

Knesset Israel

Your Beverlywood Shul

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Parshat Shemot

By Rabbi Avraham Schefres

Have you ever done something just because you felt like doing it and/or because you were in position to do so? Paroh did. He enslaved an entire people, the Jews. Why does he decide to enslave the Jews and what was his idea of slavery?

We may think that Paroh conceived the enslavement as payback on part of the Egyptians for Yosef enslaving the Egyptians. As we know, Yosef, during the seven years of famine enslaved the Egyptians (Berashit 47:13-21, 23-25). That is a possibility, however, there were two main differences between what Paroh and Yosef did. During Yosef's enslavement the Egyptians would give one fifth of what they produced to Paroh and keep four fifths for themselves. They were paid for what they did. On the other hand Paroh never paid the Jews throughout their time as slaves. In addition, Yosef never involved murder while Paroh ordered the death of Jewish baby boys. If this was payback, it was not comparable.

Another thought may be that the slavery of the Jews was predestined by Hashem and therefore the reason and methodology of how that happens does not matter. Hashem did tell Avraham that his people will be enslaved (ibid 15:13-16), however, how it happens does matter. Paroh did not need to add pain to the slavery.

Paroh enslaved the Jews and set horrible conditions because he wanted to and, as king, he had the power to do as he pleased. He did not consider any morality or boundaries for his actions. The result was an enslavement of the Jews that amounted to an attempt of physically and spiritually annihilating an entire nation.

What lesson can we apply to our own lives from the actions of Paroh? Our lesson is that even if we feel like doing something and have the ability to do it, we need to still consider whether it is the right thing to do and the manner in which to do it. Whatever we do needs to still fall under the guidelines of morality because we must be responsible and considerate in all of our actions.

Thank You!

A huge thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Josef and Bnaya Leah Schefres for their generous donation to cover the entire amount needed to fix the sefer Torah. The Sefer Torah is being repaired in Honor of Mendel Dawidowicz, זצ"ל. Mendel was a very devoted member of Knesset Israel, not only coming to davening every time, but served on the Board of the shul. He was the Levi in the shul and a soft spoken, quick witted, generous gentleman. May his soul have an aliyah as a result of the chesed that is being done in his name.

The shul is still accepting funds to help us fix two other sifrei Torah. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Shabbat Times

Erev Shabbat Jan 1, 2016 / 20 Tevet, 5776

Candle Lighting.....3:54 pm to 4:37 pm
Mincha.....4:40 pm

Shabbat Day Jan 2, 2016 / 21 Tevet, 5776

Shacharit.....9:00 am
Kiddush.....11:40 am
Mincha.....4:35 pm
Havdalah / Shabbat Ends.....5:38 pm

Mazal Tov!

Happy Birthday Ariella Joffe! (Jan 1)
Happy Birthday Moshe Parry! (20 Tevet & Jan 3)

Sefer Torah Repair Project

