



# The Collective Conversation

Weekly Torah Essays from the  
Young Israel of Scarsdale Community



Sefer Shemot

Parshat Beshalach

Sh'vat 5781 / January 2021

## “This is my God and I will Glorify Him”

By Adina Fredman

Parshat Beshalach begins with the story of the Splitting of the Sea, followed by the jubilant song of thanksgiving, Shira Hayam. It is familiar to us as the *שיר אז* prayer we recite every morning. In this song, Moshe and Bnei Yisrael praise God for their deliverance from the mighty Egyptian army, describe the miracle, and look forward to arriving in the Promised Land and building a Mikdash there.

I would like to focus on one phrase of the song: “זה קלי ואנוהו” “this is my God and I will glorify Him.” Rashi suggests two possible roots for the word “ואנוהו”. The first, ג,ו,ה, means home. To support this claim, he cites the Targum Onkelos, who interprets this sentence to mean, ואבני לי מקדש, meaning “I will build a Mikdash, a home, for God.” The second root ג,ו,י, means beauty or glory, changing the meaning of the sentence to “I will beautify God.”

*This teaching of how to beautify mitzvot has recently taken on new meaning for me*

The Gemara in Masechet Kiddushin 133b explains what it means to beautify God.

התנאה לפניו במצוות : סוכה נאה, לולב נאה, שופר נאה, ציצית נאה ספר תורה נאה

*Beautify yourself before Him with mitzvot: a beautiful succah, lulav, shofar, ritual fringes, a Torah scroll.*

This teaching of how to beautify mitzvot has recently taken on new meaning for me. What is a beautiful succah? One with half walls or an open side, allowing us to fulfill the obligation of succah while keeping our families safe. What are beautiful tzitzit? Those tied to the tallitot wrapped around winter coats and ski caps that fly in the wind as we daven outside in sub-

freezing temperatures. These are a testament to how sacred the idea of glorifying God's name, through communal prayer, is to our community.

The Gemara brings an additional explanation.

אבא שאול אומר: " ואנוייהו" הוי דומה לו. מה הוא חנון ורחום אף אתה היה חנון ורחום

*Abba Shaul interprets the word "ואנוייהו" as "אני והוא", "God and I." We are commanded to be like God, and glorify Him by adopting His qualities of compassion and mercy.*

This idea is expanded by the Torah Temimah (Rabbi Baruch Epstein 1860 - 1942). He notes that Abba Shaul does not disagree with the first opinion in the Gemara. Rather, he expands the definition. The mitzvot listed in the Gemara are all examples of *בין אדם למקום*, relating to the relationship between God and people. Abba Shaul expands the list of mitzvot to include the *בין אדם לחברו*, the interpersonal commandments. The Torah

Temimah teaches that in order to truly glorify God's name, we must be meticulous in both our ritual and interpersonal conduct.

May we continue to have many opportunities to do so.

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**Adina** and Steve Fredman have been members of the Young Israel of Scarsdale since 1984 and were blessed to raise three children in this community. Their children, Sara and Robert Aeder, moved here in 2017. Adina is a member of the Maharat Executive Kollel and teaches Tanach in the Maharat Beit Midrash Program.

*Want to write a Parsha essay?*

*Please contact Steve Smith at [LivingTorahFund@gmail.com](mailto:LivingTorahFund@gmail.com)*

**The Collective Conversation** is a project of the Young Israel of Scarsdale and the YIS Living Torah Fund

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