

Answer:

There is wonderful old Yiddish proverb, which is also said to be an ancient Chinese proverb, and a more recent Indonesian proverb, sometimes attributed to Winston Churchill, Socrates or Dr Seuss: "There are two things you should never worry about. One is something that you can't help, because you can't help it. The other is something you can help, because you can help it."

Some matters are simply out of your hands. Life and death, weather patterns and parking availability are G-d's domain, not yours. Worrying about these is not just pointless, it prevents you from achieving in the areas where your efforts are needed. The precious energy wasted on being anxious would be better saved for more important pursuits.

An expecting mother's frame of mind has a direct impact on her unborn child. Your positive thoughts and trust in G-d are as vital for your baby as pre-natal vitamin supplements and pregnancy pilates. Worrying, even with good intentions, is not really caring for yourself or your baby.

When something worries you, meditate on this question: Is there anything I can do about this, or do I need to leave up to G-d? Is it my business or His business? If it's mine I need not worry, I need to do something. If it's His, I need not worry, He knows what He's doing.

Worrying is no more than a useless diversion from your real mission. Don't get lost in it. Those Yiddish Chinese Indonesians were right, leave G-d to do His job, and you do yours.

## Live & Laugh

A tour bus driver is driving with a bus full of seniors when a little old lady taps him on his shoulder. She offers him a handful of almonds, which he gratefully munches up. After about 15 minutes she again and hands him another handful of almonds. She repeats this gesture about eight times. He asks her why they do not eat almonds themselves, whereupon she replies that it is not possible because of their old teeth - they are not able to chew them. "Why do you buy them then?" he asks, puzzled. The old lady answers, "We just love the chocolate coating."

## What's Nu?!

The Barmy Boy  
Akiva Jacobson

Mazal Tov to Myron & Natalie and grandparents Justin & Maxine Abratt.

## Calendar

Shabbos Mevorchim Shevat  
Molad: Friday 27 Jan 05:36:08

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha at the Bayit.
- ◆ **Sushi & Black Label Farbrenge**n
- ◆ Mincha: 6:30 pm
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 7:38 pm
- ◆ **Rosh Chodesh:** Shabbos 28 Jan

## Shiurim @ Sydenham Shul

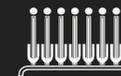
- Sunday morning 9 am—**Mishna (Pirkei Avos)** Rabbi Goldman (boardroom)
- Tuesday 1 pm—**Ladies Shiur** Rabbi Goldman (Elk Hall)
- Tuesday 7:45 pm - **Gemorra Sotah** Rabbi Goldman (Rabbi's home)
- Tuesday 8:00 pm - **Young Adults Learning**. New Programme. Watch This Space.
- Tuesday 8:15 pm - **Gemorra Brachos** (for young men) Rabbi Stern (Rabbi's home)
- Wednesday 8:00 pm - **Gemorra Sukkah** Rabbi Stern (Rabbi's home)

- ◆ The **Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011 887 5456/082 854 5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances**.
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org, aish.com
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.



# Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

Published by the  
Sydenham Highlands North  
Hebrew Congregation  
Johannesburg, South Africa



21 Jan 2017

Parshas Shemos

23 Teves 5777

## Great Expectations

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

We never really know why things happen. Do we always deserve everything life throws at us, good or bad? Allow me to share a message from this week's Parsha which may shed a little light on the mysteries of life and our higher destinies.

This is the week of the beginning of bondage for the Jewish people in Egypt. Moses experiences his first official Divine revelation at the Burning Bush. There he is charged with the formidable mission to confront the Pharaoh and demand that he Let My People Go. Moses is full of questions and repeatedly seeks G-d's reassurances.

In one exchange at the Bush, Moses asks *who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should take the Children of Israel out of Egypt?* Rashi interprets the first part of the question as Moses doubting his own qualifications to suddenly become a player in the king's court. In his typical humble way Moses didn't see himself worthy of challenging the mighty monarch of Egypt. The second part of the verse is explained by Rashi to be questioning the worthiness of the Jewish People. What have they actually done to deserve such a miraculous redemption?

To which the Almighty answers, firstly, have no fear and have no doubts, *I will be with you*. And secondly, *this is your sign that I have sent you: when you take the people out of Egypt, you will serve G-d on this mountain*.

Now it's very nice to know that this mountain was, in fact, Mount Sinai and that the Burning

Bush encounter occurred on that very same mountain. But wherein lies G-d's answer to Moses' second question? He asked *who am I?* So, G-d replied to the point and said don't worry *I will be with you*. But to the question of by what merit did Israel deserve redemption we don't see any answer. That they *will serve G-d on this mountain* doesn't seem relevant to the discussion at all.

Here it is that we find a fascinating insight into the intriguingly infinite ways of Providence. G-d was saying that it was not necessarily for what they had done in the past that he was ready to redeem the Jewish people but for what He anticipated for them in the future. On this very mountain, they would receive His Torah; they would become His chosen messengers to be a light unto the nations; they would be the moral standard bearers for the entire world. Never mind what they did or didn't do in the past. G-d had big plans for this nation and it would all begin with the impending Exodus.

What a powerful message for all of us. Sometimes, the kindness G-d does for us is not because we've *been* good but rather to enable us to *become* good. It's not for what we have *already* done but for what we still *will* do.

I know a man who in mid-life experienced a near fatal coronary. Fortunately, his life was saved by the prompt medical intervention of paramedics and surgeons. When I visited him in hospital he was overwhelmed by one idea: his indebtedness to G-d, the Healer of all flesh. "Rabbi," he said, "I was a goner. What did I do to deserve this gift of life?"

So, I shared with him the Rashi mentioned above

and told him it might not be something he had done in the past but something he would still do in the future. Perhaps G-d gave him a new lease on life for a reason. Not only to enjoy more years with his family but to do something significant for G-d, for His people, for the world.

The Almighty's confidence proved justified. The man went on to deepen his personal spiritual commitments and also made a meaningful contribution to Jewish communal life.

So, should any of us be the beneficiaries of a special blessing from Above, instead of patting ourselves on the back and concluding that we must have done something wonderful to be thus rewarded, let us rather ask ourselves what G-d might be expecting us to do with this particular blessing in the future. How can we use it to further His work on earth? Special blessings carry with them special responsibilities.

May each of us successfully develop all the potential G-d sees in us and use it for our own moral development and to somehow better the world around us.

## Parsha Pointers

*Shemos: Artscroll Chumash pg 292;  
Living Torah pg 259*

This week's portion tells a story often repeated throughout history: The Jews become prominent and numerous. There arises a new king in Egypt "who did not know Joseph" (meaning he chose not to know Joseph or recognize any debt of gratitude). He proclaims slavery for the Jewish people "lest they may increase so much, that if there is war, they will join our enemies and fight against us, driving (us) from the land."

Moshe (Moses) is born and immediately hidden because of the decree to kill all male

Jewish babies. Moses is saved by Pharaoh's daughter, grows up in the royal household, goes out to see the plight of his fellow Jews. He kills an Egyptian who was beating a Jew, escapes to Midian when the deed becomes known, becomes a shepherd, and then is commanded by God at the Burning Bush to "bring My people out of Egypt." Moses returns to Egypt, confronts Pharaoh who refuses to give permission for the Israelites to leave. And then God says, "Now you will begin to see what I will do to Pharaoh!"

## Public Speaking

*By Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum*

Remember your first lessons in effective public speaking? Your teacher laid down a few fundamentals; control your body movements, look your audience in the eye, modulate your vocal tones and look like you're enjoying yourself. Since then, you've improved with practice and developed your own style, but the basic rules still apply.

Life is all about communication. It's no good developing a message to share with the world if you haven't developed the means with which to convey it. Catching people's attention and persuading them with your arguments is a vital part of purposeful existence, and the mechanics of public speaking are essential to that effort.

There are, however, some exceptions. I was fascinated to hear once a great exponent of the art of public speaking point out that the Lubavitcher Rebbe broke all the rules. He rarely discussed current events in his public talks, nor did he routinely tell jokes and stories. He would sit or stand almost motionlessly, speaking sometimes for hours without pause. Rather than indulge in expansive gestures, his hands were often held stationary under the tablecloth, and most of the time his voice was distinctly monotone.

And yet, thousands of people in his audience and hundreds of thousands listening and watching live would hang onto every word he said. When you're speaking the truth, you don't necessarily need all the bells and whistles to make an impression.

The same concept could be applied to Moses. Have you ever wondered why G-d would choose a man with a speech impediment as His main messenger to mankind? Moshe was a self-described stutterer who could barely communicate with his

fellow Hebrews, let alone represent G-d in Pharaoh's court.

But that's the point. Moshe was not just some charismatic preacher-man with the gift for the gab and the ability to bend people to his purpose. Rather, Moshe was merely a mouthpiece for G-d's message. The Jewish people who followed Moshe into the desert were not beguiled by a fancy shyster with a golden tongue, but were responding to the essential truth of his words. It was the message, not the medium, that drew them, and that message still rings true today.

There may be tricks to effective public speaking, and it makes sense to try your best to make a positive impression. Yet the next time you get up to address an audience, worry less about the structure of your speech and your posture and pose, but close your eyes for a second and whisper a silent prayer to G-d that His message be communicated through you and that you merit to say that which He needs your audience to hear.

## The Folly of Faith

*By Rabbi Mendy Herson*

"The fool believes everything"—Proverbs 14:15.

"To whom does this verse refer? To Moses!"—Midrash Rabbah, Exodus 3.

Whoa.

Let's get this straight:

King Solomon, author of Proverbs, speaks of the gullible fool.

Then our venerable Sages, in their homiletic compilation known as the Midrash, interpret that verse to refer to...MOSES?

How could that be? Moses is intellect personified! The emblem of Divine wisdom!

Moses saw the Jews' pain during their slavery in Egypt, and how it was getting worse through his own (Divinely-ordered) involvement.

Understandably, he found it difficult to reconcile this reality with his deep-seated perception of a loving, omnipotent G-d.

He lashes out: "G-d! Why have You mistreated this people? And why have You sent me? Since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has made things worse for the people, and You still

have not liberated them!" (Exodus 5:22-23).

G-d's answer: You can do better than that. Have faith in Me, just like your ancestors did. Moses' struggle *stemmed from* his reasoned and well-constructed appreciation of G-d, an appreciation that was now challenged by his experiences.

So G-d says: Let's use this appreciation differently.

You – *because* you have an outstanding capacity to comprehend Me – need to have faith. You've used your reason to become comfortable with Me; now trust me and surrender your intellectual tools. It will be difficult, but you need to be the "believing fool" for this one.

My two-year-old is very attached to me; I assume that he knows I love him. Yet, when I need to discipline his behaviour – which makes him cry – I'm not sure he has the capacity to recognize that I'm acting out of love. Does he have the maturity to have faith in me? I expect more of my older children. I hope that my oldest can accept my decisions, even the ones he doesn't understand; I hope I've earned his faith over time.

Similarly, Moses' deep perception of G-d's goodness was a reason for him to have faith in G-d's Wisdom and Will.

The more I struggle to understand G-d and life, the more equipped I am to make sense out of all this. And the more secure I am in "playing the fool" when the need arises.

With Moses, I'll be in good company.

## Is It Worth Worrying?

*By Rabbi Aron Moss*

*Question:*

I am a constant worrier. I worry about everything and I know it. Everyone tells me to chill out but I can't. The problem is, I always feel if I don't worry and something bad happens, I will feel guilty forever more that I wasn't worried enough. Now I'm pregnant and am obsessing about what may go wrong. But if I don't worry, doesn't that mean I don't care? I am in therapy, but do you have any Jewish strategies for me to get out of this cycle?

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