

## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

### What To Ask For

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR  
RABBI MECHAEL SOROKA

Tisha B'Av is a day we mourn all tragedies we have suffered as a nation, with the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* at the forefront. However, mourning alone is not enough. The mourning must lead to a yearning to return home to our homeland and to rebuild the *Beis Hamikdash*. (Today, with the borders to Israel still closed to most of us, it is somehow easier to relate to that this year). This is what *Chazal* (the sages) refer to as *tzipisa l'yehosua*, anticipating the salvation. The mourning is something *Chazal* clearly outlined for us – increasing in intensity leading up to Tisha B'Av. But how should the yearning look? What is it exactly we are asking for?

I would like to share an idea I heard from one of my rabbeim in the Mir Yeshiva that might shed some insight in to the mission of this time period as well.

Dovid *Hamelech* said “One request I made from G-d that is what I seek, that I should dwell in the house of G-d... and to visit at his sanctuary.” At first glance it is hard to understand this statement – he first asks to dwell in the house of Hashem, but he then says “*L'vaker*, to visit.” It sounds like he just wants to be there temporarily? Some *Meforshim* (commentators) explain the word *L'vaker* comes from the word *boker*, morning, meaning he wants to be there early. Others explain it is from the word *bikkur*, checking into, similar to the idea of checking a *korban* (sacrifice), to investigate whether anything is wrong with an animal that would disqualify it as a *korban*. In truth this is the root for the term *Bikur Cholim* (visiting the sick) as well. The mitzva is not just to visit the sick, but ideally the focus should

be to look after the sick and investigate whether their needs are being met. Are they being taken care of, or is something missing?

Another question still remains though. Dovid said he had “One request.” However it sounds like he was asking for two things: to dwell with Hashem in the *Beis Hamikdash*, and to be the one to take care of all the needs.

We therefore must say that the two are one and the same. In order to properly connect to Hashem and be drawn into His divine presence, it's not enough to yearn to live there, we must desire and be proactive to give to Him as well. We connect to spirituality not just through receiving but by giving of ourselves as well.

We don't just want to be a guest in the house of Hashem, we want it to be our home, and the way to do that is to be a giver as well. We need to intuit what *kedusha* is missing and to add that into our lives, thereby connecting to Hashem and meriting to be the ones to “live” in the *Beis Hamikdash*. It should be rebuilt speedily in our days. 🕊



## THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

THIS WEEK WITH  
RABBI MEIR MINSTER

This week's *parasha*:

Q) It sounds like Moshe was looking for assistance in judging the nation. Was it not Yisro's idea?

A) Rashi seems to compound the question with his comments on the words (*Devarim* 1:9) “I said to you at that time, **saying**, ‘I cannot carry you alone...’” Rashi asks what is the meaning of the superfluous word “saying”? He answers that Moshe was saying that it was not actually his own idea; it was Hashem's idea! So, whose idea, was it?

Rabbeinu Bachya sees from this wording an answer to our question and a direct reference to the previous recounting of the story involving Yisro. Yisro saw the untenable situation of Moshe trying to judge the entire people alone. He suggested that Moshe create a system of judges, but only if Hashem were to agree. With Hashem responding in the affirmative, Moshe had no choice but to declare that he can't continue.

The anthology *Talilai Oros* cites R. Shlomo Bloch, who addresses the question in this way. Despite the difficulties involved, Moshe was prepared to make the self-sacrifices necessary to do this alone. Yisro pointed out to him, however, that to make this work, the Jewish people would have to be willing to also make those same self-sacrifices. If they were asked directly about their willingness, they might be too embarrassed to be honest about their intentions. Yisro suggested that Moshe test them (presumably, with Hashem's consent) by **saying** that it was too hard for him. If the people were to protest and demonstrate their disappointment, that

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## THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

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would indicate that they would be willing to do whatever was necessary to make Moshe's leadership successful. When, instead, they were all too happy to accept the idea of a full system of Judges, they were in fact the ones pushing for this idea.

Alternatively, the Malbim and others suggest that Moshe did not implement Yisro's plan fully at first, hoping to still be able to shoulder more of the burden himself. Only later did Moshe express his frustration and resignation to the need for a full system of judges and local leaders. This approach fits well with the *Midrash* that brings different opinions as to exactly when Moshe was referring to when he said, "I said to you **at that time**, I cannot carry you alone..."

All agree that this disconnect from Moshe, created by this new system, was disastrous and should have been protested. The *Midrash* equates Moshe's use of the word "Eichah (How?)" here in the verse (1:12), "How can I alone carry...?," at a time of tranquility, with the word "Eichah" used by both Yeshaya and Yermiyahu in describing the destruction of Jerusalem and the *Beis Hamikdash* and the exile of the Jewish people. By appreciating what we have

## A SHINING EXAMPLE

Rabbi Bentzion Klatzko tells the story of how at one point, due to the number of Shabbos guests he and his wife were hosting at their home, they decided that making Shabbos services in their own home as well would help facilitate everything in a more comfortable way for their guests. Rabbi Klatzko then went about trying to acquire a *Sefer Torah* and an *Aron*. A little while later he heard of a *Sefer Torah* for sale and went to inquire after it. The man who was selling it happened to be a man who had inherited it from his grandfather, a religious Jew who had had a small *shul* in the Catskill mountains, but the man himself was not observant by any means and had no use for the Torah. Rabbi Klatzko happily took the Torah and moved on to the search for an *Aron*. An ad stating that a Christian organization was selling an *Aron Kodesh* piqued his interest. Inquiring after that as well, the story turned out to be that it was an *Aron* from Europe that had been taken by a church during the holocaust. Again, Rabbi Klatzko happily took it, excited that the search for these items had

lost, may we merit to see their restoration and the return of our Judges, as they were in earlier times. 🙏

*Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! If you would like to submit a question on the parasha, please email it to [parasha@cincykollel.org](mailto:parasha@cincykollel.org). Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.*

## A BA'AL HATURIM FOR YOU

Ba'al Haturim points out that the last letters of the first word of each one of the five books of the Chumash are: *tav, hay, alef, raish, hay*, which have the numerical value of 611. This is the same numerical value as the word "Yiras" meaning "fear of," and the word "Torah." This represents the idea of "*Raishis chochma yiras Hashem*," that the beginning of wisdom (whose source is the Torah), is fear of G-d. 🙏

returned these holy objects back to their roots. After the *minyán* had been installed in the basement of their home, the Klatzkos were asked to host a troubled girl who had run out of her parents' home. The Klatzkos agreed and Ana moved into the basement. At first Ana hardly made any sort of contact with anyone around her, not even keeping her head up at meals. Inexplicably, over a short period she blossomed and was an engaging, sociable young woman. Rabbi Klatzko was very curious and asked Ana, "You are a totally different person. What in the world happened?" "I heard the story you told about the *Sefer Torah* and the *Aron* in the basement finding their way 'home' after many years of being 'away.' I thought if Hashem brings inanimate objects home, He can bring me home as well. So every night I've been here since I heard the story I go to the *Aron* and I pray. I pray to Hashem the He should help me get home again too, and I feel that I am on my way." 🙏

## THE FALSE MESSIAHS OF JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI NOSSON WIGGINS

### THE FRANKISTS (PART I)

To fully understand the development of Frankism, a Sabbatian movement led by the notorious Jacob Frank, some background is necessary.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (formed in 1569), the country with both the largest Catholic population and the largest Jewish population in all of Europe, was divided into four lands or regions: Greater Poland, Little Poland, Volhynia, and Ruthenia. For us Americans, these four lands can be likened to large states which were comprised of many smaller counties. The Jews residing in the Four Lands of the Polish Kingdom were united under an autonomous umbrella organization called *Va'ad Arba Ha-aratzos*, or the Council of the Four Lands. Each of the Four Lands had a chief rabbi who presided over all the local courts in the cities of his country, and, as well, was responsible for collecting taxes to be paid to the government.

The story of Frankism originated in Podolia, a province in the Land of Ruthenia (today in the western part of Ukraine) whose rabbinic seat was in Lwow (Lemberg). We must point out a crucial political and ethnical change that occurred in Podolia which is largely responsible for the development of Frankism. Toward the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (1672), following a bitter war between the Poles and the Turks, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth surrendered the province of Podolia to the Ottoman Empire. For some twenty years Podolia was free from its Polish rules and regulations and was heavily influenced by the neighboring Turks from the south. Although by 1699 Podolia was recaptured and reinstated as Polish territory, its Jewish population never submitted itself to the *Va'ad Arba Ha-aratzos*. Essentially, the Jews of Podolia, who had been independent for nearly two decades and had somewhat merged with their Turkish neighbors from a cultural standpoint, continued their independence in the early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Unlike most crypto-Sabbatian leaders, who as we have explained, operated in a secretive manner, the Sabbatians in Podolia openly practiced Sabbatianism. There were even communal rabbis who swept entire communities into the heresy of Shabbtai Tzvi. Podolian towns such as Buczacz, Nadvorna, Rohaytn, and Zolkiew had a strong presence of Sabbatians. It is in Podolia, and only in Podolia, that we find Jews who, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, stole a sheep, slaughtered it improperly, cooked it in milk, and then merrily consumed it while praying that Shabbtai Tzvi would bring the redemption. And it is in Podolia that Jacob Frank was born in 1726. 🙏