

Maharal Tzintz

PEARLS FROM THE TEACHINGS OF THE GAON FROM PLOTZK REPRINTED FROM SEFER
Chamudei Shai on the Torah and Holidays - ספר חמודי ש"י על התורה והמועדים

Parashas Beshalach

Demonstrating the correct intent in our prayer

The reason we say "Hashem malchusei ka'im le'alam ul'almei almay" is not as part of the prayer itself, but to show that we have the correct intent in what we are saying. When we say "Hashem yimloch le'olam va'ed" in the "*Shiras HaYam*" ("Song of the Sea," "Az Yashir"), we are affirming that we understand its meaning correctly. Therefore, we recite the verse twice, like "shnayim mikra ve'echad targum."

Thus, even in beyechidus, it is permissible to say it. First, we recite "Hashem Yimloch Le'olam Va'ed, Hashem Yimloch Le'olam

Va'ed" – this is the "two *mikra*." Then we follow with the Targum of Onkelos: "Hashem malchusei ka'im le'alam ul'almei almay."

The Power of the Mitzvah of "*Levaya*" ("Escorting")

וַיְהִי בְּשַׁלַּח פְּרַעֲוֵה אֶת-
 הַיָּם ("Vayehi beshalach Pharaoh es ha'am") "And it was, that when Pharaoh sent the people away...." The Midrash explains that the term "*beshalach*" ("he sent") implies *levaya*, that when the Jewish people left Egypt, Pharaoh escorted them. And what was his reward for this escorting? That there is a mitzvah in the Torah: "Do not despise an Egyptian", do not degrade him, as a reward for the mitzvah

of escorting. However, we must understand the connection between Pharaoh's escorting and this verse prohibiting the despising of an Egyptian. Let us see the profound explanation of the Maharal Tzintz.

The Talmud, *Maseches Sotah*, says about the period of Avraham Avinu that as a reward for the four steps Pharaoh took to accompany Avraham, Pharaoh merited that the Jewish people would later be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years. The Maharsha explains that this does not mean the exile in Egypt occurred *because* of those steps; rather, the decree of exile had already been established at the *Bris Bein Habesarim* (Covenant of the Parts),

and because of the steps Pharaoh took, he merited that the exile would be in his land – that the Klal Yisrael would serve him and not another nation.

The *parasha* begins with the word "Vayehi," which conveys a sense of pain: "ויי... היי" ("Oy vey," or "woe is to us") "*beshalach Pharaoh es ha' am*" – "when Pharaoh sent the people away." Woe is to us because, once again, Pharaoh escorted the Jewish people upon their departure, and this may give him the merit once again of having future exiles of the Jewish people occur under his rule.

Therefore, there is a concern "lest the people reconsider when they see war and return to Egypt – perhaps Pharaoh will again merit that the Jewish people will be in exile specifically with him, and they will need to return to him in Egypt.

This concern was very great. What saved the Jewish people from this fate? Pharaoh's regret. Hashem knew that Pharaoh would come to regret having sent out the Jewish people, and one who does a mitzvah and regrets it – i.e., he regrets the initial action – completely loses the merit of the mitzvah. Pharaoh, therefore, at

the end of the day, did not merit having the Jewish people return to servitude under him.

However, Pharaoh did receive some reward for the mitzvah of escorting: that the Torah commanded, "You shall not despise an Egyptian." For Pharaoh fulfilled the mitzvah of *levaya* when he escorted the Jewish people out of Egypt.

Let us reflect and learn: If such a wicked gentile receives a reward for the mitzvah of *levaya*, how great and immense is the reward we will receive for all the mitzvos that we fulfill! Amen.



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