

Parshas Beshalach

This week's Parsha, Beshalach, we read about the song the Jews sang after crossing the Yam Suf, praising Hashem. This Shabbos is also called Shabbos Shira, and Parshas HaMon (as we also read about the Manna that Hashem provided to the Jews for sustenance).

The praise the Jews sang wasn't over the destruction of the Egyptians; rather, it was praising Hashem for salvation. Which is why we say this section of the Torah every day in davening and end with the prophecy of Mashiach (see Rashi's questions and answers beginning in Perek 15 about the grammar of Az Yashir).

The important point was that first and foremost, the Jews were praising Hashem, which, in the context of our own salvation and the miracles happening now around us, seems appropriate to draw a parallel.

Baruch Hashem, the day came that all the Hostages are out of the deplorable confines of the Gaza terrorist machine. According to some news, this is the first time in many years that there are no known hostages, deceased or living, that are in Gaza. The release is being touted as an achievement, and many politicians are taking much of the credit for securing the hostages' release under their leadership. But where is Hashem in all this? I have not seen published articles in mainstream news or on WhatsApp channels that explicitly thank Hashem, the Master of the Universe, the provider of all.

In light of this point, I want to thank Hashem, and we all need to take a moment to recognize the miracles Hashem has provided that brought us to

this point. Azi Vezimras Kah (Hashem's might and vengeance were a salvation for me). If our time here on earth and the battles with our enemies are not looked at because it is a way with Hashem, what is the point? Heaven forbid, someone who is Jewish thinks, what's the point, because they don't have Hashem, they can turn on their own, saying perhaps the world is right (and we see this in our time). But if our lives are defined by Torah, and all is for Hashem and from Hashem, then Az Yashir Moshe es Hashira Hazos L'Hashem...

The point is "Hashem Melech Al Kol Haaretz" (as we conclude in davening when we say Az Yashir), which connects to 14:4, I shall be honoured through Pharaoh. Rashi explains that when Hashem takes revenge on the wicked, His name is glorified. When Mashiach comes, the smashing of our enemies will result in the world realizing Hashem Echad Ushemo Echad (the numerical combination of Echad is 26, i.e. the value of the Holy name of Hashem). This level of revelation is similar to the moment the world received the Torah, when Hashem bound holiness into the physical so that the physical could be uplifted for holiness. This only happened after Matan Torah. According to the prophecies of Mashiach, when that comes, the world will recognize Hashem, and this will happen easily. This is also why the Rebbe pushed people to spread Mitzvos through Mivtzoim and even advocated for the 7 Noahide laws, so more people would recognize Hashem. Reading through Beshalach and paralleling it to our times is uncanny, and it is incumbent on us to sing the song praising Hashem. Hashem also guarantees our salvation between Pesukim 15:24-26, that if we listen to

Hashem, all the illnesses from Egypt will not be brought on the Jews, because I am Hashem, your physician.

With this, we can explain the connection between the end of the Parsha and the Shira. The Jews were given Manna, and even though they complained about a lack of food, Hashem provided it to them. The Posuk says 16:16 that each shall take according to his needs, and everyone was provided for exactly as they needed. With Bitachon, one of the critical factors is trusting that Hashem provides exactly what is needed. Recognizing Hashem as the provider for all (a central theme in Shaar Habitachon) is critical to recognizing Him as the saviour, and He will save us, as the Jews were saved from Egypt and sang their song of praise. Furthermore, the law of Shabbos is taught in the same context¹. Because Shabbos is not a day of “rest,” so we relax, it is to recognize the omnipotence of Hashem, and His kingship over us. By stopping for Shabbos and keeping it, we further our mission to connect with Hashem as our Saviour.

We can read the Parsha, and see the Jews then were like us, even though there were open miracles time and time again, they complained. The Posuk tells us this to teach us that yes, complaints may be legitimate, and things may not go as we plan, or in the way we plan. But putting our faith in Hashem is the point, and we see that is what we must do, especially now in our time, when we can explain away miracles as some sort of natural occurrence or human-driven. It's all Hashem. But we must make ourselves a

vessel as well. I heard a great story about the Kichenever Rebbe (from R' Yomtov Yakov, a Chasid I met at a conference) who used to turn his pots over instead of storing them upside down; he would turn them over so the openings faced up. Because an upside-down vessel cannot receive contents, whereas an open vessel is ripe to be filled with blessings. So we must have faith, and recognize Hashem and the miracles, every single second, and sing our song of praise to Hashem.

Good Shabbos

¹ All the testing the Jews did is repeated, because they are all logical complaints. Putting your faith in Hashem takes work and is the goal.