

In this week's *Parashah*, we find the "Four Expressions of Redemption" (6:6-7), "I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt; I shall rescue you from their service; I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments; I shall take you to Me for a people." The *Talmud Yerushalmi* teaches that the four cups of wine that we drink at the *Pesach Seder* parallel these four expressions.

But how do these four expressions parallel the four cups? R' Zvi Hirsch Ferber z"l (1879-1966; rabbi in London, England) suggests: The first cup of wine is used for *Kiddush*, in which we say, "He chose us from among all other nations." This parallels "I shall take you to Me for a people."

We recite the *Haggadah* over the second cup of wine. This parallels "I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt."

Over the third cup, we recite *Birkat Ha'mazon*, in which we speak the praises of *Eretz Yisrael*. Were we to merit it, the Land would be exceptionally productive with minimal effort on our part. This parallels "I shall rescue you from their service," *i.e.*, serving the land.

Finally, we recite *Hallel*, praising *Hashem* for His miracles, over the fourth cup. This parallels "I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments."

R' Ferber adds: The four cups also allude to the four exiles that we have endured. Though we are still in exile, we drink to celebrate the fact that *Hashem* saves us from oppressors in every generation. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Kerem Ha'Zvi*)

Shabbat

"*Baruch atah Hashem, Who sanctifies the Sabbath.*"

(From the *Shabbat* prayers and *Kiddush*)

On *Yom Tov*, the parallel blessing concludes: "Who sanctifies *Yisrael* and festivals," whereas the blessing we recite on *Shabbat* does not mention "*Yisrael*." The reason for this distinction is that we (*Yisrael*) have a *Mitzvah* to sanctify the new moon, which gives us some control over when the festivals will occur. In contrast, *Shabbat* comes every seven days because G-d sanctified the seventh day. We have no input in that scheduling.

R' Matisyahu Salomon z"l (1937-2024; *Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Gateshead Talmudical College-Etz Yosef in England and Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, N.J.; he passed away last week) elaborates on this distinction using a parable: A king sent a message to one of his subjects, a simple farmer, that he was coming to visit the latter in his home. The farmer immediately began cleaning his home, making necessary repairs, and generally preparing his home for the king's arrival. Of course, the farmer's joy when the king actually arrived was immense! Even greater, however, was the farmer's joy when the king invited him to attend the dedication of the new royal palace. There, the gleaming doorknobs, the fine foods, and the pomp and circumstance were not artificially contrived for one occasion; rather, they were genuine.

R' Salomon explains: We have some control over the timing of *Yom Tov*; therefore, it is if *Hashem* is coming to visit us. In contrast, *Shabbat* marks the completion of Creation, the dedication of *Hashem's* palace, so-to-speak. As visitors in that palace, we are obligated to take note of all of the good things that *Hashem* created and of the kindness that He does for us. After all, He could have created a world where we eat only bread and water. This, says R' Salomon, is the idea behind the *Mitzvah* of *Oneg Shabbat* / enjoying food and other delights on *Shabbat*. - **Continued in box inside** -

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"The River shall swarm with frogs . . ." (7:28)

"Only in the River shall they remain." (8:5)

R' Gavriel Wolf Margolis z"l (1847-1935, rabbi of Grodno, Belarus, and later Boston, Massachusetts) writes: The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 77b) teaches, "Nothing that *Hashem* created lacks a purpose." Likewise, *Midrash Kohelet Rabbah* states, "Even things that appear to you to be superfluous are essential to the world's existence." It follows, writes R' Margolis, that if a creation is present in one place and not in another, *Hashem* has a reason for making it so. For example, there is a reason why He made crocodiles native to Egypt and not to Grodno or Boston. It may be for ecological reasons or it may be for a reason we do not know.

Given that, asks R' Margolis, where did the frogs that infested Egypt in the Second Plague come from? Wherever frogs were already present, they were there for a reason. *Hashem* would not have taken frogs from other places and brought them to Egypt, as they were necessary where they were. Rather, *Hashem* told Moshe, "The River shall swarm with frogs," i.e., new frogs. [Perhaps this is the idea behind the well-known *Midrash* cited by *Rashi* z"l (8:2) that only one frog came out of the Nile, and it thereafter split into many frogs each time an Egyptian struck it.]

R' Margolis continues: Likewise, when the plague was about to end, Moshe told Pharaoh that, "Only in the River shall they remain." Do not think, Moshe said, that the frogs that infested your country were the ones that naturally live in the Nile. Those frogs never left the Nile and will continue to live there once the plague is over. Only the new frogs that were created for purposes of the plague will die.

The same thing is true of the Fourth Plague, *Arov* / the swarm of wild animals that invaded Egypt. We read (8:17), "For if you do not send out My people, behold, I shall incite against you, your servants, your people, and your houses, the swarm of wild beasts; and the houses of Egypt shall be filled with the swarm, and even the ground upon which they are." Why, asks R' Margolis, was it necessary to add, "And even the ground upon which they are"? If they will be in the houses, certainly they will be on the ground around the houses! Moshe was telling Pharaoh: *Hashem* is not like a king who moves soldiers from one location to another as needed, leaving some locations empty of soldiers in order to reinforce other places. A swarm of wild animals will invade your homes, but not because *Hashem* relocated them from elsewhere. "Even the ground upon which they are" currently will continue to have animals, because, if *Hashem* put them there in the first place, then those places need those animals. Rather, *Hashem* will miraculously cause swarms of animals to invade Egypt without taking them from other places. (Torat Gavriel)

"Moshe spoke before Hashem, saying, 'Behold, Bnei Yisrael did not listen to me, so how will Pharaoh listen to me, when I have sealed lips!'" (6:12)

R' Yehonatan Eybeschütz z"l (Central Europe; 1690-1764) explains the logic of Moshe's argument: Our Sages say that the *Shechinah* "spoke through Moshe voice," meaning that Moshe's speech impediment was not discernable when he prophesied. However, *Hashem* spoke to Moshe in Hebrew, which Pharaoh did not understand. When Moshe translated his prophecies into the Egyptian language, it was no longer *Hashem* speaking; it was Moshe, and his speech impediment was noticeable. Pharaoh could argue: If your G-d is as powerful as you claim, why can He not do something as simple as healing your speech impediment?!

Why, in fact, did *Hashem* not heal Moshe? Precisely in order to give Pharaoh the freedom to deny the truth of Moshe's prophecy.

(Tiferet Yehonatan)

This verse is an example of the type of argument known as a *Kal Va'chomer* (literally, "light and heavy"): The Jewish People had good reasons to believe me, but they did not accept what I said. Why then should I expect Pharaoh to believe me?

R' Tzvi Abba Gorelick z"l (*Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshiva Gedolah Zichron Moshe in South Fallsburg, N.Y.; died 2010) explains Moshe's argument as follows: *Bnei Yisrael* heard the *Shechinah* speaking through me; nevertheless, they did not accept what I was saying. How then will Pharaoh accept what I am saying when I speak in my own voice with my speech impediment? (Pirkei Mikra)

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R' Salomon continues: Many of the foods that we eat on *Shabbat* would seem to be the food of poor people--for example, roasted potatoes, gefilte fish, and other dishes made from seemingly inferior parts of the animal. Historians might argue that this is because, for much of history, our ancestors were, in fact, poor people who had to economize and make the most of everything they had. However, writes R' Salomon, there is a deeper message here: The pleasures of *Shabbat* are intended to cause us to reflect on *Hashem's* kindness, and we wish to see *Hashem's* kindness in everything--even in inferior foods. *Hashem's* world is so wonderful that delicious foods can be made even out of seemingly inferior items. (Matnat Chaim: *Shabbat* p.181)