

# בשלה

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## RECKONING THE END

ויסעו מסכת ויחנו באתם...והקי' הולך לפניהם יומם בעמוד ענן לנחתם הדרך ולילה בעמוד  
אש להאיר להם...

And when they journeyed from Sukkos, and they encamped in Etham...Hashem went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light... (*Shemos* 13:20, 21).

The Torah declares that *Klal Yisrael* were accompanied by clouds of Glory when they left Sukkos. The purpose of the clouds was to lead and protect them. The above mentioned journey was the second leg of their excursion out of Egypt. The first leg of their journey is described earlier in the Torah:

ויסעו בני ישראל מרעמסס סכתה

And the children of Israel journeyed from Ramses to Sukkos (*Shemos* 12:37).

The *Targum Yonasan* (ibid.) reveals that *Klal Yisrael* were accompanied by seven Clouds of Glory even during the first leg of their journey.

There are several difficulties with this exodus which must be addressed:

1) The Torah only mentions the existence of the clouds from the time of the excursion from Sukkos onward; why did the Torah not make mention of the clouds during the first leg of their journey from Ramses? What caused the *Targum Yonasan* to assume the presence of the clouds earlier in the journey?

2) At the *Bris Bein Habesarim*, Hashem confided to Avraham that the “Affliction will last four hundred years” (*Bereishis* 15:13). The Torah in *Parshas Bo* states that the *ge'ulah* came after four hundred and thirty years (*Shemos* 12:40). Why is there a discrepancy of thirty years?

3) At the *Bris Bein Habesarim*, Hashem guaranteed Avraham that “the fourth generation shall return [to *Eretz Yisrael*]” (*Bereishis* 15:16). The Rambam suggests that the four generational links between the *yordei Mitzraim* (those who originally came to Mitzraim) and the *olei Eretz Yisrael* (those who entered the Land of Israel) can be traced by Kehas, Amram, Moshe, and Gershom (*Tosafos Yom Tov, Eduyos* 2:9). Rashi attempts to delineate the four generations with Yehudah, Peretz, Chetzron, and Kaleiv. These two listings only indicate that the four generation sequence existed within two particular families — it does not prove that this principle applied across the board to all of *Klal Yisrael*. Therefore, the Ramban (ibid.) rejects this thesis and instead suggests that the four generations mentioned to Avraham do not apply to *Klal Yisrael* at all. Rather, it refers to the “*Amori*” nation mentioned in the second half of this particular *pasuk*. Why is there no mention at all in *Parshas Bo* of this guarantee of return to the Land after four generations? At the actual time of the exodus the Torah completely omits this idea. Why?

4) At the *Bris Bein Habesorum*, Hashem declared to Avraham that his children would inherit the land of ten nations; that list included the classical seven nations of Canaan plus “the Kenite, Kenizzite, and Kadmonite” (*Bereishis* 15:19). While at the time of the exodus, Hashem informed Moshe that *B’nei Yisrael* would inherit:

ארץ הכנעני והחתי והאמרי והחוי והיבوسی אשר נשבע לאבתך לתת לך  
the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite,  
which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee (*Shemos* 13:5).

Rashi (ibid.) assures us that although only five are listed, the seven Canaanite nations are actually meant. Why this discrepancy of ten nations mentioned at the *Bris Bein Habesarim* versus only seven nations at the actual exodus?

In order to properly answer the above questions it is imperative to understand the quality of the *ge’ulah* of *yetzias Mitzraim*, and the state of *Klal Yisrael* at that time. The prescribed time for *shibud* was 400 years. In His infinite kindness, Hashem determined that *Klal Yisrael* could not tolerate that length of *shibud*, and still remain a nation capable of potentially becoming the *Am Segulah* — Exalted Nation. Hashem, therefore, “*chisheiv es hakeitz*” — “He calculated the end [of bondage]” — (*Haggadah Shel Pesach*, “*Baruch shomer havtachaso*”) and determined that it was imperative to bring the *shibud* to a close at the end of 210 years of servitude. Hashem then revealed that the four-hundred-year term would commence with the birth of Yitzchak. After all, Hashem did not tell Avraham at the *Bris Bein Habesarim* that the 400 years of servitude would be spent in Mitzraim, rather “your seed shall be a stranger in a land **that is not theirs**” (Rashi, *Bereishis* 15:13).

The *Beis Halevi* (*Derush 2*, quoting the *Pirkei D’Rebbe Eliezer*) suggests that *Klal Yisrael* served the full term of servitude (four hundred years) in Mitzraim by virtue of their additional nocturnal service. Hashem’s original declaration of enslavement only accounted for daytime labor. The additional service that *Klal Yisrael* was to perform at night cut back the actual term of slavery to two hundred and ten years. Rabbi Moshe Tzioni (*Parshas Lech Lecha*) intimates that the Guardian Angel (*Sar*) of *Klal Yisrael* was enslaved to the Guardian Angel of Mitzraim for the full four hundred year term.

The *Targum Yonasan* (*Shemos* 12:41) explains the 430 years of *shibud* mentioned in *Parshas Bo* as having begun with the *Bris Bein Habesarim*. That was when the declaration was made by Hashem, and that preceded Yitzchak’s birth by 30 years. Four hundred years elapsed from the birth of Yitzchak to the exodus from *Mitzraim*. Hence, 430 years. This is the view adopted by Rashi (*Shemos* 12:40).

The Ramban (*Shemos* 12:42; see Abarbanel, *Bereishis* 15:13) takes a different approach from that of Rashi concerning the counting of the 400 years of *galus*. He points out that the 30 additional years “were added due to the sins of the generation... this was an addition meant only to punish them for their current transgressions... the Jews sinned gravely in Egypt.” The only reason, the Ramban continues, that the salvation took place at all after 430 years was because of *B’nei Yisrael’s* “crying out.”

וישמע אלקים את נאקתם

Hashem heard their cries (*Shemos* 2:24).

Crying out to Hashem in time of need or trouble is an essential ingredient for salvation. Hashem desires that His beloved children beseech Him and cry out for Divine intervention. Yitzchak and Rivkah had difficulty in conceiving a child, and their wish was only granted after much prayer:

ויעתר יצחק לה'

And Yitzchak entreated Hashem (*Bereishis* 25:21).

Although Hashem made a covenant with Avraham *Avinu* that his children would ultimately be redeemed from Mitzraim, the Torah informs us that it was only after three different types of crying out that the Jews' plight was even addressed by Hashem:

ויהי בימים הרבים ההם וימת מלך מצרים, ויאנחו בני ישראל מן העבודה ויזעקו, ותעל שועתם אל האלקים מן העבדה

And it came to pass in those many days that the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel *sighed* from the bondage, and they *cried*, and their *cry* went up to Hashem from the bondage (*Shemos* 2:23).

וישמע אלקים את נאקתם, ויזכר אלקים את בריתו

And Hashem heard their *groaning*, and Hashem remembered His Covenant (*ibid.* 24).

ואת צעקתם שמעתי...

“and their *cry* I have heard...” (*ibid.* 3:7).

All the above-mentioned expressions of outcry were solely directed to Hashem to get His attention; they were not merely expressions of painful frustration. Although Hashem was bound to extricate the *B'nei Yisrael* from Mitzraim, it was only after substantial outcry that their situation was even recognized. Again, before proceeding with *Kerias Yom Suf*, Hashem demanded intense prayer from *Klal Yisrael*:

וגם אני שמעתי את נאקת בני ישראל

And moreover I have heard the *groaning* of the children of Israel (*Shemos* 6:5).

Crying out to Hashem is a lesson to be learned by all the generations as a means of gaining Hashem's attention and salvation. Rav Masna teaches (*Megillah* 11•) that the key to *Klal Yisrael's* delivery from the hands of the evil Haman was due only to their intense public outcry:

כי מי גוי גדול אשר לו אלקים קרבים אליו, וה' אלקים בכל קראנו אליו

For what great nation has G-d so close to them, as our Hashem our G-d is, whenever we *call* upon Him? (*Devarim* 4:7).

The only instrument with which to get Hashem to compassionately commit on man's behalf is the pious act of crying out to Hashem.

The *Kli Yakar* (*Shemos* 12:40) views the additional 30 years of suffering in a different fashion. He claims that the vast majority of *Klal Yisrael* were not interested in leaving Mitzraim. They were comfortable, even in *shibud*, and were content to remain in Mitzraim. In fact, four fifths of *Klal Yisrael* perished during the “three days of darkness” due to this very reason.

Hashem needed the additional 30 years to get even one-fifth of *Klal Yisrael* to acquiesce to leave Mitzraim.

In explaining the apparent redundancy, at the *Bris Bein Habesarim*, between the two *keitzin*, the *keitz hashanim* — end of years — and the *keitz hadoros* — end of generations — the *Midrash Tanchuma (Bo 9)* points out that the shorter “fourth generation” limit is effective only if *Klal Yisrael* does *teshuvah*; if however they do not do *teshuvah*, then the longer count in years becomes applicable.

Similarly, a distinction between the two קצין is made by the *Mishnah* in *Eduyos (2:9)* which emphasizes that the primary determination of the *keitz* is through the counting of generations and not the counting of years, as is evidenced by the Prophet (*Yeshayah 41:4*) who stated:

קרא הדורות מראש

The generations are proclaimed in advance.

The Bartenura (*Eduyos 2:9*), on the other hand, very simply holds that there is no distinction between the *keitz hashanim* and the *keitz hadoros*. They are all different names for the same event. Hence, according to the Bartenura many of our difficulties unfortunately remain unresolved.

The Ra’aved (as quoted by the *Tosafos Yom Tov* [ibid.]) writes that the “final end” — the arrival of *Mashiach* — is dependent upon the counting of generations. If, however, the generation is not worthy of redemption, the determination of “years” comes into play. Hence the *ge’ulah* (removal of governmental oppression) may take place at the completion of years, but the actual entry into *Eretz Yisrael* and building of the *Beis Hamikdash* will have to be put on hold until the superior count of generations can come into play. The *keitz hadoros* is weightier than the *keitz hashanim*; if there is an apparent contradiction the *keitz hadoros* carries more significance.

In a sense, the *keitz hashanim* is the redemption of last resort, so that the plan of Creation will automatically unwind itself, hurtling forward until the Divinely determined end. At this point the redemption will occur by default. The *keitz hadoros* on the other hand represents the culmination of the actual unification of human history with the will of Hashem (resulting in *keitz nechamas Tzion*). In essence, man has the power to direct the course of destiny by improving himself and his generation, and thereby hastening the redemption.

*Keitz hashanim*, being the inferior redemption, also takes into account the impact of man’s suffering in this world. For, if the redemption were to take place at the end of time, and humanity had no redeeming merits, the cost of redemption will be in terms of human suffering. *Keitz hadoros*, the superior form of redemption, is a reflection of man’s merits and worthiness. The reward for righteousness is manifested in the *keitz hadoros*.

The *Gemara (Sanhedrin 97:)* states:

אמר רב כלו כל הקיצין ואין הדבר תלוי אלא בתשובה ומעשים טובים. ושמואל אמר דין לאבל שיעמוד באבלו. כתנאי: ר' אליעזר אומר אם ישראל עושין תשובה נגאלין ואם לאו אין נגאלין. אמר ליה רבי יהושע אם אין עושין תשובה אין נגאלין? אלא הקב"ה מעמיד להן מלך שגזרותיו קשות כהמן, וישראל עושין תשובה ומחזירן למוטב

Rav said: “all the reckonings of the ‘end’ have passed; it is now dependent only on repentance and good deeds.” Shemuel said: “All the suffering we have already experienced is sufficient.” There is the same dispute among *Tanaim*; Rabbi

Eliezer said if Israel will repent, then they will be redeemed; if not, they will not be redeemed. Rabbi Yehoshua asked him: “If they do not repent they will not be redeemed?” The reply: “In that case Hashem will establish a wicked ruler over them, thereby forcing *Klal Yisrael* to repent and become good.”

The Maharsha interprets this as an argument conducted on different planes. All are in agreement that repentance is necessary — but their contention revolves around the two possibilities of *teshuvah*: *teshuvah mitoch ahavah* — repentance motivated by love — or *teshuvah mitoch yirah* — repentance motivated by fear — repentance that is the result of love of Hashem is preferred to a repentance that is derived from a fear of Hashem.

*Yirah* is synonymous with a weaker *teshuvah* resulting in *keitz hashanim*; *Ahavah* results from a closeness with Hashem therefore signifying a higher degree of *teshuvah* resulting in the ultimate *ge'ulah* of *keitz hadoros*.

We now return to the *Targum Yonasan*'s suggestion that *Bnei Yisrael* were accompanied by the clouds of Glory, immediately upon leaving Mitzraim; if we refer back to the Torah's account of creation, we observe a similar statement by the *Targum Yonasan*. He interprets the *pasuk*:

ואד יעלה מן הארץ

And a cloud went up from the earth (*Bereishis* 2:6),

to mean that Hashem installed the clouds of Glory above the site of creation. These were intended to serve as a *chupah* — canopy — to herald the importance of a spectacular event — the creation of man. We also find the seven clouds of Glory surrounding the *Shechinah* at the *Kisei Hakavod* — Throne of Glory (*Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer* 4). When *B'nei Yisrael* left Mitzraim, they were also re-created. They were no longer merely human; they had now become the exalted people of G-d.

אתם קרויין אדם ואין העו"כ קרויין אדם

You are referred to as “Man,” but the Nations are not referred to as “Man” (*Yevamos* 61.).

The *Targum Yonasan* intimates that this *chupah* was a sign that Hashem was heralding the arrival of *adam chadasha* — a new man. Why didn't the Torah reveal this secret to us? Because, as important as this event was — and it was extremely important — it was not what it should have been. The *teshuvah* done by *Klal Yisrael* in Mitzraim was out of *yirah* — due to the oppression of an evil king; hence, it was one of *keitz hashanim*, a *ge'ulah* indeed, but an inferior *ge'ulah* nevertheless. The Jews were not privy to a reckoning of *keitz hadoros* for they were not on a sufficiently high level. A proof of this deficiency was that Hashem commanded them not to war with the Kenite, Kenizite and Kadmonite nations (Ammon, Moav, and Edom). The total inheritance of the ten nations, as promised to Avraham *Avinu*, had to be reserved for *acharis hayamim* — the Messianic era — when *Klal Yisrael* will be on a more exalted level. For now, their lower rank did not grant them the power to conquer the three remaining nations (see page 108). They had not attained the elevated level required for salvation through *keitz hadoros*; since their redemption was through the lower level of *keitz hashanim*, the Torah did not pay full attention to the *chupah* heralding man's re-creation. It will be in *acharis hayamim*, when *B'nei Yisrael* does *teshuvah me'ahavah*, and they reach the exalted level of *keitz hadoros*, that they will be permitted to realize the full inheritance promised to Avraham *Avinu*.

The clouds of Glory which accompanied *Bnei Yisrael* throughout the *midbar* were for protective purposes; but the clouds of Glory on the first leg of the journey from Ramses to Sukkos were a *chupah* to underline the importance of man's re-creation. Since this was not the ultimate re-creation, the Torah did not deem it significant enough to be mentioned.

The "chupah cloud" mentioned by *Targum Yonasan* both in *Bereishis* and in *Bo*, and in the Torah in *Beshalach*, is indicative of a sense of glory. It may also be indicative of a form of concealment. *Targum Yonasan* (*Shemos* 24:10) uses the metaphor of clouds to describe obscurity:

והי כתוקף שפר שמיא כד הינון ברירין מן ענניא

It is like the clarity of the Heavens, when they are free of clouds (*Shemos* 24:10).

Even the greatest glory that Hashem wishes to bestow upon mankind in *Olam Hazeih* is still, in the absolute sense, clouded. The clouds highlight the ambiguity of *Olam Hazeih*. The full clarity of any human endeavor will not be fully evident until *acharis hayamim*. For with the advent of *Mashiach* there will be greater recognition of truth (*Berachos* 34:).

The *Gemara* in *Sanhedrin* (99•) reveals a startling statement by Rav Hillel:

ר' הילל אומר: אין להם משיח לישראל. שכבר אכלוהו בימי חזקיה

There is no *Mashiach* for *Klal Yisrael*, for he already came in the days of Chizkiya.

Rashi (*ibid.*) explains this seemingly radical comment by stating that Hashem will rule over us and will personally redeem us. The Maharal (*ibid.*) explains that Rav Hillel's statement is actually within the mainstream of Rabbinic teaching, for the remark is contained within the *Gemara's* discussion of the length of the messianic era. Some say it will last for seventy years, others say for three generations. The Maharal offers the suggestion that *Mashiach* is just a vehicle for salvation — but what we must anticipate is the period in which Hashem Himself will personally assume the ruling position over *Klal Yisrael* (See *Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer* 11); this is consistent with the thought of Rav Hillel.

This concept can now be applied to a much broader question. *Mashiach* will be the redeemer for the individuals present during the stage of the Messianic generation. What kind of redemption is there for past generations? What relationship is there for Avraham *Avinu*, Moshe *Rabbeinu*, or the Vilna *Ga'on* with the concept of *Mashiach*? What relationship is there for anyone long departed from this world to a *Mashiach* unique to a particular generation?

What must be understood is that a life-long career of personal striving to acquire closeness with Hashem is each individual's personal redemption. Of course we want *Mashiach* in our times; but the personal *Mashiach* for each of us is our individual identification with Hashem. In each and every generation, for every single individual, Rav Hillel offers the hope of a personal *Mashiach* and redemption.

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