



Carnegie Shul Chatter

January 26, 2022

Israel and Egypt

This week's parshah includes the final three plagues against Egypt. The final plague is, of course, the death of the first born of Egypt.

How terrible that it had to come to this. How awful that Pharaoh allowed this to befall his people.

It was not as if Pharaoh had not been warned. It is not as if Pharaoh had not seen Hashem's might as the first nine plagues were set upon Egypt. And yet Pharaoh, who considered himself to be a god, just could not and would not get the message.

And still, years later, another Pharaoh didn't get the message and Egypt was to fall to the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar.

Our prophets gave warnings to the Jewish people, and far too often the people failed to heed those warnings. As a result, we were exiled from the Holy Land.

Kids often ask their parents why they have to study history in school, especially things that happened so long ago. The answer is that there are lessons to be learned from history so that we do not make the same mistakes today.

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Light candles 5:13pm

Shabbat Services 9:30am

Shabbat Services

The Carnegie Shul continues to offer hybrid Shabbat services. Please join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19. Masks are optional. To attend virtually, watch for a Zoom link in your email. If you don't receive it, contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com. The complete Torah reading, in Hebrew and English, can be found on line at https://www.chabad.org/parshah/torahreading_cdo/aid/2492615/jewish/Bo-Torah-Reading.htm

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And yet, just as Egypt didn't learn, so do we, far too often, fail to learn the lessons of history.

We should all, in our own lives, learn from the lessons that are taught to us in the Torah so that we can lead lives filled with joy and gladness rather than the sadness and sorrow that can be our lot if we fail to learn the lessons in Torah.

Bo in a Nutshell

Exodus 10:1–13:16

From Chabad.org

The name of the Parshah, “Bo,” means “Come [to Pharaoh]” and it is found in Exodus 10:1.

The last three of the Ten Plagues are visited on Egypt: a swarm of locusts devours all the crops and greenery; a thick, palpable darkness envelops the land; and all the firstborn of Egypt are killed at the stroke of midnight of the 15th of the month of Nissan.

G-d commands the first mitzvah to be given to the people of Israel: to establish a calendar based on the monthly rebirth of the moon. The Israelites are also instructed to bring a “Passover offering” to G-d: a lamb or kid goat is to be slaughtered, and its blood sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel of every Israelite home, so that G-d should pass over these homes when He comes to kill the Egyptian firstborn. The roasted meat of the offering is to be eaten that night together with matzah (unleavened bread) and bitter herbs.

The death of the firstborn finally breaks Pharaoh's resistance, and he literally drives the children of Israel from his land. So hastily do they depart that there is no time for their dough to rise, and the only provisions they take along are unleavened. Before they go, they ask their Egyptian neighbors for gold, silver and garments—fulfilling the promise made to Abraham that his descendants would leave Egypt with great wealth.

The children of Israel are commanded to consecrate all firstborn, and to observe the anniversary of the Exodus each year by removing all leaven from their possession for seven



days, eating matzah, and telling the story of their redemption to their children. They are also commanded to wear tefillin on the arm and head as a reminder of the Exodus and their resultant commitment to G-d.

Haftorah in a Nutshell

Jeremiah 46:13–28

In this week's Torah reading, we read of the devastation of the Egyptian nation through the final three of the Ten Plagues. In the haftorah we read of the punishment G-d visited upon Egypt centuries later, through the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

G-d reveals Egypt's fate to Jeremiah: "Proclaim it in Egypt and let it be heard in Migdol, and let it be heard in Noph and in Tahpanhes. Say, 'Stand fast and prepare yourself, for the sword has devoured round about you.'" The prophet then goes on to describe Egypt's helplessness and the destruction that it will incur at the hands of the Babylonians.

The haftorah ends with G-d's assurance to the Jewish people not to fear, for though they too will be punished and exiled, ultimately they will be redeemed:

"You fear not, O Jacob My servant, and be not dismayed, O Israel! for behold, I will redeem you from afar, and your children from the land of their captivity, and Jacob shall return and be quiet and at ease, and there shall be none who disturb his rest. You fear not, My servant Jacob, says the L-rd, for I am with you, for I will make a full end of all the nations where I have driven you."



Haftorah Commentary

An interesting commentary on the Haftorah from torah.org. By the way, Yirmiyahu is Jeremiah and the Radak is Rabbi David Kimch, who lived from 1160-1235 and was famous for his commentaries.

By Rabbi Dovid Siegel

This week's haftorah shows us a painful reality: that people are not willing to learn from the past and history will undoubtedly be repeated. The setting is, once again, the destruction of the Egyptian empire by the Babylonian army. However, this week we are introduced to a new dimension, the massacre of the Egyptian people and the execution of their Pharaoh. The prophet Yirmiyahu states in the name of Hashem, "I will direct my attention to the multitudes of Alexandria and to Pharaoh and all of Egypt...I will deliver them into the hands of their killer, Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylonia." (46: 25, 26)

The Radak explains that these passages refer to a massive massacre predicted for Egypt and her Pharaoh. Radak reminds us that the Egyptian people have a long history of hostility

towards the Jewish nation. After an extended period of calm following her devastation at the Reed Sea, Egypt resumed her hostility towards her Jewish neighbors. It resurfaced during the reign of the Egyptian premier, Shishak, who invaded the Land of Israel shortly after the demise of Shlomo Hamelech. During this vulnerable Jewish era, Shishak forced his way into Israel and cleared out the treasury of the king. Our Chazal (quoted in Rashi's commentary to M'lochim I, 14-



6) cite that Shishak even had the audacity of stealing the glorious throne of Shlomo Hamelech. Egypt continued her hostility towards Israel and, after receiving heavy sums from Israel in exchange for military protection, betrayed her Jewish "ally" and abandoned her. But Egypt's final crime came when Pharaoh N'cho executed the pious King Yoshiyahu because he refused to allow Pharaoh's army to enter Israel enroute to Assyria.

Because of this full record, Hashem decided that the time had arrived to repay Egypt for all her cruelty. Although, in truth, she had previously received forty years of exile, apparently this was not sufficient treatment for her. This time, a massive massacre was being planned and an appropriate execution was awaiting her Pharaoh. With this, Hashem would remind Egypt of the very special relationship He maintained with His people. Hashem's historic lesson to the earlier Pharaoh was His opening statement that the Jews are "My son, My first-born" (Shemos 4: 24). Through these words Hashem warned Egypt at the outset that her hostility toward His chosen nation would be repaid in full. And now, nearly a thousand years later, the time had come for Egypt to review this lesson. Egypt would soon be massacred in response to her cruelty and hostility towards Hashem's first born, the Jewish people.

It is interesting to note the particular analogy Yirmiyahu uses when predicting the Babylonian army's invasion. He says "They cut down her forest, for the enemy could not be counted; they exceeded the locusts, beyond any imaginable limit." (46: 25, 26) Yirmiyahu compares the Babylonians to locusts invading the land in unimaginable proportions. In fact, he describes the completeness of this massacre as even greater than the work of the locusts. This analogy seems to bring us back to the historic plague of locusts in this week's sedra. It suggests a corollary between the Egyptian plague in earlier times and the invasion of Egypt by the king Nebuchadnezar in later times.

The explanation of this may be gleaned from the insightful words of the Kli Yakar in this week's sedra. He notes the Torah's introduction to the plague of locusts and explains it through a shocking Egyptian phenomenon. The Torah introduces the plague and states, "I have hardened the hearts of Pharaoh and his servants in order to place My signs in his midst. And for you to tell your children and grandchildren how I played with Egypt." (Shemos 10: 1, 2) "Why," asks the Kli Yakar, "was this introduction chosen for the plague of locusts and not for any other plague?" He responds by citing the testimony of Rabbeinu Chananel regarding an indisputable phenomenon in the land of Egypt. Rabbeinu Chananel testifies that there has never been a locust invasion in Egypt since the massive plague of locusts sent to them by Hashem.

Nowadays, even when all surrounding countries are infested with locusts these devouring insects will not penetrate the Egyptian borders. And if they remotely filter into Egypt they never destroy any of the existing crop.

He explains that this miraculous phenomenon was meant to serve as an everlasting testimony about the plague of locusts. In response to Moshe Rabbeinu's plea for the removal of locusts the Torah states, "There did not remain one locust throughout the entire Egyptian border." (Shemos 10: 19) Apparently, this passage became an everlasting statement and from that point on locusts will never remain in the land of Egypt. This indisputable testimony reminds the world of Hashem's harsh response to Egypt for all the cruelty she showed His chosen people. The plague of locust therefore deserves a special introduction stating that the purpose of all the plagues was for us to relate their experience to our children. Because, in fact, the plague of locust and its everlasting testimony serve as the perfect vehicle through which to remember Hashem's revelations in Egypt.

We now appreciate the perfect analogy of Yirmiyahu regarding the Babylonian invasion. The prophet was hinting to the fact that Egypt's attitude towards the Jewish people could not be condoned. They, more than anyone, should have anticipated the consequences of their cruel actions. The total absence of locusts from Egypt should have been a constant reminder for them of their past experiences for mistreating the Jewish people. Obviously no one could claim that Egypt hadn't been fairly warned. However, typically, people do not learn their lesson and history must undoubtedly be repeated. If the historic plague of locusts was not a sufficient reminder for them then the present Babylonian "locusts" would do the trick. Hashem therefore ordered a full scale massacre for Egypt to repeat their earlier experience. They would once again realize that the Jewish people are very dear to Hashem and hostility towards them is certainly not a welcomed policy. Eventually Hashem will protect His people and respond to all hostility in a most befitting fashion.

Carnegie Shul Receives Precious Gift



The Carnegie Shul is honored and deeply appreciative to be the recipients of this magnificent Torah crown.

Melissa Dreyer gifted this family heirloom to the synagogue in memory of her husband, Dr. Evan Dryer, of blessed memory, whose devotion to our congregation helped ensure a minyan on many occasions. Evan also led the davening and provided Devrei Torah for our Shabbat Services.

Evan is profoundly missed by The Carnegie Shul. May his memory be for a blessing always.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Joseph Kalla
Meyer Bales
Adolph Kalla

Ida Perlman
Belle Moskowitz

May their memories be for a blessing.

WESTERN PA SMALL CONGREGATION 2022-2023 PROGRAMMING

with assistance from the Jewish Community Legacy Project

TWO JEWISH FEMALE JUSTICES: RUTH BADER GINSBURG & ELENA KAGAN

Presented by: Dr. Rose Feinberg

**Thursday, January 26, 2023
at 7:00 pm**



Discover how each woman's life and Jewish heritage related to steps taken to becoming a Supreme Court Justice. Other Jewish Justices will be mentioned at the end of the program. Pictures and video clips via PowerPoint enhance this presentation.



Dr. Rose Feinberg is a popular presenter and Lifelong Learning Instructor for Florida Atlantic University and Nova University. Rose earned her Doctor of Education degree from Boston University and was a school principal in Massachusetts. She was an

Adjunct Professor at several universities, including Florida Atlantic University. Her prior careers in education, as well as her theater training, have enabled her to research and create twenty-six informative and entertaining programs, using PowerPoint and video clips.