

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmani zy" a, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



אמרות שמשון

Gentiles are Punished Even for Thought

“Go and learn what Laban the Aramean sought to do to our father Yaakov.”

The reason the author of the Haggadah begins with this topic before the account of the Exodus from Egypt is to teach us that HaKadosh Baruch Hu judges the nations also by their thoughts—even for what Laban intended to do, although he did not carry it out. Through this, we understand why Pharaoh and all of Egypt were punished, even though the enslavement of the Children of Israel had been a Divine decree, as HaKadosh Baruch Hu had already told Abraham Avinu at the Covenant Between the Parts (Brit Bein HaBetarim): “...and they shall enslave them and afflict them for four hundred years.” If so, what was Pharaoh's fault, since all he was doing was fulfilling the decree of HaKadosh Baruch Hu? (See the commentators who explain this in various ways).

However, according to the premise established above, it is understood very well: since they thought to do evil to Israel, and their entire intention was for evil and not to fulfill the will of HaKadosh Baruch Hu therefore HaKadosh Baruch Hu punishes them for that very evil thought. For regarding the gentiles, HaKadosh Baruch Hu considers the thought as if it were the action.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Kedoshim, Art. 2)

Thanks to Israel's Faith, Hashem Performed Miracles in Egypt

“He placed in them the words of His signs and wonders in the land of Ham.” (Tehillim 105:27)

One can analyze what “He placed in them” means—to whom does it refer? For at the end of the verse it says “wonders in the land of Ham,” referring to the Egyptians.

It can be explained that at first, Israel did not believe they would be redeemed, as the time for redemption had not yet arrived (the 400 years mentioned in the Covenant Between the Parts had not passed). But when they saw the signs that Moshe performed before them and the sign he told them: “pakod yifkod” (“I will surely remember you”),

then they believed he had truly been sent to redeem them, as the verse says: “and the people believed” (Shemot 4:31).

And our Sages taught: “Israel was not redeemed except through the merit of faith.”

This is the meaning of the verse: “He placed in them the words of His signs,” where “them” in the verse refers to Israel. Moshe performed signs for Israel, and thanks to those signs they believed in the redemption; therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu performed “wonders in the land of Ham” to redeem them.

(Zera Shimshon, Parashat Bo, Art. 2)

Hashem Himself Executed the Judgment Against Egypt

“We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and Hashem our G-d took us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. And if HaKadosh Baruch Hu had not taken our fathers out of Egypt, then we, our children, and our children's children would still be enslaved...”

One may ask: Did He take us out by force and not according to justice? And what is the meaning of the double expression “mighty hand” and “outstretched arm”?

It can be explained that “mighty hand” signifies that Hashem enacted justice by Himself to take us out, for there was a risk of irreversible loss. The Halacha (Jewish law) establishes that a person may take the law into their own hands in

a case of potential loss of personal property.

Furthermore, the Heavenly Court was present there to demonstrate that He was taking what belonged to Him according to right. Therefore, “with an outstretched arm” refers to Him together with His court, as Rashi explained: “Hashem struck, He and His court.” Since everything was done according to justice, even Pharaoh was forced to release them.

The reason why HaKadosh Baruch Hu did not leave the matter in the hands of intermediaries but acted Himself was to teach us that there was no time to lose. Had they delayed, they would have fallen into the “50th Gate of Impurity,” and there would no longer have been hope of extracting them from that abyss. Therefore, He acted directly, as it was a situation of critical loss.

(Zera Shimshon, Haggadah shel Pesach, Art. 1)

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- בן רגינה מלכה
- יהושע סלודורו בן
- מוניקה אסתר

מרבית בן רחל לישוק והצלחה בכל הענינים בריאות אימנה פרנסה בספק חסות מוחלט עמודי התווך כלי שום והפיקות והריעות והסביבה כשורת חסות ביום שמש

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח יעקב ב"ר אליהו ז"ל נלב"ע כ' ניסן תש"פ הרה"ח אלימלך ב"ר יעקב אריה ז"ל נלב"ע כ"ב ניסן תשע"א חוקש על ידי בנו ומלתו נלה רחל מנקטאמן ולזכות והצלחה לכל טוב סלח

האשה החשובה מרת רבקה מירל ב"ר יהושע לרנר ע"ה נלב"ע י"ח ניסן תש"פ חוקש על ידי בנו ומלתו נלה רחל מנקטאמן ולזכות והצלחה לכל טוב סלח

עובד דו ומנוחה הרבים רבי בנימין בן חביבה יוספה שרה שרגו זצ"ל נלב"ע י"ג סבת תשפ"ו

האשה הצדיקת דורה בת אסתר ע"ה נלב"ע י"ט תשרי תשפ"ו מנחה הרבים ועוסק בצדקה וחסד לרוב רבי ניסים בן שרה ז"ל מוגרבי נלב"ע י"ג סיון תשע"ה ת.צ.ב.ה.

Why It Was Significant That the Plague of the Firstborns Occur Precisely at Midnight

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה כֹּה אָמַר ה' כַּחֲצֵת הַלַּיְלָה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ מִצְרַיִם: וּמֵת כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
מִבְּכוֹר פְּרֹעָה וְכו' (שמות יא ד-ה)

Moshe said, "So said Hashem: At about midnight I shall go out in the midst of Egypt. And every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die...".

The Gemara in Brachos (א"ט ברכות ד ע"א) discusses why Moshe said that Hashem will slay the firstborns 'at about midnight', and not 'at midnight', and says as follows. *Because Moshe knew the exact moment of midnight, why did he say 'at about midnight'? Moshe thought that Pharaoh's astrologers might err in their calculation in the precise moment of midnight, and would then claim that Moshe is a liar. Moshe's caution was based on the lesson that was taught, "Teach your tongue to say "I do not know", lest you be caught in a falsehood.*

We need to understand why the astrologers would be so meticulous regarding the exact moment of the plague's occurrence, that were Moshe to have said "at midnight" and it would seem to them that it had occurred a bit before or after the exact moment of midnight, they would immediately have called him a liar. Furthermore, why would the astrologers seek out to dispute Moshe's prophecy, after having clearly seen that his previous prophecies were all perfectly accurate?



We first need to understand why indeed Hashem said, and why it was actually so significant, that the plague should occur precisely at midnight.

There are seven moving cosmic bodies who govern and exert their respective astrological influence on the earthly affairs according to their hourly rotations. These seven bodies are; Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun and Venus. Each of these seven bodies govern and exert their influence in a specific sequence and continuous cycle. The cycle begins with Mercury governing during the first hour after Shabbos, followed by the moon in the second hour, Saturn in the third etc. Following this pattern, we can determine which specific planet governs during any given hour.

The Gemara in Shabbos (פ"ג ע"ב) tells us that the Jewish People left Egypt on Thursday, and, hence, the slaying of the firstborns was at

midnight of Wednesday evening. According to the cycled pattern, we can determine that on Wednesday evening - which was the night of the firstborn's plague - Jupiter and its favorable influence govern in the hour preceding midnight, and Mars and its detrimental influence govern in the hour following midnight.

In view of this, we can understand why Hashem slayed the firstborns at the exact moment of midnight, not a moment before nor a moment after. The reason is because had they been struck during the hour preceding midnight, in which the influence of Jupiter governs, the clear recognition of the miracle would have been greatly diminished, because the redemption of the Jews from the plague would not have been attributed to the merit of the Jews, but rather to the favorable influence of Jupiter governing at that hour. Similarly, had the plague struck during the hour following midnight, the Egyptians would have easily dismissed the plague, attributing it, not as a punishment to their wicked behavior but rather to the negative influence exerted by Mars governing during that hour.

Thus, Hashem brought about the plague at the exact moment of midnight, which is the transition period of the planets, where neither Jupiter nor Mars govern or exert any influence, thereby establishing the twofold miracle; the salvation of the Jews being due to their merits, and the plague upon the Egyptians being as punishment for their wicked behavior.



In light of this, we can understand that had Moshe said that the plague would occur "at the very moment of midnight", the astrologers would have been extremely particular regarding the plague occurring at that very moment. Because the plague occurring at "the moment of midnight" would be a clear allusion to the double miracle - the redemption of the Jewish firstborns, proving the Jewish People's righteousness, as well as the punishment of the Egyptians, proving their wickedness - and the Egyptians would be more than happy to accuse Moshe of lying and thereby disputing at least one of the two miracles.

זרע שמשון פרשת בא אות ג

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