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## maskil Le'David

### The Redemption from Egypt in Contrast to other Redemptions

**"On that day, Hashem saved Israel from the land of Egypt, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore"** (*Shemot* 14:30).

The Chida questions why at every opportunity, both in blessings and prayers, we mention "a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt," while all other redemptions that Am Yisrael experienced over the course of history are not mentioned at all. These include the salvations that took place during the period when the Judges ruled, (see *sefer Shoftim*), the deliverance from the Babylonians, the deliverance from Haman's plot at the time of Mordechai and Esther, and the salvation from the Greeks that brought about the celebration of Chanukah. Why is the redemption from Egypt singled out?

I would like to suggest that the redemption from Egypt was fundamentally different from all other redemptions. The miracle of leaving Egypt was comprehensive, since every member of Am Yisrael was part of the Egyptian bondage. Without this redemption, Am Yisrael would have had no future. Considering that they were holding just short of the fiftieth and lowest level of impurity, they would have assimilated and given themselves up to the Egyptian servitude. But with the other redemptions, a small group would have survived even without the salvation. Had even one Jewish woman remained, and even if she had married a non-Jew, the children she would have given birth to would have been considered Jewish, and Am Yisrael would continue. Similarly, at the time of the Purim miracle some remnant of Am Yisrael would have remained, despite Haman's decree to kill all the Jews. This is true also for the oppression that took place at the time of Chanukah and all other World Wars, including the most horrific

suffering experienced by European Jewry at the time of the Holocaust.

Only the final redemption with the arrival of Mashiach will be remembered in its own right (*Berachot* 12b), for this redemption will be like the Exodus of Egypt – an all-encompassing redemption. As it says (*Micha* 7:15), "As in the days when you left the land of Egypt I will show it wonders." This refers to the final redemption.

Moreover, the other redemptions were not a universal redemption. After the redemption from the Babylonian exile, Jews still remained in this foreign country, even once they were able to return to Eretz Yisrael and build the second Beit Hamikdash. With the Chanukah miracle too, although we were delivered from their hands, the Greek culture has remained prevalent until today. And even though Haman's decree was abolished, we are constantly faced with new troubles.

Now we will return to the Chida's question: Why is the redemption from Egypt singled out? True redemption of the Jewish people is acceptance of the Torah and repentance. This is the only way we can be liberated. Exile is distancing oneself from Torah. The entire purpose of the Exodus was to receive the Torah. Because the Jewish people agreed to commit to a life of Torah and mitzvot, their redemption was immediate. Even though they had still not actually received the Torah, Hashem redeemed them with supernatural miracles, despite the fact that they were steeped in the forty-ninth level of impurity (*Zohar Hachadash*, beg. Parshat Yitro).

Therefore, at every opportunity we mention Hashem's kindness in redeeming us from Egypt in a most miraculous way. All other redemptions took place once we already had Torah and mitzvot, and the reason for the exile was because of a laxity in observing the Torah. The reason why these redemptions are not mentioned is because the power and merit to be redeemed is in our hands, if we only use the opportunity. Immediately upon returning to a life of Torah, troubles are removed and redemption arrives.

10 Shevat 5785  
8 February 2025

**1098**

**Beshalach**

**Shabbat Shira**



## Hilula

**10 Shevat**  
Rabbi Shalom Mizrachi,  
the Rashash Hakadosh

**11 Shevat**  
Rabbi Chaim Toledano

**12 Shevat**  
Rabbi Rafael Pinto, zy"ta

**13 Shevat**  
Rabbi Eliyahu Meir Bloch

**14 Shevat**  
Rabbi Yaakov Yehoshua,  
author of *Pnei Yehoshua*

**15 Shevat**  
Rabbi Chaim  
Mordechai Margaliot,  
author of *Shaarei Teshuva*

**16 Shevat**  
Rabbi Shalom Mordechai  
Hakohen Shwadron





## PARSHAH PEARLS

### Inspiring Reflections

#### Crying About Lack of Yirat Shamayim

“And they were very frightened and they cried out” (*Shemot* 14:10).

Why did Bnei Yisrael cry out?

Rabbi Klonimus Kalman Halevi Epstein of Krakow, *zt”l*, author of *Maor v’Shemesh*, explains that in fact Bnei Yisrael cried out *because of this fear*. Their hearts were in pain from the fact that they were afraid of a human being, for a true G-d fearing person is embarrassed to be afraid of anything in the world besides Hashem.

#### For Whose Sake?

“They said to Moshe, ‘Were there no graves in Egypt that you took us to die in the Wilderness?’” (*Shemot* 14:1).

The Ktav Sofer offers a beautiful explanation about Bnei Yisrael’s complaint: Bnei Yisrael remembered all the miracles and wonders Hashem had performed for them in Egypt, yet now that they were once again facing considerable hardship, they despaired of being saved. They imagined that all the miracles Hashem had performed in Egypt were not for their sake, but solely so they should be able to take out the bones of Yosef and his brothers, so they should not be buried in Egypt, an impure place.

Therefore they asked: “Were there no graves in Egypt?” The reason you took us out of Egypt was because there were no fitting graves for our ancestors in Egypt. What have we gained from this? It is only of benefit to our fathers, not to us.

#### In the Morning “Beloved,” In the Evening “Children”

“Then Moshe and the Children of Israel chose to sing this song” (*Shemot* 15:1).

Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, *zt”l*, asks the following question:

Why in the evening prayer do we say, “When His *children* perceived His power, they lauded and gave grateful praise to His Name,” while in the morning prayer we say, “For this, the *beloved* praised and exalted G-d”? How does it come about that from evening until morning our description changes from “children” to “beloved”?

Rabbi Chaim explains: There is a big difference between children and beloved ones. A son is something eternal; even a son who does the worst injustice to his father will not lose the title of son, as the Gemara brings (*Kiddushin* 36a): “Rabbi Meir says: Either way you are called sons, as it says, ‘evil offspring, destructive children.’” On the other hand, only a son who honors his father merits the title of “beloved.”

Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer tells us that when Bnei Yisrael were faced with the Egyptians pursuing them from behind and the sea preventing them from journeying forward, they were desperately afraid and threw away all the abominations of Egypt and repented.

The Rambam (*Hilchot Teshuva* 7:6) writes, “Repentance brings the distant closer; yesterday this one was hated by Hashem, repulsive and distant and abominable, and today he is beloved and delightful and a close friend.” We can derive from this that in the evening, before the Splitting of the Sea, Bnei Yisrael were only considered as children, but toward morning when they had repented, as the Pirkei D’Rabbi

Eliezer tells us, they were deserving of the title “beloved.”

This explains the difference between the title given to Bnei Yisrael in evening and morning prayers.



## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

Tidbits of faith and trust  
penned by Moreinu  
v’Rabbeinu Hagaon  
Hatzaddik Rabbi David  
Chananya Pinto, *shlita*

### In the Merit of Inner Will

I was once visited by a Liberal Rabbi whose outlook on life was in direct contrast to mine, as an Orthodox Rabbi. Nevertheless, he asked for my blessing in the merit of my forefathers. I was taken aback by his humility. After asking for my blessing, he added, “Honored Rav, I have a friend who has tried, for a long time, to convince me to meet you so we can discuss matters of religion. I have come today in order to do so.”

Unfortunately, I didn’t have time just then to spend with him on this subject, as the line behind the door was growing longer by the minute. People were waiting for advice and blessings, and I had to cut our meeting short. Heaven put the right words into my mouth, and they had an effect on this Rabbi. I quoted the opening verse of Chumash *Shemot* (1:1), “And these are the names of the Children of Israel who were coming to Egypt with Jacob, each man and his household came.” I have no idea why, but I kept emphasizing the name Jacob a few times. Suddenly, I noticed the man’s face turn pale and it looked like he was going to collapse any minute.

“How do you know it was my friend, Jacob, who sent me to you?” he asked weakly.

“I had no clue he sent you. Hashem put these words into my mouth. He saw that you made the effort to speak to an Orthodox Rabbi, who is in direct opposition to your worldview, with the intention of investigating your Jewish roots. I was therefore made His emissary to say the words that would shake you into doing complete *teshuvah*.”

**This Liberal Rabbi’s inner desire to discover the truth, was the merit that brought him to me and caused me to quote the most appropriate verse that would shake him up and inspire him to let go of his mistaken opinions of Judaism.**

## GUARD YOUR TONGUE



### When It Is Permissible to Believe Lashon Hara

If it has been established that someone is a *rasha*, for example, it is public knowledge that he revoltingly transgressed clear Torah prohibitions several times, one may believe *lashon hara* said about such a person.



## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### Which Kind of Music Speaks to You?

**“Then Moshe and the Children of Israel chose to sing this song”** (*Shemot* 15:1).

Jewish religion gives song a place of honor, as is evident from all mitzva celebrations. For example, at weddings, on Shabbat and Yom Tov meals, on completion of a *masechet*, and at a Brit or Bar Mitzvah. There are even certain sections in our prayers that are accorded special attention and we don't consider it sufficient to just recite the words; these sections are always accompanied by holy melodies. Even the Great Sages, for whom every minute was precious and calculated, set aside time to compose songs that would inspire the future generations.

The following lines are an excerpt from the viewpoint of the educator, Harav Pinchas Breuer. It is worth paying attention to his instructive insights:

Song has a powerful affect. Song speaks straight to the soul, it breaches walls and traverses borders. The toughest person will be moved on hearing a stirring tune, and a broken, despondent, and depressed person will start dancing on hearing a cheerful and joyful song. This is the exclusive power of song. There is no physical element which can stir the soul like song. We have never come across a person who was moved to tears from eating a well-done steak. We have also never come across a miserable person who suddenly becomes joyful after a long sleep. It is only song that possesses this wonderful power of having an immediate influence on the soul.

One can arrive at a wedding tired, troubled, and with frayed nerves, yet suddenly find himself spinning around joyfully in circles, indifferent to all that was and will be. The opposite is also true: on hearing a soulful, moving melody, we are drawn into a different world.

A song rooted in holiness, a piece which is an expression of nobility, or a composition that one feels was arranged by a G-d fearing person, will definitely inspire to *avodat* Hashem, as reality shows us. On the other hand, if the words are set to music by an empty, hollow person, the kind of person you would not allow your precious child to be associated with, how can you then let this composer talk to your child's soul?

And then there is the new fashion of “converting” secular or non-Jewish songs. Composers take a coarse song and patch it up with holy words. This can be compared to the hypocrisy of immersing in a ritual bath while holding on to an impure creature. In no time this “new” song becomes the latest hit at religious weddings. Precious yeshiva *bachurim* dance to the beat of this offensive melody.

If song speaks to the soul, then these cheap songs speak to the heart. It is as if we are listening to all those empty, shallow original composers. Would we be prepared to have a heart to heart talk with those empty-headed people? Why then, do we allow them, in a round-about way, to speak straight to the hearts of our children?!

One of the Gedolei Hador once asked a singer why he sings “cheap” songs. He answered that this is his way of bringing Jews closer to religion, for they form a connection with him through the songs he sings.

The Gadol countered with a story: **This type of singer once came to the Heavenly Court and was asked why he sang like a non-Jew. He answered that his intention was to bring Jews back to their Creator. He felt that he had dedicated his entire life to this holy cause. The Heavenly Court had a ready response: “Take a chair and sit next to the entrance of Gan Eden. As soon as the first *ba'al teshuva* arrives and declares that he became an observant Jew in the merit of your songs, you may enter Gan Eden together with him.”**

The Gadol finished off: This singer is still waiting for his *ba'al teshuva*...



## FROM THE TREASURY

Based on the teachings of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, *shlita*

### Torah Exists Through Joy

**“Then Moshe and the Children of Israel chose to sing this song to Hashem, and they said the following: ‘I shall sing to Hashem for He is exalted above the arrogant, having hurled horse with its rider into the sea’”** (*Shemot* 15:1).

The Midrash (*Yalkut Shimoni* 233) writes: “The angels wished to sing *shira* (a song of praise), but Hashem said to them: ‘My Handiwork is drowning in the sea and you wish to sing *shira*?’”

This gives rise to a question: How were Bnei Yisrael allowed to sing *shira*? What is the difference between them and the angels?

A possible answer is that since it is difficult for Hashem to punish His own Handiwork, He therefore did not allow the angels to sing *shira*. But Bnei Yisrael, who suffered torment under the rule of the Egyptians during all those years of bondage, were allowed to sing *shira* regarding their enemies who drowned in the sea. This jubilant *shira*, which gushed from the depths of their hearts, was an expression of their joy that they are now free men and able to become Hashem's servants.

One can also say that Am Yisrael were on the way to receiving the Torah, and Torah cannot exist in the absence of joy. As it says (*Tehillim* 100:2), “Serve Hashem with gladness.” Hashem allowed them to sing and rejoice, for with this joy they could prepare themselves to receive the Torah with gladness. In addition, without this joy they would not have merited seeing the Shechina.

It is told about Rabbeinu Tam, *zy”a*, one of the Ba'alei Tosfot, that he would place money in front of him when he studied Torah, so the money should cause his heart to expand with joy and in this way he could connect to his learning. Without a doubt, Torah was more important to him than money. The proof is that he spent his time engaged in Torah study and did not look for ways to earn money. But since money caused his heart to expand with joy, he placed it in front of him. Accordingly, one can say that after rejoicing on the downfall of the Egyptians, Hashem gifted Bnei Yisrael with spoil from the sea, so that later their hearts would expand with Torah.

**David Hamelech, a”h, says in Tehillim (84:3), “My soul yearns, indeed it pines, for the courtyards of Hashem.” My esteemed grandfather, Rabbi Yeshayahu Pinto, zy”a, explains that the word “נכספה – yearns,” is an expression of the longing David Hamelech had for the courtyards of Hashem. “נכספה” also has the same root as the word “כסף – money.” This implies that money brings joy and can awaken a feeling of longing for the courtyards of Hashem.**

# A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



## Man is Governed by Habit

**“Perhaps the people will reconsider when they see a war, and they will return to Egypt”** (*Shemot* 13:17).

Rashi explains: “They will think thoughts about their leaving and will want to return.” This is quite amazing. Bnei Yisrael will wish to return? To where? To Egypt? To the crushing harshness of the enslavement?

Rabbi Leib Chasman, *zt”l*, explains that a person is made up of two opposing powers. On the one hand, every person possesses a G-dly essence which enables him to experience lofty moments, yet at the same time he is a physical being, created from “dust from the ground.” Man is open to change to either extreme at any given moment. “He is likened to the silenced animals,” whose intelligence disappears when faced with battle. Like a horse will turn back on perceiving war, and it makes no difference to him whether his rider is a king or simpleton, so too a human being can change his position from moment to moment. One minute he behaves like a Heavenly angel, while the next moment he can behave like a horse.

**What lies behind this concept is “habit.” The power of habit is extremely great, and a person can even long for Egypt, for blows and harsh work conditions, for this is the power of habit! Being familiar with the supermarket, the Health center and the bank, gives a good feeling – this is the power of habit!**

Rabbi Shalom Shwadron, *zt”l*, would tell over the *Story of the Chaltz (Pioneer)* that took place with the establishment of the State of Israel. The government ordered every household to foster a pioneer family (new *olim*). This is how it came about that the distinguished Auerbach family, the parents of the Gaon Rabbi Shlomo Zalman, were also requested to host a couple. This couple, who were far from being observant Jews, came to stay in the house of the *mekubal*, the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Leib Auerbach. While welcoming the guests and helping them feel at home, he gently explained that they should try and preserve the

delicate nature of living in close proximity, while taking care not to offend the atmosphere and orthodox way of life of the occupants.

But with the onset of the first Shabbat, the visitors openly profaned the holy day. This offense disturbed the tranquility of Shabbat and blemished its holiness. So the Rabbanit asked her son, the young Shlomo, to try and pleasantly explain about the receiving of the Torah on Har Sinai, the Ten Commandments, and the holiness of Shabbat, in order to prevent further friction.

The young Shlomo cleverly started to explain, in a warm and affable manner, about the concept of the Shabbat Queen and how a Jew honors his Creator Who created the world in six days. The husband jumped up and retorted: “Are you trying to tell me there is a Creator? I saw him!” The young Shlomo was taken aback. “Where did you see Him, maybe you want to share the tale?”

Now it was the pioneer’s turn to address the family:

“Many years ago, as was want to happen when a local squire either intentionally or unintentionally offended the neighboring squire, a squabble would break out between the neighboring villages. This would end in a real battle, with both sides shooting at each other. The battle intensified until one side initiated a reconciliation.

“It once happened that I found myself conscripted to fight in a battle that was waged on behalf of the honor of the squire, who was seemingly offended by someone. From my hiding place between the pits of sand, I kept shooting at the “enemy.” At a lull in the fighting, I started thinking to myself, why am I involved in this? What will anyone gain from this battle?

“Suddenly I noticed that a group of orthodox *bachurim* from my village had joined our forces. I also noticed that at every break, they utilized the time to read from small books they kept with them.

“I found myself approaching them to ask what they were doing. I didn’t understand exactly

what they explained, but one thing was clear to me: While I was confused and disoriented in my present reality, they firmly believed there is a Director of the world who directs every occurrence! There is order and purpose in every circumstance, even if we don’t understand exactly how or why. These young boys were certain there was benefit behind the circumstances brought about by the Creator.

“Then an interesting thing happened. For the first time in my life, I found myself talking to G-d! I said, ‘I apologize for being so blunt, but if You can really hear me, please send me a sign! I would love to be released from army service, but, not due to any disability which will harm my future. Can I maybe ask for some small injury, let’s say in a finger? Something which will grant me release from the army but will not leave me handicapped?’

“While I was still talking to G-d,” continued the pioneer while waving his half thumb in the air, “I heard the sharp whistle of a bullet, and half of my thumb was severed, as you can see!

“Of course I was then taken away from the front lines for treatment and then recovery in a military convalescent home. I promised myself that as soon as I would be allowed home, I will immediately find out exactly what Judaism means and come closer to my Father in Heaven Who listens to the prayers of every single person.

“But, although I intended to go straight to yeshiva after my release, this didn’t happen in the end. So today I am standing here, ignorant in the ways of Judaism, and you, young boy, need to reprove me for profaning the Shabbat. Had I gone straight to yeshiva, I today could be teaching you the laws of Shabbat!

**“I am telling you this,” finished off the pioneer, “so you should know that it is very hard for a person to let go of the chains of habit! Therefore, you should take care that every time you feel some awakening to improve yourself, do something about it straight away. Take some positive action.”**



**“Contemplate and see that Hashem is good”**

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