

Just a Story...

Saved from the Queen

by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach zt"l



A serious dilemma faced the great rabbi of Prague, Rabbi Yechezkel Landau, author of the Responsa Noda BiYehuda. A kohen in the community asked him to officiate at his marriage to a divorcee. When he refused to do so on religious grounds, the man reported him to the Austrian Queen Maria Theresa who ordered the rabbi to perform the service or face serious punishment.

The rabbi thereupon informed the informant kohen that he would indeed officiate and arrangements for the wedding were made. As the couple stood under the chupah and the climatic moment arrived, the rabbi turned to the kohen and asked him to repeat after him word for word this marriage declaration: "You are betrothed to me according to the rule of Queen Maria Theresa." The guests broke into loud laughter and left the kohen and the divorcee to themselves. The brilliant rabbi of Prague thus remained faithful to his religion and no longer in danger from the Queen.

[Source: Ohr Somayach Institutions www.ohr.edu . Printed with permission]

Hints & Answers* **HALACHA CHALLENGE:** *Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchosa* (9:8) teaches: "A box or a container of tissues or of cut and folded toilet paper: one should not cut the opening according to its markings in order to take the tissues/paper through the opening. Rather, one should cut the box or the container in such a way that it will no longer be fit for usage." **RHYME:** "me". **RIDDLE:** Pharaoh has a "heavy" heart (see Shemos 7:14). *Makkos of Arov, Dever and Barad* are also described as "heavy". See verses Shemos 8:20, 9:3, 9:18. **PARSHA TRIVIA:** 1. Aharon's staff at the snakes of Egyptian magicians (see Shemos 7:12 with *peirush* Rashi) 2. Pharaoh (see Shemos 8:24) **SHMITTA:** True. [source: "A Guide to the Halachos of Shmittah" by Rav A. Wiesenfeld] | *Note: The answers are based only on the sources quoted and might not reflect opinions of other halachic authorities. As such, Menucha's answer are not to be taken as final decisions in halacha, but rather as a springboard for discussions, questions to a *moreh hora'ah*, and further study.



Menucha

A Shabbos table companion
for the whole family

לענין ר' ברוך חיים בן שלמון ז"ל

בס"ד

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Halacha Challenge

Opening a Tissue Box



"I think you're about to sneeze! So make sure to use a tissue," said Michal to her brother Chaim as she ran to get the tissue box.

When she got the tissue box, she realized that it was not opened before Shabbos.

"Hmm...what do we do?" asked Michal, "We did not make the hole on top of the box before Shabbos!"

"We're throwing out the box anyway after all the tissues are gone. So why not just make the hole on the top — like usual?" asked Chaim.

"I think making a hole on the top is a problem. Let's make a hole on the bottom," proposed their sister Leah.

Michal waived her head in disapproval and said, "I think the only way we can take the tissues out is if we destroy the box!"

Question: Who proposed the right solution: Michal, Chaim or Leah?

(The "Hints & Answers" section is on page 4)

DEDICATIONS

for *refuah sheleima* to those who need it
לזכר נשמת דוד אברהם בן חייא קהת



Moshe stretched forth his staff heavenward... (Shemos 9:23) “Rabbi Yehuda said: the staff of Moshe weighed 40 *se’ah*, it is made out of sapphire, and the ten plagues are engraved on it.” [Midrash Shemos Rabba 8:3] Rabbi Yehuda is most likely referring to the weight of water that occupy a space whose volume is 40 *se’ah*. (If we do the math, we find that Moshe’s staff weighed 750 pounds: 40 *se’ah* is about 340 liters. A liter of water weighs 1 kilogram. Since each kilogram is 2.2 pounds, 340 liters of water weigh 750 pounds.)

Q. Based on the fact that a kosher mikveh needs to have at least 40 *se’ah* of water in it, why do you think the weight of Moshe’s staff needed to have a weight of 40 *se’ah*.

A. Based on the commentary of *Imrei Yosher* on the Midrash, the explanation is as follows: The number “40” is associated with the concept of transformation. Inside a mikveh, an impure person is transformed into a pure one. Moshe’s staff was to make a transformation of the physical reality in Egypt.

Can you find other things in the Torah that carry the number 40 and are connected to the concept of transformation?

...וַאֲרָא אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אֶל־יִצְחָק וְאֶל־יַעֲקֹב. - And I revealed Myself to Avraham, to Yitzchok, and to Yaakov... (Shemos 6:3)

This verse has a commentary of Rashi which is one of the most puzzling ones in the entire Torah. After quoting the word **וַאֲרָא** - *And I revealed Myself*, Rashi comments: “To the *Avos*.” But the verse itself says “to Avraham, to Yitzchok, and to Yaakov” and everyone knows that these are our *Avos*! Why did Rashi need to make that comment?

Rashi is emphasizing that the revelations were granted to Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov during their life times exclusively because they were the *Avos* - the forefathers of the future Klal Yisroel who transmit their spiritual attainments as an inheritance to all of their children. Thus, *HaShem* revealed Himself to the *Avos* for the purpose of making the awareness of *HaShem* a fundamental element in the make up of their descendants for all time.*

*see “In the Garden Of The Torah” v.1 p.84



Rhymes for Kids



I wear my tzitzis and I feel so tall
 And our Pesach Seder I do recall
 In its four corners is their key
 Hashem’s promise for you and __!

“וְהוֹצֵאתִי...וְהַצַּלְתִּי...וְנִגַּלְתִּי...וְלִקַּחְתִּי.” (parshas Va’eira, Shemos 6:6-7) Rashi (to Bamidbar 15:41) writes: [Tzitzis is worn] on [a garment of] four corners, but not on a garment of three or five [corners]. [This] corresponds to the Four Expressions of Redemption that were said in Egypt: “I will take you out...I will save you...I will redeem you...I will take you”



Riddle



What does Pharaoh have in common with the *Makkos* of *Arov*, *Dever*, and *Barad* in this week’s parsha?!



Parsha Trivia



1. I am not a person nor an animal, yet in this week’s parsha I ate something. What am I?
2. Which non-Jew said to a Jew in this week’s parsha: “Daven for me!”



Shmittah Shaila



TRUE or FALSE? After Mrs. Cohen added *kedushas sheviis* carrots to the chicken soup and they added the carrot taste to the soup, the whole soup acquired *kedushas sheviis*. -- true / false