



RABBI Y. FRIEDMAN
12 New Hall Ave Salford
Manchester M7 4JU

ב"ה
ישראל פרידמן
רב קלויז טשארטקוב
מנשסתר

י"ג ניסן תש"פ

מכתב התחזקות (ה)

One of the main mitzvos of the Leil Haseder is drinking the 4 cups of wine. Everyone knows that we drink 4 cups of wine at the Seder to commemorate the 4 expressions of redemption והוצאתי וגאלתי ולקחתי. It is not commonly known that Chazal give an additional reason for drinking 4 cups of wine. To remind us of the 4 times the word כוס is mentioned in the story of Sar Hamshkim, when a fly fell into the cup of Pharoah.

"רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר כנגד ארבעה כוסות של פרעה 'וכוס פרעה בידו', 'ואשחט אותם אל כוס פרעה', 'ואתן את הכוס על כף פרעה', 'ונתת כוס פרעה בידו'."

The Meforshim ask, why is this incident so important that we need to commemorate it at the Seder night, to drink 4 cups of wine, to ensure we do not forget the story of the Sar Hamaskim?

If we would have been present on that day when the above incident took place, we would not have placed any great importance to it. One of the workers in Pharoah's palace had been careless, Pharoah got annoyed and threw him into prison. End of story. It wouldn't have made headline news in the papers and was not an event of world shattering importance.

This is when you look at the story through the lens of a journalist or politician. Now let us examine this story through the eyes of the Torah.

Hashem had told Avrohom Ovinu at the Bris Bein HaBesorim that the time would come when his children will be strangers in a foreign land. Now, how was this to come about? Yaakov Ovinu was not interested in leaving Eretz Yisroel for all the money in the world. So Hashem set into a motion a series of events which would culminate in Yaakov Ovinu coming down to Mitzrayim, - **and it all started with a little fly buzzing around the palace of Pharaoh.**



Stage 1: A little fly buzzing around the room falls into Pharoah's cup. **Stage 2:** Pharoah becomes enraged and has the Sar HaMashkim put in prison, where he meets Yosef HaTzaddik. **Stage 3:** The Sar Hamaskim has a dream and Yosef interprets his dream. **Stage 4:** The Sar HaMashkim is released from prison and reinstated as Yosef had foretold. **Stage 5:** Pharoah had a dream which none of his advisors could interpret, and the Sar HaMashkim then revealed Yosef's powers to Pharoah. **Stage 6:** Pharoah orders Yosef to be released from prison and he interprets Pharoah's dream to his satisfaction. **Stage 7:** Pharoah appoints Yosef as ruler over Egypt. **Stage 8:** Yosef sends a message to Yaakov Ovinu who then comes down to Mitzrayim.

Thus it emerges that the fly falling into the cup was not some minor incident, but was an integral part of Hashem's Masterplan which had major consequences for all times, and shaped the history of Klall Yisroel and the entire world. This is what Dovid Hamelech meant when he wrote in Tehillim (ch.92) *מה גדלו מעשיך ה' מאד עמקו מחשבתך איש בער לא ידע וכסיל לא יבין* את זאת "How great are your actions Hashem, how profound are your thoughts. A simple person will not know and a fool will not understand this".

The Ramban (end of Parshas Bo) writes that the purpose of learning about Yetzias Mitzrayim is to teach us and to reinforce that nothing in this world happens by chance. When a Yid sits down at his Seder, it isn't enough just to acknowledge that major events such as an earthquake, a tsunami, a volcanic eruption etc, come from Hashem. When we drink the 4 cups of wine, we are acknowledging and showing that we understand that nothing in the world happens by itself, and even the most minor incidents, such as a fly falling into a cup is only by Divine Decree.

This year we are all witness to a similar story. If we would have been asked just a few months ago what are the chances of the entire world grinding to a total standstill, we would have said it is almost impossible, what could possibly cause the entire world on all 5 continents to stop everything and grind to a halt. But Hashem has His masterplan and it all started in an outdoor market in a town most of us had never heard of.



A diseased bat (if the Chinese are to be believed in their official version) was bought by an unsuspecting customer. He became ill and passed on the infection to others, who then passed it on to others. Travelers from around the world came to China and came into contact with carriers of the disease. These travellers then exported the virus back to their home countries. By the time world governments woke up to the terrible threat, the virus was already swiftly spreading far and wide. A small little bat has brought the entire world to its knees. Indeed מה גדלו מעשיך ה' מאד עמקו מחשבתך איש בער לא ידע וכסיל לא יבין את זאת Hashem who runs the World and everyone is in the hands of Hashem.

When I spoke to the Boyaner Rebbe shlita a few days ago, he told me that this year we should all merit to eat מצה עשירה and he explained that the gemara (Nedorim 41.) tells us “the greatest pauper is a person who is poor in knowledge”, but this year we have all come to the level of “the entire world has come to the recognition of Hashem” (ישעיה יא, ט). We have all been enriched with a new appreciation and understanding how we are all in Hashem Hands, and therefore we will eat the matza as an עושר with a clear and full understanding that Hashem rules the world! מה גדלו מעשיך ה'!

ויהי רצון שנזכה לקיום סיום פיוטי ההגדה “ואתא הקב”ה ושחט למלאך המות” וימים אלו יתהפכו “מיגון לשמחה ומאבל ליום טוב ומאפלה לאור גדול ומשעבוד לגאולה ונאמר לפניו שירה חדשה הללויה-ה”.

ידידכם ישראל פרידמן