



# What Came First?

We have had times in our history when a decree forced us to change what we were accustomed to do yet when the decree was abolished we still kept it the new way. The following are a couple of examples of this: Tosafos Yom Tov tells us that the Haftorahs were established when the wicked **אנטיכוס** - the king of **יון** - outlawed public reading of the Torah. The Sages of the time therefore established the custom of reading a topic from the **נביאים** similar to what was supposed to be read from the Torah. Indeed, the Avudraham tells us the word **הפטורה** is rooted in **פטור**; exempt, as they were now exempt, having fulfilled Krias Hatorah. Even after the decree was nullified we still held onto this (Megila 3:4, Tosafos Yom Tov, s.v. **לכסדרן**). In the words of the Mishna Brura (284:2) - the reason for the Haftorah is since there was a decree not to be engaged in Torah, they read from the prophets seven Aliyos, at least three Pesukim per Aliya just as in Krias Hatorah.

Another example of this is the blowing of the Shofar which was initially done at Shacharis on Rosh Hashana. Rashi (Rosh Hashana 32b, Rashi s.v. **בשעה**). Mishna Brura 588:2.) informs us that when the government forbade it and sent people to spy during Shacharis in search of violators, the blowing was deferred to Mussaf. The Yerushalmi (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashana 4:8. Rosh Hashana 32b, Tosafos.) gives a different reason and says Tekias Shofar was deferred to Mussaf because our enemies heard the Shofar blasts early in the morning and they thought we sounded a call to battle against them. They thereupon killed the Jews there. To prevent this from happening again the blowing was deferred to Mussaf. Since several hours of Tefila and Krias Hatorah elapse before the Shofar is blown, they would now realize it is a religious ritual.

However, we are left to wonder in each of these examples why we didn't revert back to the way it originally was.

There are times we may think a certain way when really the exact opposite is true. Here are some of the many illustrations of this:

Imagine one who buys a house and later sells it making a big profit. Many may think the house is what caused the wealth. The truth is that since it was destined that he should make a big profit, Hashem caused it that he should purchase that house. With this we can understand **אך טוב וחסד ירדפוני** (Tehillim 23:6) on a deeper level. We may think that we pursue the materialism-riches and the like. However, it is the opposite: **אך טוב וחסד** - the **טוב** - we pursue us since it is destined that way from Hashem.

The Pasuk states **ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים ופרעה** **חולם**; it happened at the end of two years, Paroh was dreaming. The Beis Halevi (Miketz, s.v. **ויהי מקץ**) comments people mistakenly think that the outcome of Paroh's dream was the release of Yosef from prison. The truth is it is really the opposite- it is because his time in prison expired that Paroh had a dream causing his release from prison. This is how he interprets **ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים** - since his time in prison was over, Paroh dreamt a dream- **ופרעה חולם**. As the Midrash (Breishis Rabba 89:1) puts it- **כיין שהגיע הקץ חלם פרעה חלום**; once that limit arrived, Paroh dreamt a dream setting in motion Yosef's release.

The misconception: I have a problem and therefore should Daven. The reality: Hashem wants me to connect to Him so He therefore puts a problem in my life. This is shown to us in the Chazal (Breishis Rabba 45:4) that teaches that the **אמהות** were barren because Hashem yearns for the Tefilos of Tzadikim.

Observing lives of different creatures we could ask why Hashem created us with a need

for shelter (unlike cats and other animals).

The answer is this causes us to live in a house and therefore we have the Mitzvos of Mezuzah, **מעקה** (put a fence) and so forth. We shouldn't erroneously think that because we live in a house we have certain Mitzvos.

The words **בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים** (Shemos 13:8, Rashi s.v. **בעבור**) tell us it is because of the Mitzvos of Matza, Marror and so on that Hashem took us out from Mitzrayim. This is in contrast to thinking since we were taken from Mitzrayim we have these Mitzvos.

We may be sad, annoyed or angry when things don't go our way whether we feel if I had a better car, made the green light, my children would behave and so on, then I would be able to do what I need to do now. The reality is that this is what Hashem wants me to be doing now and this is the path to get me where I need to get to. The misconception: it's in the way. The reality: it is the way.

A Toronto girl who was bound to a wheelchair once remarked, "Some people need to be in the wheelchair so that other people can wheel it."

We may think that because there was a decree against us and now that we were saved, we have the Yomim Tovim of Purim and Chanuka. However, the correct view is that the reason for the decree was in order to bring out these Yomim Tovim. This is a deeper explanation to what we sing on Chanuka- **יונים נקבצו עלינו** - the Greeks gathered against us, breached the walls and defiled the oils in order that a miracle occur thereby causing the Yom Tov of Chanuka.

In a similar way, R' Tzadok (Tzidkos HaTzadik 178) answers our question. They continued with the new enactments reading the Haftorah and Tekias Shofar at Mussaf- although the decree was nullified since the purpose of the decree was in order to bring out these new establishments.

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לעילוי נשמת. Thank you.  
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