

INSIGHTS from the SEDRA

Insights from the Sedra is a project of the Scholar's Kollel of Great Neck. It aims to provide several questions and answers about the Sedra, culled from various commentaries, including the following: Baal Haturim, Darash Moshe, Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, Torah Treasures by Dov Furer, Wellsprings of Torah by Alexander Friedman, and Kol Dodi by Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Great Torah Lights by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman, Something To Say by Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser, The Vilna Gaon, Growth Through Torah by Zelig Pliskin and The Call of the Torah.

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Ruvane & Stephanie Vilinsky in memory of Tzvi Ben Yakov & Shimon Ben Pinchus z"l**

ותשם בה את הילד

"She placed the boy into it..." (2:3)

It is interesting to note that all the verbs used in describing the hiding of *Moshe* and his later being placed in the basket are in the feminine form: *vateireh*, *vatitspineihu*, *yachla*, *vatikach*, *vatachmera*, and *vatasem* – everything was done by *Yocheved* and *Miriam*. *Amram* had no say in the matter; the leadership was taken away from him and given to the righteous midwives. G-d made *Yocheved* and *Miriam* the leaders; decision-making was taken from *Amram* and given over to these women. (Rav Soloveitchik)

ותרד בת פרעה...ותרא את התבה...ותשלח את אמתה ותקחה

"Pharaoh's daughter went down...she saw the basket...she sent her maidservant, and she took it." (2:5)

The Torah does not mention the name of *Pharaoh's* daughter. However, it is mentioned in *Divrei Hayamim* (4:18) "And these are the sons of *Batya*, daughter of *Pharaoh*, which *Mered* took." Our Sages say that the name *Batya* was given to her only afterwards as a sign of thanks for saving *Moshe*. Hashem told her: "You called My son, *Moshe* and I therefore call you My daughter, *Biti* or *Batya*." (Torah Gems)

וירא איש מצרי מכה איש עברי מאחיו ויפן כה וכה וירא כי אין איש ויר את המצרי

"And he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, of his brethren...he turned this way and that and saw that there was no man, so he struck down the Egyptian..." (2:11-12)

The *Midrash* asks with what *Moshe* slay the Egyptian. According to one interpretation, he slew him with his bare fist. According to another interpretation, he slew him with a shovel, and still another interpretation posits that *Moshe* slew him with the Ineffable Name.

Some think that we can conquer our oppressors by mere force. Others hold that we can overpower them with the tools we use for work. But the fact is that only with the help of the word of G-d and with faith in His Name, can we overcome the many oppressors who smite us with their whips. Without the aid of the Ineffable Name, both the fist and the shovel are of no use.

(Wellsprings of Torah)

ויאמר אלקים אל משה אהיה אשר אהיה ויאמר כה תאמר לבני ישראל אהיה שלחני אליכם

“Hashem said to Moshe, ‘I will be what I will be.’ He said, ‘This is what you shall say to the children of Israel, “I will be” has sent me to you.” (3:14)

Why is Hashem referred to as *I will be what I will be*? This brings about repentance. Just as man regrets his transgressions and says *I will be good* from this day forward, Hashem immediately said *“I too will be with you and bestow upon you my Divine Presence.”* (R’ Yaakov Y. of Pshischa)

Hashem’s emblem is *emet* – truth (*Shabbat 55*) and as far as *Moshe’s* question to Hashem how he can assure *Bnei Yisrael* that this prophecy will come true, Hashem replied that His Name *“I will be as I will be”* is alluding to truth. The word *emet* in *gematriah* is equal to 441. *“Eheyeh”* is equal to 21. *“Eheyeh”* is written twice, $21 \times 21 = 441$. In *Mussaf* of the *Yomim Noraim*, we therefore say, *אשר אהיה באהיה* בהגוי אמת הדין שהוא דיין אמת – *All believe that He is the true judge, whose name is expressed as I will be as I will be.”* (R’ Avraham Mordechai of Gur)

זה שמי לעולם

“This is My Name forever...” (3:15)

The Hebrew word *forever* is לעולם, but here it is written without a “*vav*,” and is spelled לעולם. Thus, it can mean, *for concealment*. In referring to Hashem’s name י-ה-ו-ה Hashem said, *“This is My Name to conceal*. This means that it is forbidden to pronounce it as it is written. When we read the Torah, we always read it as *“Adona-i”* or *“Elokim”*, depending on the vowels. If one pronounces the Name, he can lose his portion in the World to Come. (Sanhedrin)

בני בכרי ישראל

“My firstborn son is Israel.” (4:22)

The first-born son is given the distinction of receiving a double share of his father’s inheritance since he was the son who first made him a father. Since the people of Israel is that nation which, by proclaiming the belief in G-d, in His Providence and in His Almighty power, first caused G-d to be acknowledged as the Father of the Universe, it, too, can lay claim to the title and privileges of a “first-born” son. (Meshech Chochmah)

SHABBAT SHALOM

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