



20:2 ולא היה מים לעדה ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן

"There was no water for the assembly, and

they gathered on Moshe and on Aharon." The preceding Posuk told us that Miriam died and was buried. Immediately after, the Torah says that there was no water for the people, and they gathered on Moshe and Aharon. Rashi tells us that the Parshah of the Parah Adumah is placed near the death of Miriam to teach us that just as Korbonos effect atonement, so too does the death of Tzaddikim. Miriam was an exceedingly righteous individual, a Tzaedeikes, and thus her death can effect an atonement. If this is indeed so, why is it that the Torah tells us immediately after the death of Miriam that there was no water for the people? Not having water is a very serious situation, as one cannot live without water. One would think that Klal Yisroel were being punished by not having water. If the death of Miriam atoned, then why were they lacking water immediately after her death, that which they need to survive? The following *Divrei Torah* will expound on this topic and support the *P'shat* offered in the closing paragraph.

ויבאו בני ישראל "20:1 - אמרי שפר

כל העדה מדבר צן בחדש הראשון וישב העם בקדש, "The B'nei Yisroel, the entire assembly, arrived at the Wilderness of Tzin in the first month and the people dwelt in Kadesh, Miriam died there and she was buried there." Rashi tells us that Miriam as well (in addition to Moshe and Aharon) died through a kiss from Hashem. Why is Rashi telling us this, and from where does he know it? The שו"ת מהר"ל 23 tells us a Yesod that upon one who it was decreed that he would die, Chas V'Sholom, even if he is still alive down here in this world, as far as Above, he is already considered dead. Once there is a decree from Above, and the Malach Hamaves (Angel of Death) is sent to get the person, it is considered as if he is already dead. However, this rule only applies to one who is killed through the Malach Hamaves. One who is not given over to the Malach Hamaves, rather Hakodosh Boruch Hu Himself, takes

care of bringing the person back to the world Above, there is no decree about the death, and no Malachim to go and bring the person. Thus until the person is actually taken from this world, they are considered alive. Rashi is coming to address the seemingly extra word, "ותמת שם מרים" - that Miriam died, "there." Why does the Torah need to say there? Rashi is answering this question and explaining that the Torah is telling us through this extra word that Miriam died through the Kiss from Hashem. "שם" - She died there, at that moment, and was not considered dead before, because she was not taken by the Malach Hamaves, but by Hashem.

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The Gemara in Brochos 8a says that מיתה נשיקה, death by a kiss from Hashem, is the most desirable form of death. It is similar to pulling a hair from milk - the Neshama leaves the body without any resistance. The more that people sin and connect themselves to the Gashmiyos of this world, it establishes a bond between their Neshama and their Guf. The Neshama becomes connected to the pleasures of this world, and thus becomes increasingly difficult for the Neshama to part from the physical life. For those who are completely connected to the physical world, Chazal compare their death to pulling embedded thistles from sheep's wool. Meaning that it is very very difficult to separate them. Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam had pure Neshomos. They traversed this physical world always remaining completely connected to the Ruchniyos, and not the Gashmiyos. Thus, when Hakodosh Boruch Hu came to take their Neshomos, there was no pain for the Neshama, for they weren't connected to the Gashmiyos of this world. They all died by the מיתה נשיקה, the kiss of death of Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

20:1 - ותמת שם מרים - תולדות יצחק

"Miriam died there and she was buried there." The Gemara in Moed Koton 28a says that the Parsha of the death of Miriam is near the Parsha of the Para Adumah to teach us that just as Korbonos effect atonement, so too the death of Tzaddikim effect atonement. Why does the Torah choose the Parah Adumah as the Korbon to teach us this lesson, as opposed to the Korbon Chatas or the Korbon Olah? There is an

important ingredient needed for atonement to occur. One who does not recognize in his soul the dearth that the loss of the Tzaddik leaves behind, then atonement does not occur. One must mourn greatly in his heart, and must recognize that the death of a Tzaddik is bad for Klal Yisroel. One must minimize himself, and be exceedingly humble, and see himself as dust of the earth. This is a fundamental ingredient needed for Kapparah, and without it, the Kapparah will not occur. This is why the death of Miriam is specifically near the Parah Adumah, for in regards to the Parah Adumah, the Torah tells us, "ושפר את הפרה לעיניו את עורה ואת בשרה ואת דמה על פירשה ישרוף" - everything gets burned. The message is that one must see himself as dust and ashes, as nothing, and recognize the great loss that the Tzaddik leaves behind - and that effects atonement.

20:2 - ולא היה מים - רבינו בחי

"There was no water for the assembly, and they gathered on Moshe and on Aharon." When Miriam died, the well stopped flowing, for the well flowed all those years in the Zechus of Miriam. It was the Zechus that she had of watching her baby brother Moshe. Moshe was placed in a basket in the water, and she watched at the water to see what would happen to him.

20:1,2 - ותמת שם - רבינו אביגדור

"And Miriam died there and she was buried there. And there was no water for the assembly." We learn from this that when one passes away, we pour out the water of open vessels. By people pouring out their water, it is a sign to all that they must go out and do Chesed for the Niftar. We do something which alludes to it, and do not say it outright that such and such person died, lets go do Chesed, for as Chazal tell us, that one who says bad news is a fool.

20:1,2 - ותמת שם מרים - רבינו יואל

"And Miriam died there and she was buried there. And there was no water for the assembly." The Be'er stopped flowing with water because of the death of Miriam. The water came in the Zechus of Miriam, and in the Zechus of Miriam, women were able to Tovel in a Mikvah.

ותמת שם "20:1,2 - מנחה בלולה

"And Miriam died there and she was buried there. And there was no water for the assembly." The Torah places the death of Miriam near the incident of the rock being hit to tell us that had Miriam been alive, they would not have hit the rock. Miriam was a prophetess and older than Moshe and Aharon, and she would have gotten them to speak to the rock – that which should have been in done – instead of doing the wrong thing and hitting the rock. The reason that the water stopped in the first place was because Klal Yisroel did not shed tears when Miriam died.

ולמה הבאתם את "20:4 - אור החיים

"קהל ד' אל המדבר הזה למות שם אנחנו ובעירנו" – "Why have you brought the congregation of Hashem to this wilderness to die there, we and our animals." It seems that we see once again Klal Yisroel complaining against Moshe and Aharon. Did they not learn their lesson yet, as to what happens when they go against Moshe and Aharon? Death by thirst is a horrifying prospect. They were scared. They weren't seeking meat, or something different than the Mon. They were seeking that which is a basic necessity for their very survival. They didn't say that they wanted to return to Mitzrayim, rather they just asked what the plan was when leaving Mitzrayim. If Moshe wasn't sure that he can sustain them, then why take them out of Mitzrayim? Why take them through the Midbar? Klal Yisroel may have asked in a manner that was a bit too aggressive, but their questioning here was not like the other times.

"The mouth of the well" – which was for the well of Miriam which travelled with Klal Yisroel throughout their years in the Midbar and provided water for them. Others say that this refers to the well opening up its mouth and singing Shira as it says in the Posuk in Bamidbar, "עלי, באר ענו לה."

פי "5:6 - ר' שמשון רפאל הירש

"The B'nei Yisroel, the entire assembly, arrived at the Wilderness of Tzin in the first month and the people dwelt in Kadesh; Miriam died there and she was buried there." Tzaddikim accept everything from Hakodosh Boruch Hu with great love. They know that there is no bad which comes from Hashem. It is only those people who are weak in Emunah, who see what seems to be judgment; they begin to doubt the Hashgachah of Hakodosh Boruch Hu in this world. This is why it is imperative and an obligation to eulogize Tzaddikim upon their passing from this world, to make known to the masses that it was a Chesed of Hashem, that He chose the Tzadik as a Kapparah for the Tzibbur. And the Tzaddikim are happy that they are the ones to be the conduit for Klal Yisroel to achieve atonement. Eulogies are to heal those weak in Emunah, so that they have the proper Emunah. This is why

Rashi – "פי הבאר" 5:6 – דרך חיים

explains that this refers to the well that accompanied Klal Yisroel through the desert in the Zechus of Miriam. He describes it as a rock that accompanied Klal Yisroel wherever they went. This seems difficult to understand, for it is unlikely that Rashi means that the rock travelled along with Klal Yisroel by rolling along with them, for that would imply that the rock gave forth water even without being attached to the ground. If that were in fact so, that itself was a miracle that should have been mentioned – that water came from the rock without even being attached to the ground; yet the Mishna says that the creation was "the mouth of the well" – meaning that it was just the mouth of the well that was created. Rather Rashi means that wherever Klal Yisroel went, there was a "mouth of a well" which came from a rock, and water came forth from that mouth of the well.

This – "פי הבאר" 5:6 – דרכי אבות

strengthened the Bitachon of Klal Yisroel is the Ribbono Shel Olam, that it is He Who provides drink for all. The Be'er itself was actually created at the beginning of the creation of the world – it was only the "mouth" of the Be'er that was actually created on Leil Shabbos Bain Hashmoshos.

ויבאו בני ישראל "20:1 - מטה נפתלי

כל העדה מדבר צן בחדש הראשון וישב העם בקדש, "ותמת שם מרים ותקבר שם" – "The B'nei Yisroel, the entire assembly, arrived at the Wilderness of Tzin in the first month and the people dwelt in Kadesh; Miriam died there and she was buried there." Tzaddikim accept everything from Hakodosh Boruch Hu with great love. They know that there is no bad which comes from Hashem. It is only those people who are weak in Emunah, who see what seems to be judgment; they begin to doubt the Hashgachah of Hakodosh Boruch Hu in this world. This is why it is imperative and an obligation to eulogize Tzaddikim upon their passing from this world, to make known to the masses that it was a Chesed of Hashem, that He chose the Tzadik as a Kapparah for the Tzibbur. And the Tzaddikim are happy that they are the ones to be the conduit for Klal Yisroel to achieve atonement. Eulogies are to heal those weak in Emunah, so that they have the proper Emunah. This is why

the Gemara in Shabbos 105b says that there is a great punishment for those who do not properly eulogize the righteous. For not doing so, causes the sickness of the weak Emunah to become stronger. That which Klal Yisroel did not eulogize Miriam properly, caused a terrible breakdown in Emunah amongst Klal Yisroel.

Now we can understand why the water stopped flowing after the death of Miriam, despite the rule that the death of the righteous can affect atonement. The key word in that statement is, "can", it can potentially affect atonement. Miriam died, and she was buried there – she was buried immediately. There were no Hespeditim, and Klal Yisroel did not mourn her properly. They did not recognize what they had lost, and they were ready to move on with their lives. An atonement can only happen if the death of the righteous individual is dealt with properly. That is why it is specifically the Parah Adumah that is the Korbon near the death of Miriam – for it is a Korbon which is completely burnt – the people must be humble and recognize the loss of the Tzaddik for it to help them. People cry and mourn over the death, and they realize that the Tzaddik died in the place of the people – the Tzaddik was happy to help the Tzibbur, despite it harming them.

Miriam was truly a righteous individual. She was taken by the kiss of death, Hakodosh Boruch Hu Himself came to get her. Her death was a time that the people should have cried and mourned greatly, and strengthened their Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Unfortunately, Klal Yisroel did not do so, and thus, they were severely lacking. They were lacking in Emunah. They didn't realize that the water came in the Zechus of Miriam, and being that they did not mourn her, her death did not give them an atonement. Thus, the water stopped flowing. There is a great lesson for us to learn here. When a Tzaddik dies, it is incumbent upon us to mourn properly. Not only does mourning properly help us – effect atonement, but not mourning properly can Chas V'Sholom be a great Kitrug against us. May we be Zoche to strengthen our Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu and achieve a complete atonement.