

א שטיקל תורה A LITTLE SLICE OF TORAH

פון פרשת דער וואָך FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION

January 21, 2023



ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה:

“Tachometer Torah”



...read down to the red line

Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: vaEira

Consists of: Exodus 6:2-9:35

Sequence—

in annual Torah cycle: 14th of 54

in Exodus: 2nd of 11

- A Salient Selection from the Portion -

Exodus 8:16-23

Context: *Exodus, second of the Five Books of the Torah, is an account of how God liberated the Israelites from Egypt and entered into a Covenant with us at Mount Sinai, and a record of the legislations they undertook for the conduct of the society they were to establish in the Promised Land.*

Content: *This week's portion begins the narrative of The Ten Blows (or "Plagues") struck against the land of Egypt, to persuade Pharaoh to relinquish his authority over the Israelites and liberate them from bondage.*

8:16] - And The Eternal One said to Moses, “Early in the morning present yourself to Pharaoh, as he is coming out to the water, and say to him, ‘Thus says The Eternal One: “Let My people go that they may worship Me. [8:17] - For if you do not let My people go, I will let loose hordes of rampaging wild beasts against you and your courtiers and your people and your houses; the houses of the Egyptians, and the very ground they stand on, shall be filled with wild beasts.

8:18] - “ “But on that day I will set aside the region of Goshen, where My people dwell, by not putting hordes of wild beasts upon it, in order that you may know that I am the Eternal One in the midst of the entire land. [8:19] - Thus I will put a distinction between My people and your people: tomorrow I will perform this sign!”.”

ויאמר יהוה אל-משה השכם בבקר והתיצב לפני פרעה הנה יוצא המימה ואמרתי אליו כה אמר יהוה שלח עמי ויעבדני כי אם-אינך משלח את-עמי הנני משלח בך ויעבדוך ובעמך ובבתיך את-הערב ומלאו בתי מצרים את-הערב וגם האדמה אשר-הם עליה

והפליתי ביום ההוא את-ארץ גשן אשר עמי עמד עליה לבלתי היות-שם ערב למען תדע כי אני יהוה בקרב הארץ ושמתי פדת בין עמי ובין עמך למחר יהיה האת הזה

- more over

8:20] - And The Eternal One did so. Hordes of rampaging beasts invaded Pharaoh's palace and the houses of his courtiers; throughout the country of Egypt the land was ruined because of the hordes of beasts. [8:21] - Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Go and sacrifice to your God within the land."

וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה כְּכֹד בְּיָתָהּ
פְּרָעָה וּבֵית עֲבָדָיו וּבְכָל-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
תִּשְׁחַת הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵי הָעֶרֶב וַיִּקְרָא
פְּרָעָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְלֵאמֹר לְכוּ
זִבְחוּ לֵאלֹהֵיכֶם בְּאֶרֶץ

8:22] - But Moses replied, "It would not be right to do this, for what we sacrifice to our God The Eternal One is untouchable to the Egyptians. If we slaughter in the sight of all the Egyptians that which they regard as sacred, will they not stone us! [8:23] - No, we must go a distance of three days into the wilderness to sacrifice to The Eternal One, as our God has instructed us to do."

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לֹא נִכּוֹן לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן כִּי
תוֹעֵבֵת מִצְרַיִם נִזְבַּח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
הֵן נִזְבַּח אֶת-תוֹעֵבֵת מִצְרַיִם
לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִסְקְלֵנוּ דָרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת
יָמִים גֵּלָד בַּמִּדְבָּר וְזִבְחֵנוּ לַיהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר יֹאמֶר אֱלֹהֵינוּ

וְהַפְּלִיתִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת-אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן אֲשֶׁר עָמִיד עֲלֶיהָ
8:18-19 - But on that occasion **I will set aside** the land of Goshen,
in which My people dwell,
לְבַלְתִּי הָיִוֹת-שָׁם עֶרֶב
by not putting hordes of wild beasts upon it,
לְמַעַן תִּדְעַ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ
in order that you may know that I am the Eternal One
in the midst of the entire land.
וְשִׁמַּתִּי פְּדֹת בֵּין עַמִּי וּבֵין עַמְּךָ לְמַחֵר יְהִיָּה הָאֵת הַזֶּה
Thus I will put a distinction between My people and your people:
tomorrow I will perform this sign!

מכות נודע להם שמו ה'

A) YaSHaR (Joseph Solomon Delmedigo, 1591-1655), G'vurot Adonai 123:32 - The Name of the Eternal One is made known through the plagues.

במכת צפרדעים נאמר וַיֹּאמֶר כְּדַבְּרֶךָ לְמַעַן תִּדְעַ כִּי-אֵין בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
In the plague of frogs it is said in Scripture "[Moses] declared, 'it shall be as you say, **in order that you may know that there is none like the Eternal One, our God!**'" [Exodus 8:6].

וכן במכות הערוב נאמר **וְהַפְּלִיתִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת-אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן... לְמַעַן תִּדְעַ כִּי**
אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ

Similarly in the plague of wild beasts it is said "But on that occasion **I will set aside** the land of Goshen...**in order that you may know that I am the Eternal One** in the midst of all the earth."

ולפיכך היתה התראה זאת גם כן בשם המיוחד כן אמר ה'

And in the same manner you will see this as well elsewhere, that with these [manifestations of] the Divine Name it says “The Eternal One.”

וְהִפְלִיתִי
פ-ל-א
“to separate, to make distinctive”
verb (V / הִפְעִיל / causative)
הִפְלִיא
“do wondrously for, make unique”

פְּדוּת
פ-ד-ה
“to ransom, to redeem”
noun
פְּדוּת
“redemption”

	וְהִפְלִיתִי	פְּדוּת
Septuagint (c. 150 BCE)	παραδοξασω “make a wonder”	διαστολην “a distinction”
Onkelos (c. 35 CE)	וְאַפְרִשׁ “I will separate”	פּוּרְקָן “redemption”
Vulgate (405)	<i>faciamque mirabilem</i> “I will make marvelous”	<i>ponamque divisionem</i> “I will put a division”
Wycliffe (1395)	Y schal make wondrousful	Y schal sette departyng
Tyndale (c. 1525)	I will separate	I will put a deuision [= division]
Martin Luther (1534)	<i>aufha[umlau]lt</i> “hold up, sustain”	<i>Unterschied</i> “a difference”
Geneva (1559)	I cause to be wonderful	a deliverance
King James (1611)	I will sever [= separate]	I will put a division
JPS (1917)	I will set apart	I will put a division
Aryeh Kaplan (1981)	I will miraculously set apart	therefore make a distinction
Everett Fox (1983)	I will make distinct	I will put a ransom
Mesorah (1993)	I shall set apart	I shall make a distinction
JPS (1999)	I will set apart	I will make a distinction

וְהִפְלִיתִי - וְהִפְרַשְׁתִּי וְכֵן וְהִפְלָה הַזֶּה בֵּין מְקַנָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבֵין מְקַנָּה מִצְרַיִם

B) RaSHI (Shlomo Yitzchaqi, 1040-1105) - *v'Hisfleiti* - [this signifies] “**and I will set apart and aside**”, the same as in “the Eternal One will make a distinction [between the livestock of the Israelites (that are to be spared from the plague) and the Egyptian livestock (that will be struck down)]” - Exodus 9:4].

וְכֵן לֹא-נִפְלְאֵת הוּא מְמַדָּ לֹא מוּבַדְלֵת וּמוֹפְרַשְׁתִּי הִיא מִמֶּךָ

And similarly [when the Torah says that the discipline God expects of us is] “not *nifleit* for you” [Deuteronomy 30:11, it means that] it is not set apart, too distant for you to do it.

וְהִפְלִיתִי - יש אומרים שהוא חרר אל"ף והנכון שהוא מבעלי הה"א וטעמו אפרש

C) Abraham ibn-Ezra (1089-1164) - v'Hifleiti - there are those who say [this is the verb פ-ל-א] with a liberated [i.e. missing] *alef*. In fact, however, it is one of the verbs possessing a *hei* [in its root - viz. פ-ל-ה]. And its meaning is “I will set apart and aside.”

ומדרך הסברא עתה החל פרעה להקל מעבודת ישראל כאשר ראה שהפריש השם בין ישראל ובין מצרים פחד לעשות להם רעה

In terms of the narrative logic, this is the point where Pharaoh begins to relax the labors of the Israelites— for **when he saw that the Ineffable One made a distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians, he feared to do them any further harm.**

וְהִפְלִיתִי בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת-אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן - בעבור היות המכות הראשונות עומדות איננו פלא שיהיו בארץ מצרים ולא בארץ גשן

D) RaMBaN (Bonastruc da Porta, 1194-1270) - “But on that occasion I will set aside the land of Goshen” - by virtue of the initial plagues [of blood, frogs, and lice] having already occurred, it is not a wondrous distinction that they took place in the land of Egypt but not in the land of Goshen.



אבל זו מכה משולחת וכאשר יעלו החיות ממעונות אריות מהררי נמרים וישחיתו כל ארץ מצרים ראוי היה בטבעם שיבואו גם בארץ גשן אשר היא מכלל ארץ מצרים בתוכה

But this plague [of ravenous beasts] was still pending; and when the animals came forth from their lairs— lions from the hills, and leopards, to lay waste to all the land of Egypt— it would have been appropriate for them to roam over the land of Goshen, as well, inasmuch as it was included in and is in the midst of the land of Egypt.

לכך הוצרך לומר וְהִפְלִיתִי... אֶת-אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן שֶׁתִּנָּצַל כֹּלָּה בְּעִבּוֹר שְׁעֵמִי עוֹמֵד עליה כי רובה של ישראל היא

It is therefore obligatory for [the Scriptural text] to declare “I will set aside the land of Goshen,” **all of which will be spared by virtue of My people residing upon it**, and most of the population of which was Israelite.

ואומר וְשִׁמַּתִּי פֶּדֶת בֵּין עַמִּי וּבֵין עַמֶּךָ שֶׁאֶפִּילוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אִם יִמְצְאוּ הַחַיּוֹת אִישׁ יְהוּדִי לֹא יִזְקוּהוּ וַיֹּאכְלוּ הַמִּצְרַיִים כִּדְכַתִּיב יִשְׁלַח בְּהֵם עֶרְב וַיֹּאכְלֵם וְזֶהוּ לְשׁוֹן פְּדוּת

Moreover, it goes on to say “Thus I will put a distinction between My people and your people” because **even within the land of Egypt, should a Jewish person be found there, [the ravenous beasts] would not harm him** but would maul only the Egyptians— even as it is written in Scripture: “He sent among **them** wild beasts, who devoured **them**” [Psalm 78:45], which is an expression of a distinction.

אמר להם הקב"ה אתם עשיתם המונים המונים על בני אף אני אעשה עליכם
עוף השמים וחיות הארץ המונים המונים

E) Midrash Exodus Rabbah 11:2 - The Holy And Blessed One warned [the Egyptians]: “You have heaped numerous sufferings upon My People; so I will now do the same upon you, with numerous multitudes of birds of the heaven and beasts of the earth—

שנאמר הַנְּנִי מִשְׁלִיחַ בְּךָ... אֶת-הָעֶרֶב חיות ועופות מעורבבין
even as it is said in Scripture: “Now I am dispatching among you...the ‘arov” [Exodus 8:17, a term which signifies] a diverse multitude of [predatory] animals and [raptor] birds.

אבל ארץ גושן יושן שישראל יושבין בה לא היה שם ערוב שנאמר וְהַפְּלִיתִי ביום ההוא אֶת-אֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן

But in the land of Goshen, in which the Israelites lived, there would be no ‘arov— even as it is said in Scripture: “But on that occasion I will set aside the land of Goshen.”

א"ר אמי כאדם שאומר לחבירו לא יטול פלוני בטאריקי זו שפלוני פטרונו
עומד עליהן

Rabbi Ami says this can be compared to a fellow who informs his friend: “Mr. X. will not undergo punishment, because Mr. Y. stands security for him.”

וְאָמַר לְכֶם אֲתֶם תִּירְשׁוּ אֶת-אֲדָמָתְכֶם

F) Leviticus 20:24-26 - I hereby declare to you that you will dispossess the land [of the idolatrous seven nations of the Canaanites],

וְאֲנִי אֶתְנַנֶּה לְכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אֶתְּהָ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ
and that I will give it to you as your legacy— a land flowing with milk and honey.

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר-הִבְדַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן-הָעַמִּים
I am the Eternal One, your God, **Who have distinguished you from the other nations.**

וְהִבְדַּלְתֶּם בֵּין-הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה לְטִמְאָה וּבֵין-הָעוֹף הַטָּמֵא לְטָהוֹר וְלֹא-תִשְׁקְצוּ אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם בַּבְּהֵמָה וּבָעוֹף וּבְכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמַשׁ הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-הִבְדַּלְתִּי לְכֶם לְטָמֵא

Thus you, in turn, **are to distinguish** between the clean and unclean animals, and between those birds which are clean and unclean, in order not to defile your souls by [consuming unclean] beasts or birds or anything that swarms on the ground, all of which I have **distinguished** for you as unclean.

וְהֵייתֶם לִי קְדוֹשִׁים כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֲבַדְלִי אֶתְכֶם מִן-הָעַמִּים לְהִיֹּת לִי

Thereby you are to be dedicated to Me in holiness; for I, the Eternal One, am holy, and **have distinguished you from the other nations to be My Own.**

כִּי שָׁאַל-נָא לְיָמִים רִאשֹׁנִים אֲשֶׁר-הָיו לְפָנַי לְמֹן-הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם עַל-הָאָרֶץ וּלְמַקְצָה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד-קִצָּה הַשָּׁמַיִם הִנְהִיָּה כַּדָּבָר הַגָּדוֹל הַזֶּה אוּ הַנְּשִׁמַּע כָּמֹהוּ

G) Deuteronomy 4:32-36 - For inquire now into the days gone by, which were before you— from the day on which God first created humanity on the earth, and from one

end of the world to the other; **has any such great thing ever before been done, or has the like ever been heard?**

הַשְּׁמַע עִם קוֹל אֱלֹהִים מִדְּבַר מִתּוֹךְ-הָאֵשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר-שָׁמַעְתָּ אֶתְּהָ וַיְחִי אִו
הַנִּסָּה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לְקַחַת לוֹ גּוֹי מִקְרֵב גּוֹי בְּמַסַּת בְּאֵתֶת וּבְמוֹפְתִים
וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבִיד חֲזָקָה וּבְזִרְעֵ נְטוּיָהּ וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים כָּל אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה
לְכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ

Has a people heard the Voice of God speaking from out of the midst of the fire, **as you have heard**, and lived? Or has God undertaken the experience of coming to take to Himself one nation from out of the midst of another with marvels and signs and wonders and



battles and an exercise of might and an outstretched Arm and with mighty awe, **such as all that the Eternal One did for you in Egypt in your own sight?**

אַתָּה הָרֵאתָ לְדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא
הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבַדּוֹ מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם
הַשְּׁמִיעָךְ אֶת-קְלוֹ לְיִסְרָךְ וְעַל-הָאָרֶץ הָרֵאָךְ
אֶת-אֲשׁוֹ הַגְּדוֹלָה וּדְבַרְיוֹ שָׁמַעְתָּ מִתּוֹךְ
הָאֵשׁ

You alone have seen, so as to know, that the Eternal One is God; there could be no other besides. From the very heavens You have heard God's Own Voice, to reprove you; and here on the earth God showed you His Own great fire, hearing God's Words from the midst of the fire.

The Israelites Receiving the Torah
from the Sarajevo Haggadah – Spain, c. 1365

וּמִי כְעַמְּךָ כִּישְׂרָאֵל גּוֹי אֶחָד בְּאָרֶץ

H) II Samuel 7:23-24 - **the earth,**

And who is like Your people, Israel, a nation unique in all

אֲשֶׁר הִלְכּוּ-אֱלֹהִים לְפָדוֹת-לוֹ לְעַם

whom God has continually distinguished / redeemed as His Own people,

וְלָשׁוּם לוֹ שֵׁם וְלַעֲשׂוֹת לְכֶם הַגְּדוּלָּה וְנִרְאוֹת לְאָרְצְךָ

gaining Himself great renown by performing great and awesome deeds for you and your land

מִפְּנֵי עַמְּךָ אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ לָךְ מִמִּצְרַיִם גּוֹיִם וְאֱלֹהֵיו

for the sake of Your people, whom You distinguished / redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, [striking down] nations and their gods.

וַתִּכְוֶנּוּ לָךְ אֶת-עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל לָךְ לְעַם עַד-עוֹלָם וְאַתָּה יְהוָה הֵייתָ לָהֶם
לְאֱלֹהִים

Thereby You have established Your people, Israel, to be Your Own people forever; while You, O Eternal One, will be their God.

ומי כְּעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל גּוֹי אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ - פִּירוּשׁ אֲפִילוּ בְּאֶרֶץ בְּמִקּוֹם הַפִּירוּד הֵם
גּוֹי אֶחָד כִּי נִתְקַדְּשׁוּ וְנִעֲשׂוּ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּמַלְאכִים וְהוּא הִשְׁבַּח שִׁמְשַׁבְּחָם בּוֹ דוּד
עֲלֵיו הַשְּׁלוֹם

I) Chayim ibn-Attar (1696-1742), *Or haChayim* on Exodus 20:2 - “And who is like
Your people, Israel, a nation unique in all the earth” - the meaning of this is that even on
the earth as a place of dispersal and exile they are a unified and unique nation, be-
cause by virtue of having been consecrated in sanctity they have become like angels
on earth— such is the praise with which David, may his memory be blessed, praises them!

J) Prayerbook; *O'dushah* for Shabbat Minchah -

ומי כְּעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל גּוֹי אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ

אַתָּה אֶחָד וְשִׁמְךָ אֶחָד

You are One, and Your Name is One—

and who is like Your People, Israel, a nation unique in all the earth!

תְּפִאֲרַת גְּדֻלָּה, וְעֹטְרַת יְשׁוּעָה יוֹם מְנוּחָה וְקִדְשָׁה לְעַמֶּךָ נְתַתָּ

A splendor of greatness and a garland of glory,

a day of rest and holiness have You given to Your people.

יַעֲקֹב וּבָנָיו יְנוּחוּ בּוֹ

אַבְרָהָם יִגַּל, יִצְחָק יִרְנֶן

Abraham rejoiced; Isaac sang in celebration;

Jacob and his children refreshed themselves on it.

מְנוּחַת אֱמֶת וְאַמוּנָה

מְנוּחַת אֱהָבָה וְיַדְבָּה

מְנוּחַת שְׁלוֹם וְשִׁלְוָה וְהַשְׁקֵט וְנִבְטָח מְנוּחַת שְׁלֵמָה שְׂאֵתָה רְוָצָה בָּהּ

The rest of love, and of willingness;

the rest of truth, and of faithfulness;

The rest of peace, and of serenity, and of quiet, and of safety;

the complete rest that You desire.

כִּי מֵאַתָּה הִיא מְנוּחַתְּם

יְכִירוּ בְּנֵיךָ וַיֵּדְעוּ

וְעַל מְנוּחַתְּם יְקַדְּשׁוּ אֶת שִׁמְךָ

May Your children recognize and know

that their rest comes from You;

And by their rest may they hallow Your Name.

Welcoming the Sabbath

traditional Bene Israel (Ethiopian
Jewish) yarn embroidery

c. 1989

