

FROM THE PUBLISHER AND EDITOR



Pesach gives us the greatest opportunity to remember and acknowledge the open miracles of Hashem. It's the opportunity to use our mouths to discuss them and at the Seder Nights savour them. We say on Shabbos and Yom Tov, in the Nishmas Kol Chai prayer – Every mouth shall praise You. We may ask: "But not every mouth in the world praises Hashem!" The answer is that a mouth is only really a mouth if it is praising Hashem, and if it doesn't praise Hashem it does not deserve to be called a mouth. Praising Hashem - that's what a mouth is for.

So if we've been lax during the year, thankfully we have Pesach, which literally means "the mouth speaks", to praise and praise again the wonders that Hashem did and does constantly, and through this we can find our real mouths.

It's a wonderful thing to finish working on an issue of *Jewish Life* and send it off to print. The team spends so many hours, days, and weeks getting the content mix right, making sure the articles are correct in every way possible, that each page looks stylish and inviting, and that the images used to illustrate the text are relevant and attractive. It's not just some words between some ads but an immense effort. I want to thank Robert for his great work and attention to detail, and the superb JL team which has created this special issue for Pesach. To all our readers and our most valued advertisers, thank you for your support – it is so greatly appreciated. Again, we welcome many new advertisers and look forward to working with you all in the years to come.

With so many aspects involved in getting the magazine into your hands, we are well aware of Hashem's miracles.

I'd also like to wish Linda, our operations director who has been ill this past month, a refuah shleimah on behalf of us all here. We look forward to having her back with us very soon.

Wishing you all a chag kasher v'sameach.

MARTYN SAMUELS, PUBLISHER



As the Torah begins the story of our enslavement and ultimate redemption from Egypt, we are introduced to two Jewish women, midwives, named *Shifra* and *Puah*, who were commanded by Pharaoh to kill male Jewish babies. *Shifra* was so named because she would m'shufar - "beautify" the babies by washing them, and *Puah*, because she would "make loud noises", speaking and whispering to the babies to calm them.

Our Sages teach that these women were none other than Yocheved and her daughter, Miriam. Yocheved was the daughter of Levi and the granddaughter of Yaakov Avinu, the greatest woman of her generation, counted among the original 70 Jewish souls who went down to Egypt. Miriam was a neviah, a prophetess.

Beyond defying Pharaoh's terrible decree, the midrash tells us that *Shifra* and *Puah* would also assist babies born to poor families by going to wealthy families and collecting food and water.

The name of a person defines his essence.

So, why does the Torah choose to use names that refer to the minor deeds that Yocheved and Miriam did, when, far more importantly, they repeatedly risked their lives for all of the Jewish children whom they saved?

In times of danger, even those who are weak can become momentarily strong and pushed to do great things, but we don't know what really motivates a person to do such things. It's not the great things that a person does that shows who he really is, it's the little, everyday things, those things that he does without giving much thought or concern to them; that's where we see the true measure of a person.

Yocheved and Miriam didn't just rise to the occasion to save the day in a very big way, they showed how much they truly loved and cared about every Jewish child by sticking around after each of them was born and personally caring for them with tender, motherly devotion – cleaning them, calming them, and ensuring that they were properly fed.

These small acts of kindness, even more so than their risking their lives, were the most profound expression of who they really were and of their greatness.

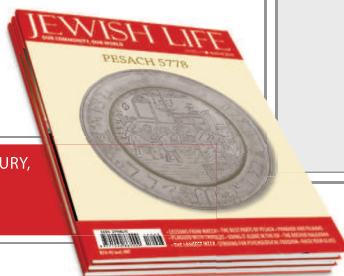
It's the minor, seemingly insignificant things we do that show who we truly are – something that should give us great pause as we go about our ordinary routine each day.

Wishing all of our readers a chag kasher v'sameach.

**ROBERT SUSSMAN,
EDITOR**

Based on the Sifsei Chaim on Shemos

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