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5780/2020 Parashath Shemoth

פרשת שמות 5780

## Shemoth: Bringing the Redemption

וַיֹּאנְחוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן־הָעֲבָדָה וַיִּזְעֻקוּ וַתַּעַל  
"And the Children of Israel sighed because of the work and they cried out and their cries went up to G-d, because of the work" (Shemoth 2:23). The expression "because of the work" is mentioned twice.

Rabbenu Bahya mentions that the reason is that the hard labor was the cause of their cry to G-d, to teach us a lesson that the prayer of a person is not as complete as one he prays out of hardship or distress. The latter type of prayer goes straight up to the palace of the Holy One blessed be He and is accepted easier.

Additionally, this portion gives us direction for bringing the future Geullah (redemption). Just as at the time of the first redemption from Egypt the Children of Israel repented and prayed to G-d, who immediately answered their prayers and the redeemer came, so too, the future redemption depends on our repentance and prayer. Just as two verses later Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, is mentioned, so too heartfelt repentance and prayer, by the Jewish people, will be closely followed by the coming of Mashiyah (the Messiah).

(See Rabbenu Bahya,  
Parashath Shemoth)



מדרש בן איש חי  
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## What is a Doctor's Role if G-d is the Healer?

It says in the Torah *Werappo Yerappeh* (You shall surely heal [Shemoth 21:19]). This is the permission from the Torah for doctors to heal the sick. Our Rabbis of blessed memory stated that a person should not dwell in a place where there is no doctor.

How can we understand this? Since G-d is the One who gives and takes life, what is the role of the doctor in all this? If it was decreed that a person should die, all the doctors in the world would not be able to save him. If, on the other hand, it was decreed that he should live, G-d has many ways to save him even without a doctor.

The answer is that there are three categories of decrees. If the person has strong merits in his favor, even if he acts in an unwise manner vis-a-vis his illness, he will not die but will survive. The second category is one who was decreed to die. Even if he were to guard himself in every possible way, none of the doctors would be able to save him. The third category is one who, because of his sins, is placed under the jurisdiction of nature. If he is careful and follows what is prescribed for his illness, he will live. If not, he will not survive.

Therefore, one who is ill must go to the doctor. One who does not seek medical advice when he is unwell transgresses the commandment of *You shall guard yourself exceedingly*, and also relies on a miracle.

(See Sanhedrin 17b. Pele Yo'es, Refuah)

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## The Redemption Will Come Gradually

In Midrash Shir Hashirim Rabbah it says that Ribbi Hiyya and Ribbi Shim'on Ben Halafta were walking in the valley of Arbel, in the early hours of the morning and saw the dawn breaking. Ribbi Hiyya said to Ribbi Shim'on Ben Halafta that this is how the Geullah (redemption) of the Jewish people will take place. First the dawn comes gradually and then it grows and flourishes, till it finally explodes into day. The redemption of Israel, likewise, will not come in one shot but will develop gradually, just like the morning light.

It says in the Prophets: *And like the light of the morning the sun will rise* (Samuel II, 23:4). Mashiyaḥ (the Messiah), is referred to as the *Sun* (Shemesh). And just like the light of the morning gradually grows and increases, so too the light of the Messiah will rise and shine gradually.

Similarly, when G-d reveals His Shekhinah to the Jewish people, He will not reveal it all at once, because they will not be able to take so much goodness at one time. We can learn this from Joseph who revealed himself to his brothers, and they were unable to answer him. How much more so will this be true when coming from G-d, and that is why He will reveal himself little by little.

(See Derakhaw Lemoshe, pg. 46. Mei Haḥesed [H' Hayyim Falajil])

## Non Permanent Writing on Shabbath

One of the Melakhoth (labors) which was prohibited by the Torah on Shabbath is *Kotheb* (writing). In order for one to be liable for the transgression of writing, both the substance (such as the ink) that was used to write with, as well as the item on which it was written, must be permanent.

Nevertheless, writing with a non permanent substance on non permanent material was prohibited by the Rabbis. As such, one is forbidden to write with one's finger with liquid on a tabletop, or to write on the dust on a window pane (writing on condensation is similarly prohibited), or to make a mark with one's nails on paper. (See *A Torah Minute*, Vol. 1, "Making a mark on a book with a fingernail, on Shabbath").

(See Ben Ish Hai, 2nd yr., Parashath Pequdei, Oth 1 and 2)



## Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe 'a"ḥ

### Tell Me Who Your Friends Are

In trying to find who the thief was who stole his friends' wallets, King Solomon told them about a young boy and girl who swore that they would marry each other without their parents' knowledge. A few years later, when the girl's father married her off to another man, on the wedding night the girl refused to have any physical contact with her newlywed husband, confessing that she had vowed to marry someone else.

She requested that her husband let her go to the first man and annul her vow, to which her husband agreed. On her way back home at night, after receiving the man's permission, she encountered a robber who wanted to steal all her jewelry. She cried, begged and pleaded with him to let her go. The thief agreed and even accompanied her to her home.

"Now", said King Solomon, "I was asked to judge who is more praiseworthy. Was it the husband who had many wedding expenses and let the wife go, taking a chance that she may not return; the first man who let the beautiful adorned bride go, without touching her; or perhaps was it the robber who let the bride return home safely?"

Each of the three men had a different opinion.  
(To be continued)