



Sha'arei Eliyahu

פרשת בשלח

Table Talk

The Sorrow of the Redemption "וַיְהִי בְשִׁלַּח פְּרַעֲהַ אֶת־הָעָם..."

This week's parasha begins וַיְהִי בְשִׁלַּח פְּרַעֲהַ אֶת־הָעָם – "It came to pass when Pharaoh let the people go". Why does the Pasuk say וַיְהִי? We learn in Mesechet מגילה (10b) that the word וַיְהִי connotes a crying tone, meaning that something bad has/will happen(ed). Wouldn't the freedom of the Jewish Nation demand a word like וַהֲיָה which the Gemara tells us is used to indicate a good sign and a happy occasion? To understand why the term of וַיְהִי was used we must see who is the one that was crying.

SHABBAT ט"ו בשבט SCHEDULE	
Mincha	5:00 PM
Candle Lighting	5:06 PM
Shiur Shabbat	8:30 PM
Shacharit	8:30 AM
Shabbat Derasha	3:30 PM
Mincha	4:30 PM
SUNSET	5:25 PM
Aravit (Shabbat Ends)	6:08 PM
Rabbenu Tam	6:38 PM

SHORT & SWEET

How was משה able to feed the Jewish People for 40 years in the desert? The Pasuk says וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־עַצְמוֹת יוֹסֵף "and משה took the bones of Yosef". A deeper meaning is that he took the עֵיצוֹמוֹ (sensitivity) of Yosef. Just as Yosef was sensitive to the people during the famine so to משה took that sensitivity within himself to feed the Jewish People in the desert for 40 years. What does this teach us? When a person goes to a levaya it's not enough to just lift up the coffin. One should try and take a good midda from the deceased and try to act on it.

~ R' Yosef Akilov

1. What benefit do we get when we say (or sing) Az Yashir daily?
2. How do we know that there will be Techiyat Hameitim (Revival of the Dead) for Am Yisrael?
3. Why is the mitzvah of Shabbat mentioned 12 times in the Torah in 7 different parashiot?

The Sefer Bnei Mevin tells us that it was in fact משה that was crying when the Jewish People were freed. The reason being that at that time he already felt that he was not going to enter the Land of Israel. He reasoned that since it was Pharaoh that let them go "against" their will a lot of people would complain in the desert. As we know this complaining led to the wandering of the Jewish People where the men between the ages 20 to 60 died within that time. Due to this they had to be buried in the desert (outside of Israel). Because of this משה would have to suffer. How? Because ה' would tell him that when the Mashiach comes those that are buried in Israel will get up but those that are buried beyond its borders will not get up. However, this wouldn't be fair because the people that left Egypt fixed the sin of Adam. So ה' told משה "you have to be buried in the desert so that when Mashiach comes you will get up and in your זכות they will get up with you." Thanks to this all people buried outside of Israel will be זוכה to rise as well. This is why משה was crying.

Another reason why the parasha starts with the וַיְהִי is because Moshe was shocked. He said so many miracles had been performed in front of the Jewish People and they leave only because Pharaoh was sending them out? This hurt Moshe to the point that he was crying at the time of the redemption. In life too we must know that on a daily basis ה' does miracles for us, and we should never doubt Him and do as He instructs us in our Torah.

~ R' Yosef Akilov



Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorach

1. Saying Az Yashir with great enthusiasm and appreciation atones for our sins and gives us merit to sing by the Geulah, may it come in our time! (Zohar, Doreish Toy, Chareidim, Ben Ish Chai, Torah Mi'Tzion, Shemot Rabbah 24:3)
2. The Pasuk says, "Az Yashir Mosh U' Bnei Yisrael Et Hashira Hazot," וַיִּשְׁרַח וַיִּשְׁרַח וַיִּשְׁרַח and the Jews will sing this song. The future tense of the Pasuk implies that not only did they sing it at the Splitting of the Sea, but also they will sing it when Mashiach comes. (Sanhedrin 91)
3. The better we keep Shabbat the better our 7 days of the week and the 12 months of the year will be. Our overall success is determined to a large degree by how well we honor and guard Shabbat Kodesh! (Aruch Hashulchan 242).

*Tu Bishvat Customs***The Prohibition of Fasting and the Customary Reading of the Zohar**

It is forbidden to fast on the day of *Tu Bishvat*. Some customarily hold an order of learning on the eve of *Tu Bishvat* and read portions of the Mishnah and Zohar that are associated with this special day. Hagaon Harav Yaakov Rokach *zt"l* compiled a special book for the order of this night called "Peri Etz Hadar". Maran Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef *zt"l* writes that one should learn while trying to understand as much as possible on this night, and not just read without understanding. One should try to focus on learning the Halachot pertaining to *Tu Bishvat*, especially the laws of *Orlah* (forbidden fruits of a tree planted within three years) and *Terumot U'Ma'asrot* (tithes). One should try as much as possible to understand what he is reading and not just to read the words alone, for reading without understanding is not considered learning at all. Only regarding the reading of the Zohar is reading without understanding indeed considered learning.

The Customary Eating of Fruits

It is customary to partake of a large variety of fruits and recite the appropriate blessings on them on the eve of *Tu Bishvat* in order to show that this day is the New Year for trees. This custom is mentioned in the works of the Mekubalim as well, and it is a fine custom.

Checking the Fruits for Worms

Fruits which usually contain worms or insects in them must be opened and checked prior to reciting the blessings on them. One must be extremely careful in the checking of fruits that are known to contain worms, for consuming them is a grave sin; one who consumes even one worm transgresses five Torah prohibitions (Pesachim 24a). One who consumes a worm taints one's soul and blocks one's heart from the service of Hashem. Indeed, Hagaon Rabbeinu Chizkiya di Silwa (author of the "Peri Chadash) took issue with the orators of his time who would expound nicely upon stories and hints of the Torah but would not rebuke the people about the terrible sin of consuming worms and the like.

One must take special care regarding dried fruits during the *Tu Bishvat* season which are known to contain worms, such as dried figs which are very difficult to check. There have been certain authorities who have banned eating dried figs and the like altogether due to the difficulty of checking them. One must therefore take extreme care in this matter.

Reciting the "Shehecheyanu" Blessing on a New Fruit

On a new fruit (meaning a fruit that one has not eaten yet this season), one recites the blessing of "*Shehecheyanu Ve'Kiyemanu Ve'Higianu La'Zeman Hazeh*". One should first recite the regular blessing on the fruit and only afterwards should one recite the "*Shehecheyanu*" blessing, as per the rule of "common and uncommon, the common takes precedence". Thus, the fruit's regular blessing which is recited on a more frequent basis precedes the "*Shehecheyanu*" blessing which is not recited as frequently. If one has several kinds of new fruits in front of him, one "*Shehecheyanu*" blessing suffices for all of them. However, this only applies when all the new fruits are in front of him, for if not, one must recite the "*Shehecheyanu*" blessing anew for each kind of fruit.

Praying for a Beautiful Etrog

Some have the custom that on the day of *Tu Bishvat* one should pray for a beautiful Etrog (citron) for the holiday of Sukkot. Although some oppose this custom since the judgment of trees is not actually decreed on this day, nevertheless, there is some basis for this custom and many great individuals have followed suit. Indeed, Hagaon Rabbeinu Yosef Haim *zt"l*, who was extremely erudite in the hidden Torah and knew the deep meanings of the different times of year, observed this custom and actually authored a special order of prayers and requests for this day in his *Sefer Leshon Chachamim*.

When Tu Bishvat Coincides with Shabbat

This year, 5777, *Tu Bishvat* will fall out on Shabbat. On such a year when *Tu Bishvat* falls out on Shabbat, the Poskim disagree whether the fruits should be eaten between Kiddush and the Hamotzi blessing, after the Hamotzi blessing has already been recited, or after Birkat Hamazon altogether. Let us briefly discuss the various opinions:

The Opinion of the Razah

The Razah (acronym for Rabbeinu Zerachya Ha'Levi, commonly known as the "Ba'al Ha'Ma'or") writes regarding the night of the Pesach Seder when the first two cups of wine are drunk before the Hamotzi blessing that an after-blessing should not be recited on the wine, for Birkat Hamazon exempts the after-blessing on the wine. The Rosh rules likewise.

The Opinion of the Rif

On the other hand, the Rif, Ramban, and others write that one should indeed recite an after-blessing on the wine before reciting the Hamotzi blessing, for wine that was drunk before Hamotzi cannot be exempted from its after-blessing with Birkat Hamazon.

The Ruling of Maran *zt"l*

Since there is a disagreement between the Rishonim regarding this matter, Maran Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef *zt"l* writes that one should therefore preferably not enter this kind of doubtful situation and one should eat the fruits only after having recited the Hamotzi blessing and not beforehand. (See Responsa Yechave Da'at, Volume 1, Chapter 82, Chazon Ovadia-Yamim Nora'im, page 97, and Chazon Ovadia-*Tu Bishvat* and Berachot, page 4.) In this way, Birkat Hamazon will exempt the after blessings of the various fruits according to all opinions.

Serving the fruits after Birkat Hamazon

Maran Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef *zt"l* writes (Chazon Ovadia-ibid, page 8) that the most preferable practice on the night of *Tu Bishvat* which coincides with Shabbat is to place the fruits on the table but to eat them only after Birkat Hamazon, for in this way, one will be able to recite both blessings before and after ("*Al Ha'etz*" and "*Boreh Nefashot*") eating the fruits and vegetables, thus affording one the opportunity to recite more blessings on Shabbat and completing the daily quota of reciting one-hundred blessings.

Summary

It is preferable to serve the fruits on the night of *Tu Bishvat* which coincides with Shabbat only after Birkat Hamazon. One should not eat the fruits between Kiddush and the Hamotzi blessing.