

NOTES

Anyone who marries, etc. – כָּל הַנּוֹשֵׂא וְכוּ: The Maharsha explains that this principle is derived from the case of Miriam herself, as before she was married she was sickly, and her rejuvenation after her marriage is viewed as a second birth.

As he set himself straight – שָׁיִשֵּׁר אֶת עַצְמוֹ: Rashi explains that he set himself straight in that he did not join the other spies in their claims against traveling to Eretz Yisrael. The Maharsha interprets this otherwise, explaining that this refers to his act of marrying Miriam for the sake of Heaven.

LANGUAGE

Rose [*vered*] – רוֹד: Apparently from the Persian vard, meaning a red rose. This loanword, and similarly its Greek counterpart ῥόδον, *rhodon*, was also used as a general term for the color red.

דִּיקָא נְמִי, דְּכַתִּיב: "הַקְּנוֹי". שְׁמַע מִינָהּ.

"עֲזוּבָה" – זוּ מְרִים, וְלִמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמָה עֲזוּבָה? שֶׁהִכַּל עֲזוּבָה מִתְחִילָתָהּ. "הוֹלִיד"? וְהֲלֵא מִינְסָב הָיָה נְסִיב לָהּ! אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל הַנּוֹשֵׂא אִשָּׁה לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם, מִעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב כְּאִילוֹ יִלְדָהּ.

יְרִיעוֹת – שֶׁהֵיוּ פָּנֶיהָ דוֹמִין לְיְרִיעוֹת.

"וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵיהָ" – אֵל תִּקְרִי "בְּנֵיהָ" אֶלֶּא "בּוֹנֵיהָ". "יִשָּׁר" – שָׁיִשֵּׁר אֶת עַצְמוֹ. "שׁוֹבָב" – שְׁשִׁיבֵב אֶת יָצְרוֹ. "וְאַרְדּוֹן" – שָׂרְדָה אֶת יָצְרוֹ. וְאִיכָּא דְאָמְרִי: עַל שֶׁהֵיוּ פָּנֶיהָ דוֹמִין לְרוֹד.

The Gemara comments: The language of another verse is also precise based on this explanation, as it is written: "And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him" (Joshua 14:6). Although his father was Jephunneh, he is known as "the Kenizzite," although he was not actually a son of Kenaz. The Gemara accepts this proof and states: **Conclude from it that Rava's explanation is correct.**

The verse states: "And Caleb, the son of Hezron, begot children of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth, and these were her sons: Jeshher, and Shobab, and Ardon" (1 Chronicles 2:18). The Gemara analyzes the verse: The verse refers to the wife of Caleb by the name Azubah. The Sages teach that this is Miriam. And why is she called Azubah? As everyone initially abandoned her [*azavuha*] and did not want to marry her because she was sickly and unattractive. The verse additionally states: "And Caleb, the son of Hezron, begot children [*holid*] of Azubah his wife" (1 Chronicles 2:18). The Gemara asks: Why use the term "*holid*," begot children? But doesn't this verse state that he married her? Rabbi Yohanan says: This teaches us that with regard to anyone who marries^N a woman for the sake of Heaven, as he married her due to her righteousness without concern for her appearance, the verse ascribes him credit as if he gave birth to her.

The same verse refers to Miriam additionally as Jerioth, which the Gemara explains was appropriate, for her face was like extremely pallid curtains [*yeriot*].

The verse continues: "And these were her sons [*vaneha*]." The Gemara explains: Do not read it as *vaneha*, her sons; rather, read it as *boneha*, her builders. In other words, the rest of the names in the verse are not the names of her children, but rather appellations for her husband, whose marriage to her built her, as it were. The first appellation for Caleb, "Jeshher," is referring to his actions, as he set himself straight [*yisher*]^N and did not join in the counsel of the spies. The second appellation, "Shobab," is referring to the fact that he broke [*sibbev*] his evil inclination by rebelling against the other spies. The third appellation, "and Ardon [*veArdon*]," is referring to the fact that he ruled [*rada*] over his evil inclination. And some say: Because the face of his wife Miriam became beautiful like a rose [*vered*]¹ after they were married, she was also called Vardon, due to her rose-like complexion.

He decreed even on his own nation – אף על עמו גזר – The source for this statement is the fact that there is no mention in this verse that the decree was only upon the Jewish infants. *Iyyun Ya'akov* suggests that upon finding Moses in the water, the daughter of Pharaoh remarked: “This is one of the Hebrews’ children” (Exodus 2:6), indicating that children other than those of the Jews were also thrown into the Nile.

You decreed in this world and in the World-to-Come – אף על עולם הזה ועולם הבא: Rashi explains that children who are killed in this world still have a portion in the World-to-Come, and therefore, failing to have children at all means not affording one’s potential children this possibility. Some explain this as referring to the parents: By divorcing and purposely not having children, they are neglecting the mitzva to procreate, thereby denying themselves reward for this in the World-to-Come (*Iyyun Ya'akov*; *Ahavat Eitan*).

The Gemara interprets an additional verse as referring to Caleb. It is stated: “**And Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah**” (1 Chronicles 4:5). **Ashhur is Caleb. And why was he called Ashhur? Because his face became blackened** [*husheharu*] from the extensive fasts that he accepted upon himself so that he would not be entrapped by the counsel of the spies. “**The father of**” is also referring to Caleb, as he became like a father to his wife. The next word in the verse, “**Tekoa,**” is an additional reference to Caleb, as he attached [*taka*] his heart to his Father in Heaven.

The phrase in the verse “**had two wives**” actually means it is as if **Miriam became like two wives**, because she changed over the course of time. And therefore the two names written in the verse: “**Helah and Naarah,**” were not two separate women, **Helah and Naarah**. Rather, initially Miriam was sickly [*hela*] and forlorn, and ultimately she was healthy and beautiful like a young woman [*na'ara*].

The Gemara expounds the following verse as referring to Miriam: “**And the children of Helah were Zereth [Tzeret] and Zohar and Ethnan**” (1 Chronicles 4:7). She was now called “**Tzeret,**” for she became so beautiful that she was like a rival [*tzara*] to other women, as they were jealous of her beauty. She is called “**Zohar,**” as her face shined like the sun does at noon [*tzohorayim*]. She is called “**Ethnan,**” as any man that saw her would be aroused so much that he would bring a gift [*etnan*] to his wife to entice her.

§ The Gemara returns to the discussion of the bondage in Egypt. “**And Pharaoh charged all his people**, saying: Every son that is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive” (Exodus 1:22). **Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, says:** The use of the phrase “every son that is born” indicates that he decreed even on his own nationⁿ that all their male babies must be killed. **And Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, says further:** He decreed three decrees. Initially, he commanded the midwives only with regard to Jewish infants: “You shall look upon the stones. **If it be a son, then you shall kill him; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live**” (Exodus 1:16). **And afterward,** he decreed with regard to the Jewish infants: “**Every son that is born you shall cast into the river**” (Exodus 1:22). **And ultimately, he decreed even on his own nation** that Egyptian infant boys should be cast into the river as well.

The verse states: “**And there went a man of the house of Levi,** and took for a wife a daughter of Levi” (Exodus 2:1). The Gemara asks: **To where did he go?** Rav Yehuda bar Zevina says: **He went according to the advice of his daughter Miriam,** as the Gemara will proceed to explain.

A Sage teaches: **Amram, the father of Moses, was the great man of his generation. Once he saw that the wicked Pharaoh said:** “Every son that is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive” (Exodus 1:22), **he said:** **We are laboring for nothing** by bringing children into the world to be killed. Therefore, **he arose and divorced his wife.** All others who saw this followed his example and **arose and divorced their wives.**

His daughter, Miriam, said to him: **Father, your decree is more harsh for the Jewish people than that of Pharaoh, as Pharaoh decreed only with regard to the males, but you decreed both on the males and on the females.** And now no children will be born. Additionally, **Pharaoh decreed to kill them only in this world, but you decreed in this world and in the World-to-Come,**ⁿ as those not born will not enter the World-to-Come.

“ולאשחור אבי תקוע היו שתי נשים חלָאָה ונערה.” “אשחור” – זה כָּלָב. וְלִמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ אֲשַׁחֲרוּ? שְׁהוֹשְׁחָרוּ פָּנָיו בְּתַעֲנוּיֹת. “אבי” – שֶׁנִּשְׁעָשָׂה לָהּ כָּאָב. “תקוע” – שֶׁתִּקְעַע אֶת לְבוֹ לְאָבִיו שְׁבַשְׁמִים.

“היו שתי נשים” – נעשה מרמס כשתי נשים. “חלָאָה ונערה” – לא חלָאָה ונערה הוא, אלא בתחילה חלָאָה ולבסוף נערה.

“ובני חלָאָה צרת וצרה ואתנן.” “צרת” – שנעשית צרה לחברותיה; “צרה” – שהיו פניה דומין כצאריהם; “אתנן” – שכל הרואה אותה מוליך אתנן לאשתו.

“ויצו פרעה לכל עמו” – אמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: אף על עמו גזר. ואמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, שלש גזירות גזר: בתחילה – אם בן הוא והמתן אותו; ולבסוף – כל הבן הילוד היארה תשליכהו; ולבסוף – אף על עמו גזר.

“ויילך איש מבית לוי” – להיכן הלך? אמר רב יהודה בר זבינא: שהלך בעצת בתו.

תנא: עמרם גדול הדור היה. בין שראה שאמר פרעה הרשע: “כל הבן הילוד היארה תשליכהו”, אמר: לשוא אנו עמלין! עמד וגירש את אשתו. עמדו בולן וגירשו את נשותיהן.

אמרה לו בתו: אבא, קשה גזירתך יותר משל פרעה, שפרעה לא גזר אלא על הזכרים, ואתה גזרת על הזכרים ועל הנקיבות! פרעה לא גזר אלא בעולם הזה, ואתה בעולם הזה ולעולם הבא!

Palanquin – אַפּריוֹן



Egyptian palanquins

LANGUAGE

Palanquin [appiryon] – אַפּריוֹן: From the Greek φορέϊον, *phoreyon*, referring to a chair used to transport people.

Verdict [pitkah] – פּתְקָה: From the Greek πικτάκιον, *pitakion*, which means a bill, a formal document, or a material upon which to write. Among other meanings of the word is list, such as a list of persons belonging to a specific group. Here it is used in the sense of a document detailing a court verdict.

NOTES

The signs of a young woman were born in her – שְׁנוּלְדוּ בָּהּ סִימְנֵי נַעֲרוֹת: As noted further in the Gemara, Jochebed was already pregnant when Amram remarried her. As such, her rejuvenation was not needed so that she would conceive. Rather, it was so that people should not say that Amram remarried her only because he was not concerned that she would bear children (*Iyyun Ya'akov; Anaf Yosef*).

From here it is derived concerning righteous women, etc. – מִכָּאן לְנָשִׁים צְדִיקָנוֹת וְכוּ': The Maharal writes that pain during childbirth and difficulty in earning one's livelihood are as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve. Therefore, completely righteous women, who are free of sin, may not suffer pain in childbirth.

Tov is his name – טוֹב שְׁמוֹ: Although he is generally referred to as Moses, that name was given to him by the daughter of Pharaoh. The discussion here, as well as in tractate *Megilla* and elsewhere in the midrash, relates to the question of what was the name given to him by his family.

פְּרָעָה הִרְשָׁע, סָפַק מִתְקַיְּמַת גְּזוּרָתוֹ סָפַק אֵינָהּ מִתְקַיְּמַת, אֲתָהּ צְדִיק, בּוֹדֵאי שְׁגוּרְתֶךָ מִתְקַיְּמַת, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וְהַגִּיד אֹמֶר וַיִּקָּם לָךְ" עָמַד וְהַחֲזִיר אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ. עָמְדוּ בּוֹלְוֵן וְהַחֲזִירוּ אֶת נְשׁוֹתֵיהֶן.

"וַיִּקָּח" – "וַיַּחֲזוֹר" מִיַּבְעֵי לֵיהּ! אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה בְּרַבּוּבִי: שְׁעָשָׂה לוֹ מַעֲשֵׂה לִיקוּחֵין. הוֹשִׁיבָהּ בְּאֶפְרָיִם, וְאֶהְרֹן וּמְרִים מִרְקָדִין לְפָנֶיהָ, וּמְלָאכֵי הַשָּׂרָת אָמְרוּ: אִם הִבְנִים שְׂמִיחָה.

"אֶת בֵּת לֵוִי" – אֶפְשָׁר, בֵּת מֵאָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה הוּיָא וְקָרִי לָהּ בֵּת? דְּאָמַר רַבִּי חֲמַא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינְא: זֵו יוֹכְבֵד, שְׁהוֹרְתָה בְּדַרְךְ וְלִידְתָהּ בֵּין הַחוּמוֹת, שְׁנֵאמַר: "אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָהּ אֲתָהּ לְלֵוִי בְּמִצְרַיִם".

לִידְתָהּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאִין הוֹרְתָה בְּמִצְרַיִם! אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה: שְׁנוּלְדוּ בָּהּ סִימְנֵי נַעֲרוֹת.

"וַתַּהַר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן" – וְהָא הוֹת מַעֲבָרָא בֵּיהּ תֵּלְתָא יְחַי מַעֲיָקְרָא! אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה בְּרַבּוּבִי: מְקִישׁ לִידְתָהּ לְהוֹרְתָה. מָה הוֹרְתָה שְׁלֵא בְּצַעַר, אִף לִידְתָהּ שְׁלֵא בְּצַעַר, מִכָּאן לְנָשִׁים צְדִיקָנוֹת שְׁלֵא הִיוּ בְּפִתְקָה שְׁל חוּה.

"וַתֵּרָא אוֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא" – תֵּנָא, רַבִּי מַאִיר אָמַר: טוֹב שְׁמוֹ, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר: טוֹבִיָּה שְׁמוֹ; רַבִּי נַחֲמִיָּה אָמַר: הֶגוֹן לְנַבִּיאוֹת; אַחֲרִים אָמְרִים: נוֹלַד כְּשֶׁהוּא מְהוּל; וְחֲכָמִים אָמְרִים: בְּשָׁעָה שְׁנוּלַד מִשָּׁה – נִתְמַלֵּא הַבַּיִת כּוֹלּוֹ אֹר. כְּתִיב הָכָא: "וַתֵּרָא אוֹתוֹ כִּי טוֹב הוּא", וְכִתִּיב הָתָם: "וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאֹר כִּי טוֹב".

Miriam continued: Additionally, concerning Pharaoh the wicked, it is uncertain whether his decree will be fulfilled, and it is uncertain if his decree will not be fulfilled. You are a righteous person, and as such, your decrees will certainly be fulfilled, as it is stated with regard to the righteous: "You shall also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto you" (Job 22:28). Amram accepted his daughter's words and arose and brought back, i.e., remarried, his wife, and all others who saw this followed his example and arose and brought back their wives.

The Gemara asks: If Amram remarried Jochebed, rather than say: "And took for a wife a daughter of Levi" (Exodus 2:1), it should have stated: "And returned for a wife the daughter of Levi." Rav Yehuda bar Zevina says: He performed an act of marriage just as one would do for a first marriage. He sat her on a palanquin [appiryon],^{8L} and Aaron and Miriam danced before her, and the ministering angels said: "A joyful mother of children" (Psalms 113:9).

The verse is referring to Jochebed as "a daughter of Levi" (Exodus 2:1). The Gemara asks: Is it possible that this is Jochebed? Jochebed was then 130 years old and the verse still calls her a daughter? Jochebed's age is established based on a tradition concerning the number of the descendants of Jacob who came to Egypt, as follows: While the verse states that Leah had thirty-three descendants (Genesis 46:15), only thirty-two were enumerated. This was explained as Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: The "daughter of Levi" is Jochebed, whose conception was on the road, as the family of Jacob descended to Egypt, and she was born between the walls, i.e., in Egypt, as it is stated: "And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt" (Numbers 26:59).

This interpolation concerning her birth is interpreted: Her birth was in Egypt, but her conception was not in Egypt. Since the Jewish people were in Egypt for two hundred ten years and Moses was eighty years old at the time of the exodus, Jochebed was one hundred thirty years old when Moses was born. In light of this, the Gemara is asking how the verse can refer to her as a daughter. Rabbi Yehuda says: The signs of a young woman were born in her^N when her husband remarried her, and she became like a young girl again.

S The verse states concerning Moses: "And the woman conceived, and bore a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months" (Exodus 2:2). The Gemara asks: But Jochebed was pregnant with Moses for three months at the outset, before Amram remarried her, as will be explained further. Rav Yehuda bar Zevina said: The intention of the verse is to juxtapose her giving birth to her becoming pregnant. Just as her becoming pregnant was without pain, so too, her giving birth was without pain. From here it is derived concerning righteous women^N that they were not included in the verdict [pitkah]^L of Eve that a woman will suffer pain during childbirth (see Genesis 3:16).

The verse states with regard to the birth of Moses: "And the woman conceived, and bore a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly [tov] child, she hid him three months" (Exodus 2:2). It is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Meir says: "Tov" is his, Moses', real name,^N as it was given to him by his parents when he was born. Rabbi Yehuda says: His name was Toviya. Rabbi Neḥemya says: They said he was good because they saw that he was fit for prophecy. Others say: They said he was good because he was born when he was already circumcised. And the Rabbis say: At the time when Moses was born, the entire house was filled with light, as it is written here: "And when she saw him that he was a goodly [tov] child," and it is written there: "And God saw the light, that it was good [tov]" (Genesis 1:4).

That their money is more precious to them, etc. – **שְׂמֹמֹנִים חֲבִיב עֲלֵיהֶן יוֹתֵר וְכוּ'**: Righteous people are willing to undergo physical pain in order to retain their money, as they work exceptionally hard to ensure that all of their wealth is obtained honestly (Ben Yehoyada). See also the discussion concerning Abba Hilkiya in tractate *Ta'anit* (23b).

Bitumen on the interior – חֲמֵר מִבְּפִנִּים: The Maharsha explains that there was no need to state that the bitumen was on the interior, as if it were on the exterior it would be dissolved by the water. Therefore, the additional mention that it was smeared inside is to teach that it was placed there not only to protect the ark, but also to prevent Moses from smelling the foul odor of the pitch. *Tosafot* explain the Gemara differently. They claim that the bitumen and pitch were both smeared on the interior of the ark, and that the bitumen was covering the pitch. The term: On the interior, would then mean that it was closer to Moses within the ark. The box was uncovered on the outside in order for it not to be noticeable among the reeds.

BACKGROUND

Pitch – תָּפַת: In ancient times pitch was made by slowly burning wood, which would be transformed into charcoal. During this process, the wood emitted various fluids. Tar and pitch are made from these fluids. Pitch is the thicker substance, and its foul odor is due to additional materials found in the fluid. Pitch was sometimes made from asphalt, which also had a foul odor caused by the presence of sulfur and sulfur hydroxide.

The verse continues: **“And she hid him three months”** (Exodus 2:2). The Gemara explains that she was able to hide him for three months **because the Egyptians counted the nine months of her pregnancy only from the time her husband took her back, but she was pregnant with Moses for three months from the outset of her remarriage.**

The next verse states: **“And when she could no longer hide him”** (Exodus 2:3). The Gemara asks: **Why couldn't she hide him any longer? Let her continue to hide him. Rather, anywhere that the Egyptians heard that a baby was born and they wanted to locate the baby, they would bring another baby there in order that it could be heard crying, and the two babies would cry together, as it is written: “Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards; for our vineyards are in blossom”** (Song of Songs 2:15). The infants who were used to uncover the hidden babies are referred to as little foxes.

The verse states: **“And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with bitumen and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the willows by the river's bank”** (Exodus 2:3). The Gemara asks: **What is different about bulrushes that she decided to use them? Rabbi Elazar says: From here it is derived concerning righteous people that their money is more precious to them^N than their bodies, as she took an inexpensive material to build the ark. And why do they care so much about their money? Because they do not stretch out their hands to partake of stolen property.** Therefore, their own property is very precious to them.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani says an alternative reason for her taking bulrushes for the ark: She took a **soft material** like bulrush, **which is able to withstand an impact both before a soft item and before a hard item.** She feared that if she would have made the box from a hard material like wood, if it were to collide with a hard item in the water it might break.

The verse continues: **“And daubed it with bitumen and with pitch”** (Exodus 2:3). A Sage teaches: She daubed bitumen on the interior^N and pitch^B on the exterior, so that righteous person, i.e., Moses, would not smell a foul odor, such as that of pitch.

The verse continues: **“And she put the child therein, and laid it in the willows [bassuf]”** (Exodus 2:3). Rabbi Elazar says: This means she placed him in the Suf Sea, i.e., the Red Sea. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani says:

“וְתַצְפְּנֵהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים” – דָּלָא מְנוּ מַצְרַיִם אֲלֵא מִשְׁעָה דְּאֵהְדְּרָה, וְהִיא הָיְתָה מִיַּעֲבָרָא בֵּיהּ תְּלָתָא יָרְחִי מִיַּעֲקָרָא.

“וְלֹא יִכְלֶה עוֹד הַצְּפִינוּ” – אִמַּאי? תַּצְפְּנֵיהּ וְתִזְוִיל! אֲלֵא כָּל הַיְכָא דְהוּוּ שְׂמֵעֵי מַצְרָאִי דְמִתְלִיד יְנוּקָא, מִמְטוּ יְנוּקָא הָתָם כִּי הֵיכִי דְלִישְׂמֵעֵיהוּ וַיִּמְעוּ בְּהַדְיָהוּ, דְכַתִּיב: “אֲחֻזּוּ לְנוּ שׁוֹעֲלִים שׁוֹעֲלִים קְטָנִים” וְגו'.

“וְתַקַּח לוֹ תַבַּת גָּמָא” – מַאי שְׁנָא גּוֹמְרִים? אָמַר רַבִּי אֲלֵעָזָר: מִיִּכְן לְצַדִּיקִים שְׂמֹמֹנִים חֲבִיב עֲלֵיהֶן יוֹתֵר מִגּוֹפָן, וְכָל כֵּךְ לְמָה? לְפִי שְׂאִין פּוֹשְׁטִין יְדֵיהֶן בְּגוֹל.

רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי אָמַר: דָּבָר רַךְ, שְׂיִכּוֹל לְעִמּוּד בְּפִנֵּי דָבָר רַךְ וּבְפִנֵּי דָבָר קָשָׁה.

“וְתַחְמְרָהּ בַּחֲמֵר וּבַתָּפַת” – תָּנָא: חֲמֵר מִבְּפִנִּים וּתָפַת מִבְּחוּץ, כְּדִי שְׁלֵא יְרִיחַ אוֹתוֹ צַדִּיק רִיחַ רַע.

“וְתַשֵּׁם בָּהּ אֶת הַיֶּלֶד וְתַשֵּׁם בְּסוּף” – רַבִּי אֲלֵעָזָר אָמַר: יָם סוּף, רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי אָמַר:

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אֲגַם, כְּדַכְתִּיב: “קָנָה וְסוּף קָמְלוּ”.

“וְתִרְדַּ בַּת פְּרַעָה לְרַחוּץ עַל הַיָּאָר” – אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי שְׂמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי: מִלְּמַד, שְׂרִידָה לְרַחוּץ מִגְּלוּלֵי אֲבִיהָ, וְכֵן הוּא אָמַר: “אִם רָחַץ ה' אֶת צוֹאֵת בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן” וְגו'.

She placed him in a marsh, as it is written: **“The reeds and willows [suf] shall wither”** (Isaiah 19:6).

The verse states: **“And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe [lirhotz] in the river”** (Exodus 2:5). Rabbi Yohanan says in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: This teaches that she came down to the river to cleanse^N herself from the impurity of her father's idols, as she was immersing herself as part of the conversion process. And similarly it states: **“When the Lord shall have washed [rahatz] away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of destruction”** (Isaiah 4:4). This washing clearly refers to the purging of spiritual sins, rather than bathing for the sake of cleanliness.

NOTES

This teaches that she came down to cleanse, etc. – **מִלְּמַד שְׂרִידָה לְרַחוּץ וְכוּ'**: The strongest proof that Pharaoh's daughter converted is from the verse that refers to: “Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh” (I Chronicles 4:18), who eventually married a Jew.

Walking is nothing other than, etc. – אין הליכה זו אלא וכו' – This is a reference to their imminent death, as the Gemara will soon discuss (Riaf).

The one who says that it means her arm – מאן דאמר – The fact that the verse first refers to the women as her maidens [*na'aroteha*] and then uses the term *amata* indicates that the latter expression is not a reference to one of her maidens. Additionally, the word *amata* is written without a *dagesh* in the letter *mem*; therefore, it means a maidservant. See the commentary of *Ibn Ezra* on the verse.

The verse calls him a child [*yeled*], etc. – קרי ליה ילד וכו' – The discussion here is based on the use of two alternative terms for the boy in the same verse, although either term could have been appropriate independently (Maharsha).

You made Moses our teacher blemished – עשיתו למשה רבינו בעל מום – Rashi explains that since Moses was a Levite, if he had an unusual voice he would not have been permitted to sing in the Tabernacle. The Maharsha and others explain that having an unusual voice is considered a blemish, and since prophecy rests upon those who are complete in every manner, it is not reasonable to say that Moses had this blemish.

‘ונערותיה הולכות’ וגו' – אמר רבי יוחנן: אין הליכה זו אלא לשון מיתה. וכן הוא אומר: ‘הנה אנכי הולך למות’.

‘ותרא את התיבה בתוך הסוף’ – בין דחו דקא בעו לאצולי למשה, אמרו לה: גבירתנו! מנהגו של עולם, מלך בשר ודם גוזר גזירה, אם כל העולם כולו אין מקיימין אותה – בנינו ובני ביתו מקיימין אותה, ואת עוברת על גזירת אביך! בא גבריאל וחבטן בקרקע.

‘ותשלח את אמתה ותיקחה’ – רבי יהודה ורבי נחמיה, חד אמר: ידה, וחד אמר: שפחתה. מאן דאמר ידה, דכתב: ‘אמתה’, ומאן דאמר שפחתה, מדלא כתיב ‘ידה’.

ולמאן דאמר שפחתה, הא אמרת: בא גבריאל וחבטן בקרקע! דשייר לה חדא, דלא אורחא דבת מלבא למיקם לחודה.

ולמאן דאמר ידה, ליכתוב ‘ידה’! הא קא משמע לן, דאישתרבב אישתרבובי, דאמר מר: וכן אתה מוצא באמתה של בת פרעה; וכן אתה מוצא בשיני רשעים, דכתיב: ‘שני רשעים שברת’, ואמר ריש לקיש: אל תיקרי ‘שברת’, אלא ‘שריבבתה’.

‘ותפתח ותראהו את הילד’ – ‘ותרא מיבעי ליה! אמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: שראתה שכניה עמו’.

‘והנה נער בכה’ – קרי ליה ‘ילד’ וקרי ליה ‘נער’! תנא: הוא ילד וקולו כנער, דברי רבי יהודה; אמר לו רבי נחמיה: אם כן, עשיתו למשה רבינו בעל מום! אלא, מלימד שעשתה לו אמו חופת נעורים בתיבה, אמרה: שמא לא אזכה לחופתו’.

‘ותחמל עליו ותאמר מילדי העברים זה’ – מנא ידעה? אמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: שראתה אותו מהול’.

The verse continues: “And her maidens walk along [*holekhot*] by the riverside” (Exodus 2:5). Rabbi Yohanan says: This walking is nothing other than^N the terminology of going toward death, and similarly it states: “Behold, I am going [*holekh*] to die” (Genesis 25:32).

The verse continues: “And she saw the ark among the willows” (Exodus 2:5). Once her maidens saw that the daughter of Pharaoh was intending to save Moses, they said to her: Our mistress, the custom of the world is that when a king of flesh and blood decrees a decree, even if all the world does not fulfill it, at least his children and members of his household fulfill it, and yet you are violating the decree of your father. After the maidens tried to convince her not to save Moses, the angel Gabriel came and beat them to the ground and they died.

The verse concludes: “And she sent *amatah* to take it” (Exodus 2:5). Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Neḥemya disagree as to the definition of the word “*amatah*.” One says that it means her arm, and one says that it means her maidservant. The Gemara explains: The one who says that it means her arm^N explained it in this manner, as it is written “*amatah*,” which denotes her forearm. And the one who says that it means her maidservant explained it in this manner because it does not explicitly write the more common term: Her hand [*yadah*]. Therefore, he understands that this is the alternative term for a maidservant, *ama*.

The Gemara asks: And according to the one who says that it means her maidservant, didn’t you say earlier: Gabriel came and beat them to the ground and the maidservants died, so how could Pharaoh’s daughter send her? The Gemara answers: It must be that Gabriel left her one maidservant, as it is not proper that a princess should stand alone.

The Gemara asks: And according to the one who says that it means her hand, let the Torah write explicitly: Her hand [*yadah*]. Why use the more unusual term *amatah*? The Gemara answers: This verse teaches us that her arm extended [*ishtarbat*] many cubits. As the Master said in another context: And similarly you find with regard to the hand of Pharaoh’s daughter that it extended, and similarly you find with regard to the teeth of evildoers, as it is written: “You have broken [*shibbarta*] the teeth of the wicked” (Psalms 3:8), and Reish Lakish said: Do not read the word as *shibbarta*, rather read it as *sheribbavta*, you have extended.

The next verse states: “And she opened it and saw it [*vatirehu*], even the child” (Exodus 2:6). The Gemara comments: The verse states: “And she saw it”; it should have stated: And she saw. Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Ḥanina, says: In addition to Moses, she saw the Divine Presence with him. This is indicated by the usage of “saw it.”

The verse states: “And saw it, even the child [*yeled*]; and behold a lad [*na’ar*] that wept” (Exodus 2:6). The verse calls him “a child [*yeled*],”^N and the same verse calls him “a lad [*na’ar*].” A Sage teaches: He is the age of a child but his voice is as loud and deep as a lad; this is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Neḥemya said to him: If that is so, you made Moses our teacher blemished,^N since his voice was unusually deep. Rather, this teaches that his mother made a canopy of youth, i.e., a small canopy, for him in the ark, as she said: Perhaps I will not merit to see his wedding canopy.

The verse concludes: “And she had compassion on him, and said: This [*zeh*] is one of the Hebrews’ children” (Exodus 2:6). The Gemara asks: From where did she know that he was a Hebrew child? Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Ḥanina, says: As she saw that he was circumcised.

These [hemma] are the waters of Meribah – הַמַּיִם מִי מֵרִיבָה: The word *hemma*, these, indicates a reference to a matter previously mentioned. Since this event was not explicitly noted before, the Sages understood it to mean that these are the waters that the Egyptian astrologers had already envisioned.

One who in the future will say, etc. – מִי שֶׁעָתִיד לֵאמֹר: This statement is difficult. If the angels are stating that Moses would sing and accept the Torah in the future, then why were they concerned that he would die? Some explain that the intention is that although there could be other means of saving Moses, the angels prayed that God would show mercy to him and save him immediately in a way that did not involve hardship (see *Ben Yehoyada*).

The Gemara comments: The Pharaoh's daughter said: "This [zeh] is one of the Hebrews' children" (Exodus 2:6). Rabbi Yoḥanan says: This teaches that she prophesied unknowingly, as the intention of the word "zeh" was: This one falls, i.e., is cast, into the water, but no other will fall by means of water, for on that day Pharaoh's decree was canceled.

The Gemara explains: And this is what Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "And when they shall say to you: Seek unto the necromancers and the diviners, that chirp [metzaftzefim] and that mutter [mahggim]" (Isaiah 8:19)? The explanation of their chirping and muttering is: They see [tzofin], but they do not know what they are seeing; they enunciate [mahggim], but they do not know what they are enunciating. Although necromancers and diviners do have some insight into the future, they do not see clearly enough to understand what they are actually seeing.

The Gemara applies this to Pharaoh: Pharaoh's astrologers saw that the savior of the Jewish people would be stricken by water. Therefore, they arose and decreed: "Every son that is born you shall cast into the river" (Exodus 1:22); they thought that their vision indicated that Moses would be killed in the water. Once Jochebed cast Moses into the water, although he was protected in an ark, the astrologers said: We no longer see in the stars anything like that sign we saw as to the downfall of the leader of the Jews by water, and therefore at that moment they canceled their decree. But they did not know that what they saw foretold that Moses would be stricken on account of the waters of Meribah. They envisioned a downfall for Moses by water but didn't fully comprehend their vision.

And this is what Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: What is the meaning of that which is written: "These [hemma] are the waters of Meribah,ⁿ where the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and He was sanctified in them" (Numbers 20:13)? The verse indicates that these are the waters that the astrologers of Pharaoh saw and on account of which they erred. And this is what Moses said: "The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand men on foot [ragli]; and yet You have said: I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month" (Numbers 11:21). Moses said to the Jewish people: On account of me, which is an alternative meaning of the word ragli, all of you were saved, as the decree to throw all males into the river was canceled on my account.

Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa says: That day that Moses was placed in the river was the twenty-first day of the month of Nisan. The ministering angels said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, should the one who in the future will sayⁿ the Song at the Red Sea on this day be stricken on this day? As this was also the date on which the Red Sea would be parted during the salvation of the Exodus.

Rabbi Aḥa bar Hanina says: That day was actually the sixth day of the month of Sivan. The ministering angels said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, should the one who in the future will receive the Torah on Mount Sinai on this day be stricken on this day? As this was also the date on which the Torah was received.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who says that Moses was placed in the water on the sixth of Sivan, you find that there can be three months during which Moses was hidden after his birth; as the Master said (*Tosefta* 11:7): Moses died on the seventh of Adar, and Moses was born on the seventh of Adar. And based on this, from the seventh of Adar until the sixth of Sivan there are three months, which correspond to the three months Moses was hidden before being placed in the water. But according to the one who says that it was on the twenty-first of Nisan, how can you find that he was hidden for three months?

זה" – אמר רבי יוחנן: מלמד, שנתנבאה שלא מדעתה, זה נופל ואין אחר נופל.

והיינו דאמר רבי אלעזר, מאי דכתיב: וְכִי יֹאמְרוּ אֵלֵיכֶם דְּרוּשׁוּ אֶל הָאֲבוֹת וְאֶל הַיְדְעָנִים הַמְצַפְצִפִּים וְהַמְהַגִּים? צוּפִין וְאֵינֶם יוֹדְעִין מַה צּוּפִין, מְהַגִּים וְאֵינֶם יוֹדְעִים מַה מְהַגִּים.

ראו שמושיעין של ישראל במים הוא לוקה, עמדו וגורו "כל הבן הילוד היאדה תשליכהו". כיון דשדויה למשה, אמרו: תו לא חזינו כי ההוא סימנא. בטלו לגזירתיהו, והם אינו יודעין שעל מי מריבה הוא לוקה.

והיינו דאמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא, מאי דכתיב: "המה מי מריבה אשר רבו?" המה שראו איצטגני פרעה וטעו. והיינו דקאמר משה: "שש מאות אלף רגלי" וגו'. אמר להן משה לישראל: בשבילי נצלתם כולכם.

רבי חנינא בר פפא אמר: אותו היום עשרים ואחד בניסן היה. אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם, מי שעתיד לומר שירה על הים ביום זה, ילקה ביום זה?

רבי אחא בר חנינא אמר: אותו היום ששה בסיון היה. אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם! מי שעתיד לקבל תורה מהר סיני ביום זה, ילקה ביום זה?

בשלמא למאן דאמר בששה בסיון, משפחת לה שלשה ירחי, דאמר מר: בשבעה באדר מת ובשבעה באדר נולד משה, ומשבעה באדר ועד ששה בסיון תלתא ירחי; אלא למאן דאמר בעשרים ואחד בניסן, היכי משפחת לה?

אותה שנה מעוברת היתה; רובו של ראשון, ורובו של אחרון, ואמצעי שלם.

The Gemara answers: That year was a leap year in which there were two months of Adar. Moses was hidden most of the first month of the three, from the seventh day of the first Adar when he was born, and most of the last month of the three, i.e., all of Nisan until the twenty-first, and the entire middle one. All of this together is considered as three months.

”ותאמר אחותו אל בת פרעה האלך וקראתי לך אשה מינקת מן העבריות.”
ומאי שנא מעבריות?

The Gemara now discusses the next verse in Exodus: “Then said his sister to Pharaoh’s daughter: Shall I go and call you a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?” (Exodus 2:7). The Gemara asks: And what is different that Pharaoh’s daughter would specifically want a nurse of the Hebrew women?

מלמד, שהחזירוהו למשה על כל המערייות כולן ולא ינק. אומר: פה שעתיד לדבר עם השכינה יינק דבר טמא? והיינו דכתב: “את מי יורה דעה” וגו’, למי יורה דעה ולמי יבין שמועה? “לגמולי מחלב ולעתיקי משדים.”

The Gemara answers: This teaches that prior to this, they took Moses around^N to all the Egyptian wet nurses and he did not agree to nurse from any of them, as he said: Shall a mouth that in the future will speak with the Divine Presence actually nurse something impure?^N And this is as it is written: “Whom shall one teach knowledge? And whom shall one make understand the message?” (Isaiah 28:9). The prophet is asking: To whom shall God teach the knowledge of the Torah, and to whom shall God make to understand the message of the Torah? The answer is as the verse continues: “Them that are weaned from the milk, them that are drawn from the breasts” (Isaiah 28:9). The conclusion of the verse indicates that the Torah should be taught to the one who did not want to nurse from the milk of a gentile woman, i.e., Moses.

”ותאמר לה בת פרעה לכי וגו’ – אומר רבי אלעזר: מלמד, שהלכה בפוריות כעלמה. רבי שמואל בר נחמני אומר: “העלמה” – שהעלימה את דבריה.

The next verse states: “And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her: Go. And the maiden [*ha’alma*] went and called the child’s mother” (Exodus 2:8). Rabbi Elazar says: This teaches that she went quickly like a maiden, i.e., with the strength of one of marriageable age, and not as the young child that she was. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani says: The word *ha’alma* is related to the word meaning to hide [*le’alem*], for she hid her words and didn’t tell Pharaoh’s daughter that she was bringing the baby’s mother.

”ותאמר לה בת פרעה היליכי את הילד הזה” – אומר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא: מתנבאה ואינה יודעת מה מתנבאה, “היליכי” – הא שליכי. ואני אתן את שכרך” – אומר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא: לא דיין לצדיקים שמחזירין להן אבידתן, אלא שנותנין להן שכרן.

The next verse states what Pharaoh’s daughter said to Jochebed: “And Pharaoh’s daughter said to her: Take this [*heilikhi*] child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it” (Exodus 2:9). Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: Pharaoh’s daughter is prophesying and she does not know what she is prophesying, as the word *heilikhi* means: This is yours [*ha shellikhi*], i.e., this is your child. The next part of the verse states: “And I will give you your wages.” Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: This teaches that with regard to righteous people, not only is it so that God arranges that their lost items are returned to them, but He also arranges that they get their wages, as the son of Jochebed was returned to her and she also received payment for nursing him.

”ותקח מרים הנביאה אחות אהרן וגו’ – אחות אהרן ולא אחות משה? אומר רב עמרם אומר רב, ואמרי לה אומר רב נחמן אומר רב: מלמד, שהיתה מתנבאה בשהיא אחות אהרן.

Elsewhere, the verse states with regard to Miriam: “And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances” (Exodus 15:20). The Gemara asks: Why is Miriam referred to as “the sister of Aaron,” and not the sister of Moses? Rav Amram says that Rav says, and some say that Rav Nahman says that Rav says: This teaches that Miriam already prophesied when she was still the sister of only Aaron, i.e., before Moses was born.

NOTES

מלמד שהחזירוהו – This teaches that they took Moses around, etc. – למשה וכו' It is apparent that they must have brought Moses to Egyptian wet nurses, otherwise Miriam would not have dared to suggest to the daughter of Pharaoh that she employ a Hebrew woman as a nursemaid. She would have feared that the ruse would be uncovered.

יינק דבר טמא – Nurse something impure – The Maharsha writes that although there is no halakhic prohibition against a Jewish baby nursing from a gentile woman, Moses refused to do so because of the additional sanctity he possessed (see *Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 81:7, and in the comment of Rema).