

Session 80
Bo – Come to Pharaoh
8 January 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nciQ0JEZuo>

Ari

Give me a thumbs up if you can hear me. Ok, great, shalom, shalom. I'm just enjoying Jeremy's music. I just admit, it puts me in a good mood. I don't know why, there's something about the very fact that he makes it and not only in Hebrew, but in English. He puts himself out there...singing, "under my grapevine, drinking a glass of wine." Well, I don't know if you guys heard, but he may have spoken a little bit too soon. But you'll hear more about that, but it's been a crazy week, and an even crazier day. And some of you may have already heard what is going on. But we'll get to that soon.

But regardless of what's happening here, it seems like so much is happening in the world and at first glance, not that much of it seems to be great. But one of the things that I've been really excited about, amongst all of this confusion in the world, may seem very small in relation to the socio-political earthquakes that are happening around the world, but nonetheless, maybe it's good, just to focus on the very personal blessings that we have in our lives, and not get lost in the global earthquakes, because we really don't have the power to change them in anything other than prayer. So why get lost in them and let them get us down? So anyways, what am I talking about? What's been exciting me so much? The fellowship connection. That's what we're having today. I really, please HaShem, allow it to go smoothly. A lot of things could go wrong. But we're all family here. We're just going to give it a shot. Jeremy and I have been really excited about it. We've been discussing it over Shabbat, and I think actually that for this first one, we're going to tweak it a little bit today. Because while you all send us awesome questions, all the time, that we have aggregated and we can always answer them later and dive into later and I love them. It feels a little bit premature, because I think before it all, it would be just so great to get to know each other. Just to connect in a more personal way.

So this is me asking you all not to be shy. We just encourage us here. Be with us. If you're just interested in introducing yourself and saying a few words about yourself, for this first one, let's just try to keep it to no more than two or three minutes each, I think. So if you'd like to say those words and then maybe something feel good, like what the fellowship means to you or what you love about the fellowship or whatever, that would be great. So, if you're interested in sharing, we would love to have you share. Just send Tabitha a personal message here on Zoom. And she will put you in the line-up.

Ok, so before we get into any more of that or dive into anything of greater substance, which there's a lot to talk about, allow me to introduce my beloved friend, Jeremy Gimpel. Jeremy, it has

been a crazy day! You've been dealing with a lot of media, just like I have, but probably a lot more because I'm sending them all to you. So catch me up with what's going on? Shalom, Jeremy.

Jeremy

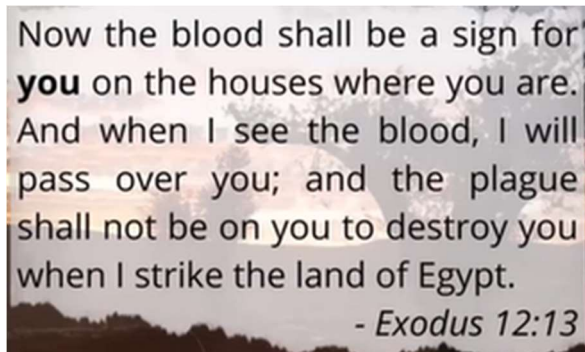
Yeah, hi, thank you. It's great to be here. It's just, the world is a crazy place. And life is not simple. And, everything that we think we understand, we don't really understand. And it's just hard to put it all together. But, you know, we had come to an agreement with the government that we were going to be able to keep our vineyard until after the Shmitta year. And then after the Shmitta year, we would be able to discuss it, maybe we would relocate it, because we can't really do anything during the Shmitta year. And it's State's Land, it's not anyone's private Land. It's in the edge of the desert. You'd think we should get a prize for making the desert blossom.

And we just got notice that for whatever reason, it's just so inconceivable, that the government on Tuesday has deployed the IDF to come and destroy our vineyard. And I just...I don't know what to do with that. Because not only is it the Sabbatical year, but it's also the year of Tu Bishvat, which is the New Year for trees. Where there is an ancient Judean tradition to plant trees on Tu Bishvat, which is like the New Year for trees. It's like right as the winter has like reached its climax, the sap is like running through the trees, we plant a new tree in the Land. And on the week of Tu Bishvat, on a Sabbatical Year, where you're not really supposed to plant anything, you're not supposed to work the Land at all, the Jewish Israeli government is going to uproot all of our vineyard and destroy it. And I just don't know...I mean I can't help but feel as though we're being communicated to in some way because it's just...it's too much to just say it's a coincidence.

And the most amazing thing is that just not that long ago, we pulled our first bottles of wine out of our vineyard. And if you can, I don't know why it's not coming in so well here, maybe if I pull it back here...why can't you see it? Zoom?! If you see the label, it was actually sent to us by one of our members, Kristen who's here today. And I don't know why it's not letting me show you the bottle of wine. But we literally have our first bottle of wine here. And we put that sticker on it because we wanted to label it in some way. And we just got our first bottles of wine after five years of labor. And now they want to destroy it. And so, I've been on the phone with politicians and the media and interviews all day long, trying to figure out how to annul this decree. And I don't know what to say. It really speaks to what I wanted to talk about today.

And so, Tehila and I were talking about it over Shabbat. And Tehila really shared this idea with me and I said I would share it on her behalf here on the fellowship. And, we were having a conversation with Emunah. And we were having a conversation about the exodus from Egypt. And Emunah is such a sharp girl. And she's reading the story, and she's like, "I don't understand, why did they have to put blood on the doorposts? I mean it says God would see the blood posts and then skip over the houses that had the blood on the posts? I mean, God could just know where they are, like why did they have to like make a sign for Him? Doesn't God know everything, like why did they have to do that?"

And I'm like, "Emunah, that is such a good question. But let's look at what Scripture says." And so, if we could just put the Scripture up on the screen, that would be amazing. Is that possible? There we go. And so, this is Exodus, Chapter 12, verse 13:



FOR YOU, that's actually an exact translation. Lecha. And so, this is really deep. The blood on the doorposts wasn't for God. It was the sign, "for you," for the children of Israel. And what does that mean? I think it really speaks to us right now in our generation.

I feel like I'm very concerned, very hesitant to post anything on social media. I would never post my children, the pictures of my children you see on the fellowship, that's in the family here. Those aren't going on Facebook, that's not going on Twitter, I don't trust Big Tec. I don't know who's listening to me. I sometimes just have conversations and the very next moment, Google ads are popping up on my phone about the conversation I had yesterday. I'm like, "What is going on? Everyone is watching me, everyone is listening to us. So I'm just very hesitant to do anything." And I think all of us feel that way. It's like wow, the governments are getting a little bit more tyrannical, things are getting a little bit more stressful and the natural instinct is, "Let's keep it quiet. Let's kind of like...let's lay low. Let's lay low until this storm passes."

And that makes a lot of sense. And then HaShem says, "No, no, no. There's no laying low now. Take the blood of the sheep, the god of the Egyptians, and then smear the blood on your doorstops. Declare it loud and clear, that you're going to be passed over and that God is King. And He's saying that even though the natural instinct is to lay low, the protection will come when we make our voices heard. When we stand for what we believe in. And there are actual statistics that have come out in Israel, every once in awhile there are Arab uprisings. And the rise in terrorism can just be seen statistically. And one of the responses was, "Well, let's kind of drive at night time and drive a little bit quicker." And there was another response that said, "No. Put an Israeli flag on your car. Raise it up high." And they saw that the cars that drove with Israeli flags...nothing happened to them. The rocks weren't thrown on those cars. The rocks were thrown on the people that were trying to lay low.

And the same thing happens on college campuses. There's a rise in anti-Semitism and Jew-hatred on college campuses. When a Jew then would say, "Alright. I'll just take off my kippah. I won't like hide my identity. I'll just lay low until you know the storm passes." That's when it rises up. But as soon as a Jew wears a star of David on his necklace, wear something to display his pride in who he is and what he believes in, somehow evil kind of makes way for it.

And that there is the communication to us in this week's Torah portion. You can't really lay low. The only way to banish darkness is to bring the light. The only way to fight evil is to bring good. And we have to not be afraid to stand up for what we believe in. And I would have loved for us to just like lay low, let this decree pass over us, maybe a new government will arise, maybe they'll be able to save our vineyard. But we are not that lucky. And we have to now raise our voices. We're going to be organizing a mass prayer on Tuesday morning at the vineyard. I think I'm going to go out and buy a thousand Israeli flags and just hang them up on every one of those vines. And as the tractors come to uproot our vineyard that we planted five years ago, let them uproot and drive over all of those flags. How this is happening in the State of Israel, I don't know. It's hard for me to wrap my mind around it, because my children are asking me. And all I can say to them is that it's only going to make us stronger. We are being tested and we have to rise up and we have to...everyone has challenges. I don't know a single family in the world that doesn't deal with challenges. Real challenges. Challenges that push them to the limit of their ability, whether it be in their marriage, with their children, with their health, with their finances. Everyone's got challenges. That's just the way this world is structured.

So my challenge is fighting for the Land of Israel. Our challenge is fighting to make the desert blossom. Our challenge is fighting for prophecy to be fulfilled. Our challenge is fighting for the future generations of believers who want to love this Land and come here. My challenge...I'll take that challenge on. I'll take it. I'm happy with that challenge. So whatever challenge faces us, this is the time that we can show courage, this is the time that we can show perseverance. I feel like it's just going to make us stronger and bring out the best within us. But even more importantly, until Tuesday happens, every decree can be annulled. We've seen it with our own eyes. The power of prayer is more powerful than anything else in this world. It is the guiding force of this world.

And so, I would call on just everyone that loves this Land, loves our farm, loves this vineyard to pray for us. Pray for this decree to be annulled. You know, you can't help...we are the deepest settlement in Judea on a Sabbatical Year, on the week of Tu Bishvat, I just can't feel as though HaShem is not just shining a projector of light onto us, just waking people up to pay attention and just as we got our first bottle of wine!



Look at that! It's ok, cause now we have bottles of wine. I'm going to sell these bottles of wine and with that money, I'm going to plant another vineyard. They're not going to stop us. We're going to make the desert blossom whether they like it or not, because there's a bigger plan involved here.

And so, thank you all for kind of marking your doors for the world to know where you stand and what you believe. Because that's actually the greatest protection. Not to lay low, not to fear, but to stand up, to not comply and to be proud. So, please God give us the strength and courage to persevere.

Ari

Beautiful, Jeremy. Truly beautiful. And you know, it's true. That's what the story of the exodus is about. You know, Miriam, she was supposed to kill all the first-born and she didn't comply. And that lack of compliance was actually what allowed the Savior, Moshe Rabbenu to be born. And it's also true, Jeremy, that in the midst of all the juggling and insanity of today, you sent me a message randomly it seemed like, out of nowhere, you said, "This will make us stronger." And it felt like that was coming from a very clear place because I wasn't feeling like that at the moment right now.

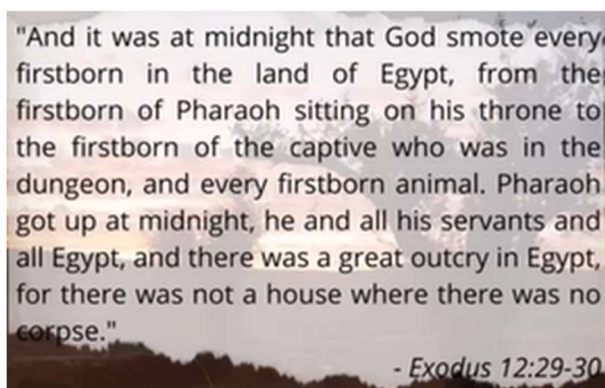
And you know, my friends, he's right. It doesn't surprise me that the cars with the Israeli flags, I hadn't heard that before, but that they weren't thrown rocks at. Because also, rationally, you know, it shows strength and a lack of fear. And that is something that intimidates those rock throwers. And you know, you'd think that at the time that we left Egypt, that we would have been the most hated, but it was exactly then, after Egypt had been devastated, really because of us, and the God of Israel, we found the most favor in the eyes of the Egyptians. And they gave us all their wealth as was promised by Abraham. So that's just really powerful.

Jeremy, thank you for sharing that. It really is painful and it's disheartening. And it's embarrassing. Because I really deeply long for Israel to be a light unto the nations. And then the State just comes and does the opposite. This is happening in a lot of different ways right now from Israel's reaction and really like the authoritarian mandates regarding the vaccine and closing off all of our borders. Far beyond when these mandates are making any sense at all...the treatment of Jews in Judea, there's just so many examples. And I don't want to get lost in politics, but really in the Land of Israel it all comes together.

So, I remind myself that it is not the nation that I'm talking about there, but the leadership. And by the way, the leadership is far from being reflective of the will of the people. I mean, consider the Prime Minister only had six mandates out of 120. And he's the Prime Minister. That should tell you all that you need to know. So I remind myself that the night is darkest before dawn and that we're on the cusp, you know not only as a nation, but as the entire world of something truly great and redemptive.

And while I truly believe that, I do, the shock that happened just this morning of this devastating news, it just, you know those words that necessarily relieve that pain...it didn't take the pain away and the confusion away. Jeremy strengthened me a little bit, but it's like...what are we in for this again? Do I even have this fight in me again? We just did this. And you know, the truth is, I'm not sure that these words of faith are supposed to fully relieve all of those negative emotions of fear and doubt and confusion and anger. But, you know, at least for me, the level where I'm holding at...sometimes I think that our faith is here not to remove all of that, but just to make it bearable enough that we're able to see it with godly eyes and see where the opportunities lie. Because if this is from God, if this is from HaShem, which everything is, then there are opportunities within it. That we just have to have the eyes to see.

Because I definitely don't consider myself as righteous or as faithful as the forefathers and I don't consider myself as ego-centric and as evil as Pharaoh. Because let's consider for a moment the reactions of Abraham vs Pharaoh. In this week's Torah portion actually we see Pharaoh's response to traumatizing and painful news. Now this is shared by Rabbi Yehonasan Gefen, it's a beautiful idea. So let's start with Pharaoh in this week's Torah portion. He just endured nine nature defying, idol demolishing plagues, barely anything was left of what was once the world's greatest super-power. And then for the 10th plague, Moshe warns that at midnight, the first born will die. Not you'd think that he would be up, pacing, and praying to his idols and riddled with anxiety, but what do we see? What do we see? Can we open that slide, Tabitha? This is Exodus chapter 12, verses 29 and 30.



Pharaoh GOT UP, at midnight. Now you know the sages of Israel recognize that the Torah is the Word of HaShem and has infinite wisdom in every letter and every word and every crown on top of the letter, it has meaning and it's all meaningful. So, why does the Torah tell us that Pharaoh "got up" at midnight?

So the great commentator Rashi, he explains it like this:

And Pharaoh got up:
"From his bed."
- Rashi: Exodus 12:30

He got up "from his bed." That's right. Pharaoh was so evil and so stubborn and so convinced that he himself was god, that he was actually able to sleep that night. Now contrast that to Abraham our forefather. Right? God told him that the next day he was to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac, his spiritual

heir, the only child that he had by his wife, Sarah, the product of his greatest yearning and prayers. And he was to sacrifice him the next day.

And the Torah tells us that Abraham arose early the next morning, meaning that he was able to sleep! He was able to sleep as well. You know, I'm pretty that I'm going to be losing at least a little bit of sleep over the uprooting of our vineyards. But Avraham was able to sleep knowing that the next day he was going to sacrifice his son. And I guess that's what makes Avraham, Avraham. Right? That's what makes Abraham, Abraham. That he didn't only have such a high level of faith, but he was able to internalize it so deeply into his heart and into his physiology. That he was actually able to sleep that night.

So I'm not there, but I can say with a full heart that such internalized faith is my greatest aspiration. It's my greatest desire in the world, that should count for something. But anyways, really, this is one of my main motivations in my Torah learning. You see, I'm not necessarily the sharpest tool in the shed, I'm not the brightest bulb in the chandelier, I mean I'm like a decently smart guy, but I'm far from the smartest. You see who I'm surrounded by. I can't compete with that. But I was, you know, I was never really able to thrive in Talmud study, just it wasn't my thing. You know, there are those who love Torah study and Talmud for the pilpul of it, for the intellectual exercise of it. But that was never me. I feel like I studied Torah for dear life. That one of my main reasons for immersing myself in Torah is because just life is so hard. And it's just hard for everybody.

And this is one of the things that I've come to understand. That when you look at some people and they seem to have it all, if you dig deeper life is often harder for them than the people who seem to be struggling. And by this point in my life, I've seen what the trials and tribulations of life can do to you. I was just last night walking by my partner, Yossi Levitt, that was around the fire with his army friends, and he was just telling me how much post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, how there's just...you know people get jaded. They get scarred. And the scars stay with them. And they carry them around and the horrors of life can quite often, it can dull that godly light that we have shining from our faces. It happens to the best of us. There have been times in my life, I know for sure it's happened to me, but deep down in my heart, I really believe that I know, that if we cleave to HaShem with all of our hearts, if we unreasonably insist on seeing God in everything and knowing that He's orchestrating the events of our lives because He loves us...to give us the opportunity to grow close to Him. If we cleave to that truth, then not only can the traumas of life not dim that godly light that shines from our faces, but the traumas themselves can magnify that

light. That if we hold tight to HaShem, then not only can we not be defeated by the pains of life, but we can grow and become better people through them.

But, you know, I was talking to Jeremy about this last night, I believe when those traumas of life come and they usually come without warning, we find ourselves in a whirlwind of confusion and pain and disorientation. And if you're not prepared for those moments, if you haven't put in the work and the prayer and the study and the meditation beforehand, it's often too late when the moment arrives. You're just not prepared, we're overtaken. I can personally testify to this truth because both situations have happened to me. There were times where I was prepared and times that I was just not prepared. And I was overtaken in the colors and the confusion.

And so I was telling my friend the other day that one of the characters I most identify with is Daniel. Is Daniel. No, I'm not talking about Daniel the prophet, but Daniel's son, you remember that from the movie in the early 80's called The Karate Kid? Do any of you know what I'm talking about, of The Karate Kid? Have you seen it? Tell me you're with me. Krista, you've seen the Karate Kid? Anyways, I think we've frozen, I really hope that you can hear me. So, there's a scene where the Karate master, Mr. Miyagi tells Daniel's son to clean his car by waxing on and waxing off, which he just does all day long. And he doesn't know why he's doing it at the time, but the idea is to make those motions – wax on, wax off, such a part of him that it's internalized into him. And that's like what I feel like my work in this world is sometimes. Just internalizing the truth of HaShem's holy Name into my essence so that I can sleep soundly like Avraham. And really have faith in HaShem that's in my heart.

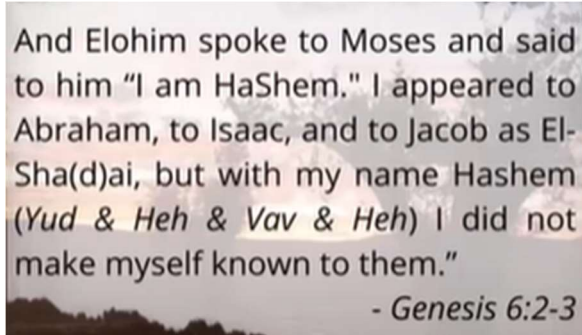
Ok, so for those of you who have been with us from the beginning, you know about my quest for mantras. There's certain psukim, certain verses that encompass it all. Or at least help truly address whatever trauma I'm going through at the time. And there are times that I remember that the focus, prayer and mediation on a relevant verse really got me through very difficult challenges. And I found that on the other side of this challenge, I emerged with that verse sort of an integrated part of me more than it ever was before. So the challenge really like embedded it into my heart.

So for example, the first time that we were really approached with the danger of these far leftists European funded organizations destroying our farm, I'm not going to go into the whole story, I've told you before. But I remember saying from Psalm 118, HaShem is with me, I will not fear for what can man do to me? It was just a reminder that it's misplaced to fear the people that seem to be posing the threats to you. Yes, maybe they'll be successful, but they only be successful if HaShem wills it. Fearing them is the wrong address. Our fears and our hopes and our prayers should always be directed towards HaShem, because He's the One who's really in control.

But as I've shared with you before, there's one mantra that for me personally, has proven to be like the 911 emergency mantra. The primary one that really covers anything that I could be facing.

I don't know if it's true for everybody, but it's true for me. And this mantra is not in this week's Torah portion. But as we discussed last week, it is first manifest before the eyes of the world in this week's Torah portion. So remind me to tell you at the end what that mantra is.

But just let's start with a very brief review of last week's Torah portion because it's really impossible to understand this week's portion without last week's. So last week's Torah portion opened up with the verses:



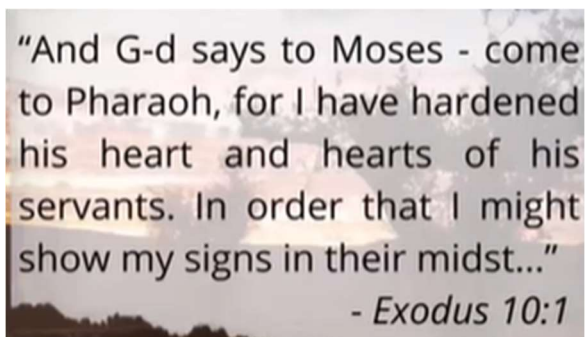
And Elohim spoke to Moses and said to him "I am HaShem." I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El-Sha(d)ai, but with my name Hashem (Yud & Heh & Vav & Heh) I did not make myself known to them."
- Genesis 6:2-3

So just very briefly, just a quick review, God was telling Moshe that He would be revealing His ultimate Name before the world. Not the Name Elohim, right? Which expresses God's Name in relation to His creation and to nature. Nor El Sha(d)ai which expresses His Name regarding borders and boundaries and limitations like the mezuzah, right? For example, which stops the angel of death at the door. We could definitely use some

of that Name in the days to come here at the farm.

But the Name that He's going to reveal to the world, the ineffable, unpronounceable, unfathomable Name of Yud, Hey, Vav, Hey, the past, the present and future all in one, would be revealed through the plagues as the illusions and idols that the Egyptians and really the entire world believed in with all of their hearts would be shattered and exposed as falsehood before the world.

Ok, this brings us to this week's Torah portion, right? Parashat Bo. And we find ourselves right before the 8th plague. And as we know from the Chanukah fellowship, the number 8 is itself a number of transcendence of nature, which may be why this plague contained freezing ice with balls of hail, with balls of fire burning within in. Right? It transcends the very laws of nature. Fire and ice together. So the parsha begins.



"And G-d says to Moses - come to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and hearts of his servants. In order that I might show my signs in their midst..."
- Exodus 10:1

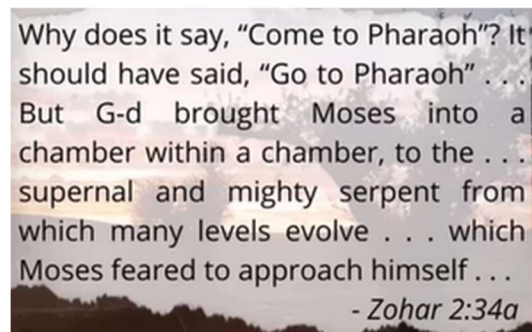
So the famous question that stands out so prominently, "Why does it say "bo al'Paro?" Come to Pharaoh, and why not lech al'paro? That would make more sense. Go unto Pharaoh.

Now there are many answers to the question, but in light of what we've been focusing on and discussing in the fellowship the words of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of course spoke so strongly to me and that's what I want to be sharing with you. So he

brings the ancient sacred text of the Zohar to provide some context, right? He explains that usually up until now, Moshe would sort of ambush Paro, often while Paro was in a compromising situation at the time, such as the first plague when Moshe approached Pharaoh when he was in the Nile, as he was relieving himself. Which he did in the Nile by the way, to hide the fact that he even had to do such a thing because he was trying to pass himself off as a deity and deities don't have to relieve themselves. So he would go into the Nile and that's what he would do and that's where Moshe would ambush him.

But now, the sages explain that Moshe was afraid because he was going to confront Paro on his throne and in his palace, the hub of his power, surrounded by all of the majesty and the glory of his palace. So Moshe was more afraid now and Hashem is saying, "Bo al'Paro," meaning come with me. Hashem is saying, "I'll go with you. I'll hold your hand." Plus He says, "Because I have strengthened his heart. I'm the One that's created this whole situation, I am with you."

But are you ready for this? So now the Zohar goes even deeper. So here's the verse from the Zohar:



Why does it say, "Come to Pharaoh"? It should have said, "Go to Pharaoh" . . . But G-d brought Moses into a chamber within a chamber, to the . . . supernal and mighty serpent from which many levels evolve . . . which Moses feared to approach himself . . .
- Zohar 2:34a

Right? He'd been going to Pharaoh for months. Right now, all of a sudden, he's scared? Why is this so different? Because now he's being told to enter into Pharaoh's very essence. Right? He was told to penetrate to the very soul of Pharaoh. He wasn't just going to confront Pharaoh externally. But he was going to confront him on the soul level. To peel away all of these shells of illusion and impurity and ego within

Pharaoh and really encounter the Creator, Himself. At the very core of Paro. HaShem was saying to Moshe essentially, "Come to see Me within Pharaoh."

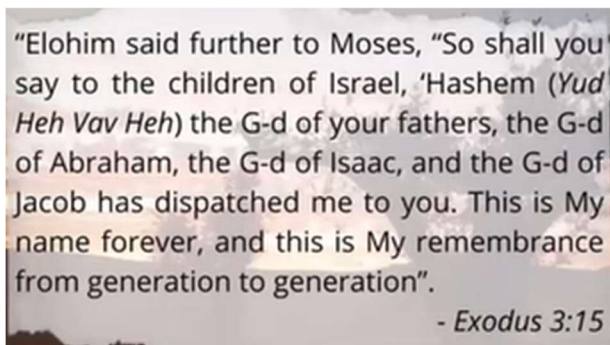
And I think maybe that's the reason why he was so afraid. You know we saw a similar fear of beholding the greatness of HaShem at the burning bush, if you remember. Moshe was afraid to behold God. It's not really Pharaoh who Moshe is afraid of, but coming to an encounter with HaShem, Himself. With the Yud, the Hey, the Vav and the Hey within Pharaoh. Because how can a human being, a mere mortal of flesh and blood possibly behold such a pure revelation of Divine truth that is so transcendent that at the deepest core, it is equally the source of both good and evil...the source of light and darkness, right? The ultimate oneness and unity of HaShem is within there. That's got to be terrifying. You know there are times I walk around the farm at night and I'm talking to HaShem. And often it's times where I'm seeking understanding, but there have been times where I asked HaShem to give me some sort of revelation. You know to reveal Himself to me in some way. And there was a time that I clearly remember that I asked Him to reveal Himself to me in some way and then my heart started beating really fast. You know, it was like accelerating and I started to sweat and I got flushed. And I remember thinking, "You know what?

Maybe we should just keep things at the status quo. Let's just stay where they are right now. I don't need to necessarily understand everything."

You know, I got afraid. I was afraid! You know, really encountering HaShem, I imagine it's quite a jarring event. And think about it. When he went up to Mount Sinai, he needed to wear a mask for the rest of his life because there was such Divine Light emanating from his face. So perhaps my friends, that's what scared Moshe so profoundly. The prospect of "bo al'Paro," right? HaShem saying to Moshe, "Come and encounter me within Paro." And that is the secret of HaShem's Name. That He is behind everything. That He is within everything. That there is nothing other than Him. And that is my 911 emergency mantra. Right? The words are found in the 4th chapter of Deuteronomy. But they're expressed with the Yud and the Hey and the Vav and the Hey. And what are those words? Say it with me if you know. Ain ode milvado. There is nothing other than HaShem. There is nothing other than Him. But I won't go so deeply into that because we've had entire fellowships based on those three words.

And so last week we discussed that we have a little Pharaoh within us. Remember that? And perhaps that little Pharaoh was part of Moshe's fear. That he would encounter that tiny sliver, that little inkling of Pharaoh even within himself. That voice that knows the way things are supposed to be. That voice that resists yielding to the Creator of the universe, that voice that would compel perhaps, maybe this is blasphemous, but that would compel even the holiest man to strike a rock instead of speaking to it as HaShem asked him to do. And so my friends, that is the power of HaShem revealing His Name in the world, revealing His Name to us. That the power of that Name that started its revelation in the world with the plagues, and the redemption of the nation of Israel from slavery in Egypt will eventually, at the end of days be revealed and bring redemption, not only to the nation but to the entire world.

When we understand the secret of Yud and Hey and Vav and Hey, the secret of Ain Ode Milvado, then really we are invincible. The nation that knows HaShem's Name cannot be destroyed. Because HaShem is connected to them, is part of them. Knowing HaShem's Name is the secret to bringing about that redemption that we are all seeking. Now consider this, right? At the burning bush, let's go back to the burning bush for a second.



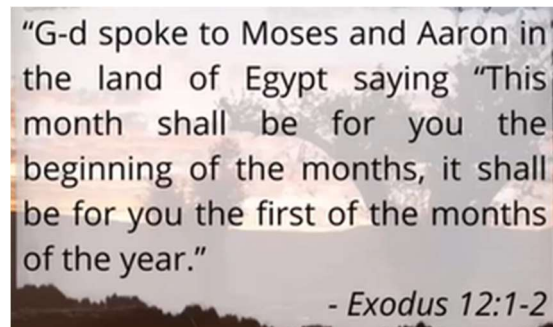
"Elohim said further to Moses, "So shall you say to the children of Israel, 'Hashem (Yud Heh Vav Heh) the G-d of your fathers, the G-d of Abraham, the G-d of Isaac, and the G-d of Jacob has dispatched me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My remembrance from generation to generation".
- Exodus 3:15

So that was at the burning bush. That's what HaShem said to Moshe. And then Moshe did what? He threw his staff and it turned into a snake. Now Rabbi Ari Kahn, he beautifully explains that this is an actual illusion to the Garden of Eden. To fixing that initial sin that the snake in the Garden of Eden...remember, it sort of wins. It gets the best of mankind. It lures man to

sin. And it succeeds. And man is banished from the Garden.

But now, HaShem is saying, "With My Name, with the knowledge of Me, with the relationship to Me, you can grab hold of that snake, you can take the snake in your hands and you can control it. No matter how impossibly alluring the snake is, no matter how compelling the compulsion to sin is, when we truly know HaShem's Name, it's in our hands to defeat it. And that's really the Tree of Life, that is our path back into the Garden, that's our path back to redemption. And just as there's nothing other than HaShem in the world, there's really HaShem to be found in every moment. There's a way to fill every moment with this taste of the original redemption. That there's an opportunity to conquer that Paro in ourselves. Not by slaying him, or really even fighting him. But by shining the light, right? As Jeremy said earlier, shining the light of ain ode milvado upon him and revealing the truth that he doesn't really exist to begin with.

And that's the mission of Israel on a national level. That, you know, we are to be that testimony in the eyes of the world, our very existence is to be that testimony in the eyes of the world which is why smack in the middle of the narrative of the ten plagues, of the destruction of Egypt and the redemption of the nation of Israel, we find this really strange verse in a really strange place. So here's the verse, Exodus, chapter 12, verse 1 and 2:



So think about it. In the middle of the most dynamic and suspenseful story of revelation and redemption in world history...actually not in the middle, more toward the climax of it really, God interjects a directive about our calendar, right? Why? What is that all about?

Now please, HaShem, help me here. This day has been so crazy and I really tried to weave this together in a coherent way. I really hope it makes sense but I'm trying. You know you can tell a lot of things about a person and really a nation by their calendar. The days that they celebrate and the cycles that they mark. For example, I don't know if you know this, but the Stalin led Soviet government, sought to integrate their atheism into every facet of society. To reimagine, right, the way things could be. Does that sound familiar to you? Reimagining everything. Reimagining everything. They tackled the calendar too to infuse their atheism into the calendar. So the solar calendar made sense to them, the division of the months within the calendar, that made sense. But they felt like the week being seven days was arbitrary and had religious origins. And by the way, it also left their machines sitting idle and decreasing productivity. So they made a five day work week. And everybody was assigned different colors that they took their day off. And so it separated families from each other and it wreaked havoc on the country and it lasted eleven years but it was a dismal failure. It's quite a story actually. But it fell apart. And man just couldn't

function without a basic seven day work week. Or a seven day week like HaShem laid out in Bereshit, in Genesis.

But anyways, we learned that this month, that the Jewish people find themselves in, during the final plague, was the month of Nisan. And as the verse we just quoted, this will be the head of the months. Right? Rosh Chodeshim. At least it will be the head of the months for the Jewish people. Are you with me? The Rebbe explains the difficulty here beautifully. We know that the beginning of the year is when? What's the beginning of the year? The head of the year? Literally the translation of those words. Rosh Hashanah. The first of Tishrei. That's when the year became 5782, the year that we're in now. So we know that Tishrei is Rosh Hashanah. The head of the year. So why in chapter 23 of Leviticus does it say:

Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first of the month, it shall be a Sabbath for you, a remembrance of [Israel through] the shofar blast, a holy occasion.
- Leviticus 23:24

So, according to that year, to the Nisan redemptive calendar from our Torah portion, it says that Tishrei which we know the first month is actually the 7th month. So what is it? Is it Tishrei? Is it Nisan? So the Rebbe explains that both of these days, the first of Tishrei and the first of Nisan are both called "heads." Right? But Tishrei is called the head of the year and Nisan is called the head of the months.

So to the Jewish people, we actually have two simultaneous heads, right? Tishrei, which is the head of the year where we mark the creation of the universe, the creation of the material world and the creation of all of mankind, the creation of nature. That is Rosh Hashanah. That is when we join the rest of humanity, right? In asking that HaShem inscribe us and all of mankind into the Book of Life. So where Tishrei is marking the beginning for all of humanity, of Rosh Hashanah, Nisan is very particular to the Jewish people. It's the beginning of Jewish time. When we became a nation with a mission. With a mission that's just tied unbelievably with the very Name and Essence of Hashem, Himself.

The Rebbe explains that we're like, in my words, like we're dual citizens. We share our basic, common humanity with all of mankind, and we mark the natural world and the laws of nature on Rosh Hashanah and Tishrei. But we're also citizens of our own unique history, of our own story. A history that rises above the natural world. A history which is governed by miracles, where our very existence in the world today is a miracle. And that is Nisan. That is our own special, particular Rosh Hashanah. Passover is, I guess you could say, Passover is the Rosh Hashanah for the Jewish people.

And that, by the way, is why HaShem reveals Himself to us at Mount Sinai, as the God who took us out of Egypt from the house of slavery. We're standing at Mount Sinai, why not introduce Himself as the God who created heaven and earth? The answer is because at Sinai, God was not just

speaking to us merely as a people. But He was relating to us as His people, His supernatural people, His supernatural nation that bears His supernatural Name. But nonetheless, we are still first and foremost people, we are people, we're still human beings. And so, we have one foot in each world and we go by both calendars together. Simultaneously. But we don't only live in both worlds, we don't just inhabit both dimensions, our mission is to bring them together, right? To fuse them. To transform the natural world by merging it with the holiness and the spirituality and the godliness. That's our mission.

And so, I don't know if you know Rabbi Jacobson. He teaches these teachings from the Rebbe and he says that God created the Jew, he just beautifully puts it as the hybrid, right? As a hybrid of the Nisan and Tishrei realities. To not only mark both calendars, but to fully live within them. To live in the Tishrei and in the natural and in the supernatural and bridge these seemingly opposite worlds of the natural and the holy. Our mission is to bring the world to a place that's described by the prophet Zechariah, "On that day, HaShem will be One and His Name will be One."

And that's really part of the reason that our calendar and our connection to the moon is declared at this pivotal point in the story. Because in many ways, we are really very much like the moon. The nation of Israel is like the moon. Now hang on here. When you look up at the sun, it's always the same, right? It's static. It's a flaming circle in the sky. But the moon, it waxes and it wanes and it goes every single month from being this tiny sliver to a full, vivid, circle. And this, if you think about it, you can probably see where it's going already. This is the Jewish people throughout history. That there are times where we're thriving and strong and then just soon thereafter, we're so beaten down that you can barely even see a sliver of us left. And then from that sliver, we go back to full strength. We're not static, we don't remain the same throughout history. We're always changing and we're always growing and we're always renewing ourselves. Like the moon.

And by the way, consider this, right? When is the moon at its full strength? When do we see the full moon? On the 15th of the month. I used to think it was on Rosh Chodesh at the beginning of the month, but no. We actually have a full moon on the 15th of the month. You know there are times where I could actually tell the date just by looking up at the moon. Because it's so clear where it is in its cycle. But when you look at the holidays and the festivals, you see something really interesting here. Each month has these special different quality of energy to it. We discussed this before on the fellowship. That the time is like sort of cylindrical, like a cone and it keeps revisiting itself on this special energy. But the full energy of each month's unique quality is most powerfully manifest when the moon is full, on the 15th of the month, right?

Let's think about the holiday we're in right now. This week's Torah portion, Nisan. Nisan is the month of redemption. That's the energy of Nisan. And while the redemption process started on the first of Nisan, it really culminated with the ultimate redemption of the exodus on the 15th of Nisan, right? On the holiday of Passover, on Pesach, the 15th of Nisan. Tishrei, we just spoke about Rosh Hashanah, what is our service on Rosh Hashana? If you remember this fellowship, it's

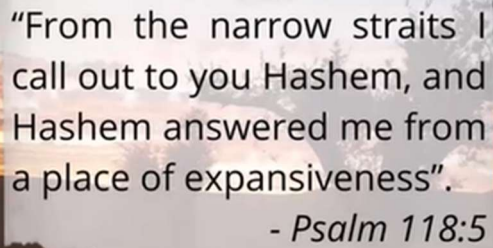
to coronate God as King, to inaugurate God as our King. So starting on Rosh Hashanah, that is the energy of what that month is, but it culminates with the complete internalization of that truth on the 15th of Tishrei, on the holiday of Sukkot, exactly six months, half a year after the 15th of Nisan, of Passover.

I mean just to take this a step further, next week is Tu Bishvat, right? Where we plant trees. And while it still feels like we're in the winter, we know that Tu Bishvat is when the sap and the life of the tree begins and it goes to its full strength on the 15th of Shvat. On Tu Bishvat, when the rebirth of the trees is at its maximum. How beautiful is that? That the 15th of the month is the zenith, is the greatest power and expression of the energy of that month. And Rabbi Jacobson and the Rebbe just shared it so beautifully.

And I'm going to try to wind it down with this, I don't want to go too much overtime. But we're actually like the moon in another beautiful way, right? So they explain it like this. There are two perspectives of the moon. One is from the earth, from mankind's perspective, from the earth the moon waxes and wanes and renews and disappears. But let's see it from the sun's perspective, if you were standing on the sun, the moon always remains the same. It never waxes or wanes. The moon is always bathed in the light of the sun.

And so sometimes it's hard to understand the Jewish people from this myopic perspective of where we're waxing and waning. And this lack of perspective and understanding causes people sometimes like Martin Luther for example pops into my mind, to go from loving us to hating us. From respecting us to abhorring us. But from Hashem's perspective, He always sees us in our entirety. He loves us in our entirety, regardless of whether the world sees us or regardless of whether we see ourselves that way. But nonetheless, no matter how hard we fall, how close we come to disappearing, just like the moon, we will return again to full strength. And to our role of reflecting God's light to the world. That's another way we're like the moon. We reflect HaShem's light because we don't have an intrinsic holiness in and of ourselves. The only reason that we're the chosen people with such a holy mission is because we're here to reflect and channel God's light to the world in a way in which can...if you look directly into the sun, you'll go blind. But the moon reflects the light of the sun in a way that it can really be received and absorbed.

Ok, I'm going to try to wind this down now. So we can understand now at this point why it's such a pivotal time now in the redemptive story of the birth of our nation. We received this first commandment, this month shall be for you the head of all months. Because our mission is tied to our calendar. And now that HaShem has revealed His holy Name in the world, we can reveal it to all of mankind. Very much through our calendar. Through our festivals, through our holidays. And that, my friends, is the key to redemption. Right? We started with our sharing of my quest for a mantra. And so one of the mantras, I said very early on, God is mine, I will not fear for what can man do to me? Well, the verse right before that is a very pivotal verse and it's really often associated with the exodus from Egypt. So, chapter 118:5, we read:



“From the narrow straits I call out to you Hashem, and Hashem answered me from a place of expansiveness”.
- Psalm 118:5

Mitzar means narrow straits. It's from the word actually mitzryim which is the national embodiment of mitzar, of narrow straits. From the narrow straits, I call out to you, HaShem, and HaShem answered me from a place of expansiveness. That's how we've always read it and you know, I've shared this before, but Rav Biederman's teaching of a different way to read that, I think takes on

an entirely different meaning than that. He says to read it like this – From the narrow straits, I call out to you, HaShem, and HaShem answered me...you aren't in narrow straits at all. You are already in a place of abundance. You're already in a place of abundance. It may feel like you're in constraints, but really Pharaoh and Egypt, the constraints, it doesn't have a life force of its own. It doesn't have any true reality in itself. It is all HaShem.

And when we're able to live His Name and reflect His light into the world, well that will bring the ultimate redemption that we've been waiting for. That will shine the light on the darkness of whatever Pharaoh we're facing at the moment. And reveal the deepest truths. That there is nothing but HaShem. Even now, just look around, right? There's Covid, and then everybody says, “We figured it out, we're God, we got this vaccine, we figured it out.” And then there was the Delta Variant, and then there's the Omicron Variant, and just today, what there was...what's the name of the new variant that just came out today? The Deltacrom or Omidelta? Some sort of mix of those? Just came out today. And HaShem is saying, “You think that you're in charge. But just like that plague of the lice, the most minute tiny microscopic thing, you don't even have control of that.” HaShem has control of everything.

And we as a nation, and we as a people can really reveal that truth to the world. And so, I want to bless all of you that you should continue to be these vessels of light, that you should continue to be able to be part of this great redemption that's unfolding today. Not only in our hearts, where each of us are trying every day to defeat that Pharaoh within us, to shine the light of HaShem, but really the redemption of the entire world. That's what at stake right now.

And so I want to bless all of you with the blessing of the Cohan, the High Priest, Aaron. But before I do, I just want to encourage you to stay on and join us in our fellowship connection afterwards. I don't know how it's going to go, but we'll figure this out together. So allow me to bless you.

Aaronic blessing (Hebrew)

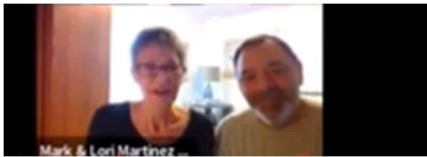
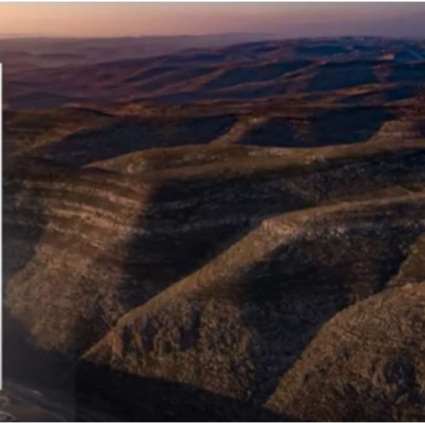
May Hashem bless you and protect you. May He shine His light and His countenance upon you. And may He give you peace. Amen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq5jxVQELFk>

FELLOWSHIP CONNECTION

The Land of Israel Fellowship

Meet: Marcy from Iowa, Mark & Lori Martinez, Joanne Meeks, Rene, Stan & Sue Deuprey, Richard Knelsen & Ramona Richardson / 09.01.2022



Mark & Lori Martinez

Rene, Stan & Sue Deuprey



Ramona Richardson