



Parshas Beshalach 2019, toxic surroundings

Our Parsha begins with Pharaoh regretting his decision to free the Jewish nation; he decides to chase after them and finish his Jewish problem. As the Jewish nation approached the Yam Suf - the sea of reeds, they noticed the Egyptian army quickly approaching from behind and trapping them against the water.

They panicked and cried to Moshe, *"why have you taken us out of Egypt?"* Moshe Rabbeinu responded, *"Don't be afraid! Stand firm and see the salvation that G-d will do for you today. G-d will fight for you and just remain silent."* G-d told Moshe to stretch out his stick over the water to split for the Jewish nation. Moshe did as G-d instructed, and a strong wind came from the east and split the water creating a dry path for the Jewish people to pass through.

As they finished crossing the sea, the waters immediately came crashing down on Pharaoh and his armies. Moshe and his sister Miriam led the Jewish people in song and dance as the water spat out the deceased Egyptians. They thanked and praised G-d for the incredible and awesome miracle that had just occurred.

As they traveled through the desert, some Jewish people turned to Moshe and complained about the food situation. They said, *"If only we had died in Egypt when we were full of bread rather than dying of starvation in the desert."* G-d responded by raining Mon - heavenly bread upon the Jewish camp each day to satisfy their hunger.

However, a question comes to mind: G-d stopped the angels from praising him for the miracle that happened to the Jewish people based on His creatures dying. Yet, in the same Torah portion, he commands us to destroy the nation of Amalek and to erase them from history completely?!

To answer this question, we must understand the context of the situation as the Jewish people left Egypt with an enormous amount of political capital. The world now knew that the G-d struck the Egyptian nation with ten plagues in retribution for the oppression and slavery of the Jewish people. Then, He split the Sea of Reeds, allowing them to cross while simultaneously drowning the Egyptian army.

The entire world knew that the Jewish nation had G-d on their side and therefore was very powerful and not to be trifled with. But after the war with Amalek, the world saw that the Jewish people were not as powerful as they had thought, and consequently, they could be messed around them.

The Midrash Tanchuma on parsha Ki Teitzei, chapter 9, explains that the word "קראך" does not only mean "*encountered*," but also "***cooled down***." That besides the nations of the world not acknowledging the power of the Jewish nation, the Jewish people themselves began to doubt G-d. They questioned Moshe and looked for any possible reason to argue with G-d and His commands.

Therefore G-d commanded that we must destroy them to ensure that we achieve the goals that we had left Egypt for. G-d wanted us not to be distracted and preoccupied with any uncertainties and therefore demanded that we completely demolish the cause of it.

In our daily life, we find that on the journey to success, there are people who do not want to see us succeed. Whether it is because they are unsuccessful or unhappy, they just don't want to see us prosper. We remove the toxic people in our life or anyone who does not want to see us flourish. Especially those who will bring us down and distance us from achieving our dreams.

It is equally as necessary to surround yourself with people with the same mindset of success. Who are as committed to fulfilling their potential as you are. We should create a circle of support that will push and help us to reach our potential.

"It is amazing how quickly your life can turn around when you remove the toxic people from it."

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*