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Minyanaire

It was around the year 1800 that a fire broke out where R' Akiva Eiger was Rav, destroying the homes. Many homes needed to be rebuilt. R' Akiva Eiger issued a proclamation advising to stipulate in their contracts that no work for the rebuilding of their homes be done on Shabbos or Yom Tov. Everyone complied except one wealthy man who was the president of the congregation as he wanted his home rebuilt without delay. To this, R' Akiva Eiger remarked that he is sure this man's house won't last long. Ignoring this, the wealthy man had his house built. This wasn't just an ordinary house rather it was the largest and most magnificent of the structures. Suddenly, one beam collapsed. They then discovered that the wooden frame was infested with timber-decay. His house would therefore need to be demolished and rebuilt. Although the builders couldn't explain why this happened only to this house, as the other houses were built from the same timber supply, all the Jews in town knew why.

When the Ponovicher Rav was raising money for his Yeshiva, he arranged an appointment with a wealthy

businessman for 7:45 in the morning at the train station.¹ Since the wealthy man was planning to board the train at 8, the appointment was to be only for 15 minutes. As it turned out, the Ponovicher Rav woke up the latest he ever did—at 7 a.m. He then realized if he davens with a Minyan, he will miss the appointment. Although he contemplated to daven without a Minyan since it was for the Yeshiva, he nevertheless decided to daven with a Minyan just as every day. When he finished Shacharis at 8:30, he decided to go to the train station anyway since maybe the wealthy man would still be there. The Ponovicher Rav arrived at the train station at 8:40. Just 5 minutes later, the wealthy man arrived as he thought the Ponovicher Rav was waiting for him for an hour. The Ponovicher Rav repeated this story to those in his Yeshiva showing the check for all to see as it was enough to support the Yeshiva for six months. He related that he wasn't relating this story to show that one doesn't lose out since the Midrash says אין אדם שומע לי ומפסיד Hashem.² Rather it shows that one gains by listening to the Torah since if he davened ביחידות (without a Minyan), he would have been at the station at 7:45 and left after a half-hour assuming the opportunity to meet the rich businessman was lost. It is because he davened with a Minyan that he earned this big check.

Weekly Events

All the events of the week are in the Parsha of the week which we read on Shabbos. The occurrences of Sunday are hinted to until Sheini in the Parsha. From Sheini until Shlishi is what happens on Monday. Shlishi until Revii encompasses that which occurs on Tuesday. And so forth. The Parsha is therefore called the סידרא, order of the week, since that is what it is.

The following story illustrates this point. A Baal Korai was needed in the Beis Midrash of the Magid of Mezerich. A man named Shneur Zalman (who later became the famous Baal Hatanya) was recommended. Before appointing him, the Magid asked him if he sees the connection of the weekly events to the Parsha. After responding yes, he was asked if he sees the daily occurrences in that day's Aliya (as we mentioned above that until Sheini are the occurrences of Sunday, from Sheini until Shlishi is what happens on Monday, and so on) to which he also answered in the affirmative. He was then asked do you know why the one who is called up for

¹ It says that the Torah עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותמחיה מאשר, a tree of life to those who grasp it and its supporters are praiseworthy (Mishlei 3:18). תמחיה, supporters is plural, referring to those who support Torah with money as well as those who support it in other ways, such as setting up the Beis Midrash so others can learn, providing coffee and snacks for those learning, etc. (see the Gra to Mishlei 3:18 and Derech Avos on Pirkei Avos, p. 45a which was authored by R' Meir, the grandson of the brother of the Gra, R' Avraham).

² Devarim Rabba 4:5. Parenthetically, anytime we are unsure what to do in life, we should ask ourselves what does Hashem want? The answer to that gives us direction in life.

an Aliya, why it was him that was called up? Answering yes, the Magid then said that he can be the Baal Korai.

Unreal Israel

In the small country of Israel, Jewish immigrants from all over the world returned to their homeland, rebuilt its ruins and revived its barren wilderness. Let us recount some prophecies which are mentioned in the Torah concerning this.

One great miracle is that of the Ingathering of the Exiles which is declared in [שם וקבצך מכל העמים אשר](#) He will gather you in from all the peoples to which Hashem has scattered you.³ Let's delve deeper into this. In 1840, there were 6,000 Jews living in the Land of Israel. By 1917, that number rose to 60,000. When the State of Israel was declared in 1948, there were 600,000. And today there are close to 7 million Jews living there. The Jewish population in the Land of Israel climbed from being 1% of world Jewry to 6% in 1948 to almost half of all Jews in the world today (as of 2021).

When we compare this to the leaving from Mitzrayim we notice striking differences. Firstly, that came after 210 years of slavery, whereas the return to modern Israel happened after close to 2,000 years. Secondly, all the Jews came out of one country whereas in the modern era Jews came from over 100 countries. Thirdly, in Mitzrayim, all Jews lived in one confined, culturally segregated ghetto in Goshen, speaking only Lashon Hakodesh, whereas Israel has seen the return of Jews from different cultural, political and ideological backgrounds, speaking over 80 different languages somehow forged into one functional society.

Another miracle is the connection between the land and its people. It states [והשמתני אני את הארץ ושממו עליה](#) I will make the land desolate, and your adversaries who dwell upon it will be desolate.⁴ Following the Roman conquest in the year 70, the land of Israel was conquered by 14 different empires over 1,900 years. As Hashem had foretold, the land remained barren to its conquerors despite repeated attempts to make it flourish, as if the land itself was pledging loyalty to her children, awaiting their return. In 1867, Mark Twain famously described the land he saw as "a desolation...repulsive and dreary...with hardly a tree or shrub anywhere... a land covered in sackcloth and ashes." That is, until the return of the Jews, as the land blossomed only once its children returned. This is in fulfillment of [ואתם הרי ישראל ענפכם תתנו ופריכם תשאו לעמי](#) but you, O mountains of Israel, will give forth your branch and bear your fruit for My people Israel.⁵

As the Jewish people returned to the Land, the land responded in return. The desert has become an oasis and the desolation a blessing. Israel rapidly started developing innovative agricultural expertise and water conservation technologies. The returning Jews have now planted over 200 million trees and Israel is one of the only nations on earth that entered the 21st century with more trees than a century earlier.

It boasts more than 300 wineries and its wine, fruits and other products are exported around the world.

Deeper than Technicalities

The following shows that which is deeper although it may seem technical.

1) The Nekuda of קמץ, kamatz represents Din, as it is closed to abundance (קמץ means close, shut⁶) whereas a פתח symbolizes Chessed, as it is opened (פתח means to open) to bounty. For this reason, we don't say [ומוריד הגשם](#) He makes the wind blow and the rain descend, with a kamatz⁷ since it is Hashem's nature to do good, and not to be closed, stingy (קמץ). Instead we say [ומוריד הגשם](#) with a סגול (א), which alludes to Chessed, as is shown in the Nekudos under the word [הקד](#) which are both סגול. We want it to be [גשמי ברכה](#), rains of blessing.⁸ In fact, after [ומוריד הגשם](#) we say [מכלכל חיים בחסד](#) He sustains the living with kindness.

2) If the letters בג"ד כפ"ת begin a word they have a Dagesh (dot in the letter, as in [בן](#)) unless it follows the letters [א ה ו י](#) (as in [אבן](#) [בן](#) [יגח](#), where there is no Dagesh in the [ב](#)).¹⁰ There are letters missing from different words due to our many sins which caused Galus. They are the [ה](#) and [ו](#) from [יהוה](#), the [א](#) from [כסא](#) (as it says [כס יהוה](#), throne of Hashem), [י](#) from [ירושלים](#) and the [ו](#) from [אליהו](#).¹¹ These missing letters are [א ה ו י](#). The Bnei Yissaschar¹² tells us that after these letters we don't have letters with a Dagesh because a Dagesh symbolizes strength, strict justice (Din) as is represented by its strong pronunciation. This is in contrast to that which has a soft pronunciation. Once we get these missing letters back, there won't be any more strength of Din (חוק הדין) in the world. These letters—[א ה ו י](#)—have a Gematria of 22, the same number of days in the Three Weeks, the time we mourn the Beis Hamikdash (which caused us to be in Galus).

3) To make a word into future tense, there are four letters we use ([אשמור](#), I will guard. [תשמור](#), you, she will guard. [ישמור](#), he will guard. [נשמור](#), we will guard.). These four letters are [א ת ג נ](#), which spell the word [תנאי](#), condition, because this is what it does, as you stipulate for the future.

4) The letter [ת](#) in [Dikduk](#) means 'you' as well as 'she' (as in [תרד](#), she/you [masculine] will go down.). What is the reason for this? It is said from the brother of the Maharal that this is because [כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה](#), every honorable princess dwelling within (a woman's צניעות, modesty).¹³ So that which is the relationship of a man—you which is direct—is also that of a woman—she which is indirect.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander ztz"l for close to five years. He received semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of the books, [Fascinating Insights](#) and [Incredible Insights](#) in addition to being the host of The Fascinating Insights Podcast. His writings, some of which have been translated into German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

⁶ A קמץ is one who is a miser, stingy.

⁷ See however Igros Moshe, Orach Chaim 4:40:15, אשרי האיש, volume 1, ch. 20,30, שו"ת אבן ישראל, 2:58, שו"ת אבן ישראל, 8,9. Also see שו"ת שו"ת תשובות והנהגות, 1:81 and 2:58.

⁸ As we say in Tefilas Geshem [ולא לקללה](#), for blessing and not for curse. See Minhag Yisrael Torah, 1, p. 210. Also שו"ת חמדת שאול 19, s.v. אחדשה"ט.

⁹ Shemos 21:31.

¹⁰ There are exceptions to all of this.

¹¹ Shemos 17:16. Tzefanya 1:4. Malachi 3:23.

¹² Tamuz Av 2:8 s.v. והנה כעת.

¹³ Tehillim 45:14.

³ Devarim 30:3.

⁴ Vayikra 26:32.

⁵ Yechezkel 36:8.