

Parshas Tetzaveh – 7th of Adar: Swimming in our Judaism:

1. Sefer Yetzira: The Mazel of Adar is fish.
2. Megillas Esther 3:7: “In the first month, which is the month of Nissan, in the twelfth year of King Achashveirosh, a pur was cast in the presence of Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.
3. Midrash Esther: When the archenemy of the Jews, Haman, was drawing lots for an opportune time to wage his personal war against the Jews, he was delighted that the date of the deadly decree fell in the month of Adar. The reason he was so happy was that he found that every other month on the Jewish calendar had some auspicious date to aid the Jewish people, but in Adar he saw that Moses passed away on the 7th. However, what Haman didn't know is that Moses was also born on the 7th of Adar. Adar is under the constellation of the fish. Haman saw nothing particularly lucky or beneficial in the constellation of the fish. He was threatening to swallow up the Jewish people like a fish swallows food. But he didn't see that there was a bigger fish, and that he would be swallowed up himself.
4. Midrash: The Jewish people are compared to fish. When it rains, the fish swim to the surface of the water and gobble down the raindrops at the surface....
5. Midrash: Pappus ben Yehudah asked Rabbi Akiva: How could he go on teaching Torah and endangering his life and the lives of his students in the face of the Roman decree against it? Rabbi Akiva offered him an analogy: A fox noticed some fish in a pond, scurrying back and forth. The fox asked them, What are you afraid of? The fish told him, We're afraid of the nets of the fishermen. Come and join me on the dry land, the fox proposed, and I'll protect you from the fishermen. The fish told him, You're a fool. For if the place where we have our life, we're afraid, certainly if we move to a place where we don't have our life-support system, we'll be afraid. Rabbi Akiva said, It's the same with Torah. Torah is life. If we take ourselves out of the Torah environment, how much more dangerous it will be for us. Torah is as necessary to sustain the Jewish people, as the water is for the fish, and the milk for the baby. And since it's life, it has to be something that is constantly new and interesting. It's possible for a person to find a new taste even in divrei Torah he's heard before, if he wants to.
6. Shmos 2,10: She called his name Moshe, as she said, 'For I drew him from the water.
7. Talmud Shabbos 88a: R. Abdimi b. Hama b. Hasa said: This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, overturned the mountain upon them like an [inverted] cask, and said to them, 'If ye accept the Torah, 'tis well; if not, there shall be your burial.' R. Aha b. Jacob observed: This furnishes a strong protest against the Torah. Said Raba, Yet even so, they re-accepted it in the days of Ahasuerus, for it is written, [the Jews] confirmed, and took upon them [etc.]
8. Talmud Gittin 60b: The only reason that God made a covenant with the Jewish people was because of the oral law.
9. Kisvei Arizal: Whenever a Jew employs one of the 13 principles of Torah elucidation, he awakens one of the 13 attributes of mercy.
10. Midrash: The Jewish people will only be gathered in from exile through the study of Mishnayos.
11. Talmud Sanhedrin 96: The grandchildren of Haman were Talmudic scholars studying in Bnei Brak.
12. Baal Hilchos Gedolos: Purim is even a greater holiday than Shavuos.
13. Baal Hatanya, Igeres Hakodesh Ch. 27, quoting the Zohar: a Tzaddik who departs from the world is present in all the worlds more than during his lifetime.
14. Talmud Sotah 13b: Moshe never died, and is still standing and ministering in the next world.