

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

✧ THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION ✧

In honor of our parents, Tuvia and Lea Schottenstein and Rabbi Yisroel and Chana Sirota

Erev Shabbos Parshas Shemos 5781 – January 8, 2021
24 Teves - The Alter Rebbe's Yartzeit

ערב שבת פרשת שמות, כ"ד טבת, תשפ"א
יום ההילולא של כ"ק אדמו"ר הזקן זי"ע

✧ כתר שם טוב

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

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Liberating the World

An angel of G-d appeared to him in a flame of fire from within the thorn bush (Exodus 3:2).

Why did G-d's emissary appear within a prickly plant? Rashi clarifies: "Specifically a thorn bush, and not another kind of shrub, in order to convey the message that *I am with you in distress* (Psalms 91:14)."

In its broadest meaning, the term *tzarah*, "distress," includes the entire physical existence. It is referred to as *tzarah* because it is a dimension of extreme constraint (*tzar*).

The upper realms of existence are spiritual, and they are unconstrained by comparison, basking in the overt revelation of G-d's Infinite Light. They and their contents are therefore expansive.

In this world, however, the Infinite Light expresses itself through the dense veil of nature.

The result is a dimension of extreme spiritual constraint and concealment. As a consequence, our physical world becomes a place of *tzarah*, distress.

But it was not meant to remain that way:

G-d's intention in creating the world in such a manner was to give room for our input. Through our Divine service of Torah study and observing the *mitzvot*, we transform the *tzarah* (צָרָה), "distress," into *tzohar* (צֹהַר), "luminance." We illuminate the universe with the light of Torah and *mitzvot*, so that Divine revelation can replace the concealment.

Focus: Your study and good deeds are powerful tools of transformation.

✧ גאולה

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by Yaakov Paley

What's Your Name?

The entire *parshah* deals with exile, so why is it called *Shemos*, "names"? What do names have to do with exile?

A person's name does not reveal his essence. In fact, it obscures it. Individuals can be polar opposites while sharing the identical name. This is the concept of exile, whereby the Jewish soul is obscured and only the superficial is observed. However, *chassidus* teaches that although a name does not represent the person himself, it is attached to

his essence so strongly that his life force is drawn through its letters to the point that if he faints, his soul can be revived by calling his name. So a name can reveal the essence. This aspect of a name is equal to redemption.

To bring the redemption, we must connect Jews with their truest essence that is concealed and waits to be revealed and revived.

The Rebbe

STUDY CYCLE FOR SHABBOS DAY

Chumash

Shemos, 7th reading: As G-d had predicted, when Moshe demanded that Par'oh release the Jews, even for three days, Par'oh refused. Instead, Par'oh ordered that the Jews no longer be supplied with straw to make into bricks; they would have to produce the same daily quota of bricks but gather the necessary straw themselves. The Jews complained to Moshe; feeling the Jews' suffering, Moshe asked G-d why He had sent him on this mission if this was the result.

Tanya

Likutei Amarim Ch. 16: The principal Divine service of the Beinoni - to rule over his evil inclination - is through the control of his mind over his heart and, thereby, actions.

Takeaway: Before you do a mitzvah, think about God. Say to yourself: God is great. I know I want to be connected to Him. Doing this mitzvah will be that "embrace" with God.

Rambam (1)

Zmanim, Hilchos Kidush HaChodesh Ch. 6 – A Lunar Month: The calculation of the length of month (and of a regular year and leap year). Principles to calculate the time of a new moon (by month, year or calendar cycle). A calendar cycle is every 19 years when the lunar and solar cycles re-align.

GATE OF TRUST

Home Sweet Home

It has been related regarding an ascetic's path to asceticism: He went to a faraway land to seek his sustenance during the beginning of his asceticism. During his travels he met a star worshipper in the city where he had arrived.

The ascetic said to the star worshipper: "How much are you in a state of ultimate blindness and lack of understanding in your service of the stars?" The idol worshipper replied, "And whom do you serve?" The ascetic replied, "I serve the Creator, Who is able to do anything, Who sustains, Who is One, Who provides food for each person according to his needs, and there is no one like Him." The idol worshipper said, "Your actions contradict your words." "How so?" asked the ascetic. The idol worshipper replied, "If what you said were to be true, then G-d would provide for you in your city just as He provided for you until now, and you would not need to bother yourself to come to this far-away land.

With this, the argument of the ascetic was shut down.* Consequently he returned to his land, accepted upon himself to be an ascetic from that time on, and never left his city again.

The argument of the ascetic was shut down. Rabbi Yaakov Emden argues that there are valid reasons that can cause a person's inability to find a livelihood in his place of dwelling, requiring him to travel. Rabbi Emden writes that this was in fact his own situation, and that it was not due to a lack of trust in G-d—rather, *this* was the will of G-d, that he travel to earn his livelihood.

This travel can be for three reasons: 1) The person does not merit to find his livelihood in his hometown and must travel to provide for himself because of his sins; for exile brings forgiveness. 2) G-d causes a person to travel so that he not be around the evil people of his town. 3) The need to travel might simply be a test from G-d to see if his belief is non-wavering despite these hardships (*Birat Migdal Oz*, *Bet Middot*, *Aliyat Habitachon*).

According to the Baal Shem Tov, Divine Providence is what leads a person to a certain place. He explains the verse *And you will go to the place that the L-rd, your G-d, will choose to make His name dwell there* (Deuteronomy 26:2) as follows: You must know that you go from one place to another because G-d has chosen this path, so that His name will dwell there. G-d orchestrates that you end up in a specific place in order to spread the light of G-d in that very place (*Hayom Yom*, 18 Elul).

Bottom Line: A man who has *bitachon* does not need to travel to provide for himself and his family, because G-d can provide for him in his own city (see commentary, for exceptions).

The Concealed and The Revealed

וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לְוִי וַיִּקַּח אֶת בַּת לְוִי

וַתַּהַר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֵּרֶא אֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא וַתִּצְפְּנֶהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים

A man of the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi.

The woman conceived and bore a son, and [when] she saw him that

he was good, she hid him for three months. (Shemos, 2:-2)

Driving Questions:

1. The man in this verse is Amram and the woman he married is Yocheved (Moshe's parents). Why does the Torah omit their names?
2. The verse discusses two elements surrounding the birth of Moshe. 1) "she saw him" (revelation) and 2) "she hid him" (concealment). What is the significance of these two elements?

The key to understanding all this, is to identify that there are two aspects in Moshe's life. One is the open and revealed part and the other is the hidden and concealed part. This is a recurring theme in his birth and childhood, symbolizing a pattern in his life and mission.

Moshe is synonymous with the Torah. His life's primary purpose was receiving and teaching the Torah to B'nei Yisroel. So much so that the Torah is referred to by his name as evident from the following verse: "זָכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי" ("Keep in remembrance the teaching (lit. Torah) of Moshe, My servant...¹").

[An additional hint can be found² in the numerical value (Gematriya³) of his name and title. Moshe Rabeinu = 613. Thus illustrating the inherent connection and synonymy between Moshe and Torah.]

345	5 ה 300 ש 40 מ
268	6 ו 50 נ 10 י 2 ב 200 ר
613	תרי"ג

Generally speaking, the Torah is divided into two main categories: The revealed part (Nigleh⁴) and the hidden part (Nistar⁵).

1. Malachi 3:22

2. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak brings this on page 66 (of this Sefer) albeit in a different context. It is also brought in Megaleh Amukos, Ch. 113.

3. Gematriya (when two words or phrases share an equal numerical value) is merely an indication and "external result" which points at an inherent thematic equivalence and commonality.

4. Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, Halacha etc.

5. Kabbalah, Agada, Chasidus etc.

Although most of what Moshe taught the Jewish People in his lifetime was the revealed dimension, he undoubtedly received the inner, hidden dimension too. Thus, the two dimensions of his birth and infancy (revealed/concealed), as well as later on in his life, parallel these two aspects of Torah he would receive and transmit.

Thus, for the first three months of his infancy he was in his parents' sheltered, sacred environment and care. Thereafter, he was raised by Basya, Paro's daughter, in the Egyptian palace, a most unholy environment.

This is hinted to by the omission of his parents' names⁶ and simply referring to them as they are connected to the tribe of Levi. The name Levi represents a deeper connection with G-d as alluded to in Leah's words when she named her son Levi, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me"⁷ — "הַפֶּעַם יִלְוֶה אִישִׁי" — "אֵלַי". This refers to our spousal relationship with Hashem too.

This idea of deep divine connection is mainly discussed in *Nistar* — the hidden parts of Torah. Yet Moshe is also referred to as an אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם — An Egyptian man⁸ which represents his engaging with the physical and

6. This teaching of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is based on a story in the Talmud (Pesachim 62b) where Rabbi Simlai wants to learn the Book of Yuchasin, a Midrashic commentary and Rabbi Yochanan denies him that privilege. R' Levi Yitzchak explains the entire episode according to Kabbalah and how the knowledge of Yuchasin is akin to Nistar, which was beyond Rabbi Simlai's capacity. Kabbalistically, father and mother correspond to Chochma & Bina, our mental capacity, which is concealed. Thus, it represents the concealed parts of Torah and why the names of Moshe's parents here are hidden.

7. Vayetzzei 29:34.

8. Shemos 2:19.

mundane world. This corresponds to *Nigleh* — the revealed part of Torah.⁹

In Moshe's service of Hashem there were also two elements. On the one hand he remained holy and transcendent of the physical world and on the other hand he descended into the chaos, coarseness and materiality of worldly affairs to elevate it and bring divinity into it.¹⁰

9. See Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh #26, where the Alter Rebbe quotes a puzzling Zohar (Raya Mehemna Pashas Naso) which describes the inner Torah as the "Tree of Life", which is pure and holy, and the revealed Torah as the "Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil". He explains at length that while all of Torah is pure and holy, the revealed Torah descends into discussing matters of evil and darkness, realities of our world which require discernment and refinement.

10. See Toras Menachem, Hisvaaduyos 5786, vol. 3, pg. 647-650.

This duality corresponds to the two elements of Torah — The hidden and the revealed.

This is also the *Avodah* of every Yid: to work on both fronts simultaneously. We need to transcend the physical world by working on our inner selves (*Nistar*), yet at the same time we need to engage with the world (*Nigleh*) in order to refine and elevate all of creation.

*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak, Likkutim al Tanach uMa'amorei Chazal, page 128 and on.*¹¹
(*Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 4, ch. 13*)

11. In the summer of 5689 (1930), Rabbi Levi Yitzchak wrote a lengthy, complex and deep *Reshima* (journal of Torah thought), based on Talmud Pesachim 62b, exploring multiple topics. In its printed form it spans 42 pages. He sent a copy to the Rebbe, his son.

פרשת השבוע

PARSHA INSIGHT

By: **Rabbi Moshe Wisnefsky** From: **Daily Wisdom #3**

Based on the works of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

Listening to G-d's Voice

Pharaoh said, "Who is G-d that I should heed His voice and send forth Israel? I do not recognize G-d, nor will I send Israel forth." (5:2)

The Divine Name *Havayah* (translated here as "G-D," with small capitals) refers to G-d outside the context of His creation. In contrast, the Name *Elokim* refers to G-d the Creator, acting within nature.

Pharaoh did indeed believe in G-d as the creative force within nature, but he knew nothing of a G-d beyond nature. One of the laws of nature is that the strong can overpower and rule the weak, so, since the Egyptians were stronger than the Jews, Pharaoh felt that it was their G-d-given right to rule over them. He could not accept the possibility that there was a G-d beyond nature who

could override the laws of nature and declare that the strong should release the weak from their rule, even against their will, simply because this is the right thing to do. (*Sefer HaMa'amarim 5679*, pp. 360 ff; *Sefer HaMa'amarim 5688*, pp. 68 ff; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 239 ff.)

G-d sent Moses to show Pharaoh that G-d is not limited by the laws of nature. We, too, must listen to our inner "Moses," telling our inner "Pharaoh" that there is a moral code beyond the laws of nature.

Torah Or 50b; Sefer HaMa'amarim 5705, p. 139

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