



1:14 יימרו את חייהם "בעבדה קשה בחומר ובלבנים ובכל עבדותם אשר עבדו בהם בפרק ב"שדה, את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו בהם בפרק"

"They embittered their lives with hard work, with mortar and with bricks, and with every labor of the field; all their labors that they performed with them were with crushing hardness." Why does the Posuk say that the Mitzriyim embittered the lives of Klal Yisroel with every labor of the field? What is being added by saying, "With mortar and bricks"? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic, and support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

1:14 שם משמעויל
חיהם בעבודה קשה בחומר ובלבנים ובכל עבדה – ב"שדה, את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו בהם בפרק –
 "They embittered their lives with hard work, with mortar and with bricks, and with every labor of the field; all their labors that they performed with them were with crushing hardness." The Midrash tells us that first the Mitzriyim afflicted Klal Yisroel with "חומר ולבנים" – "With mortar and bricks" and then ultimately made them also work, "ובכל עבדה בשדה" – all the work of the field. However, what is the addition of, "את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו בהם בפרק"? We learn from these words that the Mitzriyim switched the jobs of men and women. They made the men do women's work and the women do men's work. The two first types of work were potentially work with accomplishment. The wickedness of the Mitzriyim was that they wanted that the work should be for naught. They switched the men's and women's work to show that they didn't care about the actual work being performed. Had they cared, they would not have switched for it is counterproductive to do so. One who wants work done, wants the best people for the job, while the Mitzriyim didn't care. They were making Klal Yisroel work just for the sake of work – and not to accomplish anything. They wanted to destroy the spirit of Klal Yisroel. It wasn't about the hard work, but to make Klal Yisroel feel worthless and with no purpose. The decree against Klal Yisroel was three pronged: mortar, and bricks, all of the field, and crushing hardness. These three were K'neged the three Middos which Klal Yisroel have and live

by, as the Gemara in Yevamos 79a says that there are three Simanim that one is a Yid: **ב'ישנים, רחמים, גומלי חסדים**: Klal Yisroel are bashful, merciful, and perform Chesed for others. Klal Yisroel received these three Middos from the Avos Hakdoshim: Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. Being **ב'ישנים**, they received from Yitzchok Avinu, as **בושה** is the Midas Hadin – Yiras Hashem. Being **רחמים**, Klal Yisroel received from Yaakov Avinu, as Chazal tell us that Yaakov was a great Av **רחמן** – like Yaakov upon his children. Being **גומלי חסדים**, Klal Yisroel received from Avrohom Avinu, as all know that Avrohom was the paradigm of Chesed.

What is the difference between **גומלי חסדים** and **רחמים**? One who is **גומלי חסדים** is one who has a Teshukah, a desire to perform Chesed, and when he does Chesed, he fulfills that desire that he had within him. This is why this type of individual is always looking for opportunities to perform Chesed, for that fulfills him. If he can't find any opportunities to do Chesed, his Teshukah is not fulfilled, and he feels lacking. This was why after Avrohom Avinu had his Bris Milah, he was dejected that he did not have any guests. He needed to fulfill his desire, to feel accomplished, and needed others to perform the Chesed. However, the Midah of Rachamim is not acting to fulfill his desire, rather his only objective is to complete what another is lacking. His entire goal is for another. If no one comes this person's way in need of Rachamim, he does not seek that person out, for he himself is not lacking. It is only when he sees another, he wants to help him. His entire goal and objective is for the other person. This is real Rachmanus, and this is the Midah of Yaakov Avinu – which is greater than the Midah of Avrohom Avinu of Chesed. This person has no personal gain in it; it is all for another. Klal Yisroel needed to go through the travails of Mitzrayim in order to be purified, for them to receive the Torah Hakdoshah. They needed these three Middos, ones that they received from the Avos to be on full display. The only way to purify oneself to have a certain Midah is by enduring the opposite. The hard work, "בחומר ולבנים", was K'neged the Midah of Avrohom Avinu, of Chesed, that one who seeks to do Chesed with another does so although he does not owe the

person anything – here the Mitzriyim forced Klal Yisroel to work hard for them, even though Klal Yisroel didn't owe them anything. The work of, "בכל עבדה בשדה" that was K'neged Yaakov Avinu, the Midah of Rachmanus – where the one having the Rachmanus only has the objective to help the other, here, the Mitzriyim made Klal Yisroel work without there being any benefit of the work. Pure cruelty of there being no accomplishment, the opposite of Rachmanus. Based on this, we can explain the three Seudos of Shabbos Kodesh are K'neged these three. The Seudah of Leil Shabbos is K'neged Yitzchok Avinu. When Shabbos first comes in, there is **ב'ישנים**, being embarrassed, being overwhelmed by the great Kedusha which comes when Shabbos comes. Shabbos is not a time when one is supposed to minimize himself, rather he is supposed to revel in the Kedusha of Shabbos – be overwhelmed by the Kedusha of Shabbos. The second Seudah, the first Seudah in the morning, is K'neged Avrohom Avinu, the Midah of Chesed, where there is no Din at that point, where one is to have delight in Shabbos Kodesh, to enjoy being with Shabbos Kodesh. Shalosh Seudos, is K'neged Yaakov Avinu, the Midah of Rachmanus, which the objective is all about the other – here by this Seudah the objective is to nullify one's own desires, and it should be all about the Ratzon Hashem, completely Lishma.

Based on this, we can also explain why Moshe Rabbeinu wanted Klal Yisroel to rest on Shabbos Kodesh while they were in Mitzrayim, despite it being in Chutz La'aretz. Before Matan Torah, Klal Yisroel did not need to heed the Torah in Chutz La'aretz – they only needed to do so in Eretz Yisroel. Yet, Moshe Rabbeinu went to Paroah and convinced him to let Klal Yisroel rest on Shabbos – to heed Shabbos. Klal Yisroel needed to be in Mitzrayim for a certain amount of time to be purified in order to go on to receive the Torah Hakdoshah. Shabbos is different than every other day of the week, for the holy day of Shabbos itself purifies, and thus a different

purification is not needed. During the six days of the week, Klal Yisroel needed to work in order to be purified, but on Shabbos Kodesh it was not necessary. Therefore, although they didn't "need" to heed Shabbos for they were Chutz La'aretz, nonetheless, they were able to do it, for they still received the needed purification. This is as it says in the Midrash Tanchumah in Parshas Bereishis 3 that the Kovod of Shabbos Kodesh is greater than one thousand fasts. Which tells us that Kedusha of Shabbos Kodesh itself has tremendous purification power, much more than fasting.

ויאמר להן (מלך "מלך" – שם משומאל מצרים), מודיעו עשיתן את הדבר הזה ותחין את הילדים – "The king of Mitzrayim said to the midwives: Why have you done this thing, that you have caused the boys to live." Paroah had commanded them to kill the babies, and they didn't. It would seem that it was their inaction which caused the babies to remain alive, and not any action that they took. What does the Posuk mean when it says, "עישתן" – that the midwives did? What did they do? The Midrash tells us that the midwives did help the women give birth, and they did provide them with food and drink to help. However, it can't be that it was this that Paroah was referencing when he asked them why they did what they did, for had Paroah known that, he would not have accepted their answer that the Jewish women were experts and they were giving birth even before the midwives came. Paroah would have said that they were helping the women be healthy so that they could do it themselves. Thus, Paroah must have not been aware about the food and drink they were providing. My father, the Avnei Nezer, explains based on the Tosfos in Bava Kamma 32 regarding immoral acts that the Posuk says, "ונכחות הנפשות העשיות" – that the women who "did it" – immoral acts, will have their lives cut short. We know that in immoral acts, women are not considered to be doing an act, however, Tosfos says that because they have Hana'ah, benefit from the act, they are considered to have performed an act. To this we say regarding the midwives, that they were so joyous that the children did not die, that their faces were aglow. The Kedusha of what they

were doing was palpable. As it says in Mishlei 17:22 "לב שמח יטב גהה" – "A joyful heart makes for good health", and Rashi explains that when one is happy with his lot, his face shines. Paroah rebuked the maidservants – why are you having so much joy, the joy which is apparent upon your faces, to the point that it was considered that they had performed an action in saving the babies. Paroah knew that the "gates of excuses" is never closed, but what he was perturbed about was their joy in not fulfilling his command. The Torah says regarding Shabbos Kodesh, "שמרו בני ישראל את השבת לדורותם" – Klal Yisroel were commanded to heed Shabbos Kodesh – "לעשות" – to perform Shabbos for all of their generations. Shabbos we are to rest, not to perform actions. What does the Torah mean when it says, "לעשות"? The Torah is teaching us something very important with this word of "לעשות" regarding Shabbos Kodesh. Our inaction, our keeping Shabbos Kodesh, needs to be like an action. We have to have so much joy from Shabbos Kodesh, we have to have so much Hana'ah from Shabbos Kodesh, that it causes us to be "לשנות", to perform the action of Shabbos Kodesh. That is truly connecting to Shabbos Kodesh. If one does so, "לדורותם" – then he will have it with him for all generation – for eternity.

ואלה "אלה" – שם משומאל שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרים, את יעקב איש צבאות – זוביתו באו – "These are the names of the B'nei Yisroel that came down to Mitzrayim, Yaakov, man and his household came." The Torah says that the last letters of the words, "בני ישראל הבאים מצרים" spell, "AMILAH", and the last letters of the words, "את יעקב איש צבאות" spell, "SHVAT". This is to teach us that it is because of Shabbos and Milah that Klal Yisroel were Zoche to be redeemed from Mitzrayim. We say in the Haggadah Shel Pesach, "עבדים הינו לפרטם במצרים הינו לפרטם במצרים" – that Klal Yisroel were enslaved by the harsh king and the harsh country, Paroah and Mitzrayim. The subjugation of Mitzrayim was both with the Guf and Nefesh, body and soul. The nation and the king represent the חומר and the צורה, the substance and the form. The nation of Mitzrayim represents the subjugation of the Guf and the Chomer, while the king represents the subjugation of the Nefesh

and the Tzurah. To counteract these two, Klal Yisroel had two Mitzvos: Milah, which is the חותם, the seal of the Guf, and the Mitzvah of Shabbos Kodesh, which is the חותם, the seal of the Nefesh. Although Klal Yisroel did not yet have the Mitzvah of Shabbos, Shabbos represents the Nefesh seeking to follow the Ratzon Hashem, and this went against the force of the king, Paroah, while Milah went against the force of the Mitzriyim, the Chomer. These two great powers remain with us today, in addition to the Mitzvah of Tefillin. Through Shemiras Shabbos and Shemiras Habris it elevates the Nefesh with Ahavah to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Tefillin also brings one close to Hakodosh Boruch Hu as one is Mekabel Ol Malchus Shomayim; he accepts upon himself the yoke of Shomayim – subjugating both his mind and his heart to serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu. These protect a person from all sides, from the forces of evil of Chomer, and the forces of evil of Tzurah.

Now we can understand what the Posuk is really telling us here. Klal Yisroel needing to go through the terrible pain anguish of Mitzrayim was all for their good. It was all to prepare them to receive the Torah Hakdoshah. The Torah is telling us the three parts of Avodah that Klal Yisroel needed to endure in order to strengthen the Middos of בישנים, גומלי חסדים, ורוחניים. These were the Middos that are the trademark of Klal Yisroel, and what was needed for them to receive the Torah Hakdoshah. Every Shabbos, we have the opportunity to strengthen these three Middos. The three Shabbos Seudos are K'neged these three Middos. Greater than all these Middos, is that we are to serve Hakodosh Boruch Hu with great joy. The joy that we have in our service to Hashem must be palpable. We must feel it, and we must make sure that others see it. The Torah commands us, "לעשות את השבת". How are we to make Shabbos? When we have great Hana'ah and joy in Shabbos Kodesh, we will wear it on our faces. It is as if we are performing an action, of serving Hakodosh Boruch Hu. This will cause our children and all who see us want to be a part of it. The Shabbos joy is infectious, but we must exhibit it to the world. May we be Zoche to truly, "לעשות את השבת לדורותם" – to make Shabbos, and to take that joy and extend it into all of the days of the week.