

Dvar Torah for Parshat Shemot 5764

Based on "Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom" ## 208, 209

Yosef, all his brothers and that entire generation died (Exodus 1:6).

Is Rebbe Nachman dead?

The old-timers are all gone. We're the old-timers now. How do we ensure that those who follow stay true to their Jewishness and don't become Egyptianized and enslaved?

What we have to do as the older generation is much the same as we had to do as the younger generation. We have to seek what is eternal in our tradition, what has made it exciting and interesting to Jews across the globe and across the centuries. Having made it engaging to ourselves, we have to make it engaging to others.

When Rebbe Nachman said to let our children know what happened in Breslov ("Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom" #209), he did not mean to tell them that he wore boots or buttoned his coat in a certain way. He meant that we need to make them aware that Judaism is not a mummy (Genesis 50:2); that they not be Pharaoh-like and "not know Yosef" (Exodus 1:8). In telling us to share his teachings with our children, Rebbe Nachman paraphrases the mitzvah of remembering the Revelation at Sinai (Deuteronomy 4:10), an implicit comparison which is staggering.

Rebbe Nachman pointed out that a particular suggestion or insight of his may not strike a resonant chord with you, but by sharing it with another -- and s/he with another -- the suggestion will eventually reach its intended address. He also said that it could take a while for a suggestion to make its impact on a person. This is very important for parents to remember when dealing with their little darlings, in particular those of the teen-age variety.

The Torah lives and Rebbe Nachman lives. If we think of ourselves as old-timers, it is a sign that we think of the Torah as old. If G' forbid that is the case. when we go, and even before, those who follow will seek something new and Egyptian. That won't work. Stay young. Stay fresh.

agutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!

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