

The Rebbe

Parshas Shemos

Parashas Shemos, 21 Tevet, 5752 (1992)

A. On the verse, "**And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt**" (*Shemot 1:1*), the Midrash states: "**They are mentioned here in the context of the redemption of Israel.**" (שְׁמוֹת רַבָּה פֶּרֶשְׁתֵּנוּ פֶּרֶשְׁהָא, ה) The Midrash goes on to explain how each name of the children of Israel (the twelve tribes) is connected to the redemption.

[NOTE Midrash Shemot Rabbah 1:5 explains that the names of the sons of Israel are mentioned in the context of the redemption of Israel, with each name reflecting an aspect of their deliverance: **Reuben**: Corresponding to "I have surely seen the affliction of My people" (Exodus 3:7). **Simeon**: Reflecting "God heard their groaning" (Exodus 2:24). **Levi**: Signifying God's connection to their suffering from the burning bush, fulfilling "I am with him in distress" (Psalms 91:15). **Judah**: Indicating that they gave thanks to God. **Issachar**: Representing the reward God gave them for their servitude, including the spoils of Egypt and the sea, fulfilling "Afterward they shall come out with great possessions" (Genesis 15:14). **Zebulun**: Denoting that God caused His presence to dwell among them, as in "Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8), with "Zebulun" referring to the Temple, as in "I have surely built You a house of habitation" (1 Kings 8:13). **Benjamin**: Alluding to "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him" (Deuteronomy 33:12). **Dan**: Corresponding to "I will judge" (Genesis 15:14). **Naphtali**: Reflecting "My people shall be satisfied with My goodness" (Jeremiah 31:14). **Gad**: Indicating "And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge" (Genesis 15:14). **Asher**: Signifying "All who see them shall acknowledge them" (Isaiah 61:9).

END NOTE]

This requires clarification: The phrase "who came to Egypt" clearly refers to the descent of the children of Israel into Egyptian exile, as described in the subsequent verses and sections. The redemption from Egypt occurs much later, as recorded not in this parasha nor in the next (*Va'eira*), but rather in the middle of the parasha following it (*Bo*). How then does the Midrash assert that they are mentioned here "in the context of the redemption of Israel", which seemingly contradicts the straightforward interpretation of "who came to Egypt", a reference to their descent?

In another Midrash, it is written that the redemption from Egypt was merited because they did not change their names: Reuven and Shimon descended as Reuven and Shimon and ascended as Reuven and Shimon. Based on this, one could explain that "And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt" emphasizes the merit by which the children of Israel were redeemed from Egypt—that they did not change their names. This interpretation does not contradict the straightforward meaning

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of "who came to Egypt" (referring to their descent into exile), as this merely alludes to the reason they were later redeemed. Throughout the exile, beginning from its outset, when they "came to Egypt," the children of Israel "did not change their names." This is consistent with the earlier Midrash, which implies that the redemption was not solely because of "And these are the names of the children of Israel," but that the names themselves are mentioned in the context of the redemption of Israel. In other words, "And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt" refers to the redemption, which seemingly contradicts the simple context of their descent into exile.

Additionally, clarification is needed: According to the Midrash's interpretation that "They are mentioned here in the context of the redemption of Israel," even if an explanation connects "who came to Egypt" with the redemption, why does the verse emphasize this connection, since the context here describes the descent into Egypt? Moreover, the phrase "in the context of the redemption of Israel" includes the future redemption, as noted in the same Midrash, explaining the connection between Yosef's name and redemption: "Yosef, because the Holy One, blessed be He, will add and redeem Israel from the wicked kingdom just as He redeemed them from Egypt, as it is written "On that day, God will again extend His hand..." (*Isaiah 11:11*). Based on this, the question arises: Not only is the descent into Egyptian exile ("those who came to Egypt") connected to the redemption from Egypt, but it is also linked to the future redemption—a redemption that will occur long after the Exodus from Egypt and, even more so, long after the descent into Egypt.

To phrase it differently: What is the connection between "those who came to Egypt" (the descent of Jacob and all his sons, followed by 17 years of peaceful dwelling, after which came a period of forgetfulness, the plotting of Egypt's magicians and Pharaoh, their declaration of "Come, let us deal wisely," leading to the onset of the Egyptian exile) and the future redemption? Furthermore, it is necessary to understand—as with all matters of Torah, which is derived from the word "instruction"—what is the lesson and guidance we can derive from this now, thousands of years after "those who came to Egypt" and after the Exodus from Egypt?

B. It can be said that the explanation lies in this point: The entire matter of "those who came to Egypt" is, in truth, the redemption of Israel. The fact that in the interim there was a descent is only external; however, in its inner essence, the descent itself is (not only for the sake of or as preparation for the elevation that comes through the redemption from Egypt, but even more so) part of the elevation and redemption itself—culminating in the elevation of the ultimate and complete redemption. Therefore, the Midrash states regarding "And these are the names of the children of Israel who

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came to Egypt": "They are mentioned here in the context of the redemption of Israel," referring also to the future redemption.

Since all matters related to "those who came to Egypt" and the redemption from Egypt extend into the future, even into the present time—as our Sages of blessed memory said: "All kingdoms are called by the name 'Egypt,'" and we mention the Exodus from Egypt daily, and in every generation and every day, a person is obligated to see themselves as if they themselves went out [today] from Egypt—we learn from this that even in our current exile, we must continue the redemption of Israel, the ultimate and complete redemption, as will be explained further.

C. This can be understood by first explaining the Mishnah at the end of the first chapter of *Berachot* (also recited in the text of the Passover Haggadah):

Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah said: "Behold, I am like a man of seventy years, yet I had not merited that the Exodus from Egypt be mentioned at night until Ben Zoma expounded it, as it is stated: 'In order that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt all the days of your life.' 'The days of your life' refers to the days; 'all the days of your life' includes the nights." The Sages say: "'The days of your life' refers to this world; 'all the days of your life' includes the days of the Messiah."

Rashi explains: "Like a man of seventy years"—I already appeared aged, though not actually seventy, because my hair turned white on the day Rabban Gamliel was removed from his position and Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah was appointed as Nasi, as described later in the chapter on the morning prayer. On that day, Ben Zoma expounded this verse.

It requires explanation: What is the connection between this teaching and Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, and why is it significant that this Mishnah was stated on (or in connection with) the day Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah was appointed as Nasi? It stands to reason that since Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah studied this Torah topic on the day he became Nasi, it is related to his role as a leader in Israel. This aligns with the obligation to prioritize Torah study in matters relevant to the time. One could suggest that this serves as a general lesson for every Jew, particularly in relation to their Torah study of time-relevant matters. Similarly, the statement of Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, "Behold, I am like a man of seventy years," specifically emphasizes the number seventy.

D. Explanation of the matter: In this Mishnah, the greatness and praise of the Exodus from Egypt is expressed: Even after the children of Israel left Egypt, the obligation to remember the Exodus from Egypt "all the days of your life" remains—both during the days and the nights (as per the words of Ben Zoma) and both in this world

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and in the days of the Messiah (as per the words of the Sages). The reason for this is that the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt is a fundamental principle and a strong pillar of our Torah and faith. At that time, the initiation of redemption occurred—the children of Israel went out from the state of servitude and became inherently free people ("They are My servants and not servants of servants"), and this was done in a way that has an everlasting impact.

In human service: The Exodus from Egypt signifies the departure (of the divine soul) from the limitations and confines of the body's imprisonment and the material world in general, to connect and unify with the Holy One, blessed be He, through Torah and mitzvot. Since this is a general theme of the entire Torah and Judaism, it is stated: "In order that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt all the days of your life," to the extent that "in every generation and every day, a person is obligated to see themselves as if they themselves went out today from Egypt." Specifically, this concept has three stages and levels:

1. "We mention the Exodus from Egypt every single day" (the "days"): When the light of God shines ("And God called the light Day"), a person must, in a straightforward sense, see themselves as if they went out today from Egypt. This reflects the daily service of a Jew—to emerge from constraints and boundaries.

2. Furthermore, there is an additional innovation: "We mention the Exodus from Egypt at night," as Ben Zoma derives from the verse, "In order that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt all the days of your life... all the days of your life include the nights." This teaches that even during a time of night and darkness, when the light of God does not shine, and even during the "night of exile," the Exodus from Egypt can and must be remembered.

3. The Sages add an even greater innovation: "All the days of your life" includes—not only this world ("The days of your life" refers to this world) but also—"to include the days of the Messiah." This innovation has a twofold significance:

A) שְׁחֵחַ (in the law of remembering the Exodus from Egypt – the obligation to mention the Exodus from Egypt) "All the days of your life" – which applies to the days of your life in this world and in this time – it includes the days of Mashiach.! Until this is included in the mention of the Exodus from Egypt, "all the days of your life" in this world (before the days of Mashiach).

And the innovation in this is much greater.

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[NOTE The innovation mentioned is that this commandment isn't limited to the current era but is a lasting requirement that will continue even in the future, during the times of Mashiach. **END]**

B) Even though in the days of Mashiach (in a state of redemption) the matter of mentioning the redemption is not relevant, even then they will mention the Exodus from Egypt. Additionally, although the true and complete redemption is far superior to the redemption from Egypt, being a redemption after which there is no exile, and then the spirit of impurity will be removed from the land, the complete redemption from all constraints and borders, unlike the redemption and Exodus from Egypt, which was a redemption that had exile afterwards, and not a complete redemption, because the evil in the souls of Israel was still powerful at that time" (and therefore it was necessary for the people to flee") – even then they will mention the Exodus from Egypt in the days of Mashiach.

If they will mention the Exodus from Egypt then, this is evidence that it is for a purpose – because of the elevation and innovation that the Exodus from Egypt will also operate at that time, as explained earlier.

5. It can be said that the explanation of this is: In the redemption from Egypt, the general concept of redemption was שְׁתַּחֲדִי/innovated—the opening of the channel for all redemptions (even from exiles that followed afterward), including the future redemption. Furthermore: if they had merited, the Exodus from Egypt would have been a complete redemption with no subsequent exile, in such a way that "Hashem will reign forever and ever," as the Children of Israel proclaimed in the Song of the Sea, for they would have immediately entered the Land of Israel in the complete redemption. However, since "secondary matters, inyanim tz'dadiyim" became involved, this did not materialize.

Based on this, it can be said that the true essence of the Exodus from Egypt is the Messianic Era—the true and complete redemption. Conversely, the true and inner essence of the Messianic Era is the redemption from Egypt. However, concerning practical reality, due to secondary causes, there is an interim period (externally) between them until the complete redemption occurs in actuality. Yet, during all the interim time (between the redemption from Egypt and the complete redemption)—"all the days of your life" (in this world)—you must remember "the day you went out from the land of Egypt" [so that all the days, from the time of the first redemption from Egypt until the future redemption, speedily in our days, Amen, are considered as the days of your exodus from the land of Egypt]. And since the Exodus from Egypt is, in essence, the inner concept of the Messianic Era, the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt "all the days of your life" inherently includes (bringing about) the Messianic Era.

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According to this, it is also understood why the Exodus from Egypt will be mentioned in the Messianic Era (even though at that time, they will be in a state of redemption, and a redemption that is incomparably greater than the redemption from Egypt):

1. The Exodus from Egypt is the beginning and, moreover, the inner essence of the Messianic Era.
2. The Exodus from Egypt effects a renewal in the Messianic Era, whereby the unique virtue of the Exodus from Egypt (as it occurred in practice, due to the fact that they did not merit for it to immediately be the complete redemption) is also present—the virtue of "subduing the *sitra achra*" (the "other side"), since the evil was still in its strength at that time (as mentioned above).

However, the future mention of the Exodus from Egypt will be secondary (as it is stated: "The subjugation of the kingdoms will be primary, and the Exodus from Egypt secondary to it"), because the primary revelation at that time will be that of the complete redemption, which transcends all measure and limitation. Yet, together with this, the Exodus from Egypt will also be mentioned (in a secondary manner), because the virtue of the complete redemption—being entirely beyond all measure and limitation (in a manner of "And I will remove the spirit of impurity from the earth," *it'hapcha*)—extends into the measures and limitations of "all the days of your life" within the reality of this world (the virtue of *it'kafya* in the redemption from Egypt). Were the Exodus from Egypt not to be mentioned then, one might think that the redemption is disconnected from "all the days of your life" in this world.

6. This clarifies the addition and innovation of the sages regarding Ben Zoma's teaching: Beyond Ben Zoma's statement that the concept of the Exodus from Egypt applies to "all the days of your life," including the nights—even during the night of exile—the sages add that "all the days of your life" includes "to bring to the days of the Messiah." This means that "all the days of your life" in this world (both in the days and even in the nights, during the darkness of exile) encompasses, in addition to the level of the Exodus from Egypt as it occurred then (a redemption that was incomplete and openly so), also the level of the Exodus from Egypt in its truest sense—the Messianic Era, the complete redemption after which there will be no exile.

Furthermore, note the precision in the phrase "to bring to the days of the Messiah" (and not "to include" or similar expressions, as is common). This implies that the work of (remembering) the Exodus from Egypt "all the days of your life" in this world:

1. Brings the days of the Messiah into this world now, and even more:

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2. This actively brings, within "the days of your life," the perfection of the Messianic Era (in plural form, including all its stages) into the true and complete redemption.

[This also explains that the words of the sages are not just a "law for the Messianic era," but that they also have practical implications for a Jew's service now, even in the present time before the Messiah's arrival in actuality. By remembering the Exodus from Egypt, one knows that this is connected with "bringing to the days of the Messiah."]

7. According to this, the connection of the Mishnah to Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, who became Nasi (leader) on that very day, is understood: The innovation of a Nasi in Israel (*Nasi* being derived from the term *hisnas'ut*, meaning "elevation") is to connect and unify "all the days of your life"—both for each individual and for the collective of Israel—linking "all the days of your life" in the physical realm of this world, particularly during the time of exile ("nights"), with redemption. This includes redemption in general (liberation from limitations and constraints) and, more specifically, the Messianic Era, the true and complete redemption after which there will be no exile. The Nasi has the unique ability to unite and connect exile with redemption, and more specifically, to unite the Exodus from Egypt with the Messianic Era (even though they are separated by a period of exile). This is reflected in the verse: "You shall remember the day you went out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life... to bring to the days of the Messiah." In the life of a Jew—living as a soul within a body in the physical and material world, especially during exile—this means that one can break free from their personal limitations and constraints (*mitzarim*). Moreover, they can attain a state of living in the reality of the Messianic Era.

And therefore, it was specifically on the day that Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah ascended to the position of Nasi (leader) that he engaged with the topic of "mentioning the Exodus from Egypt even at night" and "to bring to the days of the Messiah."

8. It can be said that this is connected with Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's introduction: "Behold, I am like a man of seventy years..."

The Gemara recounts that Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah said, "Behold, I am like a man of seventy years, but not actually seventy years old," because at that time, he was only eighteen years old. A miracle occurred for him, and eighteen rows of his hair turned white. This demonstrated to everyone that Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah was indeed worthy of becoming the Nasi (leader), as he now appeared with the white hair of old age, befitting a sage to be considered an elder (*zaken*).

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From this, we see that the perfection of the Nasi's role is specifically connected to the number seventy, to the extent that before this event, despite all of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's other qualifications—being wise, wealthy, and a tenth-generation descendant of Ezra—he did not merit to establish the ruling that “the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned at night” until Ben Zoma expounded on it. This happened “on that day” when Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah became the Nasi.

And the explanation for this is as follows:

Seventy years represent the completion of a person's life, as it is written: “The days of our years among them are seventy years” (*Tehillim* 90:10). This perfection is achieved when a person reaches the point of refining all seven emotional attributes (*middot*) to their fullness—seven times ten (each attribute incorporating all ten aspects, resulting in seventy). More specifically, a person is given “seventy years” to accomplish the task of refining the seven attributes as they manifest below, within the *nefesh habehemit* (animal soul)—as implied by “*bahem*” in the verse, which hints at *behemah* (animal). Similarly, this task extends to the general refinement of the seventy nations of the world.

Through this work, a person reaches the level of seventy's completion—the aspect of *ayin* in holiness (the Hebrew word for seventy, עֶשְׂרִים, also means “eye” and signifies divine perception)—a state of unity with godliness, leading to the ultimate perfection that will be revealed in the future era.

And in a similar vein, it can be said regarding “Behold, I am like a man of seventy years” of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, the Nasi: To fulfill the role of Nasi, he had to attain the perfection symbolized by “a man of seventy years”—the refinement of matters of the world (which are divided into seventy, such as the seventy nations, seventy cubits, and so on). This gave him the ability to merit the realization of “that the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned at night,” enabling the effect of the Exodus from Egypt (liberation from limitations and constraints) even while in a state of *tachton* (lower state, “nights”). This was in addition to the daily work required in every moment, extending even to “all the days of your life to bring to the days of the Messiah,” which reflects an aspect of the ultimate redemption (*geulah shleimah*).

This was accomplished when the refinement of all seventy aspects (such as the seventy nations) reached completion. The revelation of “seventy,” represented by *ayin* (which means both “seventy” and “eye”), corresponds to the verse “And your eyes shall see your teacher.” This indicates a state where godliness is openly revealed throughout the entire world, as in the prophecy: “And the glory of Hashem will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together, for the mouth of Hashem has spoken.”

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And this can also be connected with the name of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah—"as his name, so is he":

- The name "Elazar" (אל עזר) can be read as "God has helped" (*El azar*).
- The name "Azaryah" (עזריה) can be read as "Help of God" (*Azar Yah*).

The combination of "Elazar ben Azaryah" represents the unification of these two elements:

1. The primary focus could be *Azaryah* ("Help of God"), with *Elazar* receiving its significance as the "son of Azaryah"—in other words, *Elazar* draws its strength from *Azaryah*.
2. Alternatively, the primary focus could be *Elazar* as the recipient of divine assistance, and *Azaryah* as the source—indicating a continuation of *Azaryah's* power, where "the strength of the son surpasses that of the father."

This idea aligns with the interpretation of the phrase "*ben chorin*" (a free person), where the very existence of the "son" represents a state of freedom. Similarly, in our case, the existence of *Elazar* reflects a state of being derived from and connected to *Azaryah*.

This means that Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah received special assistance from the Holy One, Blessed Be He. As the Holy One, Blessed Be He, transcends the world—this is indicated both by the name *El* (in *Elazar*) and by the name *Yah* (in *Azaryah*)—both names point to a level that is beyond the *Seder Hishtalshelut* (the chain of spiritual worlds). How much more so when we consider the combination of "Elazar ben Azaryah," which unites both aspects. From this transcendent level, he receives divine assistance from the Holy One, Blessed Be He, to serve as a Nasi (leader) and to empower the Jewish people to perform the work of the "Exodus from Egypt"—during the "days," during the "nights," and ultimately in the days of the Messiah, even to the point of "bringing to the days of the Messiah."

9. Additionally, the aforementioned innovation of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah as a Nasi is also hinted at in the story of the Gemara, where it recounts that on the day Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah became Nasi, "they removed the gatekeeper and allowed the students to enter." Previously, Rabban Gamliel had declared, "Any student whose inside is not like their outside shall not enter the study hall." However, on that day, many benches were added to the study hall.

Under Rabban Gamliel, the leadership was aligned with a model reminiscent of the future era, as in the prophecy: "And I will remove the spirit of impurity from the earth." In such a state, a student "whose inside is not like their outside" would indeed have no

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place in the study hall, since at the level of holiness of the future, there is absolutely no room for anything contrary to holiness. This leadership approach aligns with that of Shammai, whose name reflects the notion of perfection (“*sham*, there, his path is complete”). For this reason, the halachah will align with Shammai in the Messianic Era.

In contrast, the leadership of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah aligned with the reality of this world in its present time. Even in a world characterized by limitations, boundaries, concealments, and coverings—up to the darkness of exile (*nights*)—where there is the possibility of a reality where “one’s inside is not like their outside,” it is still possible to accomplish the refinement and elevation associated with the Exodus from Egypt. Therefore, on that day, they removed the gatekeeper and allowed the students to enter. This reflects the role of the Nasi, whose purpose is to increase the number of students among the Jewish people.

It could have been thought that since Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah allowed even a student “whose inside is not like their outside” to enter, it would only be possible to achieve an incomplete redemption (in a manner of *itkafya*—subduing the negative, as the evil still retains its strength). This is because the complete redemption depends on everything being “inside as it is outside” (as in the prophecy, “And I will remove the spirit of impurity from the earth”). However, the sages continue and add: “All the days of your life”—in addition to the nights—also “to bring to the days of the Messiah.” This means that even in a state of exile (where the reality of “one’s inside not being like their outside” exists), it is still possible to achieve the *complete redemption*.

This is hinted at in the fact that “even Rabban Gamliel did not refrain from entering the study hall for even one moment.” Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah’s leadership influenced even Rabban Gamliel, whose spiritual service was connected to the era of the Messiah (as mentioned above), to agree with and support Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah’s approach to leadership. This included allowing all students to enter the study hall, granting them permission to participate in Torah study regardless of their inner state.

10. An additional explanation can be offered regarding the fact that the Mishnah mentioned earlier appears at the end of the first chapter of *Masechet Berachot*. The beginning of *Masechet Berachot* starts with the question: “From when do we recite the Shema in the evenings?” This signifies, in a spiritual sense, the activation of the recitation of the Shema (acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of heaven) even during the “evenings,” meaning the darkness of night and exile. The word *me’eimatai* (“from when”) can also be interpreted as *eimah* (awe), emphasizing the commitment to divine sovereignty even in challenging times.

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This theme connects to the content at the end of the chapter, reflecting the principle that “their end is rooted in their beginning”: The Mishnah concludes with the statement that “we mention the Exodus from Egypt at night” (as part of the recitation of Shema). The Exodus from Egypt is intrinsically connected to the Shema, which is why the sages specifically established the inclusion of the passage about the Exodus during the recitation of the Shema, even though the mention of the Exodus is its own independent mitzvah and not directly part of the mitzvah of Shema.

Based on the principle mentioned earlier that “their end is rooted in their beginning, and their beginning in their end,” this concept also connects to the conclusion of the Talmud, both in the Gemara and the Mishnah.

- In the Gemara, the conclusion is: “Whoever studies halachot every day is assured a place in the World to Come, as it is said: ‘His ways [*halichot*] are eternal.’ Do not read *halichot* (ways) but *halachot* (laws).” This teaches that through the study of the halachot of Torah, one draws divine revelation into the realm of the World to Come, including the level of the resurrection of the dead in the future.
- In the Mishnah, the conclusion is: “The Holy One, Blessed Be He, found no vessel to hold blessing for Israel except peace, as it is said: ‘The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.’” (This same verse is also the conclusion of *Masechet Berachot* itself.)

This indicates that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, gives strength (*oz*) to Israel, akin to Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah’s name (*Elazar ben Azaryah*—“God has helped”). Strength (*oz*) refers to Torah, as it is said: “There is no strength except Torah.” This strength brings about “the Lord will bless His people with peace,” with the ultimate perfection of peace (in the world) being realized in the true and complete redemption. (This is further explained in the verse “He redeemed my soul in **peace**.”)

11. Based on the above, we can understand the explanation in the Midrash on the verse: “*And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt*”—that this verse is mentioned “in reference to the redemption of Israel,” even though, on the surface, it speaks about their descent, as they “came to Egypt.” “We mention the Exodus from Egypt at night” indicates that the true essence of “those who came to Egypt”—their descent into the darkness of exile (*night*)—is connected to the redemption of Israel (the Exodus from Egypt), ultimately leading to “bringing to the days of the Messiah,” which represents the ultimate meaning of the Exodus from Egypt, as explained above.

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Thus, the names listed in the verse are mentioned “in reference to the redemption of Israel.” This highlights that even in the state of *those who came to Egypt*, within limitations and constraints, they were to act and reveal how this state itself (not merely as a precursor to redemption, but as part of its essence) is associated with the redemption of Israel. This extends to the ultimate and complete redemption. Additionally, the children of Israel who came to Egypt numbered seventy souls.

It can be suggested that this hints at the essence of the task: even in the state of “those who came to Egypt,” in exile among the seventy nations (corresponding to the seventy souls), they were to reveal the redemption of Israel. The strength to accomplish this comes from the seventy souls (the descendants of Jacob), similar to how Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, “like a man of seventy years,” provides the power to “mention the Exodus from Egypt at night” and ultimately to “bring to the days of the Messiah.” This reflects attaining the higher level of the *ayin* (70, also meaning “eye”) represented in the enlarged *ayin* of the Shema, where the Exodus from Egypt is mentioned.

From this, we also learn an important lesson for the people of Israel: They should know that even in exile, in addition to the fact that the children of Israel remain in a state of ultimate perfection (as is understood and self-evident), there is a deeper point hinted at by the conclusion of *Parashat Vayechi*: “And they embalmed him, and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.” The act of embalming signifies that the body remains intact. Similarly, the verse “And these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt” adds even more: the names are mentioned “in reference to the redemption of Israel.” This indicates that the children of Israel, even in exile, are preserved in their wholeness—not only as souls within bodies, alive physically and spiritually together, but as a *neshama b’guf bari* (a healthy soul in a healthy body), in a state of ultimate perfection. They stand not only in a state that leads to redemption but, more so, in a state of *Geulat Yisrael* (the redemption of Israel) itself, to the extent of “all the days of your life to bring to the days of the Messiah.”

This will be elaborated further below.

12. Based on the above, we can also understand the connection between *Parashat Shemot* and the 20th of Tevet, the yahrtzeit (day of passing) of the Rambam, which always occurs near *Parashat Shemot*. This year, it falls on Erev Shabbat *Parashat Shemot*. Specifically, considering the known teaching that the enjoyment of Shabbat is achieved through the work and effort of Erev Shabbat—as the sages state, “Whoever toils on Erev Shabbat will eat on Shabbat”—it becomes clear that there is a connection between the yahrtzeit of the Rambam and the Torah portion of this Shabbat,

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Parashat Shemot. Moreover, the “eating” of Shabbat is not only preceded by but also made possible through the effort (*tircha*) of the yahrtzeit of the Rambam on Erev Shabbat.

The explanation of this is as follows: In the case of the Rambam, we see clearly how, even while being in a state of “*those who came to Egypt*”—a situation of exile—he worked (in a way relevant to his time) to accomplish the redemption of Israel.

This included both:

1. **Spiritual redemption**, relative to the darkness of exile that existed in his time (similar to the Exodus from Egypt, even in a state of *night*).
2. **Empowerment and preparation for the ultimate redemption in the literal sense**, “to bring to the days of the Messiah.”

This idea is hinted at in the name “Rambam,” which can be read as an acronym for “*Rabot Mofti Be’eretz Mitzrayim*”—“performing great wonders in the land of Egypt.”

While he was in Egypt, the Rambam, in the most literal sense, composed his monumental work, *Mishneh Torah*—the “Book of Halachot Halachot,” which organizes the entirety of the Oral Torah in a clear and systematic way. This act itself brought about a form of redemption (*Exodus from Egypt*) within the state of the darkness of exile, as the Rambam explained in his introduction. He noted that his purpose in writing this work was to counter the concealment and obscurity that had arisen in the study and understanding of Torah. The various commentaries, halachic rulings, and responsa had become difficult for people of his time to grasp properly, except for a small number of individuals. Needless to say, the Talmud itself presented an even greater challenge.

Thus, the Rambam undertook to compile all the clarified teachings in a clear language and concise format so that the entire Oral Torah would be arranged and accessible for everyone. This indeed came to fruition, as the Rambam’s work became a guide and path for the Jewish people across all generations. It began with the Jewish people in Egypt during the Rambam’s time, where his halachic rulings spread to other parts of the world (as is evident from the Rambam’s letters). Over time, this influence extended to later generations of the Jewish people, including through the proliferation of halachic works—starting with the *Shulchan Aruch* and others—that are based on the Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*.

In essence, the Rambam accomplished that even in a state of *night* or *evening*—literally and metaphorically—in Egypt (from the word *Mitzrayim*, meaning “limitations and constraints”), there would be an *Exodus from Egypt* and a *redemption of Israel*. This

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parallels the actions of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, who compiled the Mishnah to ensure that the Oral Torah would not be forgotten from Israel. This concept is also alluded to at the beginning of the Mishnah, *"From when do we recite the Shema in the evenings?"* which connects to the idea of *mentioning the Exodus from Egypt at night*, as previously mentioned.

Furthermore: In addition to "mentioning the Exodus from Egypt at night," the Rambam also advanced the concept of *"all the days of your life to bring to the days of the Messiah."* As is well known, the Rambam's *Mishneh Torah* encompasses all the halachot of the Torah, including the laws applicable during the time when the Beit HaMikdash (Holy Temple) stood, as well as the halachot concerning the Messianic Era. These halachot are found at the conclusion of his work, where they guide the Jewish people regarding the laws related to the Messianic Era: how one should prepare for it and the practical sequence of the coming of the true and complete redemption.

Additionally, The Rambam lived for seventy years, as in the verse, *"The days of our years among them are seventy years."* This indicates that within him, the perfection associated with the concept of *"Behold, I am like a man of seventy years"* was openly manifest. He actively worked to achieve an *Exodus from Egypt* in all situations—during the "days," the "nights," and ultimately to *"bring to the days of the Messiah,"* as was previously explained in relation to Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah.

As is well known, on the yahrtzeit (day of passing) of a *tzaddik*, all his deeds, Torah teachings, and divine service that he performed throughout his life ascend to higher spiritual levels. This ascent illuminates and is revealed below, bringing about salvation and influence *"in the midst of the earth."* Accordingly, on the 20th of Tevet, the yahrtzeit of the Rambam, all of his deeds, Torah teachings, and divine service are revealed. This includes the composition of his monumental work, *Mishneh Torah*, in the land of Egypt, as well as all the aspects of his divine service during his seventy years of life. This revelation brings about salvations *"in the midst of the earth"*—specifically within the "earth" of Egypt (representing the constraints and limitations of the world). This influence extends to making his teachings a *guide (Moreh Derech, "a guide for the way")* and a *Moreh Nevuchim ("Guide for the Perplexed")* for the Jewish people throughout all generations that followed.

Based on this, we can understand the unique significance of the "eating" on Shabbat—*Parashat Shemot* this year. Since it comes as a result of the work and effort (*avodah* and *tircha*) on this Erev Shabbat, all the deeds, Torah teachings, and divine service that the Rambam accomplished over the course of his seventy years—now revealed and actively bringing salvations *"in the midst of the earth"* on this Erev

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Shabbat—enhance the meaning of this Shabbat's *avodah*. This highlights the added dimension of the work of this Shabbat, which is to bring about the redemption of Israel even within the state of *"those who came to Egypt,"* referring to exile and its constraints!

13. The lesson and instruction from this are simple to understand, especially in our generation and time: As has been stated numerous times by my revered teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, leader of our generation: in addition to the fact that *"all deadlines have passed,"* the Jewish people have already repented and completed everything, including *"polishing the buttons."* What remains is only for the Holy One, Blessed Be He, to open the eyes of the Jewish people so that they see that the true and complete redemption is already here, and they are already sitting before the set table, ready to partake in the feast of the Leviathan, Wild Ox, and so forth.

From this, it is clear that if, even during the descent into Egypt thousands of years ago (*"These are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt"*), the redemption of Israel was already revealed, and if in all times the work of the Jewish people has been to draw redemption into the state of exile—How much more so, after the immense accumulation of our deeds and efforts throughout all generations—This includes the work of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah in his time, the Rambam in his time, and all the righteous of Israel in every generation, up until the recent generations—the work of our Rebbes and leaders from the House of David of the Tribe of Judah. This includes the work of my revered teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, throughout his seventy years of life in this world (5640–5710 [1880–1950]).

Certainly, and all the more so, in our generation and our time—after everything has already been completed (as mentioned above)—the promise in the Torah stands fully assured: "You shall remember the day you went out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life... to bring to the days of the Messiah." Simply put, there is no need for any interruption, Heaven forbid, between "all the days of your life" and "the days of the Messiah."

Unlike previous generations of the Jewish people, where such a gap existed, in our time, *"all the days of your life"* for each individual Jew—within their physical lives as a soul in a body—already naturally includes *"the days of the Messiah."* This is because the redemption is coming immediately, in this very moment and in this very place, even if it is currently a state of *night* or exile (*"those who came to Egypt"*). Thus, the final moment and last point of exile become the first moment and initial point of redemption.

And from "all the days of your life" in this time and this place, without any interruption whatsoever, Heaven forbid (even if one is already beyond seventy years of age or

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similar situations), Every single Jew immediately transitions—with complete perfection—from “*Reuven and Shimon descended*” to “*Reuven and Shimon ascended*.” This embodies the continuation of “*all the days of your life*” seamlessly into “*the days of the Messiah*” and the eternal life that will exist at that time.

14. In practice, this means that the work of the Jewish people now must be focused on “bringing to the days of the Messiah,” Revealing immediately and tangibly how the state of “*those who came to Egypt*” in exile is, in truth, a state of *Geulat Yisrael* (the redemption of Israel). This is achieved by preparing oneself and helping others prepare for the state of the Messianic Era. This includes—and is particularly relevant—in connection with the Rambam’s *yahrtzeit* (20th of Tevet), by strengthening and increasing the study of the Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*. This could involve:

- Participating (or enhancing one’s participation, if already involved) in the daily study of the Rambam with many others of the Jewish people.
- Learning *three chapters a day, one chapter a day, or Sefer HaMitzvot*.

And specifically, in the Rambam’s own work—studying the *Laws of the King Messiah* in the final two chapters of *Hilchos Melachim* at the conclusion of *Mishneh Torah*. In addition to learning these chapters oneself, one should also strive to influence others—men, women, and children in their surroundings—to participate in this study. This should be done in a manner of “*producing many students*,” such that others will observe and be inspired to follow this example, creating a ripple effect that reaches many more.

May it be Hashem’s will that through the very decision to engage in this effort, the reward will be granted immediately: The fulfillment of the Rambam’s words at the conclusion of his *Mishneh Torah*:

“After the king from the House of David arises, who diligently studies Torah and observes the mitzvot as David his ancestor did, compels all of Israel to walk in the ways of Torah, strengthens its breaches, and wages the wars of Hashem, he is presumed to be the Messiah. If he succeeds in these efforts and builds the Temple in its place and gathers the dispersed of Israel, he is certainly the Messiah. He will then perfect the entire world to serve Hashem together, as it is said: ‘*For then I will transform the peoples to a clear language, so that they all will call upon the name of Hashem and serve Him with one accord*.’” And ultimately, as the Rambam concludes: “The world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem as the waters cover the sea.”

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May this be fulfilled immediately, and may we merit to witness it speedily in our days.
Amen.