

Bo

Repeated several times in Parsha Bo, “You shall observe this as an institution for all time, for you and for your descendants.” The complete story of Passover, the rules of removing and not eating leaven, the redemption of the first born, the ritual of tefillin and the remembrance of what the Lord did for the Jewish people are storied in Parsha Bo. Bo, the Parsha that is for all time, for all generations, for every Jew. Remembering how for 430 years the ears of Gd heard the suffering of our ancestors and decided to finally answer their cries. We are to remember as humans the Master Architect of the World sees and hears and reacts. “Where was Gd?” The famous question throughout history, and the person that asked that question in the 200th year did not realize the answer, but the person that asked in in the 430th year of slavery saw the answer. Where is Gd is the age-old question but understanding the answer can only be realized when redemption takes place. This was the ancient Israelites liberation; it was the beginning of their purpose.

The name “The Lord” is used in this Parsha to denote Mercy. But what was the word Gd used for Pharoah as there was no mercy for him or his people? The beginning of the Parsha (chapters 10 and 11) demonstrates that Gd is unleashing this extreme power of nature to cause the Egyptians a cry they have not heard before or will ever hear again. The lasts few plagues were harsh: Locusts, darkness and the final plague of the death of the first born. Gd and Pharoah had severe conflict. In the story Pharoah acknowledges Gd after the plague of locusts and admits his guilt. *“I stand guilty before the Lord you Gd and before you. Forgive my offense just this once and plead with the Lord your Gd that He but remove this death from me. And Moses pleaded with the Lord, and the Lord caused a shift to a very strong wind and lifted the locusts. Not a single locust remained.”* (10:16-19) The words are Pharoah’s, and the scene is Gd and Pharoah. The Torah doesn’t even give one clue as to what Moses said to Gd to persuade him, except to say Moses pleaded with Him to stop the plague, but nothing detailed is given. The Torah does not leave out or add detail for the sake of padding a story, the Torah is telling us to focus on Gd. Focus on the miracle of the natural wonders, focus on that when man thinks he is “gd like” and even has powers to suppress and to dictate to a society, he is nothing more than a tyrant, but he is no Gd. “Not in man do I trust, nor on any angel do I rely, but on the Gd of heaven who is the Gd of

truth, whose Torah is truth, whose prophets speak truth and who abounds in acts of love and truth. In Him I trust.”

These life changing events were the imprint of an all-encompassing character, Gd. All human emotions deployed by this indescribable aura: Anger, jealousy, mercy, love, fight, bullying. It was a real fight between Pharoah and Gd, and Gd was going to mark the final bout as the beginning of the months, as it was now going to be the first of the months of the year. (12:1) All the wonderous acts, the date or the winner, it was never to be forgotten.

Possibly the doubters, or the people in whatever year of tyranny they suffer, do not believe there is really a Master Orchestrator of the World. Just think today, in 2022, we know the story of our Exodus, Parsha Bo, from our childhood and we will retell this story until our death, because as it is repeated in the Torah, “You shall observe this as an institution for all time, for you and for your descendants. We are to remember what Gd did for us in Egypt.”