



Parshas Bo 2023, Time is of the Essence.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna, Shaul Ben Berta, and Lior Gabay Ben Michal.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

The release date of this episode is the Yahrzeit, the anniversary of the passing of Rav Yisroel Abuchatzera, known as the Baba Sali. He was a tremendous scholar and master Kabbalist renowned for helping people and performing miracles. Born in Morocco in 1890, he moved to Israel in 1964 and settled in Netivot. He returned his Holy Soul on the 4th of Shevat 1984 and is buried Netivot. In his honor, may we merit the coming of Moshiach with ultimate redemption!

Our Parsha has the last three plagues that G-d struck the Egyptians for enslaving the Jewish people. The first was the plague of locusts; swarms of grasshoppers descended upon Egypt and consumed all the crops and vegetation.

Pharaoh relented and called Moshe to end the plague and stop the suffering. But no sooner had it completed, Pharaoh's stubbornness kicked back in, and he refused to release the Jewish people.

In response, G-d struck the Egyptians with the next plague, complete and total darkness. The Egyptians couldn't see for three days but could not move for the last three days as the darkness became extremely dense.

When the plagues of locusts and darkness concluded, Pharaoh called Moshe back and offered to let the Jewish nation leave without their animals.

When Moshe refused, Pharaoh sent him away and warned him never to appear in his presence again. The last plague, the death of all firstborns, began at midnight and wreaked havoc on Egyptian people.

As the death toll rose, Pharaoh, a firstborn, ran to Moshe and told him to lead the Jewish people out of Egypt immediately. The Jewish nation gathered their belongings and the Egyptian's valuables and left Egypt midday on the fifteenth of Nissan.

However, a question comes to mind: Our Torah portion has the first Mitzvah for the Jewish people. Just before the start of the last plague, G-d tells Moshe that the Jewish people shall bless the new month according to the lunar cycle. While difficult to see, the new Jewish month begins just as the moon is "**born**," once again. But why does G-d give this Mitzvah **right before** the last plague begins? Wouldn't it have been better to give this commandment **before** the last plague or **after** they were finally redeemed from Egypt?!

The Rashbam, *Rav Shmuel Ben Meir*, one of Rashi's grandsons, gives an interesting answer. He writes that since the Jewish people are about to be freed, they need to memorialize this date for eternity. Hence, G-d gave Moshe this specific commandment just as they would be freed to establish a date for the commemoration.

However, the Sforno, *Rav Ovadiah Sforno*, gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He answers that the Mitzvah of sanctifying the new month signifies the **importance of time**. It is a moment to reflect on the past month and mentally prepare and organize yourself for the upcoming thirty days.

The Sforno explains that up to now, the Jewish people did not own their time as they were slaves to the Egyptians. They were told when to get up or go to bed, when to work and what must be done.

But since they are about to be redeemed, G-d instructs Moshe to educate the Jewish people on the concept of time ownership. What it means to be responsible for every second as now they are free to do as they please.

Just as we became responsible for our actions at our Bat or Bar Mitzvah, the Jewish nation was now accountable for every moment of their day. They now had the freedom to accomplish their ultimate purpose of worshiping G-d. It was finally their choice of how and when to serve the Creator and Master of the universe.

But with great freedom comes great responsibility. The Jewish people must also take responsibility for the consequences and choices of this liberty. This means that they are now accountable for their actions and must take steps to correct any misdeeds or mistakes that may result from their decisions.

By giving this Mitzvah just before they were freed, G-d is informing the Jewish nation that from here on out, what they do matters. What they say and how they act can drastically change their future, hopefully only for good but also the opposite, heaven forbid. They were finally free to choose G-d and spread His Oneness and Name throughout the world.

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand that the one thing we can never get back is time. The clock is always ticking, no matter who we are or what we have. Most take it for granted, yet, time is the most finite and precious resource in the world.

The most perplexing part of time is that some accomplish much more in the same 24 hours. Although it may appear that they have more hours in their day, in reality, they just value and utilize every second given to them.

The lesson of sanctifying the new month is recognizing that every second we are given is valuable beyond comprehension. We should utilize each moment to fulfill our mission and purpose and create a path for the coming of Moshiach.

"Time is the coin of your life.

It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent.

Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you."

Have a meaningful Shabbos,

Rabbi Sholom Yemini