



## REBBETZIN SHIRA SMILES

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# Redemptive Realization

We have been given numerous mitzvot that direct us to remember *yetzi'at Mitzrayim*, our Exodus as a people from Egypt. Why is it so essential to recall this idea throughout our day? Is the Seder night, with its focus on retelling the story of the Exodus, not enough?

Ramban's answer to this question, found at the end of our *parashah*, has become a classic approach. *Yetzi'at Mitzrayim* was a fountain-head event, establishing our collective *emunah*,

irrevocable faith, in Hashem. The miracles we experienced on a national scale embedded within all generations to come, the belief in the existence, power, and Divine Providence of Hashem. When we do mitzvot that remind us of the Exodus, we tap into this energy, reinforcing these beliefs in a practical way.

Another valuable message conveyed in remembering the Exodus is that we are a nation of royalty. *Am Yisrael* left Egypt during the day with our heads held high, not as fugitive leaving in the night. *Sefer Hachinuch* notes that this is one of the reasons we may not break any bones while eating the *korban Pesach*, as we want to proclaim our dignity as Hashem's chosen people. Rav Shmuel Rosovsky zt"l comments that mentioning *yetzi'at Mitzrayim* regularly allows this lesson to permeate our lives, motivating us to always act in a manner fitting of one who is part of a royal family. Remembering the events of leaving Egypt reminds us of the transformation that we made from slavery to freedom. In doing so, we assume the persona and demeanor of the King's children, regal and noble.

Rabbi Zev Leff observes that the command is to recall leaving **Egypt**, rather than leaving the land of Egypt. The name *Mitzrayim* indicates its very philosophy. Rabbi Shmuel Zucker points out that "*Mitzrayim*" is composed of two words, "*meitzar*" — restrictiveness, confinement and "*yam*" — the sea. Egyptian philosophy believed that everything follows an organic course and is limited to the confines of the natural world. Even the "*yam*," the ocean, has borders and is limited. In *Mitzrayim* there was no place for expansiveness or freedom, as Chazal relate that

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no slave ever escaped the land of Egypt. The command to remember the Exodus, therefore, is a directive to view ourselves as not defined by the world of nature, statistics, or professional predictions. Rather we must firmly believe that Hashem is Master of all, directing and guiding every detail with precision. We must also realize that we each have more potential than we imagine and can break out of the confines of our perceived limitations.

An additional dimension of the injunction to remember *yetzi'at Mitzrayim* is based on an insight from the *Sefer Mitzvot Katan*. He remarks that included in the mitzvah of “*Ano-chi Hashem*,” to recognize that Hashem took us out of Egypt, is also the mitzvah to believe that Hashem will redeem us once again in the future and is the source for the mandate to yearn for *Mashiach*. Just as Hashem redeemed us from *Mitzrayim*, He will once again liberate us from our present *galut*. Thus, as we focus on recalling the Exodus, we must yearn and desire to be redeemed once again in the Final Redemption, speedily in our days. ■

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