

ISSUE #70

י' שבט תשפ"ה  
8/2/25



## A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

### פרשת בשלח

וַיֹּשַׁע ה' בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם, וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם וְכוּ'. אַז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת וְכוּ'. (שמות יד, ל – טו, א)

*On that day Hashem saved Klal Yisroel from the hand of Mitzrayim and Klal Yisroel saw the Mitzriyim dead on the seashore ... Then Moshe and the Bnei Yisroel chose to sing this song ... (Shemos 14:30 - 15:1)*

This week's *Sidrah* recounts the final salvation of Klal Yisroel from Mitzrayim. After Hashem drowned the Mitzriyim in the Yam Suf and the sea washed their dead bodies ashore, Klal Yisroel were finally saved. They were no longer fleeing their pursuing masters and were finally completely free. Led by Moshe, the nation erupted in song, recognising the miracles of Hashem and praising Him for their redemption.

The Midrash Rabbah (23:3) references a *possuk* in Shir Hashirim: נֶפֶת תִּטְפְּנָה שְׂפֹתֶיךָ, (*Hashem:*) *Sweetness drops from your lips*, in relation to the words אַז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה. Moshe sinned with the word אַז, as will be explained, and he later praised Hashem using the same expression. With this, Moshe rectified his earlier mistake, and Hashem complimented him for his choice of words.

After Moshe first approached Pharaoh and, instead of helping the people, worsened their situation, he questioned Hashem's behaviour and expressed his complaints to Him. He asked why Hashem had sent him and said: וּמֵאֵז בָּאתִי אֶל פְּרַעֲהוּ לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁמְךָ הַרַע לְעַם הַזֶּה, וְהִצַּל לֹא הִצַּלְתָּ אֶת עַמֶּךָ: *From the time I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he did evil to this people, but You did not rescue Your people.* In this statement, Moshe sinned using the word אַז, and in this week's *Sidrah*, upon recognising Hashem's miraculous salvation, he used the same word - אַז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה. This reflected Moshe's repentance and acknowledgement of his earlier misjudgement.

The Midrash compares this with a parable: There was once a province that rebelled against the king, and he wished to restore control over the region. He appointed one of his advisors to accompany him on this mission, but the advisor doubted their chances of success and refused to go. With no other option, the king decided to act alone. Under the cover of darkness, he set out and successfully regained control of the territory. When the advisor learned of the king's achievement, he presented him with a crown. The king asked about its significance, and the advisor replied, "I gave you this crown because I was wrong to doubt your ability to conquer this territory."

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* explains that the secretive strategy used by the king was key to his success. The rebels believed that the king would not dare to confront them, leaving them unprepared. By operating under the cover of darkness, the king ensured that they would remain unaware and unarmed, allowing him to ambush and defeat them. Concealing his power was critical to his victory.

This parallels the salvation of Klal Yisroel, where Hashem's concealment ultimately led to their redemption. Moshe complained to Hashem that he had not assisted, suggesting that instead of improving, the situation worsened as their slavery became harsher. Moshe's frustration stemmed from his desire for salvation to arrive sooner. At first glance, one may assume that Hashem could have delivered salvation earlier, without requiring Klal Yisroel to endure additional suffering, and this would

only have meant missing out on the miracles and wonders of the *makkos* and the splitting of the sea. However, the truth is that if Hashem had not concealed His power and allowed Klal Yisroel to experience these greater hardships, their eventual salvation would not have been possible at all.

This can be understood through a fundamental interpretation of what is said in the Haggadah: בְּרוּךְ שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּטָחוֹתָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, *Blessed is He who keeps His assurance to Yisroel*. Is it not basic behaviour to keep one's word? A person who does not abide by his promises is considered flawed, so, what is the great praise in stating that Hashem kept His promise? As R' Elyah pointed out, "If, when seeking information for a *shidduch*, one is told that the prospect is not a thief or an aggressor, surely one would not proceed with the match! So, what is the great praise?"

The Meforshim explain that the survival of Klal Yisroel was not guaranteed. Although Hashem had promised to redeem Klal Yisroel, this promise was conditioned on 400 years of exile, a period that had not yet been fulfilled. At the time of their redemption, the nation had fallen to the lowest level of *tumah*, with only one-fifth being redeemed (the others perished during Makkas Choshech). We can understand that if Klal Yisroel had remained in Mitzrayim much longer, there would have been no Jewish nation left to save. Therefore, Hashem accelerated their liberation before they became completely overwhelmed by the corruption of Mitzrayim. He accomplished this by making the 210 years of servitude, particularly harsh and unforgiving, allowing them to complete the preordained amount of exile in a shorter time. This ensured that they spiritually survived just enough to be redeemed. For this reason, we praise and thank Hashem for hastening their liberation and fulfilling His promise. This too, was the answer to Moshe's complaint as to why Hashem harshened the slavery.

The Rosh Yeshiva explains that from this, we can gain a deeper understanding of the Midrash we began discussing. The connection between the two instances of the word אָז is not merely linguistic; rather, one instance enabled the other. The increased workload - וּמֵאֵז בְּאֵתִי אֶל פְּרֵעָה לְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁמְךָ - is what allowed Klal Yisroel to merit salvation, as expressed in the proclamation, אָז הִרְעָה לָעָם לְעַם הַזֶּה יִשִּׁיר מִנְּשָׂה. Moshe recognised that what seemed bleak and punishing was truly beneficial for survival.

The Chovos HaLevavos (*Sh. HaBechina*) elaborates on the topic of those who do not appreciate the goodness of Hashem, illustrating this with a parable: Once, a special home was established to care for and heal blind people. Everything was prepared effectively, with expert doctors and valuable medicines to restore their sight. However, the blind patients ignored the doctors' directives and found themselves stumbling around the facility. Wherever they went, they bumped into items that had been placed there for their benefit, and often they fell, sustaining injuries and experiencing severe physical and mental anguish, which only compounded their unfortunate situations. They began to blame the founders of the home, claiming that these individuals wanted to cause them suffering and pain. In reality, these blind patients were completely misunderstanding the situation. Everything had been provided for their benefit, but their mismanagement led to their suffering. Similarly, Hashem created a perfect world for us to enjoy and thrive in, yet sometimes we misinterpret our experiences and blame our Creator as if He desires our failure and suffering.

Let us embrace the truth that Hashem's ways are just and beneficial for us. The harshness of slavery in Mitzrayim seemed terrible and relentless, yet it was the path to freedom. Likewise, even when circumstances appear challenging and unfavourable, they are part of a larger master-plan, that enables and empowers us to flourish in the best possible way!

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל and is presented by the Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association. To receive by email, please register your interest by sending an email to [parshasheet@gyalumni.org](mailto:parshasheet@gyalumni.org).