



Parshas 'Bo'

מתוך "ליקוטי שמואל"

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Parents & Grandparents Brought Back to Witness the Results of Even Their Intentions

Parshas [Bo](#)

Rabbi Yissocher Frand

At the beginning of Parshas Bo, Moshe and Aharon tell Pharaoh "...For if you refuse to send forth My people, behold, tomorrow I shall bring *arbeh* (a locust swarm) into your border. It will cover the

eye of the land so that he will not be able to see the land; and it will consume the remaining residue that was left to you by the hail, and it will consume all the trees that grow for you from the field. They will fill your houses, the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all Egypt, such as your fathers and your grandfathers have not seen from the day they came onto the earth until this day." (Shemos 10:4-6).

The Sefas Emes derives an inference from this last *pasuk*:

The *pasuk* says that the parents and grandparents of the Egyptians never saw such a plague of locust until this day. The Sefas Emes says that the *Ribono shel Olam* brought back their parents and grandparents who already died, in order that they should be able to witness the plague of *arbeh*. They never saw such a locust plague until this day, but today they did see such a plague!

We thus have an instance of *techiyas hameisim* (resurrection of the dead), not for *tzadikim* (righteous people), but for *resha'im* (wicked people), in order that they witness this terrible plague that befell their children and grandchildren. The Sefas Emes further

references an oft-quoted passage from the Zohar

in Parshas Pinchas which states that when a person makes a *simcha* (e.g. – a *chassanah*, a *bar mitzvah*, etc.),

the *neshamos* (souls) of the parents and grandparents who are no longer in this world, come, in some sense, to the *simcha* to witness and 'participate in' the joyous family occasion.

The Sefas Emes makes the interesting observation: The *Ribono shel Olam* takes the *neshamos* of the parents and grandparents of *Yiden* from Gan Eden and brings them to the *simcha* so that they should be able to witness the joyous event of their descendants.

On the other hand, the *Ribono shel Olam* took the *resha'im* – the parents and grandparents of the Egyptians, who also made *Klal Yisrael* suffer so much, not in order that they should see and enjoy

the *simcha* of their children and grandchildren, but so that they should see and 'participate in' the **suffering** of their children and grandchildren.

The Sefas Emes explains "how this works": Regarding *Klal Yisrael*, the Almighty is "*metzoref machshava tova l'maaseh*." (Hashem links our good intentions with actions.) He considers a good thought as having been consummated, even though in reality, it was never accomplished. However, with the *goyim*, Hashem is "*metzoref*" their "*machshava ra'ah l'maaseh*". He holds them responsible for having acted wickedly, even for their evil plans that were never executed.

The Sefas Emes says: When a person makes a *chassanah* and he takes his children down to the *chuppah k'das Moshe v'Yisroel* (according to Jewish law and custom) and the parents are good and the children are good – part of the credit is due to the '*machshavos tovos*' (good thoughts) that the parents and the grandparents invested into their children. The *Ribono shel Olam* says "They have a part in this *chassanah*. The reason this next generation is able to bring their dear children down to the *chuppah* is because of all of the '*machshavos tovos*' that the parents and grandparents implanted in their children. Even if those thoughts and aspirations were not all fully fulfilled, the "*machshava tova*" was there, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* joins a "*machshava tova*" to action even if the action was never fully consummated.

The reverse is true regarding the *goyim*. The Egyptians and their ancestors were all part of this evil plot to destroy *Klal Yisrael*. Their "*machshava ra'ah*" (evil thought) was a cause of this suffering.

The *Ribono shel Olam* says: You caused this to happen? You implanted these wicked tendencies in your children? You are going to see the "*nachas*" of them suffering from the *arbeh*.

File This Away For Your Next Seder

I saw the following thought in Rav Avraham Buxbaum's *sefer*. This is a beautiful insight and something to remember for the Pesach Seder. In describing the instructions given to Bnei Yisrael to be carried out during their last night in Mitzrayim, the *pasuk* says: "You shall take a bundle of hyssop and dip it into the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with some of the blood that is in the basin, and as for you, you shall not leave the entrance of the house until morning." (Shemos 12:22). No one was allowed to leave their house the entire night, not until the next morning.

Our Seder is basically a reenactment of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. We try to do everything like they did the night before they left Mitzrayim. However, there is one anomaly. We do one thing at our Seder that was **not** done at that first Seder! When we say the paragraph "*Sh'foch chamoscha...*" (Pour out your wrath upon the nations who did not know you), we **open** the door.

Why do we open the door if we are trying to re-enact the first Pesach Seder? We should say "Don't open the door! Keep that door closed. Nobody leaves here until morning!"

Rav Buxbaum says that we know from many different sources that *Klal Yisrael* was not worthy of leaving Mitzraim based on their own *zechus* (merit). "These people worship *Avodah Zarah* and these people worship *Avodah Zarah!*" The reason the *Ribono shel Olam* brought about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* was in the *zechus* of the *Avos* and in the *zechus* of Moshe and Aharon – but not in the *zechus* of the Jewish masses.

The Zohar writes that when Lot and his family were saved from the city of S'dom, they were warned: "Don't look back!" The reason they were not permitted to look back is because when the *midas hadin* (attribute of judgement) is rampant, only people who are

righteous and are therefore "*zoche ba'din*" (merit salvation based on judgment) are saved. However, even though Lot was the best of the people of S'dom, Chazal say that he was guilty of many of the same moral shortcomings as the other inhabitants of S'dom. The Angels warned him not to look back because if he would look back, he would be caught up in the decree of judgment along with everyone else. In fact, the Zohar lists three times in Chumash when people were not supposed to look because they were not *zoche ba'din*. (1) Noach in the *teivah* was told to not look out; (2) Lot could not look back at the destruction of S'dom, and (3) the Jews in Mitzrayim could not go out during the night of Makas Bechoros (the Plague of the First-Born Sons). *Klal Yisrael* were not permitted to go out that night because they too lacked the personal *zechus* to escape that decree. The *midas hadin* ruled in Mitzrayim that night and undeserving Jewish firstborns could have been killed as well had they "looked."

A person who is not worthy of a miracle or salvation should not look. The reason why we **open** the door during our Seder is in the hope that, G-d Willing, we will be *zoche* to salvation *ba'din* during the future *geulah* (redemption)! Therefore, when we conduct our Seder, we anticipate being *zoche* to personally witness the Divine wrath poured out upon the *goyim*. The Sefas Emes in fact says that in the *pasuk* "And you shall not go out from the doorway of your homes ***ad boker***" (until morning), the term ***ad boker*** is an allusion to the **future redemption**, when we will hopefully be fully *zoche* to witness that salvation.

“Two Plus Two Equals Four” Is Not That Simple to Understand

Parshas Bo

Yissocher Frand

This week's parsha contains two of the four chapters that are contained within our Tephillin. [Shemos 13:1-16] The last pasuk [verse] of the second of those two chapters concludes Parshas Bo: “And it shall be a sign upon your arm, and for ‘totofos’ between your eyes, for with a strong hand Hashem removed us from Egypt.”

Rashi explains that the word ‘totofos’ means Tephillin. The head Tephillin are so called because they consist of four chambers (one for each of the four chapters contained therein). Rashi references the Gemara [Sanhedrin 4b] that analyzes the etymology of the word ‘totofos’: “Tat” in the Kaspi language means two and ‘Pas’ in the Afriki language means two. This is how we know that ‘totofos’ (two plus two) equals the four-chambered head Tephillin.

This is a difficult Gemara. Why does the Torah use such an oblique fashion to tell us the number of chambers in the Head Tephillin? The Torah should have at least chosen a word that means four (albeit in another language). Why “two plus two”?

Rav Dovid Cohen suggests a very novel approach to this problem: What are the four sections that we insert into the Tephillin? The first two are “Kadesh” [Sanctify] and “v’haya ki yevi’acha” [and it will be when He will bring you] that are located in Parshas Bo. The second two are “Shma” [Hear] and “v’haya im shamo” [and it will be if you will hearken] which are located in the Parshiyos of V’Eschanan and Ekev, respectively.

The problem is that the Parshiyos of V'Eschanan and Ekev, like the rest of the Book of Devorim, were spoken during the fortieth year of the Jews' sojourn in the desert. So what did the Jews put in their Tephillin during the forty years in the desert?

There are two possible answers to this question. Either they did not wear Tephillin for the first forty years in the wilderness (which Rav Dovid Cohen does not want to accept) or they in fact wore Tephillin in the desert that only had the two sections mentioned in the book of Shemos (Kadesh and v'haya ki yeivi'acha). Therefore, it makes sense why the pasuk uses the word totofos, which, as explained, alludes to a two plus two equations. The explanation for the two plus two equation is that at one time Tephillin had two chapters and then two more were added later (in the fortieth year of their traveling), so that it ultimately contained four chapters.

Going Out With Great Wealth, Plus Self-Esteem

Before Klal Yisrael left Egypt, they were given a special command: "Please speak in the ears of the people: Let each man request of his fellow and each woman from her fellow silver vessels and gold vessels." [Shemos 11:2] This is why the Jews left Egypt extremely wealthy. They took the gold and silver from their Egyptian neighbors.

This was in fact a fulfillment of the Almighty's promise to Avraham "Afterwards (i.e. – after the 400 years of being strangers and enslaved) they will leave with great wealth" [Bereishis 15:14]. In fact, the Talmud makes the point that Hashem had to "request" of Moshe that he "please speak in the ears of the people" so that it not be said that the years of slavery were endured but the promise of great wealth was not fulfilled.

Imagine the scene: The Jewish slaves were the trusted employees of their Egyptian masters for so many years. In fact, they were, of course, more than just trusted employees. They were more than workers, more than servants. We are talking about slaves! Now the slave knocks on the master's door and says "You know what, I always liked that silver candelabra you have. Give it to me."

Why did the Almighty set it up like this? His promise of great wealth could have come about in so many other ways. Just like the manna came miraculously and the water came miraculously, He could have sent us great wealth miraculously. Why did he give it to us in such a way that we had to "borrow" it and then not return it? In the back of most Gemaras there is a famous commentary known as the RaShaSh – Rav Shmuel Shtarshon. He was not only an author (he wrote comments on every folio of Shas with the exception of 3) he was also a wealthy man and ran a Gema"ch (a free loan society). He once lent money to a tailor for a year. Payback time came and the tailor returned to the home of the RaShaSh with an envelope containing the money. He knocked on the door, Rav Shtarshon was busy writing his commentary so he came to the door, took the envelope, stuck it in the sefer [book] he was learning at the time and continued on writing his commentary. He then closed the book and completely forgot about the envelope.

A couple of months later, he reviewed his Gema"ch ledger and he saw that the tailor never paid back the money that he borrowed. He went to the tailor and asked for payment. The tailor insisted that he paid already. The RaShaSh had no recollection of the payment and continued pressing the man for repayment. Ultimately the RaShaSh took the tailor to a din Torah (a religious tribunal) to settle the matter. The court ruled in favor of the tailor. However, the general population did not believe the simple tailor

against the great Talmid Chochom, Rav Shmuel Shtarshon. They boycotted his tailor shop to show their displeasure.

His business went down the drain. He could not make a living to the extent that he had to leave town. His life was ruined.

One fine day, the RaShash picked up a sefer he had not learned from in many months. Lo and behold, he found the envelope with the tailor's money. He was beside himself with grief. He sought out the tailor and begged forgiveness. However, the tailor was not willing to accept the apology. "It's too late. I'm ruined already." The RaShaSh insisted that he would go to the Beis Medrash, give a bang on the bimah and announce publicly "the tailor was right and I was wrong."

The tailor said, "Tough. They will never believe you. They will say that you are such a great Tzadik, you just want to make me feel good and appease me, even though I really never paid you the money."

The RaShaSh then said, "No. There is something I can do for you. I have a daughter and you have a son who needs a shidduch. Your son is not a big Talmid Chochom and he is the son of a simple tailor, but if we become mechutanim, then everybody will know that you were right and I was wrong." And that is what he did. He gave his daughter in marriage to the tailor's son to rebuild the reputation and self-esteem of the man whose reputation and self-esteem he had sullied.

The matter with the "great wealth" at the end of the enslavement is similar. If the Jews had merely received miraculous compensation after 400 years of hard work and bitter enslavement, that would not have given them back the self-esteem that wore away during all those years of brutal slavery. Their payment had to come directly from the masters for whom they labored. It did not suffice to merely leave Egypt with their money. They had to leave with

their pride as well. For that it was necessary to direct them to go knocking on the doors of the Egyptian masters and to take their finest items of gold and silver – because it was coming to them. Their masters owed it to them!

The side lesson to be learned here from the story of the RaShaSh is that when the Almighty wants a poor tailor’s son to find a prestigious shidduch [matrimonial match], then some way or another, He will make it happen!

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל אָהֳרֹן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר

Written by Yoel Lax

It says in the first verse in this weeks sedra – “And Hashem said to Moshe, Come to parah.” Surely it would of mean more appropriate to say “go to parah!” Why does the Torah use this terminology?

R’ Menachem Mendel of Kotzk says that the term “Come to Paroh” means that Hashem is saying to Moshe: “Paroh is a powerful man, but don’t be afraid of him, come with me and I will protect you”

” וְאֵלֶיךָ יָבֹאוּ בְּלַיְלָה וְהָיָה חֹשֶׁךְ עַל הָאָרֶץ

Written by BENJAMIN A ROSE

Moshe says to Pharoah ” at about midnight Hashem will bring Darkness over the land”

Why does Moshe say K’Chatzos (about midnight)?? Usually, Hashem is so precise and The Torah doesn’t like to waste words and letters so why does It say About midnight???

Rashi says that usually Hashem is accurate. (in Bereishis when he is creating the World he uses the word B’chatzos (at midnight exactly). So again, we still have the question, why is the Torah not exact here??

Humor

C"J gr kpi 'J cpf

Friday afternoon, 5-year-old Moishie Sherman came in while his parents were setting the table for Shabbos Dinner. Quite surprisingly, Moishie asked if he could help. His mother said, "No, but I appreciate your asking."

Little Moishie responded, "Well, I appreciate you saying no."

C'Oggv kpi 'y kj 'Fguvk {

Shmulik Hadari was suffering from a bad case of the flu, so he called his doctor in Tel Aviv to get an appointment.

When he was told the scheduled date of the appointment, he became outraged and bellowed, "Three weeks? The doctor can't see me for three weeks? I could well be dead by then!"

Calmly, the receptionist replied, "If so, would you have your wife call to cancel the appointment?"

C'Oqwt pgt) u'Nco gpv

As Leah is visiting her late father's grave in the Beth Israel Cemetery, she passes a woman who is sobbing and wailing at another grave. Leah can easily hear that the woman is saying, "Oh why, oh why did you die? Why did you have to die?"

After paying her respects to her father, Leah is leaving the cemetery when she passes the sobbing woman again. She is still wailing, "Why, oh why did you have to die?"

Leah feels pity for this woman and walks over to try to comfort her. "Pardon me, I hope you don't mind me coming over, but I heard your cries of pain and anguish. I assume the deceased was a relative of yours?"

"No she's not," says the other woman, "in fact I never met her before."

"Then why are you so sad?" asks Leah. "Who was she?"

"My husband's first wife," replies the woman

C'Rckp'lp'vj g'ukf g

At the King David Hebrew School, the children were learning about how God created everything, including people. One little boy was especially interested in the part where God created Eve out of Adam's side.

Later that week, his mother saw him lying on the sofa, looking ill. "What's the matter?" she asked.

"I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."