

Zera Shimshon



Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"א, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.

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Why the Jews May Have Willingly Returned to Be Enslaved to Pharaoh

וַיְהִי בְשַׁלַּח פְּרַעֲהָ אֶת הָעָם וְלֹא נָחַם אֱלֹהִים דָּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים כִּי קָרוֹב הוּא כִּי אָמַר אֱלֹקִים פֶּן יִנָּחַם הָעָם בְּרֹאֲתָם מִלְחָמָה וְשָׁבוּ מִצְרַיִם: (י"ג י"ז)

It happened when Pharaoh sent the people, that Hashem did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, because it was close, because Hashem said, "Perhaps the people will reconsider when they see a war, and they will return to Egypt".

We need to understand why the Passuk associates the Jews' redemption to Pharaoh, and says 'when **Pharaoh** sent the people', instead of associating it to Hashem, by saying 'when **Hashem** redeemed the people', when in truth it was Hashem who redeemed the Jews and not Pharaoh. Furthermore, what is the meaning of the two distinct reasons that the Passuk gives; 'Hashem did not lead the Jews by way of the land of the Philistines, because it was close, and because perhaps the people will reconsider when they see a war, and will return to Egypt'?



The Torah (ו' ב' ט') relates what occurred when Moshe had first informed the Jews that their prayers had been accepted, and that they were to be redeemed from their bitter exile, and says as follows. 'And Hashem spoke to Moshe... I have heard the wail of the Children of Israel... Therefore, say to the Children of Israel: "I am Hashem, and I shall take you out from under the burden of Egypt, and I shall rescue you from their service, and I shall redeem you... and I shall take you to Me for a people..." Moshe spoke accordingly to the Children of Israel; but they did not listen to Moshe, because of shortness of wind and hard work'.

This phenomenon is nothing short of astounding. The Jews had suffered so terribly and bitterly over the many years that they were enslaved to the Egyptians, that it would have been expected that when they were finally notified that Hashem would redeem them shortly, they would jump from great joy and happiness. Instead, the Torah clearly says, 'the Jews did not listen to Moshe, because of shortness of wind and hard work'. What is the

meaning and rationale behind this apathetic reaction of theirs?!

We can explain it as follows. Hashem told Avraham Avinu בראשית ידע תדע כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא, "Know with certainty that your offspring shall be sojourners in a land that's not their own, and they will enslave and oppress them for four hundred years". Nevertheless, because the Egyptians treated the Jews ever so bitterly and brought upon them much misery, Hashem resolved that He would redeem them early, after only two hundred and ten years. But this early redemption came with a stipulation, that the Jewish Nation would need to go into exile some time further down in history, to make up for those one hundred and ninety years that was decreed upon them but never carried out.

When Hashem notified the Jews that He would redeem them from their bitter exile, He used four expressions of deliverance to tell them of their upcoming redemption. והוצאתי, והצלתני, and I shall take you out, and I shall rescue you, and I shall redeem you, and I shall take you to Me. These four expressions of deliverance were inferring to the four exiles which their descendants would need to go through in order to make up for those one hundred and ninety years that their ancestors had left early from Egypt. Hence the four expressions of redemption, which corresponds to the four exiles from which the Jewish Nation would in the future need to be redeemed from.

We can now understand the hesitancy and lack of excitement on the part of the Jews upon hearing the news of their redemption. For when they heard that they would be redeemed early, but instead would go back into exile many years later, they weren't the utmost excited, and therefore didn't react at all to Moshe's words, but rather just continued on sadly with their hard work.



When the Passuk says 'when **Pharaoh** sent the people', and not 'when **Hashem** redeemed the people', it is alluding to the fact that Pharaoh had, so to speak, some hand in the matter of their redemption. For had the four-hundred-years passed as decreed, the redemption would have been an automatic and inevitable consequence, as Pharaoh only had rights over their enslavement for four hundred years, and when those years would be over the redemption would come on its own accord. But because the four hundred years did not pass, Hashem had to, so to speak, pull the

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redemption out of Pharaoh's rights, and thus it is as if Pharaoh had some involvement in the Jews' redemption, hence 'when Pharaoh sent the people'.

Accordingly, when the Passuk says that 'Hashem did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, because it was close', we can explain it to be referring to that fact that Hashem brought the redemption closer than originally decreed. And consequently, because the Jews were not very excited about the early redemption, for it carried a heavy price of their descendants going back into exile, therefore 'Hashem did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines because perhaps the people will reconsider and will return to Egypt'.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות א

The Benefit of Having Hashem Heal Us Directly Without an Intermediary

וַיֹּאמֶר אִם שְׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹל ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִיָּשֵׁר בְּעֵינֵינוּ תַעֲשֶׂה וְהִאֲזַנְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתָיו וְשִׁמְרַתָּ כָּל חֻקָּיו כָּל הַמִּחְלָה אֲשֶׁר שִׁמְתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא אֲשִׁים עֲלֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי ה' רַפְאֵךְ' (טז כו):

He said "If you will listen diligently to the voice of Hashem, your God, and you will do what is just in His eyes, and you will give ear to His commandments and observe all His laws, then any of the diseases that I brought upon Egypt, I will not bring upon you, for I am Hashem, your healer".

The question is obvious; if Hashem won't bring any diseases upon the Jews, then the Jews wouldn't need the service of any healer, and if so, what need was there for Hashem to proclaim Himself as the healer of the Jews?



The Midrash in Shir Hashirim (ד' י"ב) says as follows. בשר ודם אין מקדים רטיה עד שרואה המכה, אבל מי שאמר והיה עולם אינו כן, אלא מקדים הרטיה ואחר כך הוא מכה וכו', וכתוב (הושע ז' א) כרפאי ישראל. אבל אמות העולם מכה אותן ואחר כך מרפאן, שנאמר (ישעי' י"ט כ"ב) ונגף ה' את מצרים נגף The human doctor won't begin the healing process until after the patient becomes sick and is in need of a cure. Not so is the way of Hashem, who begins the healing process, even before He inflicts the disease for which the cure will be needed, as the Passuk says 'When I would heal Yisrael'. This is only in regards to the Jewish people, yet regarding the Nations of the world, Hashem first inflicts the one who is deserving of such, and only afterwards does He begin to administer the cure for the disease, as the Passuk says; 'Hashem will strike Egypt, striking and healing...', which alludes to the 'striking' done by Aharon and the 'healing' by Moshe.

Firstly, we need to understand why indeed does Hashem begin



to cure the Jews from their afflictions, even before they become afflicted? Secondly, why would Hashem differentiate between the Jews and the non-Jews in this manner; what is the underlying difference that causes this differentiation in regards to the healing process between the two? And mostly, we need to understand the connection between the

Pesukim that the Midrash brings, and the discussion at hand.



We can clarify all this, through the following Halacha that the Shulchan Aruch (ת"ר"מ ת"כ כ"א) brings down. אמר לו המזיק אני ארפא אותך. וכי אין שומעין לו אלא מביא רופא אומן ומרפאו בשכר. *If the injurer says that he can heal the one whom he injured, we don't take his offer, rather we bring in a different doctor to heal him.* According to this Halacha, we can fully comprehend and appreciate the notion that Hashem was sharing with us. When Hashem told us that 'any of the diseases that I brought upon Egypt I will not bring upon you for I am Hashem your healer', He meant to say as follows. In the event that we would need a cure from a disease, it would be Hashem who would be healing us, 'for He is our healer'. Consequently, if Hashem were to inflict a Jew with a disease, He would not be able to heal him for He is the one who 'injured' him, and the Shulchan Aruch says that the injurer may not heal the one whom he injured, and as such, the sick Jew would be left with no one to heal him, for his healer "would not be allowed" to heal him. Because this is something that Hashem would obviously never do to his chosen Nation, to inflict them and leave them with no way to be healed, He's left with 'no choice' but to never bring upon them any disease. Thus, the Passuk reads as follows; the reason why 'any of the diseases that I placed in Egypt I will not bring upon you' is because 'I am Hashem your healer'.

According to this, we can explain the Midrash, as well. The Midrash brings the Passuk that says, 'When I would heal Yisrael', which clearly implies that Hashem is the Healer of Yisrael. Therefore, says the Midrash, it must be that when Hashem heals a Jew, it is before He struck him that He began to heal him, for once the Jew was stricken, Hashem, would no longer 'be allowed' to heal him, as the 'injurer' may not heal the 'injured'. This is so, only in regards to the Jewish People. Yet, concerning the non-Jews, the Midrash brings a Passuk that says 'Hashem will strike Egypt, striking and healing', which the Midrash understands to be alluding to their healing that was administered by Moshe. This indicates that the non-Jews aren't healed by Hashem directly, rather through an intermediary. Thus, even after Hashem strikes them, their intermediary healer can still heal them, and there is no need for their cure to precede their illness.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות י"ד

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