

DIVREI TORAH BULLETIN

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Crossing the Sea - The Birth of a Nation.

At the beginning of this week's Parsha, there is a startling discussion between HaShem and Moshe Rabbeinu played out in the psukim. As Bnei Yisroel approached the Yam Suf, they were understandably concerned over their future journey. In front of them lied nothing but blue water, behind them a gaining Egyptian army bent on bringing their deemed nation of slaves back to servitude. Immediately, Klal Yisroel cried out to Moshe Rabbeinu "*hamibli ein kvarim bmitzrayim*" were there not enough graves in mitzrayim, that you needed to take us out to the desert to die? Moshe in response, attempts to alleviate their fears offering words of encouragement "*al tirau, hitzyatzivu ir'u es yeshuas HaShem HaShem yelachem lachem vaetem tacharishun*". Klal Yisroel, do not worry, the great salvation is about to occur, HaShem will fight for us, there is nothing to fear.

Yet, the immediate posuk following Moshe's words of encouragement is quite puzzling. "*Vayomer HaShem el Moshe mah titzak elay, daber el Bnei Yisroel viyisau*". HaShem asks Moshe why are you crying to me, let Bnei Yisroel go forward without hesitating. Where is this posuk coming from? In the previous psukim, as Bnei Yisroel complained to Moshe, there was nothing but positive encouragement from Moshe Rabbeinu, certainly no crying or questioning of HaShem and his reasoning? In fact we do not find any indication

of Moshe crying to HaShem that necessitated a response from HaShem. What happened that caused HaShem to answer in such a manner?

Rashi as well is bothered by this question and attempts to answer this dilemma based on a Gemorah in Sotah. The Gemorah tells us upon Klal Yisroel's reaching of the banks of the Yam Suf, the sea did not immediately split, imploring Moshe to start to pour his heart out in tefillah to HaShem. The posuk is thereby telling us HaShem's response to Moshe's reaction of prayer. "Moshe, why you are crying in tefillah while Bnei yisroel are waiting at the edge of the water? Now is not the time to cry, the salvation will come, just go forward." Based on this Gemorah we can certainly understand HaShem's need to respond to Moshe. There is a time for tefillah and a time for action. On one hand it is difficult for us to ascertain what Moshe should have done as an alternative. As a leader he was praying for his flock at their greatest time of need. Just moments earlier he was unwavering in his belief that the salvation would come in the blink of an eye without any need of intervention. As the situation unfolded Moshe's understanding of what was needed to be changed as well prompting him to protect Bnei Yisroel. Perhaps then the question lies in what did HaShem see that necessitated the Yam Suf initially to splitting and ultimately telling Moshe to proceed with Bnei Yisroel, even as the Yam Suf had not yet split.

There is a beautiful Meshech Chochma which can help us answer our question. The Meshech Chochmah points out, when Bnei Yisroel crossed the Yam Suf, it was not Moshe leading the way rather the Malach Elokim. The posuk tells us “*Vayelech Achorav* “ Moshe was the last to enter the Yam Suf and cross through. With this in mind we can suggest the following idea. As Bnei Yisroel approached Krias Yam Suf, they were overcome by their fears of what lay in front of them and behind them. Yet, Moshe Rabbeinu had no worries, their deliverance was a sure thing, there was nothing to fear. HaShem had promised they would be taken out and freed and there was certainly a miracle about to happen. Yet, as Klal Yisroel stood at the water, the Yam Suf didn't immediately split as it was expected to. Moshe, acutely aware of this, starts to daven and cry for the *yeshua* of Bnei Yisroel in fear of Bnei Yisroel not being deserving of this last and ultimate *neis* (miracle) to free them from the Egyptians. Yet, HaShem responded that tefillah was unnecessary at this precise moment, all the components were in place, they just had to be utilized.

Following their exodus from Egypt, the Jewish people believed they had the greatest leader in front of them. Capable of performing miracles when called upon, nothing could stop them with Moshe at the helm. Yet that was precisely the problem. It would not have been the greatest *neis* for the Yam Suf to split, nor would it have been a great test of emunah for Bnei Yisroel just to follow Moshe as he crossed the Yam Suf. HaShem asks “Moshe, why are you crying I know you believe in me. Let Bnei Yisroel show me they believe in me

themselves when you can't help them, then the *yeshua* will come.”

So many times we are faced with our own challenges individually and communally which seem daunting and feel as if the world around us is closing in. We often look to our leaders and ask why are they not doing more? Are they not aware that there help is indicated and sought after. Yet, if we can apply and internalize this lesson of Krias Yam Suf, we will understand that the greatness and achievement of passing these challenges lies within us internally.

As Bnei Yisroel began to sing Az Yashir, the posuk tell us, “*Vayaaminu BaHaShem UV' Moshe Avdo*”. The Torah clearly separates Moshe and HaShem as two entities. Before Krias Yam Suf, the belief of Bnei Yisroel in HaShem was funneled through Moshe as there was a perception that this was the only conduit to success and greatness. Yet following Krias Yam Suf, Bnei Yisroel understood that, not only did they have the greatest of leaders in Moshe, they also had the key to greatness lying within themselves.

History immediately followed, Nachshon jumped into the sea, Bnei Yisroel afterwards and Moshe happily was the last to cross the Yam Suf.

Good Shabbos.

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