

Shemos

Perceptions • Teves 18 5785 • January 18, 2025 • Issue #2080

Why 210 years? That's what my *chavrusa* asked me recently. He understood why there had to be slavery, especially *kabbalistically*. He just hadn't seen any explanation for the length of the exile, and wanted one.

Fortunately, I have. The *Arizal* addressed this issue in *Sba'ar HaPesukim* in *Parashas Shemos*. He says:

The duration of the Egyptian Exile, from the time the Jewish people arrived there, was 210 years. During the first 130 years, the "branches" began to reincarnate into the Jewish people and the *Erev Rav*. They were refined and cleansed, good separated from the bad. Their separation was not complete until the end of the 130 years. . . After they completed their reincarnations and separations, Moshe *Rabbeinu* was born. As known, Moshe was 80 years old when they left Egypt, and 130 plus 80 is 210. It was not possible for Moshe, who was the *Da'as* itself, the good to come, [to be born] until his sparks were separated out, good from the bad. When their separation was complete, he was born. This is the reason for what our rabbis *z"l* write (*Sotab* 12b) that on the day Moshe was thrown [into the Nile] the decree to throw the males into the river was annulled. They (the rectified souls) had finished coming [into the world]. (*Sba'ar HaPesukim, Shemos*, q.v. *A Kew King*)

It is always amazing how something on a *Pshat* level can seem so random and on a *Sod* level be so specific. The Torah does not even mention the 210 years in any direct manner, though it really is the key to why the exile had to occur in the first place, and had to be so harsh. The origin goes back to Adam *HaRishon's* 130 years of *teshuvah* after leaving *Gan Aiden* (*Eruvin* 18b), the generation of the Flood, the tower, and of those born into both the Jews and Egyptians. It was all part of a major historic rectification of mankind on the way to making the Jewish people who would eventually lead it.

But that's not all. There is additional significance to the 210 years:

The *Da'as* of *Zebr Anpin* has ten *Hovayos* from the level of the *Da'as* of the *Yésod* of *Abba*, which has a *gematria* of 260, and ten names of *Ebeyeb* from the *Yésod* of *Imma* have a *gematria* of 210. The reason for the exile of the Jewish people in Egypt has already been explained on the verse, “A new king rose up” (*Shemos* 1:8), that the entire generation was sparks of the destroyed seed of Adam which flowed through the brain of the *Da'as* literally, and were very elevated souls. Since they came from there, they needed to be in exile for 210 years, which is ten times the name of the *Ebeyeb* in the *Da'as* from the side of *Imma*, as mentioned. This is what Ya'akov hinted to his sons, “Go down—*Raish-Dalet-Vav* (200 + 4 + 6)—there” (*Bereishis* 42:2). (*Sba'ar HaPesukim, Shemos*, q.v. *An Angel of God Appeared to Him*)

Da'as is a *sefirah*, which you can read about online these days. The word itself means *knowledge*, but it refers to a particular kind of Divine light that acts as the soul of the six *sefiros* of *Chesed, Gevurah, Tifferes, Netzach, Hod, and Yésod*, otherwise known as *Zebr Anpin*. That may mean absolutely nothing to you, but you should know that all that has happened through the last 5,785 years, and what will happen until 6,000, is because of the light of these six *sefiros* with the *Da'as* inside of them. They represent the Divine script for human history.

A *Hovayah* is one four-letter Name of God. It is too holy to say these days as written, so we shuffled the letters to produce the word *Hovayah* instead to refer to it. Just as everything physical is made up of elements, everything in all of existence (including the elements themselves) is made up of *Hovayos*, spiritual packets of Divine light. They are the means by which God shares His light and implements His will.

Just as there are ten *sefiros* in general, each of the *sefiros* have ten *sefiros*, each one being a *Hovayah*-unit of spiritual light. Just like *Hovayah* is a Name of God, so is *Ebeyeb*, which we are introduced to in this week's *parsha* (*Shemos* 3:14). Its *gematria* is equal to 1 + 5 + 10 + 5, or 21.

All of this may *still* mean very little to you, unless you take the time to more fully understand what the *Arizal* has written above, but it isn't the point I was trying to make. The only point I am making is, that the 210 years we spent in Egypt, 116 of which were the years of slavery, were not incidental. Nothing ever is. On the contrary, they were precise for the sake of levels of world rectification we may not know about but we are nevertheless a part of.

The complete will of God is so unfathomable, and even what we're able to grasp is only revealed to us in stages and over time. Torah gives us insight into that will and *mitzvos* help us to work with it even when we don't understand it. The only thing we know for sure is that everything that God does is for the good because He can do no evil, no how much history seems to argue the opposite.

Figure out what you can about whatever it is that bothers you. But where you fall short, use trust and faith in God's goodness to carry you through life. This is what has carried us as a nation throughout history until today.

I have just published my new *Haggadah*, b"H, called "The Wise Son Says." You can see it here: <https://www.shaarnunproductions.org/lwise-son-says-haggadah.html>, and take advantage of the special offers available at this time. *Pesach* is closing in on us fast, b"H, so please check out my new *Haggadah* while the specials lasts. It's Torah for the entire year . . .and possibly life-altering.