



A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

Only As One

BACK IN PARSHAS VA'ERA, WHEN PHAROH challenges Moshe and Aharon, Hashem told Aharon to throw his staff down and it would turn into a snake. Pharoh called his sorcerers to do the same, and the *passuk* then says "the staff of Aharon swallowed their staffs." That is, after the snakes turned back into sticks, then the staff of Aharon swallowed up the others.

The *Bal Haturim* says something fascinating there. He comments, based on the *Midrash*, this isn't the only time this exact miracle happened. It will happen again by Korach. After Korach and his men were swallowed up into the ground, Hashem says to tell all the *n'see'im* (leaders) to take their staffs together with Aharon's and place them in the *Ohel Moed*; the staff of the one whom Hashem chooses will sprout. Moshe does so, and the next morning they see that the staff of Aharon *Hakohen* blossomed. The *Bal Haturim* says there as well that after the staff blossomed, the staff of Aharon swallowed up the rest of the staffs and subsequently spit them out. Then the *passuk* says each *nasi* took his own staff.

RABBI
MICHAEL
SOROKA

I once heard from R' Schlesinger, ז"ל, a Rabbi in Monsey, an explanation of the message of this miracle. He explained that it was clear to all that Aharon was the chosen one, but only when he had all of the other *n'see'im* contained within him did his staff, representing him, blossom. Although Aharon was chosen to lead the rest and represent them, *Klal Yisrael* is only complete when we are a complete unit. Korach tried to fracture the unit of *Klal Yisrael* by creating discord. After Korach, the *ba'al hamachlokes* (instigator of argument), was eliminated, it was still necessary to drive home this message—there are leaders who guide us and we need them to fill that role. But for us as a nation to reach our full potential, all the parts must fit together, and we must fulfill our individual roles as well. Only then can we blossom and be a light for all the nations of the world.

I will close with the following questions (and please share your thoughts with me). We see from this *Midrash* that the exact miracle that took place in front of Pharoh happened again after the episode with Korach and his people. What is the parallel? What lesson being imparted at one occurrence is applicable to the other? Why does the *Midrash* make this connection? Was it to draw a parallel between the motivations behind Pharoh's action and those of Korach? Hope to hear from you. 🕊

A RIDDLE FOR YOU

What *passuk* is said twice (and only twice) in the Torah with the same cantillation as well? 🕊

See reverse side for the answer

A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

Getting Called to the Torah

There are different numbers of *aliyos* depending on the day of the week and the time of the year. For example, on Mondays and Thursdays, Shabbos afternoon, fast days, Chanukah, and Purim, there are three *olim*. On Rosh Chodesh and *Chol Hamoed*, there are four. On the *Chagim* (Festivals), five; on Yom Kippur, six. And on Shabbos morning seven people are called up, which is the maximum for any day (O.C.135:1). On Shabbos, some congregations add *aliyos* while others do not. Since both practices have a basis in *halachah*, each congregation should follow its own custom (O.C.282:1).

The breakdown for Shabbos morning is as follows. A *Kohen*, a *Levi*, five *Yisraelim*, and an additional person for *Maftir* (who can be a *Kohen*, *Levi* or *Yisroel*) are called to the Torah. If a *Kohen* is unavailable, either a *Levi* or a *Yisrael* is called instead of him, but if a *Yisrael* is called instead of a *Kohen*, then a *Levi* can no longer be called after him (O.C.135:6). If a *Levi* is unavailable, then the same *Kohen* who was called for *Kohen* is called again (O.C. 135:8).

The person being called should take the shortest possible route to the *bimah* so that there is no unnecessary delay. If all of the routes are equal in distance, he should ascend from the right side (O.C. 141:7).

One who is not wearing a *tallis* already should put one on when receiving an *aliyah* on Shabbos or Yom Tov mornings. He need not put on a *tallis* when receiving an *aliyah* at other times (*Halichos Shlomo* 12, note 29). Before reciting the *bracha* (blessing), the *oleh* should look inside

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A TIMELY HALACHA

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the Torah to see where the *Ba'al Koreh* (reader) will begin reading. He then rolls up the Torah and recites *Borchu* followed by the first blessing. Alternatively, he may leave the scroll unrolled but close his eyes while reciting *Borchu* and the *bracha* (M.B.139:19). One should hold on to the *etz chaim* (handles of the Torah) while making the *b'rachos* and during the *leining* (O.C. 140:41).

The one who goes up to the Torah should read along with the *Ba'al Koreh* quietly (O.C. 141:2). After the reading is over, the *Sefer* should be rolled up and then the final *bracha* is recited. The final blessing should not be recited over an open *Sefer* even if one keeps his eyes closed.

The blessings must be recited loudly enough so that at least ten people are able to hear them. The *Poskim* are extremely critical of those who recite the blessings in an undertone (O.C. 139:6).

We will continue next time with who is called to the Torah and what happens when there not enough *aliyos* for all those who are deserving of one. 🕒

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

RABBI AVIE GOLD, AN AUTHOR FOR ARTSCROLL publications, tells the story that when his grandparents came to America, his grandmother had already heard many stories of Jewish children leaving the fold and she was determined to do her utmost to prevent it from happening to hers. She knew the best chance she had was if her children would go to Jewish schools, and to that end, the day after she arrived from

GLIMPSES OF THE KOLLEL

Local teen age boys are always eager to join Rabbi Chayim Heinemann for the Torah



TEEN'S LEARNING

lessons that he provides them at a variety of enjoyable venues.



Europe, she went to school to get him accepted immediately. However, it was not going to be so simple. "I'm sorry," said the principal, "we just don't have any room for more children right now. We are already doubling up children in all the desks and with all the books. We just don't have more room. You will have to wait." "How long is the wait," she asked. "Two years," answered the principal. She went home, picked up her son and walked back to the school. "Even if you can't go into the classroom, you can still hear the children learning and praying," she told him. They proceeded to sit down on the steps of the building. Seeing this woman and

child sitting on the steps, many of the faculty asked what she was doing there. "Waiting," she would answer. When they saw that several hours later she still had not moved, they asked who she was waiting for. "I'm waiting to put my child in school," she would answer simply. After four days the principal had enough. He had seen for himself the determination of this Jewish mother. He made room for her son. 🕒

RIDDLE ANSWER

🕒 03:19:30

BEYOND ELLIS ISLAND THE TRAILBLAZERS, TRIALS, & TRIUMPHS OF AMERICAN JEWRY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

As Jews from Eastern Europe passed through Ellis Island, the majority moved into the Manhattan neighborhood known as the Lower East Side. The Jewish population density there reached proportions of 700 people per square acre. (To put that into perspective, one of the most densely populated cities in the world is Manila, capital of the Philippines, which has a population density of only 185 people per acre!) One of the unfortunate side-effects of living in such conditions was the rise of Jewish gangs made up of 1st or 2nd generation Americans. The plethora of young men (40% of Jewish immigrants were under 18) provided a large pool from which to recruit members and lure young Jews to escape the poverty prevalent in the Lower East Side. Infamous Jewish gangsters Meyer Lansky, Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel, and others had their roots in gangs of the Lower East Side. Thankfully, the phenomenon of Jewish gangsters did not last beyond that generation—it is thought because Jewish gangsters, as opposed to other ethnicities, had no desire to pass on the "family business" to another generation; on the contrary, they wanted their children to earn a legitimate living. 🕒

SOURCES: Hieke, Anton. "Farbrekhsers in America: The Americanization of Jewish Blue-Collar Crime, 1900-1931." 2010. <http://www.aspeers.com/sites/default/files/pdf/hieke.pdf>

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