**Shabbos Shira – הים ראה וינס**

**Power to the People**

The Medrash is well known. מה ראה – What did the Yam Suf see, that caused it to split? ארונו של יוסף ראה – the Yam saw the casket bearing Yosef HaTzadik. In the Zechus of his running away to resist temptation – וינס ויצא החוצה, the sea responded to his presence, and it too ran away– וינס. HaRav Chanoch Ehrentreu zt”l, in his Kometz HaMincha, asks, why does the Medrash need to ask מה ראה? The preceding Pasuk in Hallel states that the Yam saw how היתה יהודה לקדשו ישראל ממשלותיו. Klall Yisroel was in an exalted state of holiness, worthy of this pièce de résistance of the miraculous Yetzias Mitzrayim. We may also ask, why, at all, was any merit needed to cause the Yam Suf to split? The Yam didn’t need to calculate any Zechusim. Hashem told Moshe to raise his staff and split the water. What more was needed?

Kriyas Yam Suf, was not the only time we find the forces of nature being manipulated in dramatic ways, for the benefit of Yidden. Tanach, Gemara and Medrashim are replete with such incidents that occurred even for single individuals of merit. “Merit” is the key word here. The Ribono shel Olam designed this world, to provide us with the means to fulfill His Mitzvos and live as a ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש. When we exert every effort to overcome human nature, desires and weaknesses, and rise to greatness, the Borei Olam will respond in kind, מדה כנגד מדה. The mighty forces of nature will also have to change their course and not be allowed to interfere with the fulfillment of our mission.

Klall Yisroel, on the shores of the Yam Suf, were in a poor state – ואת ערום ועריה. What Zechusim did they have at this point? They fulfilled the Mitzvos of Korbon Pesach and Bris Milah a week before, and that is pretty much it. Most of the Yidden, 80% in fact, didn’t even get to that point. They perished during the Days of Darkness, as a result of their unworthiness for redemption. This remnant did not have much more to show for themselves. The odds were against them, to be deserving of a miraculous deliverance from the onslaught of the Egyptian forces bearing down on them. הללו עובדי עבודה זרה was the accusing cry of the Malachim, including שרו של ים – the governance of the seas.

Yoseif HaTzadik was the symbol of rising above our frailties and failings. He was at the point of no return in reacting to the enticements of Potiphar’s wife. At that critical moment, he saw the image of his father before him, דמות דיוקנו של אביו. Yaakov’s visage urged him and beckoned to him – “Run! Stay strong and true to your heritage and upbringing. Don’t throw it all that away in a moment of weakness.” Yoseif had to marshal his emotions in facing his brothers too. He accepted his fate, without any lingering animosity. Yoseif was a powerful ruler, but even more so, a מושל ברוחו.

The Yidden at the Yam Suf displayed this fierce loyalty and determination as well. The תרגום יונתן and תרגום ירושלמי give an amazing explanation to וחמושים עלו בני ישראל – The Yidden went forth, fully armed and equipped. The Targum says they were fully equipped with Ma’asim Tovim of breathtaking proportions. R’ Mezi Weisberg, Shlit”a, a Rosh Chaburah in Bais Medrash Govoha, quoted R’ Yoseif Salant zt”l, in Be’er Yoseif, that the four-fifths that perished in Mitzrayim left behind numerous orphans. In the rush and chaos of leaving Mitzrayim, who would look after them? Everyone did, despite the pressure of getting their own numerous children out. Every single, surviving family took in four families of orphaned children! No Child Left Behind! Chesed beyond, beyond. This is what the Yam Suf saw, symbolized by ארונו של יוסף. Like Yoseif’s incredible feat of וינס - the Yidden brooked the natural tendency to focus inward, on their own needs, at a time of turmoil. Instead, they looked beyond their selves, giving assurance and comfort to forlorn children who, otherwise, had nobody to turn to. The strength and resolve for such an undertaking – four families of other people’s children, to take them in as your own, was the overpowering merit that parted the way for Klall Yisroel to move on, through the waves of the Yam Suf.

R’ Matisyahu Salomon, Shlit”a, is known for his outstanding thoughtfulness. A family that lived a few doors from him, had been ripped asunder by the death of their father, a respected Talmid Chochom. R’ Matisyahu made a Chasunah for one of his children during the year of his neighbor’s Aveilus. Not wanting them to feel forgotten and left out, the Mashgiach had the presence of mind – in middle of his own Simcha – to send a waiter with food from the Chasunah to the home of the Aveilim, so they could feel part of his Simcha. מי כעמך ישראל.

The Ribono shel Olam will certainly move Heaven and Earth to bring ישועה ורחמים to anyone who is ready to put aside his own pressing needs, in order to give hope and stability to such children and anyone else in such a Matzav of turmoil and uncertainty.

May we go forward, singing. Have a wonderful Shabbos, yk

לע"נ, my father, ר' אברהם אייזק בן אלכסנדר ע"ה - Yartzeit 12 Shvat, who dedicated his life to helping those in need. And dedicated to all the גבוריכח who give of themselves to help Hashem’s children in their time of need.

**L’RavchaD’Milsa Weekly Almanac**

***Erev Shabbos Shira-12 Shvat***

***Minhagim for*** שבת שירה

Crumbs For the Birds - Should be put out *before* Shabbos to avoid Halachic issues.

Reminding us how Hashem cares for all living things. Just as the birds find their sustenance without us, so should we rely on Hashem who sustains us without fail and devote more time and effort to Limud Torah, Tefillah and Mitzvos.

The birds joined Klall Yisroel in song at the Yam Suf.

The birds thwarted the plot of דתן ואבירם by eating up the מן they left out Shabbos morning.

It is customary to enhance and add to the Shabbos foods served at Seudos Shabbos.

The old Minhag was to add a Kugel which represents the מן in its preparation that creates a top and bottom crust - reminding of the protective layers above and below the מן.

“Kugel” derives its name from the age-old recipe (still followed in Yerushalayim) to prepare it in a deep round pan - כְּעִגוּל, as a reminder of the round appearence of the מן described in the Torah.

Many sing extra Zemiros and Piyutim at the Seudos Shabbos, especially יום ליבשה - which some Kehillos say before גאל ישראל by Shachris!

**So you’re looking for a** סגולה **for** פרנסה**? Here are** סגולות **for year round from various sources:**

Studyingשער הבטחון inחובות הלבבות.

Honoring your wife properly (and if not, watch it all fly away, חס ושלום!) (ב"מ נ"ט.)

Saying מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד ה' רֹעִיat the start of a meal.Saying בַּמֶּהמַדְלִיקִין on Friday night.

סעודת מצוה in Honor of ראש חודש. תפילה בציבורMikvah. Torah study. תפילה!

ברכת המזון out loud, with concentration - from a סידור

***Shabbos Shira* -13 Shavt**

**R’ BaruchSorotzkin**, Born and נפטר (1979) - Rosh Yeshivas Telz-Cleveland, a powerful orator and a tireless member of MoetzesGedolai HaTorah.

# **Sunday, Parshas Yisro-14 Shavt**

The ר' יעקב יהושע - פני יהושעFalk (1756)

# **Monday, Parshas Yisro-TesVavShavt**

Minhagim abound!

The מהרש"א says that on this day the wood cutting for the מזבח would resume and continue till ט"ו באב.

**Wednesday, Parshas Yisro-17 Shavt**

**Rabbeinu Chaim Pal’agi** of Izmir, Turkey (1868), author of KafHaChaim and more than seventy other noteworthy Seforim!

Rabbi Chaim Palagi was a prolific author. Seventy-two of his works are known, but it also is known that some of his manuscripts were destroyed in the great fire which struck Izmir in 1841. Every time R' Falaji published a new book, he made a festive meal and ate a new fruit, on which he would recite the blessing of "She'he'cheyanu." (There is a dispute amongst poskim/halachic authorities whether one may recite this blessing in honor of printing a sefer.)

In one of his works, R' Falagi describes his own life as follows: I call heaven and earth to testify that from the age when I could control my faculties until I was 20, I used to devote myself single-mindedly to Torah study, day and night, with no wasted time. I had no involvement with worldly matters. From age 20 to age 40, when my children were dependent on me, I dealt with worldly matters as a broker. Nevertheless, whenever I had no work, I did not turn to frivolity and wasteful things, but rather I returned to my studies. From age 40, when I was appointed to be a rabbinical judge and teacher and to handle matters of concern to the public, until this day, there is not a minute when I am not surrounded by litigants or by public affairs. These matters come both from this city and its environs, and also various decrees of the government keep me busy with matters affecting the public. Therefore my heart worries within me that I do not spend sufficient time studying. I therefore force myself to use the limited time that I have for studying, and may others see me and do the same; may they learn from me that when distractions come along, whether they come from public or private matters -- for one's eyes and heart search for a spare moment -- that spare time, when it comes, should not be wasted. If one lives thus, his Torah studies will be blessed.

 R' Falagi's son wrote of him: His behavior with his family and the excellence of his character traits in dealing with them was unique in the world. He never became upset about any household issue; to the contrary, he always made peace overtures . . . He never became upset at the children's noise. He used to call them to him each morning to recite the morning blessings, and they prayed out loud. Very patiently, every day, he performed the mitzvah of "You shall teach them to your children." He would instruct his children in fearing Hashem . . . and never to make fun of any person. Once, a member of his household offended another person, and he [i.e., R' Falagi] did not rest until that person had been appeased. A number of times, he even gave money to a person who had been offended.

In his seferRefuahV’Chaim, Rabbi Chaim Palagi offers powerful advice for the sick: donate meat to the poor - “One should take meat and donate it to the poor… it is good to donate [the meat] to poor Torah scholars. The pasuk says: they shall slaughter - sacrifices for charity – and be confident in Hashem, that they will experience relief and salvation.”

***Purim Saragossa***

Scholars still debate the location of the story. Many favor Siracusa (Syracuse, on the island of Sicily) as the location of our story some 600 (1421) years ago. Others refer to Saragossa, Spain as the location. In any event, The Jewish main street of the city contained 12 synagogues. At the annual royal visit three Torahs dressed in gold and silver were taken from each synagouge to welcome and parade the King through the town. One day the leaders of the community decided that the practice violates the sanctity of the Torah and that henceforth the Torah containers would be marched dressed as before but empty without the Torahs. The practice went well for 22 years. One day an apostate by the name of Marcus at a royal meeting revealed the secret. The King in a fury ordered a surprise inspection the next day and the slaughter of all Jews if Marcus is indeed correct. That night the Prophet Elijah appeared in the dreams of each of the 12 sextons and ordered them to insert the Torah in the empty cases. The next day, upon finding the scrolls in the containers the King ordered Marcus executed and relieved the Jews of taxes for a period. As a result of the miracle, the scroll was written and the 17th of Shevat celebrated as the Purim of Saragossa or Siracusa, still observed in many Sephardi families to this day.

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