

Parshas Va'eyra

This week's parsha marks the beginning of the plagues that befell the Egyptians. In each plague there is a counter action to a trait exuded by the Egyptians. The story that took place with redemption from Egypt is also a foreshadow of our being redeemed from the current exile.

The parsha opens with Hashem saying how He was revealed to Avraham Yitzchak and Yakov, but with the holiest name of Hashem, He never revealed himself. The first words of the posuk use the Elokim name of Hashem which represents "teva" or nature (they are the same gematria- Teva and Elokim-properly spelled). This is since Hashem used "natural" parts of the world but exposed their opposites, and things went against their natural state. Hashem has the power to do this. Which will also take place in our time when we are redeemed from this golus.

We find that with the signs Moshe used to show his power to Paroah, such as the staff turning into snakes. Paroah got his magicians to perform the same "trick" the difference was that when Moshe's staff consumed the other snakes, it seems it was in stick form (based on the medrish) which is one of the first examples of the wonders that Hashem displayed. Ultimately when Mashiach comes, the natural order will be shaken in a way we can't even comprehend, and the exodus from Egypt is the foreshadow.

- 1) The blood as a plague of the water happened for a few reasons:
 - a. We mentioned last week that the Egyptians thought

they could enslave the Jews without punishment, due to Hashem promising never to bring a Mabul. Hashem showed the Egyptians that even without a mabul He could enact a punishment

- b. Water is a lifeforce, like blood being a lifeforce. All carbon-based lifeforms are comprised mostly of water, especially humans. But water is what is consumed to ensure survival, not blood. The Egyptians were showed that Hashem who provides the lifeforce of everything gives the correct lifeforce, and if you think you Egyptians are in control this is a reminder they are not.
- c. The Nile was a deity to the Egyptians, Hashem was reminding them by poisoning the Nile, that he truly is the ultimate Ruler.
- d. Finally, the Jews were able to become wealthy by charging the Egyptians for water. If a Jew and an Egyptian were drinking from the same pitcher, blood would flow for the Egyptian, and water for the Jew, unless, as the Medrish explains the Egyptian purchased the water from the Jew. This is the beginning of the Jews become "ois" slave. Now not only are they becoming free, but they are also becoming wealthy. As the Jews could never be beholden to the Egyptians for 'letting them

go', lest the Jewish people somehow give credit to the Egyptians when our redemption only arises through the agency of Hashem.

- 2) The frogs are interestingly chosen for a few reasons:
 - a. The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains in a sicha, that frogs are a benign animal, which don't seem to have any value (whereas other animals have medicinal or other purposes in an ecosystem). The benign nature of frogs was used to counter the trait of Paroah who thought of himself as a deity, where there is no chance to do teshuva.
 - b. Frogs displayed traits of Mesiras nefesh, by even jumping into the furnaces. For which Chanania Mishael and Azaria used as the reason for their committing to self-sacrifice. They reasoned that if the frogs can jump into a furnace, how much more so we who serve Hashem can. The frogs therefore highlight the power of mesiras nefesh, which is antithetical to the Egyptian way of life, which is antithetical to a Jewish way of life.
- 3) The lice:
 - a. These were the first plague where the magicians were useless, as the gemara explains they cannot perform magic on something less than the size of a barley. This

begins the counteraction to the people who think they can challenge Hashem, there are places where they are limited, and Hashem is unlimited in His capacity to run the universe.

- 4) The wild animals:
 - a. Generally wild animals don't discern who or what they will attack. Yet here they only attacked the Egyptian livestock. This shows on the power of Hashem
- 5) The theme of Dever and Shchin are similar in showing the power of Hashem over the health of the world
- 6) Barad- the hailstorm, similarly, was the coexistence of two opposites (fire and water/ice) in one form to cause destruction.
 - a. It also shows the power of Mesiras Nefesh, in that we are able to perform deed opposite our nature, and even when we don't want to.

In the Haftora, which derives from Yechezkiel 28:25-29:21. In the Haftora the exodus from Egypt is mentioned, as well as the traits of Paroah who made himself into a deity. Yechezkiel, mentions that the crushing of the empires and their annihilation, puts them in the class of artifacts, and pages in history. Similarly, with Nevuchadnezzar (who is referenced in the chapter). This all came true, which means that the final redemption as referenced will come true as well.

Good Shabbos