

Sparks of Light Torah Portion Behalosecha

Tractate Psachim 120b [The Haggadah says: A story about Rebbi Eliezer, Rebbi Yehoshua, Rebbi Elazar, the son of Azariah, Rebbi Akiva, and Rebbi Tarfon who performed the Seder in B'nei Brak.] Why did they not make the feast in Yerushalaim? Why did they specifically [choose] B'nei Brak? Why suddenly B'nei Brak? It is written in the B'nei Issaschar that B'nei Brak-בני ברק equals the numerical value of “The Satan-השטן”-364. [They performed the Seder in B'nei Brak in order] to subjugate the Satan. [The Rav returns to the question:] It is written in [Tractate] Sanhedrin 32b: [One should go to a proper *Beis Din* (Jewish court). One should go to [the *Beis Din* of] Rebbi Eliezer in Lud or to [the *Beis Din* of] Rebbi Yehoshua [in Pakkien etc.]. [These sages lived outside of B'nei Brak. Why did they choose to perform the Seder specifically in B'nei Brak?] What is the relevance of B'nei Brak that all of them traveled to make the feast [of the Seder] in B'nei Brak? Why did you travel to B'nei Brak? We must travel to B'nei Brak; so is written in the Haggadah.

Rather, the entire idea is “To [the *Beis Din* of] Rabbi Akiva in B'nei Brak.” It is written that the [interpretation method of] *drash* [elucidation]¹ is [the specialty of] Rebbi Akiva. Rebbi Akiva would infer that in Egypt, they [the Egyptians] were plagued with fifty plagues and upon the Sea, 250. [Rebbi Akiva infers this from the following verse.] “His burning anger, wrath, indignation, trouble, a band of deadly messengers.” They all traveled to Rebbi Akiva and sat there the entire night and learned about the plagues. When we learn about the plagues, plagues fall upon the entire world.² There is Corona in the entire world; it is a type of death plague; the plague of death plague. “And you all; do not exit the entrance of your houses until morning” (Shmos 12:22). It was forbidden to leave the houses [similar to current affairs].

[The Rav now compares the current affairs of being restricted from going to the Kosel due to the Coronavirus to the restrictions from going to the Beis Hamikdash during the era of Yeravam, the son of Nevat.] People who would be *oleh regel* (pilgrimage to Yerushalaim during the three festivals of Peisach, Shavuos, and Succos) were unable to. Now Shar Shechem (the Damascus Gate) is closed and locked. Shar Yafo (Jaffa Gate) is closed and locked with a patrol of blockades and police cars. It is impossible to be *oleh regel*. Just like during the era of Yeravam, the son of Nevat. “But you have been a snare to Mitzpah and a net spread over Tavor” (Hosha 5:1). They made blockades on Mount Tavor. During the era of Yeravam, the son of Nevat, they made blockades on Mount Tavor. They would ask the person; where are you going? If he says to Jenin [an Arab village in Israel], they say ok. However, someone would spy on him; a wagon with four horses. He [the person attempting to be *oleh regel*] says, I'm travelling to Jenin, to Shechem, to Yosef Hatzadik; they would spy after him. If they saw him continuing past Shechem, he continues on southwards, they see him up until Ramallah; they see how he

¹ There are four general methods of interpreting the Torah; the simple explanation (פשוט), hint (רמז), elucidation (דרש), and secret (סוד).

² The Rav explained in a lesson prior to the global outbreak of the Coronavirus that the Coronavirus was intended to be a plague upon the Jews. Only through the intervention of the Tzadikim, was it deterred away from us. (Unfortunately, however, the moment the Rav was taken to prison, the virus suddenly spread globally, including in the Land of Israel.) Perhaps, the importance of drawing the plagues to the world is to remove the plagues that were intended to come upon us. In addition, the plagues reveal G-d's providence. Seemingly, the Sages understood that through celebrating the Seder Night specifically in Rebbi Akiva's city, they would be capable of drawing the plagues away from us and draw Divine Providence.

passes Ramallah [towards Yerushalaim]. They killed him; let him be stabbed with a sword! Past Ramallah, you're already for sure traveling to Yerushalaim!

This is written in Hoshea chapter 5. "But you have been a snare to Mitzpah and a net spread over Tavor" in Mitzpah there were blockades. Upon Mount Tavor, there were blockades, and in each blockade, they would ask him, where are you going? If he says to Shechem, to Yosef Hatzadik, to Jenin to buy vegetables for cheap; tomatoes for cheap [they would let him through]. In Jenin it's half price; infinite terrorists, but the price makes it worth it! Everything is half price. So, we are traveling to Jenin to buy vegetables. But it is forbidden to buy vegetables there; only with the supervision of the Badatz. He continued to travel to Shechem and there were tomatoes for half price with the supervision of the Badatz. There was someone who wanted to buy tomatoes in Yerushalaim. "But you have been a snare to Mitzpah and a net spread over Tavor." Now Shar Yafo is closed and locked with patrols and with police cars. Whoever will be *oleh regel* is subject to the death penalty!

However, Aviyah, the son of Yeravam, the son of Nevat was 1.8 meters [tall]. The moment that his turn came to guard with the blockades, he opened all of the patrols along with the police cars. With the patrols; we will ascend to Yerushalaim to be *oleh regel* to the Kosel! [And all of Israel will lament over him [Aviyah] and bury him; he alone] shall be brought to burial since there was good in him" (Kings a: 14:13). And Isabel, the dogs licked her blood.³ From the entire house of Yeravam, no remembrance will be left! So, said Achiyah Hashiloni.

Achiyah Hashiloni, says Rashi, lived for 700 years. He was from the ones who left Egypt. Since the exodus of Egypt until Yeravam, the son of Nevat, 700 years had passed. [Rashi explains that] he was [at least] 56 [years old] when they left Egypt. [This is inferred since there is a tradition that] Achiyah was alive during Amram's [Moshe's father] era. If he saw Amram, he [would have been] 56 [years old during the exodus from Egypt]. All of this a gemara in [Tractate] Bava Basra 121b. [The gemara assumes that Amram was alive for at least a day of Yaakov's life]. Since [Amram passed away at the age of 137], behold he passed away [at least] 154 years after they [Yaakov's family] entered Egypt (137 plus the last 17 years of Yaakov's stay in Egypt=154). Until the exodus from Egypt [which was 210 years after Yaakov entered Egypt], this equals 56 years.

[The amount of time of the exile in] Egypt equals 210. [Seemingly, part of the following calculation was misunderstood.] They were there [in the desert] for forty years. 210 plus 50 is exactly 300. And another 440 years until the building of the Beis Hamikdash is 740 years. By the time the Beis Hamikdash was built, 440 years passed. [Until then] the Mishkan was in Shiloh, afterwards in Nov, and then in Givon. King Shlomo went to Givon to the Great Alter in Givon. From the time that he went to Givon until he built the Beis Hamikdash equals eleven years. And another forty year that Shlomo reigned equals already almost 800 years. And then Yeravam, the son of Nevat came; he also reigned for 21 years. We reach 810 years.

Achiyah lived for 810 years. And the wife of Yeravam, the son of Nevat came to him weeping that her son is sick, Achiyah is sick; deathly sick with Corona! What's going to be now with my son? She was disguised, however, he said; no, you're the wife of Yeravam. I recognize you; I see you; you can't disguise yourself! She went and disguised herself like an Arab woman;

³ Seemingly, this is relevant to the lesson since she as well did not merit to be buried; similar to most of the House of Yeravam.

she went [to him] with five burkas. He says, no, you're the wife of Yeravam, the son of Nevat. I'm telling you that no remembrance will be left from the House of Yeravam, the son, of Nevat! [And all of Israel will lament over him and bury him; he alone] shall be brought to burial since there was good in him." What is the good thing? He went with all of the patrols; he went with all of the police cars, with a hundred police cars, he ascends to Yerushalaim. A fire burned within him. He would travel with a hundred police cars; we are traveling to the Kosel! We will pray; the blessing of the kohanim. This year there was no blessing of the kohanim. A terrible thing; such a thing has not been since the Creation of the World. But he did the blessing of the kohanim and was *oleh regel*; he took all of the patrols with him, along with the blockades and placed them in the Kosel.

Arabs, Moabites, and Ammonites would throw rocks. It is written that they would throw rocks constantly. Until Nechemia, they would throw rocks; until Nechemia arrived and he had an approval from the Pasha that whoever will throw a stone will be hung upon a tree. Nechemia came and said that whoever will bother them, to the pilgrims, will have a tree taken from his house and they will hang him upon the tree. Every person will be hung upon his tree; upon his personal tree that he prepared. This was the private tree of Haman; every person has the right to be hung upon his tree.

When was Haman hung? On Tuesday [the 16th of Nissan, the first day of Chol HaMoed Peisach]. After fasting on the Seder Night and after waiting three days [in fasting], Haman merited to be hung immediately upon the Seder Night on the first day of the counting [of the Omer]...

Unfortunately, we did not merit hearing the duration of the lesson