

And I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt; I shall rescue you from their service; I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. (6:6)

The above *pasuk* contains therein the four different expressions of redemption, which represent four progressive stages of the redemption with which Hashem liberated *Klal Yisrael* from Egypt. These three are followed by *V'lakachti eschem Li l'am*, "I shall take you to Me for a people," referring to the Giving of the Torah, our acceptance of which made us Hashem's nation.

The **Chidushei HaRim** wonders about the sequence of the expressions, of placing *V'hotzeisi*, "And I shall take you out" before *V'hitzalti*, "And I shall rescue you from their service." One would assume that, in the sequence of redemption, cessation of labor would be first, after which *Klal Yisrael* would be taken out of Egypt. He explains that this sequence addresses the vagaries of human nature, whereby people under intense pressure fail to realize fully the difficult circumstances in which they find themselves. It is only after they have emerged from darkness, and they can finally sense the beauty of light, that they begin to realize the depth of misery in which they had been immersed. Very often, we become so terribly complacent, so used to our miserable lot, our desolation and sorrowful condition, that we lose sight of how really miserable it is.

The Jewish People had been in Egypt so long, had been enslaved by the wicked Pharaoh and his equally evil nation for such a long time, that they were no longer aware of the meaning of freedom. It was only after they had been liberated from Egypt, and were now a free people, that they could reconcile themselves with the misery of their forced labor. They had no idea of how much they had actually suffered until it was over, they were out, and now they could look back in retrospect.

A powerful analogy lends insight to this idea. The story is told of a king who sought to imbue his son with common sense and understanding concerning the ways of the world. For his first lesson, he chose to break his son's dependency on money. After all, the prince was wealthy; nothing prevented him from spending whatever he wanted. He could have anything, go anywhere; there was nothing in his way – except for his intellect, which would teach him that everything has a limit.

The king felt that the best way to teach his son the proper values would be to remove him from his present setting and situate him in a community of poor beggars, who earned their daily bread by soliciting door to door for pennies – if they were lucky! A year passed, and the king decided to check up on his son to determine if he had benefited from the experience. "My son, how are you doing?" the king asked. "Fine. I am doing well," the prince answered.

"Is there anything I can do for you? Anything I can get for you?" the king asked. "Yes, there is. I need a bag, so that when I go begging, I will have a place in which to put my few coins," the prince answered.

After only a year, the prince had lost sight of the palace with its gold and silver. He did not ask for

anything much, because his entire perspective had been altered. He was no longer a spoiled prince living in luxury, in a palace awash with gold, silver, precious paintings and fine furniture. He needed nothing more than a bag to hold his few pennies, because if he would lose a “penny,” he would have lost a fortune!

“Is it any different with us?” asks the *Chidushei HaRim*. Ask a Jew what he needs, the response will invariably be, “a raise” or “a few extra dollars.” We have lost our sense of values. Sadly, we rarely hear, “I wish I had more time to learn,” or “I am having great difficulty understanding this passage in the *Gemorah*.” We have lost sight of our priorities. Instead of focusing on what is really important, we complain about foolish things.

Horav Shlomo Levinstein, Shlita, relates an incident which took place concerning *Horav Shaul Rubin, zl*, who served as *Rosh Kollel* in Afula. One day he met a fellow who served as a security officer at one of the prisons. The officer related to the *Rav* that he had been dealing with a recalcitrant husband who had been jailed for refusing to give his wife a *get*, *halachic* divorce. In *Eretz Yisrael* the *rabbanim* take serious action against one who is guilty of such egregious behavior. They frown on one who relegates his wife to becoming an *agunah*, abandoned wife – as should we all. The officer asked *Rav* Rubin if perhaps he would meet with the obstinate husband, who would rather spend his life in jail than give his wife a *get*.

Rav Rubin complied with the officer’s wish and visited the prison, where he spent some time in conversation with the husband. At the conclusion of the conversation, he commented to the officer, “I am sorry to say that this man will never give his wife a *get* – even if he is incarcerated for one hundred years! He has become quite used to being in prison. He no longer knows what life on the outside is like. He does not know the meaning and value of freedom. He sees neither anything wrong, nor restrictive, about being in prison. I suggest that you release him for a few months. Let him get a taste of freedom. Then, suddenly, return him to prison. You will see how fast he will give his wife a *get*.”

The prison officials followed the *Rav*’s suggestion and released the prisoner. In two months’ time, he was “reintroduced” to his prison cell. Two weeks later, he begged to be released. He would give his wife a *get*.