



# TIFERET HASHABBAT

## ***This Week in Tiferet***

On Shabbat Parashat Shmot, our students enjoyed a Shabbaton in the holy city of Tveriya. We visited the new Maimonides Heritage Center, learned about the Rambam, who is buried in Tveriya, and davened at his kever. We took a walking tour of the city, hearing about its significance in winning the War of Independence in 1948. On Motzaei Shabbat, we ended the Shabbaton with a boat ride on the Kineret, filled with music, ruach and dancing. Meanwhile, back  
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## **תורת תפארת**

### **Watching the Frogs**

**Mrs. Shalvie Friedman**  
**Parashat Vaera**

When Moshe and Ahron walked into the palace of Paroah and defied nature by miraculously morphing a staff into a snake, they expected the most powerful man in the world to be humbled by a rare glimpse of true divine power. Instead they received a different response. Not only could the Egyptian magicians turn their staffs into snakes like Moshe did, they were able to replicate the first two of the miraculous plagues of blood and frogs.

Granted, by the third plague they could no longer keep up with Moshe. But at the start, what made the Egyptian's magic so different from Moshe's miracles? If the sorcerers could perform the same miracles, then were those first two plagues even so great?

There is a story at the beginning of the book of Daniel that gives us an insight into the real shortcoming of these sorcerers. Daniel had three good friends, Mishael, Chanaya, and Azarya, who served as Jewish princes in the court of the mighty and evil Nevuchadnetzar. One day, Nevuchadnetzar decided to demonstrate his power. He erected a massive golden idol and gathered ministers, leaders and noblemen from all over his kingdom. He commanded all those gathered that at the start of some pre-determined music, everyone was to bow to the idol. Anyone who didn't would be burnt alive.

Amongst those gathered were the three Jewish princes - Mishael, Chanaya and Azarya. The music started playing and all the guests started bowing to the idol, except for three who remained standing. Nevuchadnetzar was enraged and commanded his servants to throw the Jews into the furnace. Hashem sent the Malach Gavriel into the furnace and protected them from the scorching fire.

The Gemara in Pesachim (53b) tells us the inner debate of these three heroes. They said to themselves, "If the frogs in Egypt could jump into the Egyptian's ovens to make a Kiddush Hashem (in order to fulfill Moshe's promise to Paroh that there will even be frogs in their ovens), how much more so should we be obligated and willing to jump into this furnace to

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## Mazal Tov!

**Mazal Tov to Dr. Daniel and Devori Weichholz (rakezet)** on the birth of a baby boy! May they be zochim to raise him I'Torah, I'chupa, u'I'maasim tovim!

**Mazal Tov to Zack and Kori (Venick 5769) Pomerantz** on the birth of their son, Akiva! May they be zochim to raise him I'Torah, I'chupa u'I'maasim tovim!

## *This Week in Tiferet (cont.)*

in Tiferet our alumnae gathered for our annual Alumnae Shabbaton in Tiferet. They were invited to meals in our faculty's homes, were inspired by thought-provoking panels, and reconnected with their teachers and friends from Tiferet. We are proud to be able to keep the connections alive with our beloved students and we hope to continue to do so for years to come!

## תורת תפארת (המשך)

die al Kiddush Hashem."

Rav Yerucham Levovitz explains that the real short-coming of the Egyptian sorcerers was not the power of their magic; it was their inability to notice how Moshe's miracles weren't magic. On the deepest level they were a revelation of how each and every creature was doing the will of Hashem. The frogs that were "Osim be'ayama retzon Konam" - doing the will of their Creator. The water expressed Hashem's will and made itself into blood. The plagues were not a matter of who could out do the other- they were a test of insightfulness. Would the Egyptians notice the hand of Hashem behind EVERYTHING?

Mishael, Chananya and Azarya, hundreds of years later, learned mussar from the frogs! They had the refinement of their spiritual senses to notice something seemingly insignificant like a bunch of amphibians in an oven, and look deeper to see creatures who were doing the will of Hashem. And most impressively they acted upon that recognition.

Life is full of amazing things. We all have our own personal "frogs in the fire." We have the choice to either be like the Egyptians, chas veshalom, and see the world as something to conquer or worse, ignore; or we can choose to put on different glasses, and notice how each ant marches to the tune Hashem has set for him. Each flower grows in the direction Hashem desires it to... and we should learn from the natural world around us and do the same. We should constantly be striving to do what Hashem wants US to be doing in the world, just like the world of nature around us does. That is a true Kiddush Hashem.

## Warning Sign

Shira Korman (5775)

In this week's Parasha, Hashem commands Moshe to tell Pharoah everything He says so that Bnei Yisroel can go into the desert and serve Him. Hashem also tells Moshe to warn the Egyptians about the next makot.

הִירָא אֶת דְּבַר הַיְמָעֲבָדִי פָרְעָה הֵינִי אֶת, פרק ט פסוק כ, it says, עֲבָדָיו וְאֶת מִקְנֵהוּ אֶל הַבָּתִּים, which means "The one among Pharoah's servants that feared the word of Hashem, whisked his servants and livestock indoors". There were two types of Egyptians, the ones who feared Hashem's words and took their servants and livestock inside, and others who did not listen and decided to let their servants and livestock work in the fields. The servants and livestock that stayed out in the field, all died from Makat Barad. Why didn't these מצרים realize that this was already the seventh Maka coming and know they should have listened to Moshe?

The Midrash compares the מצרים who feared Hashem's words איוב, and the Mitzrim who didn't heed the words of Hashem to בלעם. These were both advisors to Pharoah. Even though he was very smart, בלעם did not pay attention to the things around him. For example, when בלעם was asked by בלק to curse the Jews many years after, on his way he came to a halt by his donkey. He didn't understand why the donkey stopped, but we know that the donkey saw an angel in the middle of the road with a sword in its hand. בלעם got angry at his donkey, and suddenly the donkey spoke and yelled back at בלעם, about how he always did what בלעם asked, and that in the end he always got beaten. This was a wake-up call to בלעם saying, "Can't you see that something crazy is happening?"

What we learn from the actions of the Mitzrim and the story of בלעם is how Hashem puts so many things in front of us to get us to become closer to Him, and sometimes we look the other way. In our year in Israel, we come to grow, learn, make new relationships, and become closer to Hashem. How can we do this if we are always being lazy and staying in our rooms to relax because we are just too tired? We have to realize that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity, that this is the only time we can do this. When will be in the same place, with the same people, in the same atmosphere at the same time ever again?