

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת שמות תשפ"א

Moshiach doesn't know he is Moshiach until the time comes to redeem us

ומשה הנה רעה את צאן יתרו התנו בתנו מדגן וינתק את הצאן אתר המדבר ויבא אל הר האלקים הרבה: ... ויאמר אנכי אלקי אביך אלקי אברהם אלקי יצחק ואלקי יעקב... ועתה לכה ואשלחך אל פרעה והוצא את עמי: Moshe was pasturing the flocks of Yisro, his father in law, the chief of Midian, and he led the flocks after the free pastureland, and he came to the mountain of Hashem, to Chorev. And He said, "I am the G-d of your father, the G-d of Avraham, the G-d of Yitzchok, and the G-d of Yaakov.".... So now come, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and take My people, the children of Israel, out Egypt." (3: 1-10) The Chasam Sofer questions, why does the Parsha begin with the fact that Moshe was pasturing the flocks of Yisro? What is this connection to Moshe being told by Hashem to take out the Yidden from Egypt? The Chasam Sofer offers a strong insight into the guidance of redemption from Hashem. Moshe Rabbeinu had no idea that he was to be the redeemer. He led a life in Midian tending to sheep, and was approaching 80 years old. Then all of a sudden, Hashem reveals Himself to Moshe by the burning bush, and tells Moshe: "You are to redeem Klal Yisrael. Moshe was the first Moshiach in Klal Yisrael. The same thing happened to King Shaul who led a simple life, when one day Hashem came to him and told him you are to be King. Hence, says the Chasam Sofer in all the generations there was a

person who led a simple life, and if the generation would have merited to be redeemed, Hashem would have suddenly approached that candidate to be Moshiach. The same is today, Moshiach doesn't know he is Moshiach until the time will come when Hashem will approach that person and say: "you are Moshiach and go redeem Klal Yisrael out of our bitter exile. This we learn from our Parsha with Moshe. The Chasam Sofer is in his responsa (vol 6 chapter 98), and in his commentary (Masechta Eiruvim Daf 42), as well as his commentary on the Torah Parshas Shemos. Yeshaye Hanavi says והנה ביום ההוא יתקע בשופר גדול ויבאו האבדים בארץ אשור והנודדים בארץ מצרים והשתחוו לה' בהר הקודש בירושלם (ישעיהו כז יג) And it shall come to pass on that day, that a great shofar shall be sounded, and those lost in the land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt shall come and they shall prostrate themselves before Hashem on the holy mount in Jerusalem. This will come suddenly as the Posuk states the word which means "it will happen". The same idea says by our verse ועתה לכה ואשלחך So now come - suddenly- and I will send you to Pharaoh. As we say in Ani Maamin באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח ואף על פי שישבא אני מאמין באמונה שלמה עם כל זה אהבה לו בכל יום שיבוא we wait everyday and believe that Moshiach will come and can come today, Amein. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick) (Revised and edited by Duvid Pinchas Rose)

*** The Maharash Lubavitch's drawing on a posuk in Tehillim guided a Yid's path to salvation ***

A chassidische Yid named Noach owned a distillery in Russia which produced top quality whiskey. He became quite wealthy from the trade, and the Czarist government realized there was revenue to be gained from it. They installed a system of flow meters on all the whiskey barrels to gauge the factory's output, and thereby calculate a stiff tax on the product. Now this Noach was an honest, observant Jew, and upstanding merchant who took his obligation to pay the proper legal excise tax very seriously. Very soon after the meters started recording, the local authorities saw that Noach was scrupulous in paying his taxes and came to trust him implicitly. They trusted Noach to be a loyal subject of the Czar who paid his proper dues. But his affairs took a dark turn when a gentile worker hatched a scheme to steal whiskey and sell it on the black market, thus stealing from both Noach and the tax collector. Knowing that no one inspected the barrels, he made a small hole in a hidden place, siphoned off a little whiskey at a time and bottled it for sale. A second worker, no less the scoundrel, learned of the scam and threatened to inform Noach unless the first man cut him in, to the tune of 50% of the take. This succeeded in shutting his mouth. But these two embezzlers had a falling out, with the second one running to the local tax office to inform about the first bloke embezzling tax revenue. Tax evasion was

a serious crime in that time and place. Working on the tip, the tax police raided the distillery and discovered the holes in the barrels which had been feeding the illicit bootlegging. But the original schemer had a ready retort for them. "You've got it all wrong. None of this was my idea. It was Noach, the owner, who told me to make the holes, siphon off the whiskey a little at a time and deliver it to him so that he could beat the taxes on it. He's the one you should grab!" Ever ready to take the word of a gentile accuser against a Yid, the policemen didn't need much convincing. They arrested poor Noach and hauled him before a judge, who ordered him held without bail until his trial for theft and embezzlement. At this point, community activists got involved on Noach's behalf. They had contacts in the halls of power in the justice ministry in Petersburg, the Russian capital. Noach actually had established a good reputation over the years and the advocates built on that to persuade the Minister of Justice to instruct the local judge to release Noach on bail until his trial, before a panel of three judges. And so he was released. This Noach was a chosid of the Rebbe Maharash, Rav Shmuel of Lubavitch, youngest of the holy Tzemach Tzedek's seven sons, and his successor. It was to his door that he beat a swift path in search of release from his legal predicament, which, as

we have seen, was built on a pack of bald-faced lies. He described his plight to the Rebbe, and stressed that if convicted, he faced long exile to Siberia, with his entire business confiscated -- in short, a total disaster for him and his family. In his despair, he let out a bitter, heart-rending cry, a fragment from Tehillim (121:1-2) **מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי** *from where will my help come?*

The Rebbe replied, "Be calm, my son. Follow my advice: the moment any Yid approaches you crying **מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי** fill up his **אַיִן** -- that which he is lacking -- and Hashem in turn will fill up your **אַיִן** -- just what you are lacking. The Rebbe concluded with a brocho for his acquittal and success in all endeavors.

[An explanation: The entire passage from Tehillim 121:1-2 reads:

(אֲשֶׁא עֵינַי אֶל־הַרְיָמִים) מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי עֲזָרִי מֵעַם ה', (עֲשֵׂה שְׂמַיִם וָאָרֶץ)

(I shall raise my eyes to the mountains) from where will my help come? My help is from Hashem, (the Maker of heaven and earth.) The word **מֵאַיִן** can have two distinct meanings, which converged in this rabbinic wisdom. 1) **מֵאַיִן** "from where" -- will my salvation come? 2) **מֵאַיִן** from nothingness/emptiness/despair: from that sorry state my salvation will emerge. When a person calls out in anguish, **מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי**, from his state of emptiness and despair, it is precisely from that feeling of desolation that his salvation emerges as he realizes **יְהוָה יִרְוֶה מֵעַם יִשְׂרָאֵל**. By building on both meanings of a key word in the posuk, the Rebbe found a springboard for the salvation his chosid desperately needed.] Back home in his circle of friends and supporters, Noach heard about a terrible mishap suffered by his friend named Chaim. A horrendous fire had burned his kretschma along with his house to the ground, leaving him penniless and his family homeless. Our Noach had always had a heart of gold and lost no time in hurrying over to where Chaim lived, smelling smoke from the still-smouldering ruins on the way. Setting aside his own grief for the moment, Chaim greeted Noach with a truncated *brocho* **מתיר ... ברוך**

-- **מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי** from our morning brochos, where it refers to our first stretchings upon awakening in the morning, but literally translates as "Blessed is the one who frees the bound, or, by extension, liberates the imprisoned." Still not thinking of himself, he asked Noach how he came to be released from jail, which Noach described. But Noach swept all such small talk aside: "Lema'aseh, how much money would you need to rebuild everything you lost?" Chaim quoted him a ballpark figure. But here were two Yidden who thought only of the other one's plight -- not his own. "I couldn't possibly take that kind of money from you, what with you facing big lawyer's fees." "In that case, consider this 100% as a loan, which you'll repay when you're back on your feet." At this point Chaim broke down completely and cried out, "It's Hashem -- the only true helper who will help me. My Tehillim tells me so: **מֵאַיִן יָבֵא עֲזָרִי עֲזָרִי מֵעַם ה'** Those words rang like a clear bell in Noach's head as he remembered the Rebbe Maharash's guidance to him. "By filling up a fellow man's emptiness, Hashem will reciprocate by filling up your lack and your void." "Chaim, Chaim, I implore you. Accept this loan, because it is only in that merit that I will be acquitted in court!"

Chaim acquiesced, although he could not fathom even the simple meaning of Noach's plea. "Of course, of course. Thank you for your help, my brother, and may Hashem bless you with prosperity, health and the 'not guilty' verdict you deserve."

The trial date arrived, and Noach duly appeared - but without a lawyer. He trusted in the Rebbe's promise and in hashgacha protis from the Borei Olam. The crafty prosecutor spun a web of false charges, impugning Noach with the scheme of drilling secret holes in whiskey barrels and siphoning off product to sell on the black market, cheating the Czar of tax revenues. To give at least the appearance of fairness, the presiding judge gave Noach a chance for rebuttal. He rose with quiet dignity. "May it please the court. The indictment I face is a total fabrication -- nothing but falsehood and lies. I have never defrauded or stolen from any human being, much less our beloved Czar and his government, to which I am a true and loyal subject. There is nothing more to say. Defense rests!"

All the while, the judge had been eyeing Noach, thinking that he had surely seen him sometime before. Suddenly, he had a flash of recognition. "The judicial panel has heard the testimony and we must now retire to our chambers to deliberate on the verdict. But before we do, I want to relate an incident from my distant past. Years ago, a teenaged boy from a well-to-do family was taking a train home. He had to change trains at a station along the way and had barely enough time to cross the platforms for the transfer. In his haste, he left behind his carry-on bag, with all his money, food, and the connecting ticket inside. By the time he realized what happened, his new train had departed, and he was left high and dry. Desperately, he begged the other passengers to have pity on him and extend a helping hand. Everyone turned a deaf ear. Everyone, that is, except a kindly gentleman who bolstered him, took out money from his pocket and told the boy to buy himself some food and the ticket for the rest of the journey at the next station. The nice man refused to give his name. Now it can be told: that forlorn teenager was ME and the man who helped him so generously was NOACH -- the man standing in the dock before us. I have been waiting years for a chance to repay him for his generosity and concern for a teenager in distress. Seeing him now, and hearing his voice, I can now "connect the dots." And I tell you what I know in my heart. Anyone who helps a helpless person in need with such generosity, all the while concealing his identity, is no criminal. It is clear to me that the charges against this man are false. If my colleagues agree, I vote to acquit him." Hearing this impassioned plea, the other judges hastily agreed to the verdict.

The vision of the Maharash was fully confirmed on two fronts: 1) when Noach helped Chaim "fill his void" at the time of our story, and 2) now when his OWN "void was filled up" -- and he was acquitted -- in the merit of the kindness he had bestowed years earlier.

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