

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ע"ה And Tzvi Daniel ע"ה ben ע"ה David Ainsworth ש"י
Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

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Finding A Purpose In Bittul Torah

“Reish Lakish said: Sometimes the dereliction of the Torah is its foundation, as it is stated, *asher shibarta*, ‘that you broke’ (Shemos 34:1). [This is G-d’s statement to Moshe regarding the *luchos* that he shattered. Since this phrase is superfluous, our Sages see it as a separate message; *asher* (“that”) is associated with *yishar*, implying:] The Holy One blessed be He said to Moshe: *yishar kochacha she-shibarta*, ‘Thank you very much for breaking them!’ (Menachos 99a).”

This is puzzling: How can the neglect of Torah study become the foundation of Torah study?

It is stated, *ve-ha-chayos ratzo va-shov*, “And the angels would run and return” (Yechezkel 1:14).

This is true of everything, for all things passionately strive to return to their source [creating a constant tension between existing in their present state and relinquishing their present existence by returning to their source].

When a person eats, drinks, conducts business, and the like, he is distracted from studying Torah and serving G-d. As a result, his soul relaxes from its passionate longing for G-d’s closeness. This setback then prompts the soul to strive all the more desperately to attach itself to G-d, with far greater passion and power. So the distraction is the foundation of a far greater feeling for Torah and connection with G-d.

גאולה

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by Yaakov Paley

Tehillim For Redemption

We will be redeemed from exile through the power of Torah study and *teshuvah*, return to G-d. Now, everyone is able to return to G-d, but not everyone is able to study Torah. However, our Sages state that G-d informed *Dovid HaMelech* that whoever recites the words of Tehillim will be considered as having studied the most complex Torah subjects.

The Egyptian exile alludes to the final exile, and therefore, at the very start of the exile, we find the keys to redemption. The final letters of the

sentence (*ve-eileh*) *shemos benei Yisrael ha-ba'im mitzraimah* (“And these are the names of the sons of Yisrael who came to Egypt”), spell the word “Tehillim.” And the final letters of the words *mitzraima es Yaakov ish u'veiso* (“...To Egypt; Yaakov, each man and his household”) spell “teshuvah.”

If we are unable to combine our *teshuvah* with Torah study, we must at least recite Tehillim for the sake of bringing the redemption.

Igra DeKallah

A “New” Pharaoh

The Verse:

A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know of Yosef (*Shemos* 1:8).

The Rashi:

A new king arose—Rav and Shmuel differ about the meaning of this (in the Talmud - *Sotah* 11a). One says this means a new king, in the literal sense. And the other says it was the same king, but he issued new edicts.

The Question:

Usually, Rashi cites talmudic disagreements anonymously. Why, in this instance, did Rashi record the names of the disputants?

The Suggested Explanation:

Rav and Shmuel’s disagreements over scriptural interpretation often fell along the same fault-lines. Rav preferred to interpret the verse literally, at the cost of contextual coherence. And Shmuel preferred to interpret the verse so that it is contextually coherent, even if that meant leaning away from the verse’s literal meaning.

For example:

- 1) When Potiphar’s wife attempted to seduce Yosef, the verse says, “It was on that day that entered the house to do his work—and not one of the men in the household was in the house” (*Bereishis* 39:11). Rashi cites a dispute between Rav and Shmuel about the meaning of this phrase. Rav says, Yosef came to do his work, literally. Shmuel says Yosef came with the intention of having relations with her, the word “work” is metaphorical. Rav’s interpretation is obviously literal. But Shmuel’s takes the contention of the verse into consideration—when it says that no one else was there, it implies that Yosef’s work was the sort of “work” that required an empty house.
- 2) Megillas Esther opens with a description of Achashverosh’s rule: “From Hodu until Cush, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces” (*Es-*

ther 1:1). Commenting on this verse, Rav says that Hodu and Cush were two cities on either side of the world. Shmuel says they were adjacent, but Achashverosh’s rule over the entire world was just as secure as it was over the two neighboring cities of Hodu and Cush (*Rashi*, *ibid*).

Here, too, Rav interprets the word “until” literally, as an indication of distance. But Shmuel considers the context: the verse continues, “one-hundred and twenty-seven provinces,” that already describes the extent of his rule, why would the verse repeat itself? Therefore, Shmuel says the meaning of “until” here is non-literal. Achashverosh ruled over the entire world with the same force as he did over Hodu and Cush.

In our verse, the same disagreement unfolds. This verse is meant to explain how Pharaoh could ignore the tremendous good Yosef did for Egypt and enslave his descendants—“A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know of Yosef.” Rav understands this literally, there was a new king. But contextually, this still is not satisfactory because even a new king had to know that just a few decades previously Yosef had saved the entire land. Shmuel, therefore, understands the verse to be highlighting the unique evil of Pharaoh, in anticipation of what we will discover about him in the coming chapters. “It was the same king, but he issued new edicts” is evidence of Pharaoh’s particular cruelty, and that fits with the context of this verse and the following verses which sketch out Pharaoh’s plot of enslavement.

Accordingly, it might be thought that Rashi recorded the names of Rav and Shmuel to explain the background and rationale of each of the two interpretations he cited. But, if this were the case, then Rashi would record their names in every instance where he cites their scriptural disputes. There are several verses where Rashi cites their disputes anonymously. Therefore, Rashi must have some other motive for recording their names.

The Final Explanation:

Rav and Shmuel each excelled in a different area of law. The law follows Rav in *ritual law*, but the law follows Shmuel in *monetary law* (*Bechoros* 49b). Meaning, Rav was more immersed in the world of ritual law, which concerns a person's relationship with G-d, while Shmuel dedicated his time to presiding over monetary disputes, which concerns a person's relationship with their fellow man.

Therefore, when a narrative has elements both of interpersonal relationships and human-divine relationships, Rav would emphasize the relationship with G-d, and Shmuel would emphasize the impact on interpersonal relationships.

In our context: granted that the verse describes Pharaoh's evil character. But was his evil directed primarily at the Jewish people, or was it directed more at G-d, i.e., a spiritual failure?

If we read, as Shmuel did, that it was not a new king, but the same one who changed his decrees,

that would underscore Pharaoh's cruelty toward the Jewish people. To personally know Yosef, and then to enslave his grandchildren is an audacious act. But before G-d, Pharaoh could justify himself by saying that Yaakov had blessed Pharaoh, subjecting his family to Pharaoh's rule. He was exercising his rights as a king.

If we read, as Rav did, that it was a new king, then Pharaoh's interpersonal cruelty is not as evident, being that he did not personally know Yosef he had a more tenuous personal relationship with the Jewish people. But the moral evil toward G-d is underscored, for based on what right did he believe he could enslave the people? Yaakov never subjugated himself to this new Pharaoh's rule.

Thus, Rashi cited Rav and Shmuel's names because their respective areas of expertise and passion explains their differing interpretations of the verse.

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סיפור חסידי

ONCE UPON A CHASID

By Yanki Tauber

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A History Of Deception

G-d called to him from within the bush, and said: Moses, Moses... Now go. I am sending you to Pharaoh. Bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt...

...Moses said to G-d: So I will go to the Israelites and say the G-d of your fathers sent me to you. They will immediately ask me what is His name? What shall I tell them?

G-d Replied to Moses: "I Will Be Who I Will Be. Tell the Israelites that 'I Will Be' (EHeYeH) sent me to you."

...Moses pleaded with G-d. "I beg you, O G-d, I am not a man of words... I beg you O Lord, please, send someone more appropriate..." (Shemos 3:4 - 4:13)

On Simchat Torah, the entire town of Lubavitch would join the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel, for hakofos, the joyous dance with the Torah scrolls. After concluding the hakofos in their local synagogues, entire congregations would dance their way to the synagogue at the Rebbe's headquarters.

One year, the *Atoh Horeisa* verses were being recited when a shul full of chassidim arrived, merry with dancing and vodka and with their gabai in

their lead. The jolly group half led, half pushed the gabai through the crowd to the lectern, where he was given the honor to recite the verse: "May our words be for goodwill before the Master of All."

But Rabbi Shmuel insisted that the gabai also explain the verse he is to recite. Exclaimed the gabai: "To also explain? Then first I need a l'chayim." The Rebbe agreed that he had every right to insist on a l'chayim.

After downing his first l'chayim, the gabai

maintained that a single glass was not sufficient for the task at hand. More l'chayims followed. Finally, the gabai admitted: "Rebbe, I cannot interpret the verse. I request that the Rebbe explain its meaning..."

The Rebbe explained: "May our words be"—may our speech consist of only that which is "satisfactory to the Master of all."

After the Rebbe finished there was much commotion in the shul. Many were clamoring that the gabai ought to be taken to task - he had finagled an undeserved l'chayim! Rabbi Shmuel responded with the following story:

One year the one who usually blew the shofar at the High Holiday services in the synagogue of Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch was not available. So Rabbi DovBer asked his youngest disciple, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, to fill the role.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman agreed on condition that his master teach him the sublime meditations ('kavonos') associated with blowing the shofar.

But after the Maggid had taught him all those lofty concepts, Rabbi Schneur Zalman admitted that he had never acquired the skill of sounding the shofar.

"Why have you deceived me?" demanded the Maggid. "I have transmitted to you teachings which are only revealed to a select few." Said Rabbi Schneur Zalman, "I merely followed the example of Moses..."

Rabbi Shmuel explained: when the Almighty appeared to Moses and dispatched him on his mission to free the Jewish people from exile, Moses said: First, I need to know the secret of your name. I cannot come to the Jewish people without the understanding of who You are and how You relate to our existence. So G-d revealed to Moses the sublime concept of 'I will be who I will be' - the Divine names and manifestations by which the infinite and indefinable light of G-d sustains all of creation. And then Moses protested: But I am not qualified. Please, send someone else...

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

SHABBOS CHITAS / RAMBAM GUIDE

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