

The Whole Plan

Before I write the PTDT each week, I check them from previous years. I don't go back to check on the Lead Tidbits that used to begin on the front page of Torah Tidbits, but maybe I should. I found the topic I wanted to write about this week, already presented in past years, but rather than find another topic, I'm going to present things from a different perspective.

MIMA NAFSHACH - If you don't remember that I have addressed this issue previously, then there is no problem (even if I repeat the older PTDT verbatim).

And if you do remember - hopefully, this time will be different enough to be interesting on its own.

But before we get to that, here's something else, light and maybe of interest.

Did you realize that there are two plagues (both in this week's sedra), that are anagrams? Easy question; fun to ask your kids, grandkids, guests... These two plagues show up in a gimatriya - see the GM file (or towards the end of the AAO and text only files).

Back to the theme of the PTDT.

In last week's sedra, we were introduced to G-d's Plan, as He presented it to Moshe at the burning bush. His Plan to take us out of Egypt in order to bring us to Eretz Yisrael. And that on the way, we would serve G-d on that mountain (Chorev, Har Sinai).

At the beginning of this week's sedra, HaShem sends Moshe to tell the people of His Plan and Promises. In Va'eira, it/they is/are expressed in three p'sukim, each of which contains one aspect of The Plan.

After telling Moshe that He has remembered His promises to the Avot and He has heard the cries of the People, He says to Moshe - Therefore (LACHEIN), say to them:

V'HO-TZEI-TI... I will take you out...

V'HI-TZAL-TI... I will save you...

V'GA-AL-TI... I will redeem you...

These three terms relate, of course, to taking the People out of Mitzrayim. They refer to ending the oppression and slavery, physically taking us out of that land, and taking that land out of us.

That was Sh'mot 6:6. The next pasuk begins with V'LA-KACH-TI... I will take you to Me as a nation. This word traditionally completes the set of the Four Terms of Redemption - the ARBA L'SHONOT GEULA. Even though it relates to Revelation at

Sinai, it is part of the Seder experience because it adds the spiritual dimension of Redemption, that which gives significant meaning to the Exodus.

The (Rabbinic) mitzva to drink four cups of wine on Leil Pesach is considered to correspond to the Four Terms of Redemption.

(Some sources connect the four cups of wine to KOS PAR'O which makes four or five appearances in the Sar HaMashkim's dream and Yosef's interpretation thereof.)

The Four Terms of Redemption certainly fit with the many fours that we have at the Seder.

And then there is the Fifth Term of Redemption - V'HEI-VEI-TI... And I will bring you to the Land... This too is alluded to at the Pesach Seder in the form of KOS SHEL ELIYAHU, the fifth cup of wine that is filled but not drunk. (There are some who do drink a fifth cup - but that's for another time.) It focuses on the future Geula. We'll get back to this in a moment.

For the purpose of being part of SIPUR Y'TZI'AT MITZRAYIM, we speak of Four (or Five) Terms of Redemption. And that works for the Seder.

But let's go back to 6:7, the second and third of the three p'sukim we are talking about. And let's take them

beyond the Pesach Seder. Let's look at them as they are part of the Seder of Leil Shavuot.

Well, we don't have a Seder on Shavuot night, but if we did...

Actually, one important way of looking at the Seder experience is that it serves as a model lesson in the transmission of Torah Judaism from one generation to the next.

We then can look to the second and third p'sukim (6:7,8) on Shavuot - or at the Shabbat Parshat Va'eira table, or any other time, with a little more detail than we do at the Seder. These two p'sukim, that gave us the Fourth and Fifth terms of Redemption from the perspective of Pesach night, can be expanded for our current presentation.

The second pasuk begins with V'LAKACH-TI which for Seder purposes represents Revelation at Sinai. However, the Sinai experience involved a covenant between two parties. Covenants (B'RITOT) don't work from one side only. The pasuk continues, V'HAYITI LACHEM... Not only will I take you to Me as a Nation, but you will (hopefully) allow (maybe that's not the best word) Me to be your G-d.

So looking at the fuller picture, V'HAYITI is now counted as the Fifth Term - which means we'll have to renumber V'HEI-VEI-TI (which we will get to

shortly. And that same pasuk continues with one more term - VI-DA-TEM, and you will know (beyond a doubt) that it was I (HaShem) who took you out of Egypt.

This idea, which earns VI-DA-TEM the title of the Sixth Term of Redemption, is so important, that it was HaShem Himself who states this in the first of only 2 p'sukim out of the 5846 p'sukim in the Torah, that we heard from Him directly.

If there were such a thing as drinking four cups of wine at the Shavuot Seder (which there isn't), the Four Terms might be V'HO-TZEI-TI (covering the Exodus, and then V'LAKACH-TI, V'HAYITI, and VIDATEM.

Which brings us to the third pasuk beginning with V'HEI-VEI-TI, which in the scenario that I am presenting (not actual, just hypothetical), makes V'HEI-VEI-TI the Seventh Term.

And finally, we complete the Terms of Redemption with an Eighth Term, which we find in that same, third pasuk. After G-d tells us that He will bring us to the Land that He raised His hand in an oath, promising to give it to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, the Torah then says - V'NA-TA-TI, and I will give it (Eretz Yisrael) to you (Bnei Yisrael) as a MORASHA, a heritage.

Actually, Shavuot is not just Z'MAN MATAN TORATEINU, which connects

it to V'LAKACH-TI, V'HAYITI, and VIDATEM, but it also, as Yom HaBikurim, connects Shavuot to V'HEIVEITI and V'NATATI.

That would give us six cups of wine in the fanciful Shavuot Seder. But don't worry. We don't actually have such a Seder. However, the idea deserves mention (and repeating). This ties in to what I mentioned earlier about the Pesach Seder being a model lesson for us to modify and include in our teaching. **PTDT**