

DIVINE IMPULSE

For those familiar with the story of Yud-Beis Tammuz, the Frierdiker Rebbe didn't miraculously break down the prison walls or make himself invisible to the guards to go free. Instead, his release was secured through very natural methods: local activism and international pressure.

Why was the Frierdiker Rebbe so keen on ensuring a natural process? After all, a Rebbe is surely capable of causing supernatural events to ensure his release. Why then did the Rebbe prefer such a "regular" order of events? Were there no miracles left in the bank?

At a Shabbos farbrengen commemorating the geula, the Rebbe explained that the Frierdiker Rebbe wanted his release to have a unique impact on the world. By leaving prison in a completely natural and legitimate way, the world became that much more receptive to Torah and mitzvos.

The story of Purim has a similar undercurrent. While the end is a tale of miraculous upheaval, the leadup is a long and twisting journey of very ordinary political intrigue. A complex, sophisticated story is told long before anything miraculous happens. Yes, beneath the surface, Hashem was orchestrating extraordinary events, putting together a perfect puzzle of salvation for the Yidden, but on the surface, it was business as usual in ancient Persian politics.

Similarly, with the Frierdiker Rebbe's release, the importance of a natural process is brought to light. That's how Hashem wanted it, and that's how it ought to happen.

Or so it would seem. A spirited account of birds and rabbis recorded in the Zohar puts this theory into question. Let's take a look.

SHADE AND A COOL DRINK

Rebbi Shimon Bar Yochai and his contemporaries were learning the divine secrets of Torah on a sunny day. They were conversing outdoors, but they managed to be kept in the shade. Birds were circling above their heads with wings outstretched to block the burning sun.

Soon Rebbi Pinchas Ben Yair joined the group; he kissed Rebbi Shimon and sat down with them. When he arrived, the birds started flying away, and Rebbi Shimon called them back. Rebbi Pinchas Ben Yair stopped him from calling the birds; he said we need to be merciful to all creatures, so let the birds go.

Rebbi Shimon conceded and said to the birds that he knows Hashem wanted to make a miracle for us but now you are absolved of your duties and you are free to go. The birds left and then the trees started moving and casted their branches over the group. After this, a stream came and Rebbi Shimon, Rebbi Pinchas and the rest of the group sat, drank, enjoyed and happily delved into the secrets of Torah.

The Rebbe's father explains how Rebbi Pinchas Ben Yair is like Avraham Avinu, the embodiment of *chesed*. That is why he had compassion for the birds. In his merit there was protection from the tree and there was a stream of water.



A LOOK AT THE TORAH OF
HARAV LEVI YITZCHOK
THROUGH THE REBBE'S SICHOS

The Rebbe's father cites different *pesukim* that show the correlation of Avraham with trees and water.

WHEN THINGS DON'T FIT

On the surface, the story doesn't fit at all with the statement that "Hashem doesn't make a miracle for nothing." It also doesn't seem to work with the *dinim*, "One should not rely on a miracle," and "Don't daven for miraculous actions."

What happened here? Why was Rebbi Shimon relying on "Hashem wants to make a miracle for us," when we know that Hashem does not make miracles for no reason? Why are all these incredible miracles happening for seemingly trivial, non consequential things like extra comfort while they studied together?

This is even more difficult when we talk about studying Torah. Torah and mitzvos especially need to be done naturally, and there is a story of the Alter Rebbe that illustrates this:

At the time of his imprisonment, the Alter Rebbe was transported on a boat and requested that the captain stop the boat so that he can recite Kiddush Levanah.

The captain either refused or ignored him. A "Zhid," who is also a criminal traitor, doesn't get special treatment.

The Alter Rebbe miraculously caused the boat to stop but he still

didn't say Kiddush Levanah until the boat captain would do it on his own.

This is because a mitzvah needs to be a natural act in the physical space of reality.

Back to the Zohar, why does it appear like here we suddenly are able to request miracles?

WHAT MAKES HASHEM WANT MIRACLES

There are times, rare moments, when the Aibershter doesn't look at the rulebook that He authored and instead "wants to make a miracle" without any great reason. He doesn't calculate if the miracle is "needed," He doesn't pay attention to "don't rely on miracles." He just wants to override the boundaries of nature and make miracles.

When does this happen?

The Zohar tells us that Rebbi Pinchas, Rebbi Shimon and their colleagues weren't just passing time in the sun. They were studying together.

What were they studying?

Penimiyus haTorah, the deeper, innermost parts of the Torah. They were doing what we call today *hafatzas hamaayanos chutzta*. They were popularizing the inner parts of the Torah.

At moments such as these, the Rebbe explains, Hashem acts out of the ordinary. He doesn't consult with his own rulebook. He doesn't follow the script. He wants to make a miracle

even if it goes against nature. He wants to do whatever it takes to help them. Even if it is only to make it easier for them, like adding shade, getting a cool drink, etc.

In retrospect that is actually what happened with the Friediker Rebbe. A Jew went to spread Chassidus and a government overturned its verdict. Hashem combined the miraculous with the natural because ultimately He can have it any way He wants, and He can even make it natural as well, to have both qualities. That is also what happened with Purim.

KNOWING WHERE TO PULL STRINGS

The lesson is obvious:

Every Jew needs to be aware that when it comes to spreading Chassidus, Hashem wants to help him in any way possible, *kevayochel* "impulsively," even to make miracles for him, and even if just to make things go smoothly. Hashem doesn't consider any preconditions, not even considering whether the person spreading the Chassidus is deserving of this special treatment.

This is how Moshiach is going to come as well. Hashem will sidestep all the rules and calculations and bring the complete *geula* in an entirely miraculous way, immediately. **1**

(Adapted from *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Balak 5747*)

לזכות
הרה"ר' אלחנן משה
וזוגתו מרת חנה זלאטא
ומשפחתם שיחיו
טענענבוים

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בשליחותם הק'
בנאפה וואלי, קאליפורניא