

Geulas Yisrael #95- Shabbat Hagadol/Pesach

It Will Take Time

Moshe Taragin

קול דודי הנה זה בא מגלד על ההרים מקפץ על הגבעות

Shir Hashirim portrays Hashem's arrival in Egypt through the metaphor of a gazelle leaping and bounding across the mountains. This energetic image conveys excitement and affection, but most of all, speed.

Everything in Egypt was moving at warp speed. Our 400-year sentence of slavery was commuted to a 210-year term. The night of the actual Exodus was even more frenetic as Hashem descended at midnight, and within hours we were already commencing our desert voyage.

Everything was moving so quickly that we couldn't even bake bread for the journey, instead gathering scraps of unbaked dough and quickly wrapping them in clothing. A mad dash from Egypt.

Our lightning fast escape from Egypt is distilled by the term *חפזון*, a word which appears twice in the Torah. The gemara in Berachot asserts that *both Egyptian and Jew* experienced a similar *chipazon* pace, and for this reason the word appears twice.

The Egyptians were overcome by Hashem's overwhelming force, and they frantically expelled us out from Egypt. Days earlier, a defiant Pharaoh had cautioned Moshe that their next encounter would mark Moshe's untimely death. At this stage, facing the onslaught of *makkat bechorot*, the humbled and frightened tyrant desperately searched the streets of Egypt, begging him to quit Egypt and end the bloodbath. Everything was going sideways and in a hurry and no one had time for procedure or order. The Egyptians were caught in a panicked frenzy.

This panic was *ironic*, as Hashem's punishment of the wicked always is. Egypt had always been a country of planners. They had pieced together a plan to store food during years of agricultural prosperity, to better survive the upcoming famine. Likewise, they had deviously schemed a methodical subjugation and slavery of an entire Jewish nation. This night, all their tactics and strategies went out the window as Hashem descended into Egypt and wrecked the best laid plans of Man. Egyptian

chipazon signaled the futility of human planning when it opposes the moral will of Hashem.

Jewish chipazon

We too, experienced a whirlwind exit from Egypt. The breakneck pace of our geulah reflected the purely divine nature and texture of our redemption. During the preliminary stage of our geulah- during the negotiations with Pharo and subsequent plagues- Hashem opted to stream geulah *through* Nature and *through* politics. He could have easily lift us out of Egypt without Pharo's approval, but He wanted geulah to flow through history and through human decisions.

This night however, was different. We were confined to our homes and Pharo was reduced to a bumbling and babbling coward. There was little *human* about this night, as the stage was cleared for Hashem to make His first appearance in the human realm.

לא על ידי מלאך ולא על ידי שרף ולא על ידי שליח אלא הקב"ה בכבודו ובעצמו
This was not an evening for human agency or for divine proxies dispensing the will of Hashem. This night, all human conventions, including human time and human tempo were obliterated. Redemption unfolded in divine time and not along human schedules. Our chipazon was a product of a divine tempest swirling through Egypt.

A Slower Pace

Egypt happened quickly, but our current redemption will be slower. In chapter 52 Yeshayahu cautions that our final geulah will be paced more slowly than our first redemption from Egypt.

כי לא בחפזון תלכו ובמנוסה לא תלכון כי הולך לפניכם ה' ומאיספכם אלקי ישראל

Unlike the rapid redemption from Egypt, our final redemption will not occur in chipazon-like haste. Though Chazal allude to a possibility of a quick and rapid final redemption, it is far more likely though that our final redemptive process will unfold gradually and slowly. We will return to Israel, but many will, initially, remain behind in exile. We will lay claim to our ancient homeland, but the world will not immediately recognize our rights. Unlike the chipazon geulah from Egypt, our final geulah will take time....in more ways than one.

Internal Geulah

It is clear, that the international and diplomatic component of redemption will be gradual. Settling all of Israel and earning international approval will not be immediate. The return of the children of God to the land of God will arouse much disapproval and denial of our rights. This is obvious.

What is less obvious is that our internal geulah process will also take time. Redemptive fever breeds unrealistic expectations. We assume that, immediately upon our return, all internal issues will be easily and effortlessly resolved. We have learned the hard way, that unifying Jews from across the globe and from different religious orientations is not as simple as it sounds. We face a battery of social, cultural, and religious challenges which are probably too thorny for quick and simple solutions. Without patience and vision, we cobble together clumsy and ineffective solutions and become frustrated in the long term. Redemption requires faith and passion, but also patience and stamina. It is hard to juggle passion and patience. They don't naturally cohere.

Rav Kook's vision is not happening. Secular Zionism *does* contain a seed of teshuva and will, one day, sprout into a religious revival. But it doesn't seem to be happening quickly. There has been a recent and welcome shift in secular Israeli society toward traditionalism or masoratiyut, but a full religious awakening still seems distant. This process will take time and we must learn to model the beauty and nobility of religion rather than aggressively force-feed religion through legislation and enforcement. Imposing religion upon unwilling recipients always backfires in the long run.

The Conversion Dilemma

Israel was built as a safe-haven of return for every Jew alive. As various countries around the world are plunged into political turmoil, and given the rising tide of antisemitism, the rate of Jews returning increased. However, not everyone who returns home is halachikally Jewish. We embrace every person who strongly affiliates with our nation, but we must not relax halachik standards of conversion. Opening the door to

every person who identifies as Jewish but is not will contaminate the Jewish pedigree we fought so hard to preserve over a two-thousand year exile in foreign lands. Finding a solution to this prickly dilemma will take time and will probably not occur in our generation. Redemption takes time- both externally and internally. Living through redemption requires patience and faith.

Charedim and Demography

Torah study is paramount to Jewish identity and without it we lose our title to this land. Additionally, our Torah commitment protects us from foreign threats. Charedi society is built upon massive investment in Talmud Torah through isolation from broader cultural and economic engagement. Charedi society insulates itself to better protect itself against a modern cultural barrage which threatens religious purity. This separatist approach worked for many decades, while Charedim lived on the fringes of society.

Demographics are quickly changing and charedim are achieving political clout. A situation where such a large demographic lives apart from general society, but still influences it is a ticking time bomb— for both secular Israelis and charedim. How can charedi society integrate in manner proportionate to its demographic, without compromising its ideals? Sadly, secular Israel still harbors hostility to a charedi culture which it sees as shirking national service, while attempting to superimpose religious standards upon mainstream society. How can we stitch together these various strands of Israeli society into one cohesive fabric? This too will take time and trial and error.

So, over Pesach celebrate the "lightning in a bottle" redemption from Egypt. Celebrate the evening that human timelines were ransacked and Hashem Himself choreographed a rapid redemption. But don't expect an encore. We are back in history and back in our land. Our dark world has been illuminated by the rays of redemption. But it will take time and it will not all happen in our generation. It may, but don't count on it.

Chag Kasher v'samei'ach