



Parshas Shemos 2018, Daughter of G-d

Our Parsha begins by giving context to the Jewish people's situation, Yosef and all his brothers have passed on, and there was a new king who did not know of Yosef or his accomplishments.

As the Jewish people grew in numbers, Pharaoh began feeling threatened by their size, so he started an initiative to destroy them. First by enslaving them to break their character and positive state of mind. Second, he forced them to throw their newborn baby boys into the Nile River to die.

Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, had a son, fearing that he would be discovered and killed, wrapped him up in cloth, put him in a basket, and set him afloat on the Nile River.

Batya, the daughter of Pharaoh, went to the river to bathe when she heard a faint cry of an infant from a basket that was afar. She stretched out her arm which miraculously grew and took hold of the basket. Upon seeing a baby boy, she instantly understood that he was Jewish and was there because of her father's decree.

Miriam, Moshe's older sister, who was watching him from afar, approached the princess, offering her to get a wet nurse for the baby, and came back with the baby's mother, Yocheved took Moshe to nurse him, but when he came of age, she brought him back to the palace to be raised by Batya.

This miraculous story begs many questions, but the primary one is, why did Batya stretch out her arm if she knew it could not reach the basket?

The human eye, in conjunction with the brain, measures distances, and we use this feature every single day. We use hand-eye coordination, from driving our cars

to typing on a computer. Which tells us how far an object is and how much effort we need to use to reach it.

Moshe's basket was located many yards away from Batya in the river. Realistically she knew there was no chance for her actually to reach out and take the basket. Yet she still tried to reach it. What compelled her to stretch out her arm to grab something impossible to get a hold of?

The Talmud relates that Batya set out that morning to immerse herself in the Nile River to complete her conversion to Judaism. Then, she heard an infant's distinctive cry and saw a small basket floating in the water. She stretched out her arm to reach it.

Already, her Jewish soul had begun to guide her. Although her conversion was not yet complete, she already had immense trust in G-d to bridge the gap between reality and her potential, that she was to nurture the most influential person in the Jewish people's history. She did the maximum of what she could; she did all that was possible on her part, leaving the rest up to G-d, and he stepped in to do the rest, bridging that gap to achieve the unimaginable.

As a reward for her trust in G-d, we call Moshe by the name given to him by Batya, as the Pusuk says, *"She named him Moses, and she said, "For I drew him from the water."* When G-d calls out to him from the burning bush, He uses the name Moshe, cementing her place in Jewish history.

We are introduced to a woman, simply known as *"bas Pharaoh - the daughter of Pharaoh,"* but once she overcomes an impossible challenge and teaches us how it should be done, she is referred to by her real name, Batya, the daughter of G-d.

In our daily life, we often find ourselves in situations that appear impossible, well beyond our reach, and in many cases, they are. However, even under such circumstances, we should not despair. We must never give up on a challenge before we start, before we even try, before we invest any of our efforts to see if we actually can succeed.

We can approach seemingly impossible challenges with our best shot, extending ourselves as far as we can. If we unfortunately fail, we must learn from that failure and realize that we are now more susceptible to success than ever before.

"It is only those who dare to fail greatly that can ever achieve greatly."