

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ובא לציון
Ready for Redemption

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

A redeemer shall come to Zion and to those of Jacob who repent from willful sin ...And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, said Hashem...and shall not be withdrawn from your mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring...

ובא לציון גואל,
ולשבי פשע
ביעקב... ואני,
זאת בריתי אותם,
אמר ה'... לא ימוש
מפיך ומפי זרעך ומפי
זרע זרעך...

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word

This is a Divine Assurance that if a family produces three consecutive generations (מפיך ומפי זרעך ומפי זרע זרעך) from your mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring) of profound Torah scholars, the blessing of Torah knowledge will not be withdrawn from its posterity (Bava Metzia 85a). *Siach Yitzchok* explains that we see the fulfillment of this blessing in the miracle that Torah greatness has remained with Israel throughout centuries of harsh exile and flight from country to country and from continent to continent (cited in *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, page 159).

be people who descend from many generations of Torah scholars who are themselves ignorant of Torah. There are families that bear the name of prestigious *Gedolim* who today may not even know how to even read one verse in the Torah. The Chofetz Chaim explained that the Gemara's analogy is very precise. The Torah is like a guest seeking its host's home. Sometimes a guest knocks on one's door. If no one answers the door, the guest will not come in. If Torah has been in a family for three generations, the Torah will come "knocking on that family's door" in future generations. But still, the younger generation must open the door for the "Torah" guest who must still be invited in by each new generation (Adapted from Rabbi Frand on *Parshas Zos HaBracha*, Torah.org, 2006).

Someone once asked the Chofetz Chaim, in light of this Divine assurance, how there could

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

The Value of Teshuvah

Teshuva is a precursor to redemption.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Our Generation's Merits

The prayer tells us, ובא לציון גואל ולשבי פשע, a redeemer shall come to Zion and to those of Jacob who repent from willful sin. The Torah (*Devarim* 4:27-31) indicates that *teshuvah* is required to bring the Jewish people's redemption. The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 86b) makes the connection as well, stating, "Great is repentance, for it brings the redemption nearer." Yet, it is hard to imagine that our generation's *teshuvah* is enough to bring the world closer to redemption.

The *Midrash* (*Yalkut Shimoni, Shir HaShirim, Remez*, 986) explains that when Moshe Rabbeinu told the Jewish people that they would be redeemed from Egypt during the month of Nissan, they replied, "How can we be redeemed? We do not have good deeds... Egypt is full of our idols!" Moshe responded, "Because Hashem wants to redeem you, He does not look as much at your

bad deeds. To whom does Hashem look? To the righteous ones among you."

The "righteous ones" in our day are the Jews who, in spite of all the confusion of this world, in spite of all the excess materialism that pulls people so strongly, in spite of all the lusts and desires that are readily acquired, reject the falsehood and turn to G-d. Their *teshuvah* will suffice to bring the final redemption.

Chofetz Chaim (*Chomas Hadas*, Chapter 13) explains: "Nowadays (late 1920's), all the signs of the end of days have been fulfilled and the troubles are greater [than in prior generations]. When one combines all the factors, with an awakening of even a small *teshuvah*, one can hope to hasten the arrival of the final redemption.... Therefore, certainly our obligation is to awaken to do *teshuvah*."

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Look at Us!

On your way to shul on an average Shabbos, look around at your fellow Jews heading in the same direction. Coming out of various streets, dressed in their Shabbos clothes, they converge, head inside and begin reciting prayers that go back 2,000 years. Nobody drives. Nobody takes out a cell phone. Nobody cooks a meal. Thousands of Jews across the globe live this singular, once-a-week existence unknown to any other people in the world. They learn, study, review



and observe the same laws of Shabbos that have been in force since the Torah was given. They gather around tables and bless their wine and bread, eat their meal, sing their Shabbos songs and offer their after-meal blessings. For thousands of years, we alone have done this, and so much else, against all odds, in the face of persecution and poverty.

The miracle is that the Jewish people are still at it.

We have clung to our Torah, to Shabbos and to Hashem for all these centuries, and no matter how far we might be from the heights of spirituality of days gone by, this extraordinary merit grows more extraordinary with each passing day, with each downward step of the world and culture around us. Therefore, we need not despair that we lack the merit to bring redemption. Our spiritual currency in this spiritually impoverished world is worth more than ever. Our *teshuvah* is precious, and indeed has the power to bring redemption.

Try This!

► For all of our praying and speaking about the coming of Mashiach, there are some Jews who may harbor a bit of doubt that we will ever be worthy of that great day. However, redemption is not just a possibility; the power of our *teshuvah* and the arrival of redemption are a promise from Hashem, and therefore, a certainty. Reinforce the thought that it will happen when you say the words, ובא לציון גואל ולשבי פשע ביעקב.

Did You Know

► *Supporting the World*

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 49a) teaches that since the day the *Bais HaMikdash* was destroyed, the world has been supported by the saying of קדוש קדוש קדוש ובא לציון גואל, known as *Kedushah De'Sidra* (*Mishneh Berurah* 132:6). It is preferable for men to recite the *Kedushah* קדוש קדוש קדוש

of ובא לציון גואל with a *minyan* (*Ibid* 132:3).