

## Rav Tzadok HaCohen of Lublin: Shemot

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Rabbi Zadok HaKohen Rabinowitz of Lublin was born in Kreisburg, 1823 and died in Lublin, Poland in 1900.

“Now it came to pass in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his brothers and looked at their burdens ...” (Exodus 2:11). The Midrash explains that when Moses saw the burdens of the Jewish people, he appealed to Pharaoh to give them Shabbat so they could rest. They then spent Shabbat reading books of redemption, showing faith by longing for G-d’s salvation (Exodus Rabbah 1:28).

G-d had commanded Moses to bring the elders to plead with Pharaoh for the release of the Jewish people. However, when the time came, only Moses and Aharon attended. The Midrash explains that each one of the elders changed their minds through a lack of faith that redemption was possible. When Moses approached Pharaoh without the elders, Pharaoh saw that the Jews lacked complete faith and took away their rights to keep Shabbat (Midrash Aggadah Exodus 5:1).

While it is possible to have an intellectually accept G-d’s existence, that alone is not complete faith. The Gemara (Shabbat 31a) says at the end of our lives we will be asked ‘Were you faithful in business?’ and ‘Did you fix times for Torah?’ However, the Gemara (Kidushin 40b) states that a person is first judged on his Torah study. Tosafos (ibid.) explains that the question means, ‘Did you have faith in G-d to run your business in a way that allowed you to fix times for Torah?’

We live in a demanding world and are anxious to make a living. We may know intellectually that through our efforts, G-d provides our daily sustenance, but to neglect Torah study in favour of our business endeavours demonstrates a lack in faith.

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