



# TAL

## BESHALACH 5775

### THE COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

#### What Proportion Of The Jewish Nation Left Egypt?

**Rabbi Jonathan Tawil**



The Jews finally left Egypt. What a sight – millions of slaves freed in the most magnificent way! The Torah tells us, "So Hashem turned the people toward the way of the Wilderness to the Sea of Reeds. The Children of Israel were Chamushim when they went up from Egypt." (13:18). Chazal go to lengths to describe what is exactly meant by the word "Chamushim". Rabenu Bachya explains the word "Chamushim" to imply that the Bnei Yisrael were armed with weapons when they left Egypt. Although a nation under HaShem's direct protection should not need to bear arms to defend itself, the Torah nevertheless demands that we do

so. By conducting ourselves in as normal and natural a manner as possible, we minimize the need to deviate from the laws of nature, through which Hashem controls the universe. If necessary, Hashem will work miracles on our behalf, but we must try to minimize His miraculous input and focus on our Hishtadlut. Rashi and the Pesikta D'Rav Kahana 11:11 explain that the word "Va'Chamushim" is spelled without a "Vav". This leaves it open to be read as "Chomesh", which means "one-fifth", and implies that only one-fifth of all the Jews in Egypt actually left with Moshe. The majority, who were unwilling to

**Shabbat Begins 16:30 Shabbat Ends 17:41**

assume a Torah lifestyle, refused to leave, and thus perished during the plague of darkness so that the Egyptians would not witness their deaths. They were so assimilated, they had gotten used to the Egyptian lifestyle – why should they leave? On the contrary, now that they were free, they wished to stay and live in Egypt as free citizens; they felt there was no need to make an effort, go through the wilderness on a long track to fight a war with the seven nations in Israel and conquer a land they knew little about.

Hashem saw this as a lack of appreciation and it was a decision that caused their demise - they chose to be like Egyptians and therefore they were punished together with the Egyptians. Four fifths of the Bnei Yisrael perished and only one fifth came out of Egypt.

But we have to ask ourselves: taken at face value, this Midrash is almost too astounding to believe. Did only one-fifth of the Jewish people really leave Mitzrayim, while all the rest perished? Why is there no record in the Torah of such a monumental tragedy, and how could the Egyptians fail to notice such a massive loss of life?

Moreover, there is an interesting Mechilta that brings an opinion that states that it wasn't one in five that survived the plague; rather it was one in fifty, or even one in five hundred, or possibly even more (as sworn to by R. Nehorai)! This p.t.o.

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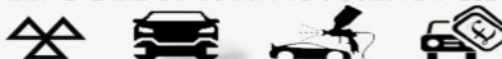
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Mechilta begs explanation. Is it possible that so many of the Bnei Yisrael died? Are we to think that only one in every 500 Jews escaped Egypt?

R Shimon Schwab gives an awesome explanation.

When Kayin killed Hevel, Hashem appeared to Kayin and told him "Kol Dmai Achicha" – "your brother's blood is calling out from the earth." Our Sages ask why did Hashem use the word "Dmai" – which seems to mean "bloods" – in the plural? Surely he only killed Hevel – one person and therefore Hashem should have said "Kol Dam Achicha?" Our Sages explain that Hashem was referring to all the potential future generations of Hevel that had now been killed through Kayin's one action. Kayin's murderous act caused the blood of all the future generations to rise up against him – that is the meaning of "Demai" in the plural.

Similarly, when Moshe killed the Egyptian task master and the Pasuk

states he looked "Koh VeKoh",



Rashi explains this to mean that Moshe, with his Ruach Hakodesh, looked into all the future generations of this Egyptian and saw that there was no righteous person to come from him. It is only then that he killed the Egyptian.

R Shimon explains in a similar light that the Midrash here is not to be understood in the literal sense. Rather the Midrash is referring not

only to those that died in Egypt, but also to all those future generations of Jews that were to come from these people.

In reality, only a select few failed to make the grade and perished in Mitzrayim. Where the Midrash claims that only one-fifth (or one five hundredth) left is to help place that loss into perspective. If we were to take that relatively small number of Jews and extrapolate the number of their descendants (that they surely would have produced in a few generations), their loss becomes exceedingly great. Their numbers would total in the millions, and exceed the number of Jews who actually left Egypt. Understood thusly, the Midrash teaches us how tragic the loss of even a single Jew really is when viewed with a wide-angle lens.

Sometimes our actions might seem small – we might think nothing of them – but the truth is that their ramifications can last forever.

This week's parasha takes place when the Children of Israel were finally released from their Galout that last 210 year in Egypt. The nation made their way from Egypt to the Sea, where each and every one attained prophesy. In the prophetic Song On The Sea, רישׁי זא the nation declared in unison הו ונאור ילא הו "This is my G-d..." (Exodus 15:2). They could point with their finger and prophetically identify G-d. One might think that this is the pinnacle of one's existence, and the top rung of the ladder of success, but a closer look at the parasha reveals a different standard by which to measure true achievement.

Rabbi Shalom Noach Brezovsky, the Slonimer Rebbe, of blessed memory, comments on the Pasouk "And G-d was going before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them on the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to illuminate for them to go by day and

by night" (Exodus 13:21).with a Chasidic explanation. He expresses that "by day" refers to the times when everything is bright, and going well. "By night" refers to times when life is filled with difficulties, and darkness characterizes one's life

**"One must continue seeking G-d's will in either situation; to ask the question: "what does G-d want from me in this situation?"**

experiences. The main thing in both situations: "To go by day and by night." One must continue seeking G-d's will in either situation; to ask the question: "what does G-d want from

me in this situation?" The emphasis is on having an approach, not panicking, not becoming petrified and unable to cope - to keep going.

Later in the parsha, after the Children of Israel passed through the Sea of Reeds, they went into the wilderness, and they came to a place called Marah, named after the bitter (mar) water which they found there. The Torah states (Exodus 15:25) "...there He (G-d) gave him (the nation) statutes and judgements, and there He tested him." They were thirsty, and they complained inappropriately. G-d's response; give them laws to learn and observe. "And He said: "if you will surely listen to the voice of Hashem, your G-d, and you will do what is right in His eyes, and you will

p.t.o.

## Parasha Insights

**Rabbi Mordechai Fhima**



hearken to His commandments, and you will guard His statutes, all of the disease which I placed upon Egypt I shall not place upon you, for I am G-d your healer. (Ibid. 15:26).

The message is: What is there to do when things are going bad? Keep going and immerse oneself in performing commandments.

Now we had a terrorist attack in Paris 2 weeks ago and people asking what can we do. should we increase security? speak to the authority? yes we must make all effort possible to stay protected but

the main thing we should do is increase our effort performing commandments of Torah and Mitsvot.

Subsequently the Children of Israel find themselves hungering for food. G-d gives them the heavenly Manna. But not so fast. There are laws which go along with it. Don't leave it overnight, and don't go out to collect it on Shabbos.

The greatness we are capable of reaching is not the result of how elevated we can get at the best times, but rather by being consistent

through all the situations we find ourselves in. The prophesy attained at the Sea of Reeds was a gift given to the people at that time of the birth of our nation. However, the subsequent lessons which they learned in those critical beginning months of our nationhood, and taught us, is that true greatness begins and ends with knowledge of Torah, and dedication of one's actions to living up to that knowledge "to go by day and by night."

This devar Tora is base on Rabbi Chaim David Green

## Halachot Of Kiddush Of Shabbat Morning

**Rabbi Dov Levy**



Halachot – Kiddush of Shabbat Morning for Women

*The Rabbis instituted making Kiddush on Shabbat morning. It is referred to as Kidushah Rabbah - the great Kiddush, so that people would not belittle it, being of Rabbinic origin.*

**Do Women need to make Kiddush on Shabbat morning?**

Yes, women are obligated in a commandments pertaining to Shabbat, even if they are time-bound.

**My husband isn't home yet and I'm starving, do I have to wait for him for Kiddush?**

No certainly not. Fill a cup with grape juice and make Kiddush.

**But I'm unsure which verses to say. Aren't I stuck?**

Kiddush of Shabbat morning technically only consists of the Beracha of Borei Peri Hagefen. All the verses we add referring to Shabbat are only customary and can be omitted.

1. What percentage of the Jewish People died during the plague of darkness?

**13:18 - Eighty percent (four-fifths).**

2. Why did the oath that Yosef administered to his brothers apply to Moshe's generation?

**13:19 - Yosef made his brothers swear that they would make their children swear.**

3. Why did the Egyptians want to pursue the Jewish People?

**14:5 - To regain their wealth.**

4. Where did the Egyptians get animals to pull their chariots?

**14:7 - From those Egyptians who feared the word of G-d and kept their animals inside during the plagues.**

5. What does it mean that the Jewish People "took hold of their fathers' craft" (*tafsu umnut avotam*)?

**14:10 - They cried out to G-d.**

6. How did G-d cause the wheels of the Egyptian chariots to fall off?

**14:25 - He melted them with fire.**



7. Why were the dead Egyptians cast out of the sea?

**14:30 - So that the Jewish People would see the destruction of the Egyptians and be assured of no further pursuit.**

8. To what future time is the verse hinting when it uses the future tense of "Then Moshe and Bnei Yisrael will sing"?

**15:1 - Resurrection of the dead during the time of mashiach.**

9. Why are the Egyptians compared to stone, lead, and straw?

**15:5 - The wickedest ones floated like straw, dying slowly. The average ones suffered less, sinking like stone. Those still more righteous sunk like lead, dying immediately.**

10. The princes of Edom and Moav had nothing to fear from the Jewish People. Why, then, were they "confused and gripped with trembling"?

**15:14 - They felt horrible seeing Israel in a state of glory.**

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Hacham Ovadia is perhaps most known for his scope of knowledge, as can be seen by his responsa in Jewish Law. In a typical responsa, he may quote over 50 sources on a given topic. In his home there were no walls or wallpaper, but only thousands of sefarim (Torah books) organized in a specific order. Picking up any given book, you could not go three pages or so without his handwritten commentary on the topic.

Once a guest walked in and asked, "Rabbi I heard that you have a photographic memory. Is that true? Do you know all of these books by heart?"

Those around in the room challenged him to try to stump the Rabbi. "Pick any one of the thousands of books, start a line, and Hacham Ovadia will finish it," they said.

As the man reached towards the set of Shas (Talmud), everyone around started to smile. "You might want to try something not so easy," they said. His son, Hacham Daveed Yosef shlit"a, once said, "He wishes that everyone would know that his mastery of Torah is not only due to being a prodigy but also to his tireless effort and toiling in Torah. One morning his kids noticed a very peculiar action: Hacham Ovadia woke up in a blaze, ran towards the sink to wash his hands, recited *Birkat HaTorah* (blessings recited before learning Torah) and rushed to look at a responsa of the Rivash. The children were very curious for an explanation. "We know that

you have a love of Torah," they said, "but what is the urgency?"

He replied that the night before he was toiling to understand two seemingly contradictory statements by the Rivash that seemed irresolvable. After thinking about the issue for a while, he resolved the contradiction. "In my sleep," continued Hacham Ovadia, "the Rivash appeared to me in a dream and stated, 'You have indeed understood my intentions; there is no contradiction in my two statements. It is all clarified in another source that I have written.' Upon waking up I went to check the source he mentioned and indeed it was there."

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