



Another Aramean? or, Don't Kill the Messenger!

An Aramean sought to destroy my forefather. (Devarim 26:5)

WHO WAS THIS ARAMEAN? WE USUALLY assume that he was Lavan.

Lavan wished to destroy everything as he pursued Yaakov. (Rashi)

Here's an alternative explanation.

When Rivka left with Eliezer to marry Yitzchok, she was sent off by her mother and her brother, Lavan. Rashi notes:

Where was Besu'el? He sought to hold her back by poisoning Eliezer, but an angel came and

killed [Besu'el] instead. (Commentary, B'reishis 24:55)

Jewish law dictates that if one appoints an agent to secure a wife on his behalf, and the agent disappears, the sender may not marry *anyone*. Why? Because perhaps the agent has secured a marriage on his behalf to some unidentified woman; if this gentleman wishes to marry someone else now, who's to say that his new wife isn't a blood relative of the first? Hence, he may never marry anybody, until it is clear whether or not the agent was successful. And, with the agent AWOL, who is to know?

Had Besu'el the Aramean poisoned Eliezer, Yitzchok would have never been able to marry, on the chance that Eliezer had found him a wife before disappearing—and the future Jewish People would have ended right there! ❧

praiseworthy thing. (Maimonides, *Hilchos Chametz Umatzah*, 7:4)

WHY DOES THE RAMBAM (MAIMONIDES) tell us to study a secondary source (the declaration of the First Fruits, in which the story of the Exodus is mentioned as an aside), when we can just go straight to the source and read the original story, in its entirety, in Sh'mos?

Further, why does the Rambam connect the praiseworthiness of adding to one's interpretation of the Exodus to the declaration of the First Fruits? What if one wished to extend and add to his understanding of the original account of the Exodus, in Shemos, instead?

The Netziv (Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin, of nineteenth-century Lithuania) says that we're misinterpreting the Rambam's words. The correct way to read them is: "And anyone who adds...

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Still in Egypt?

Had the Holy One, blessed be He, not taken our forefathers out of [Egypt], behold—we, our children, and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt! (Haggadah)

HITTIITES, BERBERS, KUSH, ASSYRIA, BABYLON, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Byzantine Empire, Arabs, Turks, Britain... The list of Egypt's rulers is a virtual *Who's Who* of mighty world conquerors.

Yet we are supposed to believe that, had Hashem not taken our forefathers out, we would still be enslaved—to *Pharaoh!* Surely one of the aforementioned rulers from that venerable list would have taken over—or released us, if we hadn't escaped first. After all, Pharaoh and Ancient Egypt exist solely in the history textbooks, and there are no slaves in modern Egypt! How can the Haggadah make this wild claim?

Yet it does, and we impart to our children—and base our religion upon—this very claim! How?

Here are two answers, one literal and one figurative.

Our Sages tell us that everything exists for the sake of the Jewish People; every happening, somehow, somewhere, directly or indirectly, affects the Jews. Taken to its extreme but logical conclusion, this means that even events of major geo-political importance only happen because they have consequence to the Jews!

Now let's connect this concept with that quote from the Haggadah. Had Hashem not taken our forefathers out of Egypt, we and our descendants would still be slaves in Egypt, *because Egypt would never have been conquered by another nation!* All the successive empires over thousands of years only came about

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Improving on a Good Story

One must begin [retelling the Exodus story on Pesach night] with the derogatory and conclude with praise. How? ...One begins by describing how we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and detailing all of the evil that he did to us, and concluding with the miracles and wonders that were wrought upon us, and our freedom. One does this by expounding on [the declaration one makes when bringing First Fruits to the Sanctuary, D'varim 26:5–8]: "An Aramean sought to destroy my father..." And anyone who adds to and extends his commentary on this portion of the Torah has done a

At the Kollel

KEY: 🖐️ Beginners 🖐️🖐️ Intermediate 🖐️🖐️🖐️ Advanced 🚺🚻 for men and women

Looking for a chavrusa? See Coordinator Rabbi Chaim Heinemann!
Chavrusos are available noon–1 PM on weekdays, and 8–9:45 PM Sun.–Thurs.

Sunday *Free brunch!*

🖐️🖐️ **America Runs on Torah**
(Jewish Law & Parasha)
Rabbis Dani Schon
and Yisroel Kaufman.....10 AM
Grand Deluxe breakfast served

Tuesday

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Partners in Torah
at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Binyamin Teitelbaum.....8 PM

Wednesday

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Torah Treasures for
Seniors at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 10:30–11:15 AM

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Downtown Lunch-n-Learn
at Strauss & Troy**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 12–1 PM

Thursday

🖐️🖐️ **Halacha** (based on the parasha)
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....9:10–10 PM
Homemade refreshments served

Minyanim Daylight Time

Shacharis
Sunday.....8:15 AM
Monday–Friday.....7:20 AM
Shabbos.....N/A

Mincha
Sunday–Thursday.....5:45 PM
Shabbos.....5:30 PM

Ma'ariv
In the Beis Midrash:
Sunday–Wednesday.....9:45 PM
Thursday.....10 PM
Shabbos.....N/A

Every Day

🖐️ **“Dirshu” Gemara Shiur**
(Maseches B'choros)
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis.....
Sunday 7:15–8:15 AM
Monday–Friday 5:50–6:45 AM

🖐️🖐️ **Kollel Yisgaber K'ari**
(amud-a-day of Mishnah B'rurah)
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....
Monday–Friday 6:55–7:20 AM

🖐️🖐️ **Kitzur Shuchan Aruch**
Live video conference!
Rabbi Dani Schon.....
Monday–Friday 12:05–12:20 PM

🖐️ **Daf Yomi**
Rabbi Meir Minster.....
Sunday–Thursday 8–8:45 PM
Shabbos (at CZE) 1:00 pre-mincha

🖐️🖐️ **Nightly Halacha Chabura**
Rabbis Dani Schon
& Binyamin Teitelbaum.....
Monday–Thursday 9–9:45 PM

Chavrusa Learning
(private & small groups).....times vary



PESACH BREAK The Kollel will be on recess from Sunday, March 29 to Monday, April 13.

Improving on a Good Story CONTINUED

is, himself, a praiseworthy individual [for taking on such a task].”

How so?

In general, when one relates a story that happened to his forefathers, he doesn't embellish the story and make it come alive; he will tell over the basic account and be done with it. However, if this astonishing tale happened to him personally, well, the more he embellishes and savors every detail, the better!

That is the advantage of shifting away from Sh'mos and over to the declaration of the First Fruit, in D'varim. The “main” source for the story of the Exodus speaks in the third person, in a very detached manner. On the other hand, a person bringing his First Fruits speaks in the first person. So the Rambam stresses

that one who expounds on this far-away retelling, in particular, is praiseworthy individual—he now can expand on his

narrative, as he views himself as if he, himself, left Egypt, and is telling it over as such. 🚪

Still in Egypt? CONTINUED

for the sake of the Jewish People, and if Hashem hadn't taken us out of Egypt, there would be no Jewish People!

Another answer to our question can be found in the teaching that the Children of Israel, while enslaved in Egypt, sank almost to the lowest depths of spiritual impurity; had the moment of redemption been delayed for even one moment, we would not have been worthy of being redeemed. It's true that we might not literally be slaves to Pharaoh today, but in a sense we would

have never have left Egypt. Having missed the deadline to go, we would have crossed the threshold from being “enslaved Hebrews” to being just slaves. We would have been slowly assimilated into Egypt. And so we say that, had Hashem not taken our forefathers out of there, behold—we, our children, and our children's children would be sitting in office towers in Cairo, living and existing as Egyptians, enslaved in that culture. 🚪