SLOWLY BUT SURELY

What exactly was the logic which Moshe was presenting in his argument as he questioned whether Pharaoh would be willing to hear his plea on behalf of the Jews?

Rabbi Yitzchak of Volozhin illustrates this with a parable. A man was locked up deep inside a dungeon. One day, a man appeared in front of his cell and slowly began to deliver a message. The prisoner quickly realized that the messenger was stuttering badly and could barely get out a word. Yet, it also was clear that the man was informing the prisoner that he was soon to be released. Although the words were slow in being spoken, the listener was quite satisfied to wait patiently as the good tidings were being pronounced, slowly but surely.

If this same messenger would, instead, appear before the warden of the prison in order to appeal for the release of any particular prisoner, we could certainly understand that the officer would not have the patience to listen to the slow and broken words of supplication of this man and he therefore would not be receptive. He would be thrown out of the official’s quarters without success.

This, then, was the observation that Moshe had. The Jews were broken and they were suffering. Moshe was coming with news of their imminent redemption, and although Moshe had a defect in his speech, the Jews should have been receptive. Nevertheless, the Jews could not hear his message. This caused Moshe to be apprehensive about approaching Pharaoh. If the Jews were impatient and unwilling to hear, despite the fact that they had a direct interest to listen, how then could Moshe expect Pharaoh to listen? Pharaoh had no reason to be willing to listen, and Moshe feared that his appeal would fall on deaf ears and he would therefore be rejected.

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PARENTING THROUGHOUT LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein notes that this is the first time that the Torah mentions Amram and Yocheved in their role as parents of Moshe. The significance of this being stated now as opposed to earlier is that at this point Moshe had already reached a level of prominence as an agent of Hashem, as he was to embark on a mission to lead the Jewish people out of the Egyptian servitude. The lesson to be learned is that no matter how much a parent believes that his child is set on his way and will succeed, one cannot rely on that alone. Moshe was endowed with brilliance and possessed a rare degree of holiness. The Gemara (Sotah 12a) states that even at his birth the entire house was lit up due to his countenance. Nevertheless, his parents did not assume automatically that he was destined for greatness and that he was clearly going to go on the right path in Torah and yir'as Shamayim. One should always be concerned that as bright as a child may be and no matter how gifted, his wisdom and talents can just as

A child always needs guidance and nurturing, and only then can his parents and teachers feel confident that he will go in the proper derech.
What does it mean when it says that none died “until one”?  If it means that “no animal died, until one”.  What does it mean when it says “until one”?  If it means that not even one died, perhaps the verse should have said precisely that, that no animal died, “not even one”, or “not one”.  Yet Pharaoh’s heart became stubborn and he did not send out the people.”  Shemos 9:7

After the plague of מים, where a huge number of Egyptian livestock were killed, Pharaoh sent to check what had happened at this time among the flocks of the Jews.  If read literally, the verse reports that he noticed that “no animal died, until one”.  What does it mean when it says “until one”?  If it means that not even one died, perhaps the verse should have said precisely that, that no animal died, “not even one”, or “not one”.

HaRav Yehoshua Leib Diskin suggests that the verse expresses itself in this manner in order to tell us that, in fact, no animals died “until one”, but one animal did die.  Shemos 9:19

The one animal that died was actually not a loss for the owner, as he would have had to forfeit that animal to Pharaoh for the tax.
Pharaoh, as he would no longer collect this animal as the tithe.

This sequence of events is actually indicated as we read the verses. In Verse 6, the Torah tells us that “no animals of the Jews died”. This means that if the owner had a number of animals such that the death of one animal would have been a loss for the Jew, then that animal did not die. In Verse 7 we find that when Pharaoh sent to the Jews, in other words when he sent messengers to collect his tithe, no animals of the Jews died, except “until one”. This means that the one which was due to be paid to Pharaoh did die. When Pharaoh checked this, he was shocked that the only casualties were ones that he sustained, even within the camp of the Jews.

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THE WAY OF THE EVIL

Our sages (Midrash Shemos Rabba 10:6) have identified the behavior of Pharaoh to be typical of the conduct of evildoers. They react in times of distress by crying out and exhibiting signs of remorse and regret for their mistakes, but as soon as the situation is remedied, they return to their wayward actions. This insight of the Midrash, however, seems to be nothing more than a reflection of our verses themselves, where Pharaoh reacted to the plague of hail by first summoning Moshe and Aharon in order to confess that he was wrong, but immediately upon the halting of the deadly hailstones, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to send out the Jews. What is it that the Midrash is adding to our understanding of this episode?

The Ponovitch Mashgiach explains that the Midrash is indeed teaching us a great lesson. We should not think that as the evildoers succumb and yield in times of difficulty they do so with sincerity and with a full heart, only to reconsider and to return to their corrupt ways once again. This is not at all what is happening. Rather, even the temporary appearance of decency which they exhibit when under pressure is only an outward and feigned guise of purity and cooperation. This is “the way of the evil ones”, and it should be interpreted as the forgery that it really represents. This pattern is clearly repeated whenever the sinful ones are confronted with adversity, and we should not be fooled to think that their expressions of submission are sincere.

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Halachic Corner

Zmanim for Parshas Vaera 5780

According to the Guan of Vilna
Krias Shma - Sat. 10:25  Terilis - Sat. 4:55  Sunset 7:10  Sunrise 4:57

According to the Magen Avraham
9:00  10:01  4:55  7:10  4:57

Rosh Chodesh Shevat will take place next Monday, Yom Sheni

The sanctity of the synagogue and the beis midrash is very great. We are commanded to fear Hashem, Who dwells in them, as it is written (Vayikra 19:30): “And My sanctuary shall you honor.” The synagogue and the beis midrash are also called sanctuaries, as it is written (Yechezkel 11:16): “Yet will I be to them as a great lesson. We should not think that as the evildoers succumb and yield in times of adversity, and in many places candles are lit during services. One should not kiss one’s little child there, because in the synagogue one must only display one’s love of God. One should not enter the synagogue or beis midrash if his body or clothing is dirty, and one should be careful not to track any mud in from his shoes or snow on his boots.

Halachic Corner is dedicated by Benyomin Freeman in memory of his father Gedalia Freeman, May his memory be for a blessing.

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Questions for Thought and Study

1. Why did the Torah need to trace the lineage of Moshe and Aharon before they confronted Pharaoh? See Ohr HaChaim 6:14
2. Why does the Torah need to tell us that Amram married Yocheved, who was his aunt? See Chizkuni 6:20
3. When Aharon’s staff swallowed the staff of the Egyptian magicians, what happened to the magicians themselves? See Malbim 7:11
4. Why did Pharaoh delay his request to remove the frogs until the next day? Didn’t they want to get rid of them right away? See Ramban 8:6
5. How was the plague of lice to be a measure for measure (קנס = כנו) punishment for what the Egyptians did to Bnei Yisrael? See Ba’al HaTurim 8:72
6. What is the difference between Hashem’s telling Moshe to “come” (קנ) to Pharaoh and...
and His telling Moshe to “go” (ר“ג) to Pharaoh? See Ohr HaChaim 9:1

This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- Hebrew Theological College, in conjunction with Yeshiva Parents and Yeshiva Women, looks forward to greeting you at our 39th Annual Melave Malka, Motzaei Shabbos, February 1st, at 8:00 PM. Featured Speaker: Rabbi Yo´el Ben-David, president of Chalal: Av Beis Din, eRe, present challenge: “Chalal: Nipping the Problem in the Bud”. There will be a sumptuous fleishig buffet served. The evening will conclude with our exciting raffle. For info/RSVP on this enjoyable event: 847-982-2500 or htc.edu/mnn.

- Hebrew Theological College’s Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro will take place this Thursday, January 30, 12:35-1:15. Rabbi Sam Biber will speak on “Gambling: Illegal or Immoral?”. Complimentary appetizers as well as a discounted menu available for shiur participants. Men and women invited to attend. For more info: Rabbi Joshua Zisook at 847-982-2500 or zisook@htc.edu.

- TAG Chicago is here to help! Now selling kosher email, talk & text, and talk-only phones. We offer free devices safe. Visit tagchicago.org, Call 847-920-8245 or email Help@TAGChicago.org to book your appointment. 8150 Central Park, Skokie. Remember - “Call before you buy!” We will help guide you.

- Save the Date: Join The Blistein Institute for its Annual Winter Event on Saturday evening, February 29, at 9:00 PM, in the Sky Lounge of the State and Chestnut Building, 845 N. State. Rabbi Yonah Weinrib will present his beautiful Illuminated Original Manuscripts. Join us for an evening of music and great food. Catering by Shallots with Wines by Shulem. Complimentary valet parking.

- Yachad seeks a full-time Chicago Chapter Director to add to its dynamic team. Some responsibilities include the supervision of all programmatic and related activities, strategic initiatives, and stewardship of existing and future organizational partnerships. Works closely with local staff and National team. Please send a résumé with a cover letter to herrmann@ou.org or to cohene@ou.org. No phone calls, please.

- RCCS Chicago is once again hosting the Yaakov Yisroel Topper Ice Hockey Tournament on Sunday, February 9th, at the Fifth Third Arena! This free family-friendly event is open to all, and will feature exciting hockey games, entertainment for kids, and refreshments. Come enjoy the atmosphere and cheer on your favorite team. Visit www.rccschicagohockey.com.

- Make your Rosh Chodesh meaningful. Blistein Institute invites women of the community to the Edith Tessler Rosh Chodesh Project for Women. Rabbi Yirmiyahu Neuman will speak on “Renewal”. This Monday, Jan. 27, at 1:30 PM, at Shallots Bistro. Come early and receive 10% off your lunch order.

- The DeZimrah Institute seeks to train future Baalei Tefillah to lead Shabbos davening with niggunim that will inspire the entire kehillah to join in the Tefillah B’Shira experience. Join world-renowned Cantor Benny Amar on Sunday morning, February 23, 2020, at Congregation Or Torah, for a workshop on “How Your Tefillah Can Bring the Kahal to the Next Level”. If you are interested in this unique opportunity, please call Julie at 847-877-8000 or email Dezimrah@gmail.com.

- The DeZimrah Institute is pleased to present Benny Amar, exceptional singer and Baal Tefillah from the Manhattan Jewish Experience, to lead a special davening, Kabbalat Shabbat through Musaf. Kiddush to follow. February 21-22, at Congregation Or Torah in Skokie. Weekend events sponsored in Memorium of yahrtzeit of John Hanus, z”l.

- Yeshivas Hakayitz 2020 enrollment is now open. Eligibility: Boys entering grades 6 through 11. Camp dates: June 30 - July 27. Join the 200 campers & counselors from coast to coast for the 41st year of summer camping’s most unique experience. We offer exciting Torah Studies, competitive sports leagues, electives, bunk activities, awesome daily trips, & the most inspiring Shabbosos. For application, related camp media, and more info: please visit yhk.htc.edu.

- Kayitz Adventure Trip 2020 for boys currently in grades 7 & up, Aug. 16-19. Whether you are enrolling your son in Yeshivas Hakayitz or not, this is a 5 full day, jam-packed adventure of great fun. Beautiful Camp Ao-Wa-Kiya on Stony Lake & Michigan’s west coast is our home. Adventures include instructional sailing & kayaking, tubing, canoeing, kayaking, SUP, zipline, target sports, high ropes course, lakefront inflatables, Silver Lake boating, sand dune jeep tours, hikes, sandboarding, horseback riding, & more. See details: yhk.htc.edu.

- Blistein Institute is proud to offer a Spring Technology Camp for women, offered through a generous grant by JUF. Learn how to use coding, HTML, CSS & JavaScript to create useful & beautiful websites. Learn how to set up your site for local development, how to purchase a web domain, & deploy your site to a live server so it can be accessed worldwide. The class will meet Sundays, beginning Feb. 9, for 10 sessions. Master teacher, outstanding instruction, scholarships available. Interested? Call Mrs. Mann 773-973-0241.

- Congregation KINS in conjunction with the JUF invites the community to our annual Melave Malka featuring Yaakov Katz, Editor-in-Chief of The Jerusalem Post and author of “Shadow Strike – The Jewish Glimpse of the Nile”. This Saturday evening, January 25, 7:30 PM. To make a reservation visit the KINS website www.congkins.org. Walk-ins welcome.

- Join Camp Maayan Midwest and bring a friend! For every camper you refer and who applies there is a $100 referral discount off camp tuition. Become a Maayaner and experience great times & friendships that will last forever. Register today for a summer you don’t want to miss! For more info call 847-440-4940 or visit maayanmaridwest.com.


- Blistein Institute is proud to highlight one of our newer majors in our academic roster. The major in Graphic Arts provides students with the knowledge, skills and tools to pursue a profession that is exciting, stimulating and lucrative. The Graphic Arts are utilized in today's contemporary business world across industries and platforms worldwide. For information please set up an appointment to visit us: 773-973-0241.

- Community Safety Network presents FBI Special Agent Dave Young, Chicago Field Office Behavioral Analysis Unit Coordinator, to discuss “Targeted Violence: Pre-Attack Behaviors and Indicators”. The presentation will be held at Congregation Or Torah, 3800 Dempster, Skokie, on Tuesday, January 28th, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM. Please RSVP to Info@cschicago.org.

- Please support Hebrew Theological College and save money at the same time! The HTC Discount Card features 65 Vendors and is the largest Discount Card ever! Low cost lots of savings. Available for purchase at Kesser Stam and EJ’s Pizzeria.
Chicago Chessed Fund’s much-anticipated 3rd annual Shas for Shidduchim is coming up! On Tu B'Shvat, February 10, 2020, hundreds of lodim will complete Shas in zechus of Klal Yisroel’s singles. Following the event, there will be a grand Siyum HaShas featuring divei Torah from Rabbi Moshe Tuvia Leifff and a Seudas Mitzvah catered by Zelda’s Catering. Be a part of it! Sponsor a daf at Shas4Shidduchim.org or call 847-679-7799 x170.

Do you know how to build a strong foundation for your teenagers? Join the YU Torah Mitzion Kollel for: “Building a Strong Foundation for Our Teenagers”, a conversation between Rabbi Dovid Kupchik, Principal, Psamson Yeshiva High School, and Rabbi Dr. Leonard Matanky, Principal, Ida Crown Jewish Academy. This program will be moderated by Rabbi Reuven Brand. Rosh Kollel Tuesdayevening, February 4th, 8:00 PM, at Bernard Horwich JCC - Rosenstone Gallery (3003 W. Touhy, WRP).

The Net Foundation and Ohel Shalom Torah Center are pleased to announce the final lecture of Rabbi Daniel J. Raccah's Personailties in the Bible series for this season, titled: “Reuven: The Journey of Correction, Part 2”, to be held this Motza'ai Shabbat, January 25th at 7:45 PM, at Ohel Shalom, 2949 W. Touhy. Note the time adjustment. Please join us.

Spring Semester at Blitstein Institute begins February 3rd. Combine the impact of a rigorous education that takes place in a real classroom, taught by outstanding faculty, in a strong Torah environment. Online options available for additional flexibility. Complete a prestigious Bachelor’s Degree accepted by quality employers and outstanding graduate programs. For information call Mrs. Mann: 773-973-0241.

JCC Chicago’s Community Tuesdays presents My Go-To Place, by CJ SeniorLife. Join us every Tuesday at Bernard Horwich JCC in West Rogers Park, for mind and body enrichment, beginning with NIA for Parkinson’s at 10:30 AM. On January 28, we’ll be talking about the amazing power of gratitude to increase positivity in one’s life. Join us for coffee, pastries, and fun. Free. jccchicago.org/communitytuesday.

How Are We Tackling the Agunah Crisis? Please join us on Feb. 1st, at Congregation Or Torah, for a community-wide Shabbaton with the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA). This program will include: Friday morning drasha, and a special Shabbat morning drasha panel at 7:30 PM featuring Rabbi Yona Reiss and ORA leadership. Email info@getora.org for more info!

Darchei Noam Glenbrook looks forward to our annual “Four Rabbis Walk into a Shul” program, “An Evening of Torah”, Motzei Shabbos, February 1st, 7:15-10:00, featuring Rabbi Mordecai Becher along with Rabbis Daniel Fox, Yehoshua Karsh and Yehuda Meyers. Call 224-306-9364 for more information.

Torat Imecha: Learning from Generations of Jewish Women, NILI Midor L’Dor, an inter-generational learning program for 5th-8th grade girls with their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and friends is back! Led by Mrs. TMK Yosef Kupchik, Principal, Fasman Yeshiva High School, and Rabbi Dr. Leonard Matanky, Principal, Ida Crown Jewish Academy, this program will take place at place Motzei Shabbatot: February 1st, 15th, and 29th, 7:30-8:15 PM, in the WiFi Beit Midrash (8150 McCormick, Skokie). You bring a learning partner, we’ll bring the learning and exciting Raffle prizes at each session!

Men & women are invited to YU Torah Mitzion Kollel’s Amon & Rivka Friedman Living Torah series welcoming Rabbi Mordechai Becher, Jan. 31 – Feb. 1. Friday night, 8:15, at Yeshai & Bluma Broner’s home (2928 Estes, WRP); Shabbat Drasha at KINS; Pre-Mincha Shiur, 3:45 at Michael & Judy Daniels’s home (6441 St. Louis, Lincolnwood); Seudah Shlishis at Bais Chaim Dovid; Motzei Shabbat, 7:15 at Darchei Noam Glenbrook. Rabbi Becher is the Senior Lecturer for Gateways Organization and a Professor at YU.

Registration is now open for the YU Torah Mitzion Kollel’s 12th annual dinner celebration, Friday, February 23, 2020, at the Crowne Plaza O’Hare. 5:30 Pre-Dinner Shiur with Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University; 6:30 Dinner and Dessert Buffet honoring Rabbi Hillel and Faye Meyers and Rabbi Gedalya and Tamar Shames. Visit www.torahchicago.org or call the office at 773-973-6557 to register.

Hillel Torah's application deadline for the 2020-21 school year is January 27. Come see us in action! Our nurturing classroom communities foster the emotional, physical, social and intellectual growth of every child. Our child-centered approach guides children to explore, discover and engage in learning while integrating Torah and Chesed, Israel and Ivrit into their daily lives. For more information and to schedule your personalized tour contact karin.felix@hilleltorah.org.

Attention ATT students in Grades 3-12! Only a few days left to participate in the ATT’s Pogrund Family Judaic Artwork and Essay Contest. Deadline for art/essay submission is Thursday, 1/30/2020, by 5:00 PM. Sponsord by the Pogrund Family, the contest provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity, ability to research Jewish topics, & express themselves through writing/art. For more info & to see Judaic Artwork & Essay Contest Rules, visit https://www.att.org/student-contests/or 773-973-2828.

Watch your mail for the Nathan & Shirley Rothern ATT Summer Program brochure. Register before March 15th for the Early Bird Bonus Discount. Have your child experience an awesome summer, make new friends, learn new skills & develop talents with sewing, drama, sports, art, science, rocketry, dance, cooking, magic, robotics, self-defense, computer programming, daily trips and more. For more info, go to www.att.org., click ‘For Students’ to view brochure & register online.

Super Science Sunday fuses fun and learning for kids in grades N-6! Join us on Sundays at Walder Science starting February 2nd for exciting experiments & activities. Girls grades 1-6 meet weekly 10:15-11:30 AM, boys grades 4-6 meet 3:45-5:30 PM, boys grades 1-3 meet 3:30-4:45. Special classes for Kindergarten & Nursery: 10:15 AM, 1:45 PM, and 3:30 PM. Space is limited, so reserve your spot now. Located at 3050 Touhy Avenue. Sign up/info: www.walderlab.org/sunday or 773-649-5360.

JCC Chicago is now hiring Early Childhood Assistant Teachers and Substitute Teachers in Chicago (Lakeview & Rogers Park) and Northbrook. Be a part of a team of educators, social workers and specialists who support the whole child through a developmentally appropriate curriculum embracing Jewish life and complementing the home. Learn more and apply online at https://www.jccchicago.org/about/career-listings/.

JCC Chicago is now hiring dynamic and engaging Summer 2020 Day Camp Staff for the following positions: Counselors (male), Art Specialists, Sports Specialists and Song Leaders at Apachi Rogers Park, and Counselors, Art Specialists, Sports Specialists and Song Leaders at Apachi Evanston! Learn more and apply online at https://www.jccchicago.org/about/career-listings/.

Yosef and Shira Malka Waldner invite you to join the members of the Kehillah Fund for a community Melava Malka honoring Nesanel Siegal for his years of dedication, as we celebrate 15 years of investing in our children’s future with our support of Jewish education. Motzei Shabbos, February 22, 2020, at Ziegler Auto Group of Lincolnwood. RSVP at kehillahfund.org/events by February 17.
A spell-binding musical event you have never experienced before! A truly creative multimedia show, “Dreams of a Nation”, with Rabbi Andrew Shaw, CEO of Mizrahi U.K., and singer Jonny Turgel. Relive the story of the Jewish Nation through song, music, audio-visual and narrative. Mizrahi RZC Bet Café, Motza’ei Shabbat, Saturday night, February 8, 2020, at 7:30 PM, at ICJA, Skokie. For tickets and sponsorship info, visit: betcafe.rzc.us or call 847-674-9733 x2.

Hillel Torah seeks a Director of Student Services (K-8) for the 2020-21 school year. As a member of the senior educational leadership team, the Director works closely with students, teachers, families and outside professionals to meet a wide range of student academic, social and emotional needs. The ideal candidate will bring experience in special educational or general education settings and demonstrated ability to foster student independence and discipline. To apply, send résumé, cover letter & statement of educational philosophy to resumes@hillelторah.org.

The Chicago Orthodox Student Union begins its Winter CLIK Learning Program directed by the YU Torah Mitzol Kollel this Monday, January 27, at KINS. 7:45 PM Dinner – 8 PM Shuir. CLIK - “College Learning Initiative at KINS”: Shuir: “How the Modern Beit Midrash and Library Changed the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah”, will be led by Rabbi Dr. Zev Eleff, Chief Academic Officer, Hebrew Theological College. Meat/veggie food included! Questions? chicagoorthodoxstudentunion@gmail.com

Monday, February 3, Life Unexpected presents: “Raising a Child with Challenges - It Takes a Community”, featuring panelists Rebecca Bassman; Aviva Berger; Shana Erenberg; Tami Meier; Aviva Robinson; Aviva Vilenkin & moderator Mara Tesler-Stein, at Adas Yeshurun, 3050 Touhy. 6:45 PM refreshments, 7:00 program begins. Additional parking at JCC. For mothers of children with challenges, and women across our community who seek to gain insight into these challenges and provide support.

A takeaway from the Siyum HaShas was the need to sanctify our time with the power of learning. Let’s put this message to practice at the 5th Annual Super Learning Sunday Event at Adas Yeshurun, February 2nd, 4:30 to 9:00 PM. Great speakers! Great learning! Great food! Hourly raffles! Free event open to boys and men. Email Smyle4Torah@gmail.com for information.

Mazal tov to Brina Dauber on passing her Bar Mitzvah! Congratulations!}

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