

"And Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon and commanded them to the Bnei Yisrael". (6:13)

Chazal (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashana 3:5) explain that the special commandment at this time was the dictate concerning the laws of setting one's slaves free. It seems peculiar that Hashem deemed it necessary to enjoin them with this specific *mitzvah* at this particular time. We may explain this in the following manner. At various times every individual experiences a moment of such import that it has the potential to transform one's entire life. When such an experience takes place, it is necessary that he immediately immortalizes those fleeting moments and integrate them into his outlook on life. This concept does not only apply to an individual in a personal context, but it also embraces all of *Am Yisrael* and spans the eternity of the Jewish people.

As *Am Yisrael* was on the verge of redemption from the Egyptian bondage, Hashem suddenly told Moshe to charge the people with a particular *mitzvah*. This *mitzvah* was the mandatory freeing of Jewish slaves after a specific period of time had elapsed. Why was it appropriate at this moment to transmit this particular *mitzvah*, which was not to become applicable for almost half a century?

The answer lies in the understanding that in order to internalize the extreme pain of enslavement and yearning for freedom, one must previously have experienced slavery. Since it is difficult for an owner to empathize with the sufferings of a slave, he cannot easily give up a slave whom he views to be an intrinsic part of his property. The only way to convince an owner of his obligation is to employ the emotions felt by the Jewish people on the day that they themselves were freed. Thus, on the very day that they experienced the joy of freedom, they were charged to immortalize this moment with the *mitzvah* of freeing Jewish slaves at the appropriate time. One must always strive to preserve the elevation attained at those occasional moments of spiritual awareness in order to constantly apply them to his daily endeavor.