

required. G-d wanted Moshe to draw water from the rock by speaking alone.

In our own lives, we find it easier to have faith when things are going reasonably well. When we seem to be on the road to success and encounter trials and struggles, we have faith that we will ultimately succeed. But what happens when things are falling apart, Heaven forbid? What happens when they become stormy? Those are the times that test our faith. Those are also the times when our faith can spell the difference between hope and despair. (Rabbi Naftali Reich)

Healing for the Soul

A number of years ago in Flatbush, Mr. Shimshon Blau, told the Rabbi he had commissioned a *sofer* (scribe) to write a *Sefer Torah* for him. When asked if there was a particular reason he decided to have the *Sefer Torah* written, Mr. Blau told his heartbreaking story.

Shimshon Blau was only 16 years old when the Nazis took him, his parents and his sisters from Lodz, their hometown in Poland, to one of the notorious concentration camps. Shortly after their arrival the parents were separated from the children and Shimshon never heard from them again. He was placed in a slave labor barracks and suffered humiliation and heartache every day.

One night as he was lying in bed, a Nazi soldier came in to check on the prisoners. He walked from bed to bed - and then he saw Shimshon. Suddenly he lunged at Shimshon's feet, grabbed his leather boots and yelled, "Those boots are now mine."

Shimshon was shocked. The leather boots had been given to him by his parents shortly before the family had been captured by the Nazis. Shimshon treasured them because they were his last connection to his beloved parents. He had no pictures, no letters, no memento that he could hold onto in a private moment for strength and rejuvenation. The gift of the boots had become a precious memory. Shimshon cried uncontrollably. This cruel act by the Nazi was the axe that cut the last tangible bond with his parents. It was devastating. He cried for hours. Eventually he fell asleep.

The next morning he went out of his barracks barefoot and found the soldier who had taken his boots. In desperation he begged, "Please give me a pair of shoes. I have nothing to wear on my feet. I'll freeze to death." He did not dare to antagonize the soldier by asking for his own boots back. Much to Shimshon's surprise, the soldier told him, "Wait here, I'll be back in five minutes with some shoes for you."

Shimshon shuddered in the cold as he waited for the soldier to return. In a few minutes the Nazi came back with a pair of shoes and gave them to the startled but grateful teenager. Shimshon went back to his barracks and sat on his bed to put on his new shoes. He looked them over carefully. They were made of wood, but he knew he would have to wear them regardless of what they were made of or how uncomfortable they would be. As he was about to put his foot into the shoe, he looked into its instep and gasped. The instep was a piece of parchment from a *Sefer Torah*!

Shimshon froze in terror. How could he step down on the words that Hashem Himself had told Moshe *Rabenu* to write for all generations? But he knew he had no choice. There was nothing else to wear on his feet and it was either these shoes or frostbite and death. Hesitant with guilt, he put them on uneasily.

Now, years later, Shimshon said, "With every step I took, I felt I was trampling on Hashem's *Sefer Torah*. I swore to myself then that if I ever got out of the camps alive, no matter how rich or poor I was, someday I would have a *Sefer Torah* written and give back to Hashem the honor I took from Him by trampling on His Torah. That's why I gave the shul a *Sefer Torah*. (Reflections of the Maggid)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לֵאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

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SHABBAT HUKAT ☆ תְּהִיָּה תְּהִיָּה

Haftarah: Shoftim 11:1-33

JULY 8-9, 2022 10 TAMUZ 5782

Shir Hashirim/Minhah:

6:30, 6:45, 6:55, 8:00 pm

Candlelighting: **8:10 pm**

Evening Shema after: **9:08 pm**

Shaharit: **4:35, 6:45, 7:45, 8:25, 9:00 am**

Morning Shema by: **8:21 am**

Shabbat Class: **6:35 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 7:45 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **9:07, R"T 9:39 pm**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Weekday Minhah: **7:00 pm**

Mabrook to Charles & Robin Zafrani on the marriage of their daughter, Sarine, to Abie Anteby.

Mabrook to Jimmy Kassin on the marriage of his daughter, Molly, to Shemuel Menahem. Mabrook to the grandparents, Meir & Barbara Abadi.

Mabrook to Michael & Claire Levy on the birth of a baby boy. Mabrook to the grandparents, Roby & Sheryl Levy.

Mabrook to David & Miriam Kassin on the engagement of their son, Meyer, to Grace Shelby. Mabrook to the grandparents, Armando & Luisa Behar.

This bulletin is dedicated by Michele and Raymond Levy
Le'Ilui Nishmat Yehuda Ben Miriam

A Message from our Rabbi

"יִפְתָּח הַגִּלְעָדִי הָיָה גִבּוֹר חַיִּל וְהוּא בֶן-אִשָּׁה זֹנָה"

"Yiftah Hagiladi was a mighty man of valor and he was the son of a concubine." (Shoftim 11:1)

The *Haftarah* talks about the historical era of the *Shoftim*. It was a period of time after the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the land of Israel, but before the first King, Shaul. The main focus is on Yiftah. The opening *pasuk* tells us that he was a strong man, but came from a less than impressive background. He was the son of a concubine, a woman whom his father didn't fully marry.

Rabbi Yaakov Bender gives an interesting perspective into this story, which is very timely in our society and community.

The story tells us how he faced rejection and harassment. His own brothers, from another wife, drove him away, saying, "You shall have no share in our father's property,

for you are the son of an outsider.”

He was not welcome anywhere, so he went away, on his own, settling among “empty people.”

But later the Jewish nation was in military trouble, and someone recommended Yiftah. Maybe, they thought, he could help the war effort.

They came to ask him to lead them at war, and he reacted with surprise. “Did you not hate me, and drive me out of my father’s house?” They asked again and promised that they would make him the commander. He agreed and led them to great victory.

What happened there? He was in pain, clearly still hurt, and then a few *pesukim* later, he agreed to join them. What changed?

Every one of us – parents, Rebbeim, teachers – has, at some point, seen the effects of bullying and teasing. People may look tough, but rejection hurts, and that pain never goes away. It stays. It is real. Boys use teasing nicknames for one another. Whatever it is, it must be shut down, even if the victim is laughing along. Mockery hurts, and the pain does not go away.

This is what happened here with Yiftah. Years of rejection had left a mark, and so when they asked for help, the old pain rose again. What happened?

He decided to pick himself up and move on! Yiftah understood that they needed him and that he could help. He would lead, he said, but they would have to work with him and leave the past behind. Yes, they said, agreeing.

Yiftah would become not just a mighty warrior, but a *Shofet*, judging the Jewish nation, a leader in every sense.

Because it is true that rejection causes pain and it is true that the pain does not go away. But it is also true that a person can rise again, using the pain to propel him even higher. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

The Ultimate Battle

The *pasuk* in this week’s *perashah* says, “The Canaanite, king of Arad, who dwelled in the south, heard that Israel had come by the route of the spies, and he warred against Israel and captured a captive from it.” *Rashi* explains that this *Canaanite* nation who lived just south of the southern border of *Eretz Yisrael* is actually none other than our old nemesis *Amalek*, because it says about Amalek that they dwell in the land of the South.

If this nation is *Amalek*, what does our *pasuk* mean when it calls its leader “the *Canaanite*”? *Rashi* explains: They disguised their language to speak the Canaanite language (rather than the Amalekite language) in order to trick the Jews. The plan was to mislead *Bnei Yisrael* to pray to *Hashem* “to deliver this Canaanite nation into our hands” when in fact they were **not** Canaanites! Their strategy was to deflect the prayers of the Jews by having them pray for the wrong thing!

Rashi, however, notes that there was a major flaw in their “battle plan.” The Jews noticed that they were dressed like Amalekites, even though they were speaking the language of *Canaan*. The Jews therefore became suspicious and were unsure whether they were dealing with *Canaan* or with *Amalek*. That is why, *Rashi* continues, *Bnei Yisrael* offered a generic prayer without mentioning a specific nationality: “If You will deliver **this nation** into my hand...”

Let me ask a question: These Amalekites are so wise and so perceptive that they realize that if a Jew prays to Hashem, it is going to be effective. They are even so knowledgeable that they know if a Jew prays to Hashem and he utters the **wrong** *Tefilla*, it is not going to be effective. Furthermore, they knew that the Jews already realized *Amalek* was a fierce enemy. Part of *Amalek*’s plan was to pretend they were only Canaanites. The Jews would think they were doing battle with a pushover nation, so their

prayers would not be as intense. Less intense prayers will not be as effective.

One might ask: If *Amalek* knows all this, the power and effectiveness of prayer and the existence and omnipotence of Hashem, then why do they remain *Amalek*? Why do they persist in their evil ways? Why not throw in the *Amaleki* towel and say “I give up. You are right” and convert to Judaism?

The answer is that their intellect may have told them that, but whatever their lusts and lifestyle had been was not compatible with being a Jew or being a *Shomer Mitzvos*. I can see something as clear as day right in front of my hand, but there is a long distance from a person’s brain to his heart. The point could have been proven to them intellectually and rationally, but if it does not fit in with a person’s personal agenda, he may not make that final leap. He will twist and turn and rationalize and be in denial, but will refuse to honestly confront the truth.

This is not only the story with *Amalek*. This is the story with all of us. We know the truth. We know that Hashem knows everything we do. We know what He expects of us. But from time to time, we do things that we should not be doing, even though we know that one day we will need to pay a price for this. But there is a big difference between the *Sechel* (intellect) and the *Lev* (heart). (Rabbi Yisroel Meir Frand)

Miriam’s Well

Without water, life cannot survive. Nonetheless, millions of Jewish people survived in the parched and barren desert for forty years. How was this possible? Only through a miracle. During their travels through the desert, the Jewish people were accompanied by a rock from which an abundant supply of water constantly flowed. It was called Miriam’s Well, because it existed in the merit of Moshe’s older sister Miriam, who was a righteous woman and a prophetess in her own right.

In this week’s portion, we read about Miriam’s death only months before the entry of the Jewish people into the Holy Land. Miriam’s Well ceased to function after she died, and the people were faced with a critical water shortage. They besieged Moshe and demanded that he provide water for them, for otherwise they would die. G-d told Moshe to take his staff in hand and speak to the rock. Instead of speaking, however, Moshe struck the rock with his staff. The waters gushed forth again, but Moshe forfeited the opportunity of entering the Holy Land. Because of his mistake, he passed away while the Jewish encampment was massed on the east bank of the Jordan River.

A number of questions come to mind. Why was the water given to the Jewish people only in the merit of Miriam? And why couldn’t the water continue after her death without Moshe speaking to the rock?

The commentators explain that one of the most striking features of water is that its viscosity allows it to adapt perfectly to its surroundings; water will naturally assume the shape of any container into which it flows. Symbolically, Miriam represented this quality. She was able to adapt her faith and her steadfast loyalty to G-d’s will under any and all circumstances. Come what may, Miriam shone as the paragon of staunch faith.

Miriam was born during the darkest chapter of the Jewish bondage in Egypt. Her name, recalling the word *marah*, bitter, evokes the bitterness of the Jewish condition. When she was just a young girl, Pharaoh decreed that all male babies be thrown into the river. Husbands and wives separated in order to avoid producing children who would be drowned, but Miriam persuaded her parents to have faith and remain together. As a result, her brother Moshe, redeemer of the Jewish people, was born.

Like water, Miriam adapted to the oppression and the suffering and remained strong in her faith. Therefore, in her merit, G-d provided the Jewish people with miraculous water in the desert. And when she died, a new demonstration of supreme faith was