

## סמיכת גאולה לתפילה

Redemption and Prayer

### 1. Go'el Yisrael, Blessing After Shema, Siddur

אַמֶּת אַתָּה הוּא רֵאשׁוֹן וְאַתָּה הוּא אַחֲרוֹן וּמְבַלְעֶדְיָךְ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ: מִמְצָרִים גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ יְקוּק אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתָנוּ: כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם הִרְגָתָּ וּבְכוֹרְךָ גְּאֻלְתָּ וַיִּמְסוּךָ בְּקַעַת וְזָדִים טָבַעַת וַיִּדְדִים הִעֲבַרְתָּ וַיִּכְסּוּ־מַיִם צָרִיחֶם אָחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתַר: עַל־זֹאת שִׁפְחוּ אֱהוּבִים וְרוֹמְמוּ קֹל וְנִתְּנוּ יְדִידִים וְמִירוֹת שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבְּחוּת בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת לְמֶלֶךְ קֹל חַי וְקַיִם: רַם וְנִשְׂא גְדוֹל וְנוֹרָא מִשְׁפִּיל גְּאִים וּמִגְבִּיהַ שְׁפָלִים מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים וּפּוֹדֶה עֲנּוּיִם וְעוֹזֵר דְּלִים וְעוֹנֶה לְעַמּוֹ בְּעֵת שִׁוְעִם אֱלֹיו:

Truly, You are First and You are Last, and we have no king, redeemer, or deliverer besides You. You redeemed us from Egypt. Hashem, our God, You liberated us from the house of bondage. You slew all their firstborn, and You redeemed Your firstborn,. You split the Sea of Reeds, and You drowned the wicked. You caused the beloved ones to pass through, while the waters covered their enemies; not one of them remained. Because of this, the beloved ones praised and exalted the Almighty; and the beloved ones offered hymns, songs, and praises, blessings and thanksgiving to the King, the Almighty, [Who is] living and enduring. (He is) exalted and uplifted, great and awesome; He humbles the haughty and raises the lowly. He frees the captives and redeems the humble, helps the impoverished, and He answers His people when they cry out to Him.

### 2. R. Ezra Bick, Geula: Response to God's Majesty

<https://etzion.org.il/en/halakha/orach-chaim/prayer-and-blessings/geula-response-gods-majesty>

I can experience the presence of God in creation through the dynamic flux of ever-changing nature. I can experience the love of the giving of the Torah through my own daily Torah learning. But how do I experience the power of the redemption of Egypt in these times, a period of exile and *hester panim* [God hiding His face]? In fact, is it at all true to say that God redeems us now in the present as He did four thousand years ago?

...*Geula* [redemption], unlike creation and Torah, cannot serve as a precursor to the acceptance of the yoke of heaven. Our normal experience of *geula* in this world of exile is not clear enough nor strong enough to lead one to accept upon himself the kingdom of God. On the contrary, it is the acceptance and recognition of the kingdom of heaven that leads to the experience of *geula*...

Because we have accepted You as King, as God, and as truth, and hence it must be true even though it is indeed hard to see it with our natural eyes. Looking through the spectacles of faith (*emuna*), through the prism of fealty to the King, we indeed experience the redeeming power of God...

### 3. R. Avi Weiss, *Holistic Prayer*, p.22 and p.31

Redemption can be achieved only through a joint effort between God and humankind. In creating the world, God intentionally left it incomplete. One can give different rationales for this. Had God created a world of only good, there would be no good, as good is a relative term. Had

God created a perfect world, we would be left with no challenges to overcome. Had God created a world where we could only do the right thing, we would be bereft of our freedom of choice, and hence, not be human. Thus, the last word of the creation story in Genesis is *la'asot* – “to do” (Genesis 2:3). God is, in effect, telling us, “I have created the world imperfectly, and I leave it to you to finish what I have started. In partnership, we will redeem the world.”

... As much as we seek God in prayer, God, through prayer, seeks us, encouraging us to partner with Him in redeeming Israel and the world.

#### 4. Exodus 14:15

פְּרַעַה הַקָּרִיב וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם וְהִנֵּה מִצְרַיִם | נֹסַע אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּירָאוּ מְאֹד וַיִּצְעֲקוּ  
בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְקֹוֹק: ... וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם אֶל־תִּירְאוּ הִתְיַצְבוּ וּרְאוּ אֶת־יְשׁוּעַת יְקֹוֹק אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה  
לָכֶם הַיּוֹם כִּי אֲשֶׁר רְאִיתֶם אֶת־מִצְרַיִם הַיּוֹם לֹא תִסְפוּ לִרְאֹתָם עוֹד עַד־עוֹלָם: יְקֹוֹק יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם  
תִּחַרְשׁוּן: {פ} וַיֹּאמֶר יְקֹוֹק אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מַה־תִּצְעַק אֵלַי דִּבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּסֵעוּ:

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites caught sight of the Egyptians advancing upon them. Greatly frightened, the Israelites cried out to Hashem... But Moses said to the people, “Have no fear! Stand by, and witness the deliverance which Hashem will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you will never see again. Hashem will battle for you; you hold your peace!” Then Hashem said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward.”

#### 5. Shemot Rabbah 21:8

רבי אליעזר אומר, אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה: עת לקצר ועת להאריך, בני שרוים בצער, והים סוגר, והאויב רודף, ואתה עומד ומרבה בתפלה!?! דבר אל בני ישראל ויסעו.

Rabbi Eliezer: God said to Moses, “There is a time to shorten and a time to lengthen. My children are distressed, the sea is closing, the enemy is pursuing, and you are standing there going on and on with prayer?!? Say to the children of Israel, ‘Go forth!’”

#### 6. R. Abraham Joshua Heschel

<https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/what-selma-means-to-the-jews/>

For many of us the march from Selma to Montgomery was about protest and prayer. Legs are not lips and walking is not kneeling. And yet our legs uttered songs. Even without words, our march was worship. I felt my legs were praying.

#### 7. Go’el Yisrael, Blessing After Shema, Siddur

צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפְדֵה כְּנַאֲמָךְ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל, גְּאֻלְנוּ יְקֹוֹק צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ קְדוֹשׁ  
יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְקֹוֹק גְּאֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Rock of Israel, arise to the aid of Israel, and liberate Judah and Israel as You promised. Our Redeemer— ‘Hashem of hosts’ is His Name, the Holy One of Israel Blessed are You, Hashem, Who redeemed Israel.

#### 8. Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 9b

העיד רבי יוסי בן אליקים משום קהלא קדישא דבירושלים: כל הסומך גאולה לתפלה אינו נזוק כל היום כולו.

Rabbi Yosei ben Elyakim testified in the name of the holy community in Jerusalem that one who juxtaposes redemption and prayer will incur no harm for the entire day.

### 9. Jerusalem Talmud, Berakhot 1:1

אמר רבי אמי פלמי שאינו תוקף לגאולה תפילה למה הוא דומה. לאוהבו של מלך שבא והרחיק על פתחו של מלך. יצא לידע מה הוא מבקש ומצאו שהפליג עוד הוא הפליג.

Rebbi Immi said: Anyone who does not immediately pray after mentioning redemption, whom is he to be likened to? To a lover of the king who comes from afar to the king's door. When the king comes to see what he wants, he finds that the person left. Hence, the king also leaves.

### 10. Song of Songs, 5:2-6

אני ישנה ולבי ער קול | דודי דופק פתחילי אחתי רעיתי יונתי תמתי שראשלי נמלא-טל קנוצותי  
רסיסי לילה: פשטתי את-כתנתי איככה אלכשנה רחצתי את-רגלי איככה אטנפם: דודי שלח ידו  
מן-חור ומעי המו עליו: קמתי אני לפתח לדודי ונדי גטפוימור ואצבעתי מור עבר על כפות המנעול:  
פתחתי אני לדודי ודודי חמק עבר נפשי יצאה בדברו בקשתי והו ולא מצאתיהו קראתיו ולא ענני:

I was asleep,  
But my heart was wakeful.  
Hark, my beloved knocks!  
“Let me in, my own,  
My darling, my faultless dove!  
For my head is drenched with dew,  
My locks with the damp of night.”  
I had taken off my robe—  
Was I to don it again?  
I had bathed my feet—  
Was I to soil them again?  
My beloved took his hand off the latch,  
And my heart was stirred for him.  
I rose to let in my beloved;  
My hands dripped myrrh—  
My fingers, flowing myrrh—  
Upon the handles of the bolt.  
I opened the door for my beloved,  
But my beloved had turned and gone.  
I was faint because of what he said.  
I sought, but found him not;  
I called, but he did not answer.

### 11. Rashi, Berakhot 4b, *Zeh ha-Somech*

אלא יהיה אדם מקרב להקדוש ברוך הוא אליו, ומרצהו בתשבחות וקלוסין של יציאת מצרים, והוא מתקרב אליו, ובעודו קרוב אליו יש לו לתבוע צרכיו.

Rather a person should bring the Holy Blessed One close to himself and cajole Him with praise and thanks of the Exodus from Egypt. And God will come close to him. And when God is close, he should request what he needs.

12. Talmidei Rabbeinu Yona, Rif Berakhot 4b, *eizehu ben ha-olam ha-ba*

ואומר מורי הרב שהטעם שזוכה לשכר גדול כזה מפני שהקב"ה כשגאלנו והוציאנו ממצרים היה להיותנו לו לעבדים... ובברכת גאל ישראל מזכיר בה החסד שעשה עמנו הבורא. והתפלה היא עבודה. כדאמרינן (בבא קמא דף צ"ב:)... וכשהוא מזכיר יציאת מצרים ומתפלל מיד מראה שכמו שהעבד שקונה אותו רבו חייב לעשות מצות רבו כן הוא מכיר הטובה והגאולה שגאל אותו הבורא ושהוא עבדו ועובד אותו. וכיון שמכיר שהוא עבדו מפני שגאלו ועושה רצונו ומצותיו...

ועוד אמר מורי נר"ו טעם אחר מפני שכשמזכיר גאולת מצרים ומתפלל מיד הוא מראה שבטוח בה' בתפלה כיון שמבקש ממנו צרכיו. שמי שאינו בטוח בו לא יבקש ממנו כלום... וכיון שמזכיר עכשיו אותה הגאולה שבטחו אבותינו בה' והצילם ומתפלל מיד נמצא שגם הוא בטוח בו שיענה אותו כמו שענה לישראל בעבור שבטחו בו. ומפני זה מזכיר אותה הגאולה ומתפלל מיד.

And my teacher the master said that the reason that one merits so greatly is that when the Holy Blessed One redeemed us and took us out of Egypt we were to be to Him as slaves... And in the blessing of Ga'al Yisrael we mention the loving kindness that the Creator did on our behalf. And prayer is service (avoda – from the root for the word slave) as we are taught in [Bava Kama 82b](#) ... And when you mention the Exodus from Egypt and pray immediately you show that just like a slave who has been acquired by his master is obligated to what his master commands so too you recognize that you are God's slave and must worship Him. And once you recognize that you are God's servant, because God redeemed you, you will do God's will and His commandments...

And my teacher also said another reason [for the great rewards of linking geula to Tefila]. Because when you mention the exodus from Egypt and immediately make requests in prayer you show that you have faith in God. For you would not ask something on someone in whom you had no faith. And since you mention the same redemption that caused our ancestors to have faith in God who had saved them, and then pray immediately, behold you must have faith that God will answer you as was done for the Israelites. And because of this you mention the same redemption and then pray immediately.

## Geula and Tefilla: Dependency upon and Trust in God

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## 13. R. Ezra Bick, Geula and Tefilla: Dependency upon and Trust in God

<https://etzion.org.il/en/halakha/orach-chaim/prayer-and-blessings/geula-and-tefilla-dependency-upon-and-trust-god>

There is one crucial difference between human bondage and the service of God. A human master has selfish goals, goals for himself. If he is the source of the meaning of the life of his slave, then the slave has no goal other than the welfare of the master. But God has no selfish goal which we can serve. His goal is the good of Man... Slavery to man exhausts the slave by exploiting him. Service of God fulfills man by giving him meaning.

How is tefilla, the turning to God in supplication and request, a service of God? He who prays declares that there is no other source for his good than God. "Ein lanu ela Avinu she-bashamayim" – we have no one other than our Father in heaven. Just as a slave knows that his only source of food is his master, that the direction in his life will come from his master, so the servant of God turns only to God to fulfill his needs and to receive instruction. The commandments of God, unlike the commands of the slave-owner, give meaning, divine-transcendent meaning, to the life of the servant of God. Is there anywhere else to where man can turn to satisfy his thirst for a mission, for significance, for the means to survive? He who prays answers in the negative. "Ein lanu ela Avinu she-bashamayim."

It is therefore not surprising that the central defining element of tefilla is "tachanunim" – supplication, request – rather than hymns of glory and psalms of praise. We serve God by declaring that He is the only address for our needs... We serve by stating: Without You, I am nothing, dust and ashes. Therefore, I turn to You for... everything listed in the Shemoneh Esrei – wisdom, forgiveness, health, redemption, sustenance, justice, etc. And where did we learn this, to view God not just as a convenient supply house but as the master of our fate and the source of our lives? From the exodus, when He redeemed us from being slaves to exploitative man and granted us the freedom and value of accepting His values and His munificence for ourselves.

R. Ezra Bick, **Geula and Tefilla:  
Dependency upon and Trust in  
God**

R. Ezra Bick, **Geula and Tefilla:  
Dependency upon and Trust in  
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14. **Geula and Tefilla:  
Dependency upon and Trust  
in God**

15. **Geula and Tefilla:  
Dependency upon and Trust  
in God**

16.

17.

18.

19. **Geula and Tefilla:  
Dependency upon and Trust  
in Go**

14. R. Jeff Fox, Introduction to Shema and its Berachot (4)

<https://roshyeshivatmaharat.org/2020/11/introduction-to-shema-and-its-berachot-4-the-blessings-and-the-amida-1-%d7%a1%d7%9e%d7%99%d7%9b%d7%aa-%d7%92%d7%90%d7%95%d7%9c%d7%94-%d7%9c%d7%aa%d7%a4%d7%99%d7%9c%d7%94/>

I believe that we are living in a generation that wants the lover-beloved imagery but still needs the king-servant reminder...

Halakha rests on the foundation of a divine Commander and human beings who are commanded.

**15. Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p.30**

The only meaning of prayer as a religious institution is service of God by man who accepts the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven...The greatness and power of prayer, the legally mandated fixed and obligatory prayer, is in the rejection by man of all personal interests and motives... in favor of the awareness of standing before God, a posture which is identical to all people in all conditions and in all circumstances, and is not dependent on one's personal history or what has occurred to him; i.e. the extinction of a person's will in favor of the obligation to serve God.

**16. R. Aryeh Ben David, *The Godfile*, p.77**

As you learn to reject or minimize personal interests and motives in prayer, you will also learn to minimize personal interests and motives in your relationships. Social structures supersede personal needs. The demands of family, community, and nation assume pre-eminence in life. Personal needs are subjected to the greater good of the larger group.

This approach to God and human relationships focuses on your level of dependability and loyalty; your own moods, needs, and desires are not central.

**17. Babylonian Talmud, Brakhot 4b**

דְּרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן סִבֵּר גְּאוּלָּה מְעַלְיֵיתָא לְאֵלָּהּ אֶלְא גְּאוּלָּה מְעַלְיֵיתָא לָא הוּיָא אֶלָּא עַד צַפְרָא. וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי סִבֵּר כִּיּוֹן דְּלָא הוּיָא אֶלָּא מְצַפְרָא — לָא הוּיָא גְּאוּלָּה מְעַלְיֵיתָא.

**Rabbi Yohanan holds: Redemption occurred in the evening as well; however, the full-fledged redemption was only in the morning.** Since the redemption began in the evening, it is appropriate to juxtapose the blessing of redemption to the daily evening prayer. **Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, on the other hand, holds: Since full-fledged redemption only occurred in the morning,** and the redemption of the previous evening **was not a full-fledged redemption,** there is no need to juxtapose the blessing of redemption to the evening prayer.