

On the first of the Aseres Hadibros – Anochi Hashem Elokechoh – the Rambam explains that Hashem constantly gives existence to the world, and He controls everything that happens in the world in an ongoing way. There is hashgocho protis on everything down to the finest detail.

In addition, there is only one force – Hashem Echod. There are no parallel forces. The Ramban writes that the makkos showed us that this Force that runs the world is intelligent, it created the world from nothing, and has total control over the entire world.

One of the deepest discussions of all the various yesodos emunoh that we learned from yetzias mitzrayim, is the part of the haggodoh called 'dayenu'. Although it is a song that is sung by children at the seder, it contains incredibly deep insights. We will now go through this song line-by-line and elaborate on what it teaches us.

אילו הוציאנו ממצרים ולא עשה בהם שפטים

Had Hashem just taken us out of Egypt, it would have been overwhelming. We were shown the existence of Hashem and how He took us from one avdus to a different avdus. But it didn't stop there. Hashem taught us the world isn't hefker. There is din and cheshbon – reward and punishment in an exact, precise manner. This was the thing which inspired Yisro the most. He was searching and searching for the truth and when he was told about the middoh k'negged middoh – how at kriyas Yam Suf, each Egyptian was punished exactly in the manner he tortured Jews – this convinced Yisro of the truth of Hashem. The justice of Hashem is straight down to the finest detail.

עשה באלהיהם

The next level to appreciate is that Hashem eliminated the sheker of avodo zoro. There are no parallel kochos. There is only Hashem's unity which controls everything. On the night of makkas bechoros, all the avodo zoros disintegrated. But there was one avodo zoro which remained for seven days. It is always the last avodo zoro for people to give up – the god of money – Baal Tzefone.

Klal Yisroel is going through an entire process of education and growth – to understand who Hashem is and how He runs His world. Klal Yisroel can't just show up at Har Sinai and accept the Torah without any preparation.

הרג את בכוריהם

The next level to appreciate is makkas bechoros. There was an overwhelming miracle that happened. Every bechor in all of Egypt died on the spot at the exact stroke of midnight. If there were two bechorim in the house, they both died. If there was no bechor, the oldest child in the household died. If the husband had a bechor with some mistress, he died too. When Hashem says something is going to happen, it will happen with every detail that was predicted.

Human beings have the capacity to ignore obvious messages that Hashem is sending them. There is a most incredible Rashi which illustrates this. Moshe had already predicted how and when the previous nine makkos would come, and they all came about exactly as predicted. Before makkas bechoros, Moshe predicted the entire country will be in panic and chaos from all the deaths of the bechoros at midnight. The posuk says that at the time of makkas bechoros, Pharaoh got up in the middle of the night. Rashi adds that he got up from his bed. What does this mean? It means Pharaoh was able to go to sleep that night of makkas bechoros, just as he did every other

night. As if nothing was going to happen – as if his entire country wasn't about to collapse! Pharaoh was able to ignore it all and go to sleep in his bed! In his mind, Pharaoh is still in charge and everything will be fine.

Makkas bechoros finally broke the resolve of the Egyptians to keep Klal Yisroel as their slaves. They went crazy to get Klal Yisroel out as soon as possible. But people have short memories. A mere three days later, Pharaoh and the Egyptians regret letting Klal Yisroel go and they run to get them back! Why were they so desperate to get them back? It was because the entire Egyptian economy was based on slave labor. They had no choice but to get their slaves back because no Egyptian was ready to do his own work.

There is a Yalkut which gives a whole different perspective to why Pharaoh pursued Klal Yisroel to the Yam Suf. It says Hashem maneuvered Klal Yisroel to move to Pi Hachiros and Migdol – next to the idol of Baal Tzefone. Why is Hashem bringing them there? Because this is where Pharaoh was storing all the treasures amassed by Yosef. Migdol was a military camp placed specifically to guard the treasure next to the god of money, Baal Tzefone.

When Pharaoh saw Klal Yisroel going in that direction towards his money, he suddenly forgot all about the destruction of Egypt and got all the horses he could gather to stop Klal Yisroel. And who gave him the animals? It was those who feared Hashem and brought their animals inside before makkas borod. This happened even though four days earlier they were going crazy trying to get Klal Yisroel out of Egypt. People forget very quickly.

נתן לנו את מחונם

The next thing to be thankful for is all the money Klal Yisroel got from Egypt. They got it in two steps. Once it happened when they collected clothes and vessels from their neighbors when left Egypt, and then an enormous amount at Yam Suf. Although the riches they received at Yam Suf were much greater, Hashem still wanted to make sure that Klal Yisroel knew the promise to Avrohom Ovinu – of leaving Egypt with great wealth – was being fulfilled. He didn't want them to wait a week for Kriyas Yam Suf thinking for a moment that Hashem doesn't deliver what He promises.

Hashgocho protis is working in a very detailed way.

Klal Yisroel have to get to Migdol and Pi Hachiros to get this treasure. This could have been arranged in many different ways. Hashem could have sent a tornado to just pick up the Egyptian army and throw them in the sea and be done with it. But Hashem wants to teach Klal Yisroel lessons with everything they experience.

After everything that happened in Egypt, Klal Yisroel are tested now in their bitachon. They are going into a desert with very little supplies. Hashem sends them out without giving them any time to prepare large amounts of provisions. But Klal Yisroel don't hesitate. They trust that Hashem will take care of them. For a year they were taught that Hashem runs the world and there is hashgocho protis. They take this lesson to heart and go into the desert without knowing how long they will be there, how they will survive, or if their rations will run out. All they need to know is that Hashem will take care.

קרע לנו את הימים

Kriyas Yam Suf was an event that impacted all the nations in the region.

It shook up the Cana'anims and they were terrified of Klal Yisroel – as Rochov testified to the spies Yehoshua sent. This was one part. The other part was that Hashem wants Klal Yisroel to grow from the experience and show their bitachon that Hashem will save them.

The Beis HaLevi writes in his Kuntres Habitachon – which is essentially what the Gra says in Mishlei – that we empower Hashem when we rely on Him to provide for us. Only if we put ourselves in Hashem's hands will Hashem step in and interfere to ensure our success. But if we don't think Hashem is running the world, and feel that someone is in control of us then we empower that person to exercise control over us. If we are in charge, then we will have to fend for ourselves and Hashem will not arrange things to make it work out.

So when Klal Yisroel go into the Yam Suf, it still hasn't split. They have to go in deeper and deeper into the water, believing that Hashem is in charge and He will save them somehow and not let them drown. Only then it splits. Hashem is giving us lessons how He runs the world.

Avrohom Ovinu goes into the kivshon ho'aish relying on Hashem to do whatever He wants. He puts his life in Hashem's hands – not expecting Hashem will save him, and then Hashem saves him. Horon goes in to the same kivshon ho'aish – not because he is putting his life in Hashem's hands – but because he became confident only after he saw Avrohom was saved! So he dies and no miracle is done for him.

Hashem could have saved Klal Yisroel at Yam Suf in a number of different ways. But He chose this way to teach them a lesson in bitachon. We empower Hashem to save us only after we place our trust in Him that He will save us. Then we deserve the miraculous salvation.

העבירנו בתוכו בחרבה

When Hashem split the Yam Suf, there is another demonstration of hashgocho protis. Yes, the wind was blowing all night, but when you walk on the sea bed, it will be absolutely dry – not even mud. There will be vertical walls of water on either side of you. This can't be because of any wind blowing!

שקע צרינו בתוכו

Hashem destroyed our enemies in the Yam Suf in a way that Klal Yisroel

saw the middas hadin – middoh k'negged middoh.

ספק צרכינו במדבר ארבעים שנה

Hashem provided for us in the middle of crossing the Yam Suf and throughout the 40 years in the desert. Hashem gave them all their needs. He is taking care of them in every way. The Rishonim in Shabbos say there were merchants who came to Klal Yisroel in the desert to sell them all kinds of merchandise, but they didn't need to buy anything. All they had to do was learn Torah – day after day for forty years.

האכילנו את המן

In addition to living in the desert while our needs were taken care of, we also got the man which tasted like anything you wanted. And it was not a one-time event – Hashem told Moshe to keep a portion of man in a container to testify to later generations that Hashem takes care of our parnossoh – even when you don't see it as clearly as you do now.

Hashem is preparing them with all kinds of lessons of bitachon and hashgocho protis. They need these lessons in order to receive the Torah. They will not forget it like Pharaoh forgot the lessons and went to sleep.

נתן לנו את השבת

Hashem gave us Shabbos in a way to teach us that Shabbos is built-in to the world itself. The man will not fall on Shabbos like it does during the rest of the week. It is not something we observe by ourselves outside the world. Shabbos is embedded in the very functioning of world because no man fell on Shabbos.

Dayenu is teaching us to step back and understand the educational process that we went through with yetzias mitrayim. Part of the mitzvah of sippur yetzias mitrayim is to incorporate these lessons as we go through the seder on Leil Pesach. This is no children's song to just sing with the tune. The Rishonim took dayenu very seriously – they all had pirushim on dayenu because it describes how Klal Yisroel were able to be on the level to receive the Torah.

The final completion of yetzias mitrayim is when they enter Eretz Yisroel and build the Beis Hamikdosh.