

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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In this week's Torah portion, Beshalach, we read of the different opinions among the Jews when they were faced with the Red Sea in front and the approach of the powerful Egyptian army from behind.

"Let us drown in the Sea," cried one group of Jews. "We must return to Egypt," declared another camp. A third party suggested waging war. The last opinion was to pray, putting everything in G-d's "hands."

Moshe spoke to each of these groups, explaining to them the folly of their suggestions. And he gave them the only possible solution to the seemingly impossible situation.

"We have been commanded by G-d to go forward. We must travel on to Mount Sinai where we will receive the Torah and thus bring light to the world. This is the whole reason for our exodus from Egypt."

The suggestion of each of the four groups can be interpreted according to its simplest meaning and also according to Chasidut.

Drowning in the sea can also be understood as drowning in the sea of Torah, totally immersing in spirituality without consideration for our mission of elevating the physicality of the world.

The intent of those who suggested surrendering and going back to Egypt, was that they would study Torah and observe mitzvot in Egypt, spreading holiness and purity to that immoral nation. However, being forced into this compromise, the mitzvot performed there would not have been carried out with joy and enthusiasm.

Fighting, too, was not an appropriate option. Firstly, it was recommended by those whose natural instincts were to be aggressive, not out of a higher motive. In addition, the mission at hand was to bring light into the world and this can never be achieved through fighting.

One might think that the last option, praying and putting oneself totally in G-d's hands, was the best. However, here, too, there is a problem. For just praying means giving the matter over to G-d without any effort on your part to rectify the situation.

As we can see, each option has its own good points and drawbacks. The major drawback for each suggestion, however, is that they were not in keeping with G-d's command to the Jews to go forward, despite obstacles and seeming impossibilities. The Jews were being commanded to do something that went beyond their nature, beyond their intellect. And by following G-d's command, they would not only merit the splitting of the Red Sea as a nation, but each individual would break through his own personal Red Sea after which he can receive the Divine revelation at Mount Sinai. (based on the Rebbe's talks, From: Ichaim 5753, #302) - Ichaimweekly.org

"The children of Israel ate the manna for forty years." (16:35) Since G-d provided the Jews with everything they needed, such as food and clothing, it seems impossible for them to have fulfilled the mitzva of charity. The manna in the dessert tasted like any food a person had in mind. A poor person had never tasted expensive foods, so the charity of a rich person was to recommend to a person which foods to have in mind. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe) – www.ascent.org.il

"G-d maintains war against Amalek from generation to generation." (17:16) After the Jews left Egypt, they were on the highest level of faith in G-d. Amalek's attack on the Jewish people was not merely intended to destroy them physically, but to detach them from G-d spiritually, by putting doubts in their mind about G-d. Whenever a Jew has doubts about Judaism, Amalek is at work. G-d is so angry at Amalek that He wants to wipe out his remembrance entirely. (Keter Shem Tov) - ibid

A Tree's New Year Resolution

Tu B'Shevat -- the 15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat -- is known as the "New Year for Trees". Naturally this would be a time for trees to engage in soul-searching -- the same way people do on Rosh Hashanah. Here is a tree's New Year Checklist::

Did I shelter the seedlings that live up to be a next generation like myself?

Did I grow towards the sun as a tree higher towards that which I can never the same the more I strive towards it?

Did I make sure my roots remain nurtures them, and did I drop my back life to that which sustains me?

Did I ensure that my fruits were sweet and nourished all that came to enjoy them? Did everyone walk away from me with a smile?

Did I bend gently in the wind, accepting what G-d sends but never breaking or giving up hope? Did I grow in strength and wisdom with each new ring this year?

Come to think of it, not a bad checklist for us humans either!

(By Rabbi Shlomo Yaff spiritual leader of Congregation Agudas Achim of West Hartford, Connecticut) – chabad.org



in my shade -- so they will grow

should, reaching up higher and grasp, but which nurtures me all

firmly planted in the soil that leaves there in the fall to give

The Leaf

It was the summer of 1896, and father and myself were strolling in the fields of Balivka, a hamlet near Lubavitch. The grain was near to ripening, and the wheat and grass swayed gently in the breeze.

Said father to me: "See G-dliness! Every movement of each stalk and grass was included in G-d's Primordial Thought of Creation, in G-d's all-embracing vision of history, and is guided by Divine providence toward a G-dly purpose."

Walking, we entered the forest. Engrossed in what I had heard, excited by the gentleness and seriousness of father's words, I absentmindedly tore a leaf off a passing tree. Holding it a while in my hands, I continued my thoughtful pacing, occasionally tearing small pieces of leaf and casting them to the winds.

"The Holy Ari, I" said father to me, "says that not only is every leaf on a tree a creation invested with Divine life, created for a specific purpose within G-d's intent in creation, but also that within each and every leaf there is a spark of a soul that has descended to earth to find its correction and fulfillment.

"The Talmud," father continued, "rules that 'a man is always responsible for his actions, whether awake or asleep.' The difference between wakefulness and sleep is in the inner faculties of man, his intellect and emotions. The external faculties function equally well in sleep, only the inner faculties are confused. So dreams present us with contradictory truths. A waking man sees the real world, a sleeping man does not. This is the deeper significance of wakefulness and sleep: when one is awake one sees Divinity; when asleep, one does not.

"Nevertheless, our sages maintain that man is always responsible for his actions, whether awake or asleep. Only this moment we have spoken of Divine providence, and, unthinkingly, you tore off a leaf, played with it in your hands, twisting, squashing and tearing it to pieces, throwing it in all directions. "How can one be so callous towards a creation of G-d? This leaf was created by the Almighty towards a specific purpose and is imbued with a Divine life-force. It has a body and it has its life. In what way is the 'I' of this leaf inferior to yours?" (From the writings of the sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn; translation/adaptation by Yanki Tauber) – chabad.org

When the second part of Torah Or was about to be printed, Chassidim knew that the Tzemach Tzedek had written glosses and commentaries on the maamarim. They pleaded with him to publish these with the maamarim, but he refused. He then dreamt that his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, visited him and asked him to publish them, but he revealed this to no one. Only after three of his sons had the same dream and reported this to him did he agree to have his glosses and commentary printed with the second part of Torah Or, which they now entitled "Likutei Torah." 1 (From Rebbe's Hayom yom shevat T 15).

There are times when moving forward is not enough. There are times when you can't just change what you do, how you speak and how you think about things. Sometimes, you have to change who you are. You need to pick both feet off the ground you tread and leap.

From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; rendered by Tzvi Freeman

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Shabbat (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)
	9:00 PM	Tanya(Rabbi Wolf)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

There will be no classes next week on Monday - Thursday February 9-12, except for Rabbi Wolf's Tuesday night class.

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 5: 30 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS BESHALACH TU BISHVAT

February 6, 2004

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 5:10 PM
Fridav Mincha: 5:25 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:22 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen**
- **Chumash 4:30 PM**
- **Mincha 5:00 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 6:10 PM**

Kiddush is sponsored by Shimshon and Dora Mishael in honor of their new baby girl.

Yartzeits: Galin Bas Avraham – Shevat 16, Rabbi Yosef Yehuda Chein – Shevat 21, Chaja Hirschhorn – Shevat 21.

Happy Birthday to Dovid Sochaczewski, Rabbi Yossi Lipskar, Moshe Chodorow and Joy Ruth Graff.

Mazel Tov to Shimshon and Dora Mishael on the birth of a baby girl.

GOOD SHABBOS!