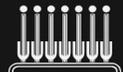




Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



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19 Jan 2019 Parshas Beshalach 13 Shevat 5779

The Bones of Joseph by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

They say adapt or die. But must we jettison the old to embrace the new? Is the choice limited to modern or antiquated, or can one be a contemporary traditionalist? Do the past and present ever co-exist?

At the beginning of this week's Parshah we read that Moses himself was occupied with a special mission as the Jews were leaving Egypt. Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. Over a hundred years before the great Exodus, Joseph made the Children of Israel swear that they would take him along when they would eventually leave Egypt. As viceroy of Egypt, Joseph could not hope to be buried in Israel when he died, as his father Jacob was. The Egyptians would never tolerate their political leader being buried in a foreign land. But he did make his brethren give him their solemn undertaking that when the time would come and all the Israelites would depart they would take his remains along with them.

And so it was that while everyone else was busy packing up, loading their donkeys, and getting ready for the Great Trek into the Wilderness, Moses himself was busy with this mission, fulfilling the sacred promise made to Joseph generations ago.

Now Joseph was not the only one to be interred in the holy land. His brothers, too, were accorded the very same honor and last respects. Yet, it is only Joseph whom the Torah finds it necessary to mention explicitly. Why?

The answer is that Joseph was unique. While his brothers were simple shepherds tending to

their flocks, Joseph was running the affairs of state of the mightiest superpower of the day. To be a practicing Jew while blissfully strolling through the meadows is not that complicated. Alone in the fields, communing with nature, and away from the hustle and bustle of city life, one can more easily be a man of faith. But to run a massive government infrastructure as the most high-profile statesman in the land and still remain faithful to one's traditions — this is not only a novelty, this is absolute inspiration.

Thrust as he was from the simple life of a young shepherd boy into the hub of the nation's capital to juggle the roles of viceroy and Jew, Joseph represented tradition amidst transition. It was possible, he taught the world, to be a contemporary traditionalist. One could successfully straddle both worlds.

Now that they were about to leave Egypt, the Jews were facing a new world order. Gone were slavery and oppression, and in their place were freedom and liberty. During this time of transition, only Joseph could be their role model. They would need his example to show them the way forward into uncharted territory, the new frontier.

That is why the Torah mentions only Joseph as the one whose remains went along with the people. They needed to take Joseph with them so that, like him, they too would make their own transition successfully.

Ever since leaving Egypt, we've been wandering. And every move has brought with it its own challenges. Whether from Poland to America or Lithuania to South Africa, every transition has come with culture shocks to our spiritual psyche. How

booming voice says, "He's right!" Rabbi Goldstein smiles, turns to the other three rabbis, and says to them, "So nu, my argument was correct was it not?" "Okay, okay, so now it's 3 to 2," replies one of the other rabbis.

Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl: 8:45 am
- ◆ Ladies **Shmooze** with *Rebbetzin Estee Stern* 10-10:30 am in the Community Centre. Coffee, tea & refreshments.
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall. L'Chaim by **Milton Burlin** in honour of his father's 1st Yahrzeit.
- ◆ **Smorgasbord of Shiurim.**
- ◆ Mincha: 6:30 pm
- ◆ Shalosh Seudos sponsored by **Yisroel Barouchi.**
- ◆ Shabbos Ends: 7:38 pm
- ◆ **Tu B'Shevat:** Monday 22 Jan

Sydenham's Youth Services Back in Business!

SYDTEENS:
Director: Ari Poyurs
Saul Joseph & Natanya Joseph

SYDKIDZ:
Director: Gilad Kohaly
Rachel Berkowitz, Liron Horowitz, Kayla Drutman & Shaina Sachs

Friday 6pm | Shabbos 10:15am
Don't miss it - see you there!

- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.

G-d took us on a detour to the sea and opened it up for us. He was telling every Jew for all times:

Obstacles are not interruptions to the journey; they are the journey. Keep marching towards the Promised Land. Every challenge along the way will give you deeper insight and renewed power. Just have faith. It will split your sea.

Live & Laugh

Rabbis Bloom, Levy, Goldstein and Morris regularly have theological arguments, and whenever they do, three of them are nearly always in accord against the fourth rabbi. Today, the odd rabbi out is Rabbi Goldstein. But this time, Rabbi Goldstein decides to appeal to a Higher Authority.

"Hashem," he cries out, "I know in my heart that I was right and my colleagues were wrong! I would therefore be most grateful if you could give us a sign to prove to my colleagues that they were wrong."

Although it is a beautiful warm sunny day, as soon as Rabbi Goldstein finishes his prayer, a storm cloud moves across the sky above the four rabbis, rumbles once and then dissolves.

"Aha," says Rabbi Goldstein, "that was a sign from Hashem. I knew I was right."

But the other three rabbis disagree, pointing out that it isn't unusual for storm clouds to form on hot days.

So Rabbi Goldstein prays again. "Hashem," he cries out, "I need a bigger sign to show my colleagues that I was right and they were wrong. Please G-d, please give us a bigger sign."

This time five storm clouds suddenly appear above them and rush towards each other to form one big cloud. Then a lightning bolt slams into a nearby field.

"See," says Rabbi Goldstein to his colleagues, "I told you I was right."

But the other 3 rabbis continue to insist that nothing had happened that couldn't be explained by natural causes.

Then, just as Rabbi Goldstein is getting ready to ask G-d for a gigantic sign to end the other three rabbis' disagreement, the sky turns pitch black, the earth starts to shake vigorously, and a deep,

do you make a living and still keep the Shabbat you kept in the shtetl when the factory boss says "Cohen, if you don't come in on Saturday, don't bother coming in on Monday either!" It was a test of faith that wasn't at all easy. Many succumbed. But many others stood fast and survived, even flourished. It was the test of transition — and those who modeled themselves on Joseph were able to make the transition while remaining committed to tradition.

Democracy and a human-rights culture have made that part of Jewish life somewhat easier, but challenges still abound. In all our own transitions today, may we continue to learn from Joseph.

Parsha Pointers

*Beshalach: Artscroll Chumash pg 366;
Living Torah pg 321*

Soon after allowing the Children of Israel to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh chases after them to force their return, and the Israelites find themselves trapped between Pharaoh's armies and the sea. G-d tells Moses to raise his staff over the water; the sea splits to allow the Israelites to pass through, and then closes over the pursuing Egyptians. Moses and the Children of Israel sing a song of praise and gratitude to G-d.

In the desert, the people suffer thirst and hunger and repeatedly complain to Moses and Aaron. G-d miraculously sweetens the bitter waters of Marah, and later has Moses bring forth water from a rock by striking it with his staff; He causes manna to rain down from the heavens before dawn each morning, and quails to appear in the Israelite camp each evening.

The Children of Israel are instructed to gather a double portion of manna on Friday, as none will descend on Shabbat, the divinely decreed day of rest. Some disobey and go to gather manna on the seventh day, but find nothing. Aaron preserves a small quantity of manna in a jar, as a testimony for future generations.

In Rephidim, the people are attacked by the Amalekites, who are defeated by Moses' prayers and an army raised by Joshua.

The Power of a People

By: Rabbi Shraga Sherman

This week, we get to the miraculous splitting of the Red Sea — a miracle that took place as the Children of Israel were presented with a very difficult situation. The waters raged in front of them; their Egyptian oppressors were bearing down on them from behind. To everyone's amazement, the sea suddenly split before their eyes. While the people crossed over, the normally flowing waters stood still like a wall of protection for the nation of Israel.

Why did the Jews deserve to be saved in such an awesome manner?

The Sages tell us that it was because of the children. The Talmud records that the children who went out of Egypt were the first to recognize G-d. This is a puzzling statement. After all, together with the nation that left Egypt were the great spiritual giants: Moses, Joshua and all the elders of Israel. Yet they were not the first ones to recognize G-d; it was specifically the children — children born and raised in the midst of Egyptian oppression. Nevertheless, they received a fitting and proper education, resulting in their being first to recognize G-d. The Torah even hints that they were able to point with their finger, saying, "This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him."

Education and Guidance

With the splitting of the Red Sea, a special occurrence happened. Not only was the obstacle removed, it was transformed into a wall of protection for the Jewish people, as the verse states: "And the waters were for them a wall to their right and to their left."

This tremendous event of transformation was also due to the children. When a child knows that the only true existence is one of holiness, he or she can feel in a very sincere, simplistic, and natural way that nothing is able to interfere with, and disrupt, the pursuit of fulfilling the will of G-d.

Thus, in effect, there are no obstacles.

Not only during the Exodus from Egypt was the Jewish nation in need of a supernatural event. In every generation, we are constantly in need of

Sydenham Shul 24 Main Street, Rouxville, 2192.

Telephone: 640-5021, Fax: 485-2810

E-mail: sydsbul@sydsbul.co.za

Website: www.sydsbul.co.za

www.facebook.com/sydenhamshul

miracles; as the sages tell us, the Jewish people are compared to a "lamb amongst 70 wolves." The whole foundation of our existence is in essence supernatural, a type of constant, ongoing miracle. The key to meriting this conduit with the Creator, ensuring the survival of the Jewish nation, is proper Jewish education for our children. We must give them correct guidance in the study of all aspects of Torah, in a way that encourages and inspires them to observe and absorb the holy heritage of the Jewish people. And the goal is to accomplish this not in a distant meaningless fashion, but in a way that translates into their daily lives.

The lesson from all this is that if one wishes to be truly blessed, both materially and spiritually, including *nachat* from our children and grandchildren, then the way to that is through engaging our children in true Torah education. The goal is to produce a life and vitality in Judaism not only when they go to synagogue, but constantly. We must imbue our youth with such an appreciation for G-dliness that they will be able to point and cry out, "This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him." Such a foundation will be able to split any sea and transform any obstacle on the path toward G-dly pursuits.

Why the Need to Split the Sea?

*A Lesson on Why the Jews Needed to Travel Through the Red Sea
By: Rabbi Aron Moss*

Question:

Why did the Israelites have to pass through the Red Sea? On my map of the Middle East, the route from Egypt to Israel is directly through the desert. The sea is totally out of the way. G-d led them on a detour, trapping them between the sea and the chasing Egyptians, and then split the sea. Does G-d have no sense of direction?

Answer:

In describing the Exodus, the verse tells us that "G-d did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, which was close by, because G-d said, 'The people might reconsider when they see war, and return to Egypt.'"

Nevertheless, the biblical story is meant to provide us a lesson for our personal lives. So here's

how I understand the words of the sages on this: The earth is comprised of oceans and continents, sea and dry land. The difference between the two is: On dry land, all is open and visible. The trees, animals, mountains and people that occupy it are all easily recognizable. The sea, on the other hand, is a big blue expanse of mystery. Though the sea is teeming with life, when you look at it you can identify nothing; all is hidden beneath the surface.

So it is with a person. Our personality has two layers: our sea and our land. What we know of ourselves, our visible strengths, our tested talents and our known abilities, the elements of our character that we are aware of— these comprise the "dry land" of our personality. But below the surface of our character lies a vast sea of latent talents, inner strengths and untapped abilities that we never knew we had. In the depth of our soul lies a reserve of dormant energy waiting to be discovered. This is our "sea," and even we ourselves are unaware of what lies there.

How can we access this reservoir of potential? How can our sea become dry land? There is only one way. And we know it from the encounter at the Red Sea.

The Israelites had their back to the wall: Egyptians closing in on one side, a raging sea threatening on the other. They had only two options: despair or faith. Logic and reason demanded that they give in. There was no possible way out of their predicament. But faith demanded that they keep marching to the Promised Land. Sea or no sea, this is the path on which G-d has led us, so we have to have faith and march on. And so they did.

It was at that moment, when hopelessness was countered by faith, that the impossible happened, and the sea opened up to become dry land. The most formidable obstacle dissolved into nothingness, without a struggle, just with faith. The people became empowered exactly when they acknowledged G-d as the only true power. By surrendering themselves to a higher force, they discovered the force within them. They split their own sea.

The Jewish people are no strangers to times of challenge. At the very birth of our nation, we needed to learn how to face these challenges. So