

Shemini 5771

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We have several “time periods” in our calendar year. The days between the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Av-are known as “The Three Week Period”. The days from the 1st of Tishrei through the 10th of Tishei- are referred to as the “Aseret Yemei Teshuvah Period”. We are now in the days between Purim and Pesach, known as “The Period between Ge’ulah and Ge’ulah.”

One of the reasons we celebrate Purim in the second Adar rather than the first Adar is because we want to consolidate the Ge’ulah (redemption) of Purim with the Ge’ulah of Mitzrayim. Chazal wanted us to compare the two events to see their differences and see their commonalities so we can learn one from the other.

The Gemara states (Megillat Ta’anit 12) “Ge’ulat Mitzrayim, in which the decree [of Par’oh] was only against the male children of the Jewish people, how much more so [should we celebrate the miracle of Purim] where the decree of Haman was against the male and female children of Israel “. Comparing the miracles of the two events we find Ge’ulat Mitzrayim had the Ten Plagues against the Egyptians , the splitting of Yam Suf, which were open and revealed miracles for all to see and be awed, while the miracles of Purim were hidden and concealed; only those with perception were able to see G-d’s hand behind the scenes. Yet, the Beracha, Chazal decreed of “*She’asa Nissim La’a’voteinu*” is the same Beracha for both events.

Many people recite the Beracha of “HaGomel” at the first opportunity after returning from an ocean crossing flight. This is based on the Gemara Berachot (54b) stating that four events require a special Ho’da’ah, a Korban Todah to Hashem. One of them is for crossing the ocean. Notice Rashi on Torah where Korban Todah is introduced (VaYikra 7:12), “*Al Davar Hoda’ah, Al Nes, K’gon Yordei HaYam*”, that crossing the ocean and returning safely is regarded as a NES, a miracle, and for that it requires a Korban Todah, or our recitation of HaGomel. Imagine that, every time we fly over the ocean, a miracle has been performed. But do we sense it at such; do we perceive it as that?

The lesson Chazal are trying to convey by *Smichat Ge’ulah to Ge’ulah*, learning Purim from Pesach is that just as the “natural events” that took place in Persia (Iran) were not so natural after all, it was HaShem who, behind the scenes, orchestrated every detail of the events, so too must we view all of our “natural blessings,” that fact that we can see, we can hear, walk and talk, have *nachat* from children and grandchildren, all these natural events are truly daily blessings and miracles.