

Shmos

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This week's parsha begins the second sefer of the five books of the Torah.

According to Ramban, Sefer Bereishis is known as Sefer Yetzira, whereas Sefer Shmos is Sefer Ma'aseh. This makes sense according to chassidus, as the era of chumash Bereishis spans far greater timeline than Shemos until the end of Sefer Devarim.

The foundations of the world were set out in Bereishis as Hashem's infinite light was drawn down into the mundane. In order for the world to continue as it were, far greater revelations of light had to be drawn down, and open miracles performed, until the point we live into today that "open miracles" are shrouded by veils of physicality, yet we still actively take leaps of faith daily to remain observant and true to our paths as Jews.

The opening Pesukim of Parshas Shemos tell us the recounting of the Bnei Yisrael, as Rashi says, even though they were counted in the last parsha, to show on the love and affection Hashem has for his children. More than this, according to some mepharshim by recounting the souls that descended into Egypt Hashem is imbuing each soul with the fortitude to persist through the exile. Because it was known to Avraham and the forefathers that the Jews would have to go to Egypt and suffer through the exile, as a steppingstone to the formulation of the nation of Israel and the receiving of the Torah.

When Rashi opens up Chumash Bereishis with the question of why the Torah didn't start with "Hachodesh Hazeh Lochem", that is the moment of the birth of the nation- and the first commandment to the Jewish people as a nation. Rather Rashi says the reason why the Torah starts with Bereishis is because all the power of the actions of Hashem are to tell us that we have dominion over our land, so when the nations of the world call us robbers for taking the land of Israel, we can show them the biblical history that

everything took place in the land, and it is rightfully ours – as it is with Hashem intent that the lands were given to the whomever they were given to, and it is with Hashem intent that the land is given to the Jews.

In my mind this is another moment to connect with the Ever prophecy of Mashiach in Parshas Toldos, and the connection to the interpretation of what Mashiach will be for the Jews, which is where we rule our own domain (i.e., conquer edom). In the introduction to Chumash Bereishis the Sforno highlights that the whole purpose of creation was intentional and Hashem committed himself to every generation, much like how Chumash Shemos begins, with the recounting of the "neshamos" that came down to Egypt, that is to say Hashem instilled and provided fortitude for the Jews to survive the tribulations of the exile in order to continue the purpose of creation which ultimately is to make for Hashem a dwelling place in this abode, which is revealed and culminated the coming of Mashiach.

Ya'akov in Vayechi says in Ber. 49:1 that he wished to tell his sons that which will take place "b'Acharis Hayamim" which according to some mephorshim means, that which will take place in Yemos Hamashiach (Ramban), furthermore Rashbam says it's the idea of their power, and inheritance, which seems vague, but connecting this to the Ramban's explanation, it would mean in my mind the conquering by the Jews of their dominion, that is in the messianic era.

This then explains why Sefer Bereishis precedes Sefer Shemos, not only in chronology, but the pillars of the foundation that sets the world and its characteristics into motion, and the history of the formation of and the evolution of the development of the nation that is to become the nation of Israel, whose entire purpose is to draw Hashem's light down to make an ultimate dwelling place.

Unlike the exiles of Egypt and the subsequent exile between the 1st and 2nd temples, where there was a defined amount of time as per prophetic vision, the 3rd and final exile, the one we are in now, doesn't have a fixed amount of time, (as it has been 2000 years), by comparison, and we through our actions, can expedite the coming of

Mashiach- which is envisioned from the prophecies, whereas the Bris between Hashem and Avraham, that the Bnei Yisrael would go to Egypt was known, and the people needed to be prepared and given strength to arise out of the exile to receive the Torah. The torah fast tracks the period of the exile and highlights the important parts, of the salvation. As Ramban points out, that Sefer Shemos is the Sefer or Ma'aseh, that is it is the book in which we learn about what we are supposed to do as Jews, and formalizes, through the giving of the Torah, all the commandments that we are given to actually draw down Hashem's lights, as the mitzvos are intended.

Prior to the giving of the Torah, the world had in it revealed spirituality, and the fore parents practiced the Torah in an 'informal' that is solely spiritual way (for example Ya'akov put "tefillin" on by placing sticks on his arm and head, as a sign, rather than the tefillin that we understand from Halacha Moshe M'sinai, where there are black boxes made out of hide, which the Rabbanon tell us have to contain parshios in a specific order. Halacha and the power vested to humans to derive and understand the mitzvos was given to us in this sefer, with Hachodesh Hazeh Lochem, the first mitzva as a nation, where we can command control over our calendar and define and establish when the mitzvos of the days are to be kept.

Sefer Bereishis establishes the baseline rules of the world, (much like we know there are 7 days in a week, that doesn't change) whereas Sefer Shemos, gives us the power to signify the days in the calendar, based on the rules established as the foundational principals of the earth. This idea is derived from Ramban's explanation to the opening of Sefer Shemos.

The last point here I want to make is that Ibn Ezra points out there is a significance of the "Vov" of "V'eileh Shmos". Without detailing Ibn Ezra, I want to point out a connection explained in Chassidus about the word Bereishis, which is the conjugation of two words "Bara and Shis", created with six. Kabala and Chassidus tell us that the 6 is the middos and layers Hashem used as part of creating the space for the physical world. The "vov" at the beginning of this sefer would seem superfluous, that is, as translated it is a read on

from the previous book, "and these are the names of the bnei yisrael", whereas grammatically Hashem could have said, "Eileh Shmos" i.e., these are the names, not and these are. The Vov, I conjecture is a similar parallel to the kabbalistic 6 drawn down into the world when Hashem created it, and this is the spirit that is imbued into the 70 souls, as mentioned to provide them with the fortitude to persist and arise out of the ashes to receive the Torah, build the Mishkan, etc. etc. and coronate Hashem as the ruler and king of the universe, whom we serve through his Torah and Mitzvos.

Further discussion could be made about the new king which arose and "didn't know Yosef" and the parallels of antisemitism which befalls the Jews throughout history. Human psyche, condition, and character, while we believe has "developed" truthfully has not dramatically changed since the beginning of time. "Hava Nischakma Lo" we have to be wise to the Jew's says the new leader of Egypt. And he establishes conspiracy and distrust with seemingly rational issue, that is if Egypt would arise for war, would this nation among us (the Bnei Yisrael) be aligned with us, such that we wouldn't worry they too would turn on us and kick us out of our land...? There was no war, there was just a trope and a lie established by the anti-Semites of the time, to rile the nation against their neighbours, and turn the nation into task masters. Might I remind us this happened 85 years ago in 1935, culminating in the 81 years ago the actual Holocaust.

The 24 of Teves marks the Yahrzeit of the Alter Rebbe, who established the Chabad Chassidic Dynasty. The Alter Rebbe wrote the Tanya after being freed from exile, when envisioning the time of "V'yafutzu Mainosech Chutza" my wellsprings (of chassidus) will spread forth. As the Alter Rebbe knew it was time to reveal on a massive scale the hidden elements of the Torah through the teaching of chassidus and living in the ways of Chassidus.

On that note, the current exile that we are in should end, and we should realize the true purpose of the creation which is to make a dwelling place for Hashem in this abode. May we merit to the coming of Mashiach speedily in our times. **Good Shabbos.**