

PARSHAS BO

By HARAV YAAKOV FEITMAN

KEHILLAS BAIS YEHUDAH TZVI

In one of the most famous of the Ramban's essays on Chumash, at the end of this week's Sedra, he explains the place of miracles in our history and our world. Why here? Why does the Ramban focus so strongly on Parshas Bo for this exposition? I believe the answer lies in the surprising word "*hisallalti*." The Torah records that Hashem tells to us relate to our children and grandchildren that He "toyed" or "played" with Egypt. What exactly is the message of this unique word? Can the deadly makos be called a game? Can the years of Jewish suffering in bondage be considered a play? The Chasam Sofer, followed by generations of super-commentaries suggests an approach which encompasses all of Jewish history and our private lives as well.

If we were to look at the surface of Egyptian history as it connects with Am Yisrael, it would appear as if Mitzrayim was the most successful of empires and superpowers. Paroh claims to have created the Nile (Yechezkel 29:3) and is in control of its ebb and flow. Indeed, he is the head of one of the most ancient of cultures and civilizations. He literally makes fun of Moshe Rabbeinu's early claims of his G-d's miraculous powers and summons not only his wise men but even kindergarten children to duplicate Moshe's signs. It is Paroh who bathes with impunity in our children's blood and enslaves us with arrogance, cruelty and apparent finality. Yet, just fast-forward a bit and watch what happens. Paroh is rendered so impotent that, as every Jewish child now knows, he runs around Mitzrayim in the dead of night searching for the very people – Moshe and Aharon – he had just ejected from his palace.

Furthermore, his entire nation is shortly decimated financially and bodily, they are rapidly drowned in the sea and consigned to eternal insignificance and derision. This is the *hisallalti*, the toys which became of the mighty Egyptian army and the game which was played with his illusion of power. Such has been the fate of all civilizations which thought to destroy the Jewish people. They were often able to hurt us and even challenge our existence. But in the end, we triumphed, while most of them disappeared ignominiously in the dustbin of history. As Rav Yaakov Emden famously wrote (in his Siddur), the greatest miracle in Jewish history is that there is a history itself, that we are still alive and have watched all the others fade away. Perhaps that is why the Ramban decided to feature his discussion of miracles at the end of this saga. All of Jewish history teaches us to be suspicious of ephemeral success. No one was more successful than Paroh and no one fell lower and faster. On the other hand, no one has suffered more seeming defeats than Am Yisrael, no one has suffered as much humiliation and tragedy. Yet, as the Novie Michah teaches us, "As the days when you left Egypt, so will I show you wonders." Yetzias Mitzrayim teaches us as Jews to take the long view. Many an individual has wanted to give up and give in to despair. Yet, the story of Am Yisrael reminds us not only not to be depressed but that this is the "game plan," to recognize that it is the end result which counts. We will iyH have Olam Haba and Moshiach. We will be repaid as "*samcheinu kimos inisanu*," according to our suffering. Parshas Bo reminds us to hold our heads high and remember that all the temporary successes cannot compare with the ultimate victory of geulah.

A GUTTEN SHABBOS

HALACHA OF THE WEEK 5779

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In honor of a number of simchos being celebrated in the Shul, this week we will discuss Halachic issues about shiduchim and planning a wedding.

Question: I have heard that it is not a good idea to get married during the second half of the Hebrew month. Is this true?

Answer: Yes. Both Rama (Even Haezer 64:3) and the Mechaber (Yoreh Deah 179:2) rule this way. Additionally, the Nemukei Yosef (end of 5th Perek of Sanhedrin), Ramban (Teshuvos No. 283), Gra (Yoreh Deah) and many others cite this as Halacha. However, the Gra is also quoted to the opposite side, that there is no problem with such scheduling (Keser Rosh 118), as are other Poskim (Aruch Hashulchan 64:10, Teshuvah M'ahavah Yoreh Deah 3:355). Even among those who are strict, some hold that one can get married up to the 18th of the month (Sh'eilas Yaakov 2:6). Others say up to the 22nd of the month (Nidrei Zruzim, Kuntres Yosef Daas).

Question: Is it true that the Chasunah takes place in the Kallah's city?

Answer: Yes, unless both sides agreed otherwise (Teshvos Harashbah hameyuchosos l'Ramban 278; Shach Yoreh Deah 232:43).

Question: From when do the chosson and Kallah need a shomer?

Answer: In pure Halacha, Choson and Kallah do not require a shomer and make go out alone until the Chupah. However, many Poskim (see Edus L'Yisrael end of chapter 1) hold that neither should go out alone from the aufruf, if that takes place as is traditional, the Shabbos before the Chasunah.

Question: Is there any Halachic significance to the Badeken?

Answer: Absolutely. According to Tosfos (Yumah 13b), as followed by the Rama 55a, the badeken represents a *kinyan* – a form of acquisition – since the chassan is in effect “clothing” the kallah. Therefore, to fulfill this shitah, the Mesader Kiddushin often assigns two witnesses to watch the badeken. The chosson and the kallah should also be aware of their presence (Imrei Dovid 29).

Question: I know that the chosson has to receive an aliyah before the chasunah. That's the aufruf. However, is it true that he is obligated to get an aliyah on the Shabbos after the chasunah as well?

Answer: The chosson is obligated to receive an aliyah on the Shabbos after the Chasunah (Levush and Mogen Avrohom end of siman 282 and beginning of 136). The source seems to be that since a chosson is similar to a king and the king must have two sifrei Torah, the chosson receives two aliyos.

Question: I heard of a case where the chosson and the kallah got delayed and arrived only in time for Sheva Berachos. Should they have said all the Sheva Berachos?

Answer: Yes (Ezer Mikodesh 62:8). May we have only simchos iyH.

Question: Must the Chosson and the Kallah eat bread at each Sheva Berachos?

Answer: Yes (Tzitz Eliezer 13:99; Yabia Omer 6:9)

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