



לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
LIKKUTEI
SICHOS

The Immovable Egyptian

Sicha Summary

Chelek 19 | Shoftim | Sichah 2

The Context:

The Torah forbids a Jew from dwelling in the land of Egypt. This law is derived from a verse in *Parshas Shoftim*, which warns a king not to “have too many horses,” so that he will not be tempted to return to Egypt (where many horses were bred). (*Devarim* 17:16).

The Question:

Rambam writes: “When Sancheriv, King of Assyria, arose, he confused the identity of all the nations; he mixed them together, and exiled them from their place. The Egyptians who live in the land of Egypt at present are of other nationalities...” (*Issurei Biah* 12:25)

If the current residents of Egypt are not the original Egyptians, why is it forbidden to dwell in Egypt? The reason for the prohibition is so that a Jew will not be influenced by the corrupt character of the Egyptians, a people who cruelly enslaved the Jews. (*Sefer Hamitzvos, Negative Commandment* 46) However, since those people no longer live there, the prohibition should not be applicable!

The Explanation:

Sannecherib’s attempt to exile the nations was not absolute. There still remain some indigenous Egyptians in Egypt. (*Levush to Shulchan Aruch, Even Haezer* 4:4) Even though the majority are not original Egyptians, the fact that there is a minority that was never uprooted creates a *halachic* reality wherein that minority can never be considered nullified by the

majority. Living in Egypt is thus forbidden because of the minority of indigenous Egyptians who remain there.

[This is not the case concerning the prohibition of marrying an Egyptian convert within three generations, regarding which, Rambam rules: “Since these four forbidden nations became intermingled with all the nations of the world with whom it is permitted [to marry once they convert], all converts are permitted. For when any of them separates himself from them by converting, we operate under the presumption that he separated from the majority. Therefore, in the present age, in all places, whenever a convert converts, whether he be an... Egyptian {or not}..., he or she is permitted to marry into the Jewish people immediately.”] (*Issurei Biah* 12:25)

The Lesson:

Prior to the giving of the Torah, G-d told the Jewish people: “You have seen what I did to Egypt.... And now, if you listen well to Me and observe My covenant, you shall be to Me the most beloved treasure of all peoples....” (*Shemos* 19:4-5) In other words, seeing the miracles G-d did for us in Egypt should arouse fervor in our service of G-d.

Being that some original Egyptians from the era of the Exodus still remain in Egypt, this exhortation also applies today — when we see the miracles G-d does in Egypt in contemporary times, it should inspire us to “listen well” and elicit G-d’s love.