



Parashat Shmot

January 2023

Conversation 1

I was on my daily morning walk here in Beit Zayit and walked by a fellow with a kipa and I asked him, Parshat Shmot, the portion of Shmot, can you give me a few sentences about it? Without the slightest hesitation he said yes and said that Yosef Joseph was first mentioned as a na'ar and that reference to na'ar is a reference to youthfulness, to energies, to openness to the world, and the use of that word has a lot of meaning. The people of Israel needed for Yosef to go down to Egypt first. With that approach and with those energies and with that culture in place, the people of Israel will be able to survive and even thrive in their experience in Egypt. And the fellow said that upon leaving Egypt the waters only opened when Joseph's bones approached the sea, and that was what even let them go out of Egypt.

Conversation 2

In another situation, a truck pulled up to the local market grocery. The driver came down and he had a kipa and tzitzit. So I walked up to him and said, Parshat Shmot, can you give me a few words about it? And he said yes. Parshat Shmot starts out with 70 people, describing the 70 people of the family that came out. And he said, there's also an expression in Hebrew shivim panim l'Torah there are 70 faces to the Torah. And he said, those two are connected. That as many faces as there were that came out of Egypt, so are the faces of Torah and the way to look at it and the way to relate to it.

Conversation 3

Near the Mahane Yehuda market in Jerusalem yesterday evening I was walking with my son and we saw a couple and I turned to them and said I've just finished a wonderful dinner at a restaurant where my son is a chef. And a great topping to it would be to hear about the Portion of the Week. They looked at each other and they said, well, we don't really have something. So I said thank you, good evening and we walked away. Then after a few moments I felt a tap on my back. And the fellow said, excuse me, my

Weekly~Portion



פרשת~השבוע

wife is a little slower, but she wants to say something to you. And she came along and she said in the Parashat HaShavua in the Portion of the Week one way of looking at it is that it's looking at the soul, the child's soul that's in each of us, that each of us has a whole range of souls of a child with different aspects. That's the way she related to it and she wanted to express that.

So I found that very moving and I started crying, which happens, and I apologized. I said, I have a certain condition in which I cry frequently. And the fellow said, Could I please have your Hebrew name? So I'll mention you in the prayers. So I said to him, yes, my name is David ben Ben Zion. And with that we parted, each in their own way, but having connected in this way.