



דרכים בפרשה

שביעי ואחרון של פסח



והמשים עלו בני ישראל מארץ מצרים

And Bnei yisroel were armed when they went up From Mitzrayim (Shemos 13:18)

In his first explanation of our *possuk*, *Rashi* explains והמשים to mean “armed.” This requires explanation in light of the obvious question: what did their weapons consist of? Where did the Jewish people obtain weapons in the short span of time that was allotted to them in order to prepare to leave? They did not even have time to prepare food, let alone search for weapons. (It also would not be plausible to suggest that the gold and silver vessels that they requested of the Mitzriyim prior to their departure were referring to their own weapons as that would indeed be an incredible *chiddush* in *pshat*.)

Rashi then quotes the Midrash which offers another explanation, that והמשים is derived from the word חומש, “a fifth.” According to this explanation, the *possuk* would then be understood as saying that the *Bnei Yisroel* was only one fifth of their original amount when they left Mitzrayim, i.e. four fifths of the Jewish People did not make it out. Apparently, the bulk of the *Bnei Yisroel* was prepared to adopt the Egyptian lifestyle and not move forward to realize the purpose of the entire sojourn in Mitzrayim which was for the sake of becoming HaShem’s People. It is true that they did not want to be slaves, but at the same time, they were not prepared to leave the country which represented everything that they knew about in this world. The fate of these four fifths was that they died out during the three-day plague of חושך.

From the words of the *Targum Yonasan ben Uziel*, we have yet a third explanation. *Targum* writes that each Jew left Mitzrayim with five children. This is interesting as one may wonder why it should be that each family had the same amount of children, and especially if it is understood that the ages of the adults ranged from 20 to 60. Furthermore, from וישרצו וירבו *and they teemed and increased* we learn that during those years in Mitzrayim, HaShem activated the powers of nature and very many delivered six at one time.

In his *Be'er Yosef*, Rav Yosef Salant zt”l, offers a brilliant explanation of והמשים (armed), which

integrates all three ideas, demonstrating how each one actually complements the other. However, before doing so, he adds a fourth explanation. Quoting the *Targum Yerushalmi*, he suggests that the “weapons that they were armed with” were the *mitzvos* and *ma’asim tovim* (good deeds) that they did.”

This is difficult as we find that HaShem gave us the mitzvos of *dam pesach* and *dam milah* because we were completely bare of mitzvos (as we recite in the *haggada*- ואת ערם ועריה ואעבור עליך ואראך מתבוססת - *but you were naked and bare. And I passed over you and saw you downtrodden in your blood and I said to you: “Through your blood you should live!” And I said to you: “Through your blood you should live!”*) Accordingly, how can we explain it to mean that we left armed with *mitzvos*? At what point did they perform these mitzvos and *ma’asim tovim* that the *Targum Yerushalmi* refers to?

Rav Salant explains: We mentioned in *Rashi*’s second explanation that four fifths of the Jews died because they were not ready to commit. The *halacha* is that there is no death penalty prior to the age of 20. This would mean that the four fifths that died in the plague were only the adults. It comes out that there 4 out of every 5 families were left without parents. These children were now orphans. At that moment, the fathers of the remaining one fifth went ahead and adopted all the families. Hence, each Jew left Mitzrayim with five children, i.e. 5 families (their own plus the 4 more). The Midrash relates that וישרצו וירבו refers to a second *bris* as well: The pledge that the Jews made to each other at that moment was the pledge of חסד.

Now, all four explanations are one and the same. Indeed, only one fifth of *Bnei Yisroel* left Mitzrayim. However, they were armed with the great weapons of mitzvos and *ma’asim tovim* which refers to the adopting of the other four families.

This sheds light on the *possuk* in *Yirmiyah*: זכרתי לך חסד - HaShem says that He remembers the חסד that we did when we were a young fledgling nation. Normally,

this refers to the fact that we went with full *emunah*. HaShem considers it a חסד when we put our trust in Him. Based on the above, it can be explained that the חסד HaShem referred to was our willingness to adopt four new families.

The Seder began with the opening words of כל דכפין ייתי השתא עבדי - let all that are hungry come a eat, and -לשנה הבא בני חורין we be free! It was the merit of the incredible ברית של חסד with which we exited Mitzrayim, therefore our Seder began once again with that same clarion call for more chessed, ending with the tefillah that in this same zechus we merit the geulah.

The chessed we did back then served as our armor. The world is at war and there is a heavy darkness at this moment. Let us remember this lesson and double down on our acts of chessed. Surely this will protect us once again. Just as HaShem remembered the חסד that we did when we left Mitzrayim, so too, during these days of Pesach, we ask that HaShem take note of it as well. אמן כן יהי רצון

אחרון של פסח

What is the reason that the last day of Yom Tov is known as אחרון של פסח? (We do not find such a title given to the last day of Sukkos or the second day of Shavuos.)

Yirmiyah HaNavi tells us: לכן הנהימים באים נאמיה ולא-יאמרו עוד חיה אשר העלה את בני ישראל מארץ מצרים- Assuredly, a time is coming—declares Hashem, when it shall no more be said, “As the Hashem lives, who brought the Yisroel out of the land of Mitzrayim.”. The days will come that we will no longer even mention the redemption of Mitzrayim. This refers to the days of *Moshiach* when we will no longer look back to those times because we will have a new redemption to look at. Therefore, we call the final day of Pesach אחרון של פסח to HaShem that this should be the גאולה שלימה and that this shall be the very final Pesach for us.

We find the word שלימה used in four main instances: תשובה שלימה, רפואה שלימה, אמונה שלימה, גאולה שלימה.

I heard a beautiful explanation from HaRav Nissan Kaplan shlita explaining the word שלימה in these

contexts: Rambam in Hilchos Teshuva (2,2) explains that teshuvah is only complete if Hashem Himself, (the *yodea talumos*), would be able testify that this person will never again return to this sin. Of course he is well meaning when he accepts upon himself to do teshuva, but will it stand the test of time when he is put to test yet again? At the point that he will certainly no longer return, it is called תשובה שלימה.

The same idea can be expressed with the other three usages as well. When we wish upon someone a רפואה שלימה, what is it that we are really asking of Hashem? We proclaim, “Hashem, we are not only asking that the *choleh* be healed but that the illness should be completely removed, never to return again.

Similarly, when it comes to *emunah*, we all have our moments when we *mamish* feel the *emunah*. But does it last? What happens when we hit the next bump? Are we still holding steady and strong? אמונה שלימה is the idea that our resolve to have faith in Hashem will remain with no going back.

Finally, with regards to the גאולה שלימה, we have been in and out of *golus* numerous times, but we daven to Hashem, begging Him that this should be the final time. Let us finally be redeemed, once and for all, never to return back to this bitter *golus*.

Now, as we enter into אחרון של פסח, we ask of Hashem that these should all occur. At the time of Kriyas Yam Suf, the Torah relates that -ויאמינו בה- it was an incredible moment of *emunah*. As we relive those moments, we ask that the *emunah* remains with us. The inspiration and *hisorerus* that the Yom Tov brings should lead us to תשובה שלימה as well. Ribono Shel Olam, there are so many *choilim* in *Klal Yisroel*. Please grant all of them a רפואה שלימה.

And lastly, may we merit to finally experience the גאולה שלימה that we have been waiting for, making this the true אחרון של פסח. We hear Moshiach's footsteps already, please see our pain and finally allow him to open the door! אמן כן יהי רצון

מרדכי אפפעל, Good Yom Tov,



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