



Making Every Day Redemption Day

What is Redemption on a Personal, National, and Global Level?

I'm impressed with my friend, Rivka Malka Perlman, who has organized a 'redemption day' with thousands of adherents throughout the globe. Yet, for me and Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin, every day is 'redemption day.' What is גאולה/geulah – 'redemption' exactly? It may mean very different things to different people. It would be interesting to interview random people in various places and ask how they define the word, and what kind of vision they have for redemption. That would make a fascinating YouTube. Perhaps it would even go viral! Geulah can be global, national or personal. On a personal level, I believe geulah is ultimate freedom to express our soul-potential within this world. When the constraints, blocking our soul from truly shining its light evaporate, then we experience personal redemption. Practically speaking, this can be manifested in several ways, such as being healed from a debilitating illness, finding and marrying our soulmate, giving birth to a child or making Aliyah. On a national level, redemption of the land is when it returns to its rightful owner. This implies liberating the land from the other nations, removing its thorns and thistles, bringing out its fruitful potential, by planting and building Jewish settlements on the land. "The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land belongs to Me..." (*Vayikra* 25:23). The Land of Israel belongs to Hashem, Who designated it not only to the Jewish people in general but allotted specific land plots to each individual family according to tribes. This explains why the mitzvah of buying back land for a relative – whose state of poverty compelled him to sell it – is also called 'redemption' as it states, "If your brother becomes destitute and sells some of his inherited property, his redeemer who is related to him shall come forth and redeem his brother's sale" (Ibid. 25). Each kind of redemption spiritually infuses the physical realm by overcoming any blocks preventing the soul from illuminating it fully. Since the Jewish people are the soul of the land, each particular plot of land- in Israel must be illuminated by its particular designated spiritual owner. This is called redemption. On a global level, the Mashiach embodies the complete image of G-d, since his soul includes all other human souls within it. Therefore, he has the potential to redeem the entire world.

Redemption in the *Scroll of Ruth*

Both our personal plot of land in Israel and our body are physical manifestations of our soul. During the final redemption, every Jewish soul will not only inhabit its physical body, but moreover, we will all live on our designated land that can be called our extended body – a body to our body.

Redemption is the underlying theme in the *Scroll of Ruth* (mentioned in *Megillat Ruth* 2:1, 2:20, 3:2, 3:9, 3:12, 4:1-10, 4:14). "Naomi said to her daughter-in-law: 'Blessed be he of Hashem, who did not abandon His kindness to the living and to the dead.' And Naomi said to her: 'The man is a relative, one of our redeemers.'" (*Megillat Ruth* 2:20). Since "the man" – Boaz is "a relative" he is a potential "redeemer" to redeem the land that belonged to Naomi's and Ruth's deceased husbands as well as redeeming the soul of Ruth's late husband through the mitzvah of *yibum* – 'levirate marriage.' Performing *yibum* by marrying the 'brother's (or closest relative's) widow, is called "redemption," since it redeems the deceased from spiritual death. When a man passes away without children, his soul has no continuation in the world, and is therefore unable to

ambulate within the physical realm. In the *Scroll of Ruth*, *yibum* brings about a twofold redemption: both for Machlon, who receives a second chance in life, and also to bring about our ultimate redeemer – the Mashiach – whose birth is a result of this mitzvah. King David, the Redeemer of Israel, descends from the union of *yibum* that Boaz performed with Ruth subjugated to the highest, most altruistic and spiritual intention. The concept of redemption also teaches us that no matter how unfruitful we have been in our lives, or how low we may have fallen, eventually Hashem will redeem us and extend us new life in the face of our past failures (*Yeshu'ya* 40:2-5; *Michah* 7:8 and many other verses throughout the *Tanach*).

Redemption for the Land

ספר ויקרא פרק כה פסוק כד ו

בְּכֹל אֶרֶץ אַחֲזַתְכֶם גְּאֹלָה תִתְּנוּ לְאֶרֶץ: (כה) כִּי יָמוּךְ אָחִיךָ וַיִּמְכַר מֵאֲחֻזְתּוֹ וּבָא גְאֹלוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֵלָיו וַיִּגְאֹל אֶת מִמְכָר אָחִיו:

“Therefore, throughout the land of your possession, you shall give redemption for the land. If your brother becomes destitute and sells some of his inherited property, his redeemer who is related to him shall come forth and redeem his brother's sale. (*Vayikra* 25:24-25).

A deeper explanation of “redeeming the land” refers to Hashem commanding the neshama and the ruach to bring redemption to the body (also called ‘the land’). This is manifested through a process of connecting each part of the soul with the body: The neshama illuminates the ruach, which in turn illuminates the nefesh to enact the perfect body-soul connection (*Siftei Kohen, Vayikra* 25:24). The juxtaposition between “redemption for the land,” and “your brother becoming destitute,” teaches us that redemption happens specifically during poverty, as it states, “The son of David will not come until... the [last] coin has gone from the purse” (*Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin* 97a). Although “Tzion shall be redeemed through justice and her captivities through tzedakah (charity)” (*Yeshu'ya* 1:27), the accusing spiritual powers cannot blame Israel for not giving enough tzedakah, when the last coin has gone from the purse (*Pardes Yosef, Vayikra* 25:24). The word, *בְּכֹל/v'kol* – ‘throughout’ it is an allusion to the Shechinah. *אֶרֶץ אַחֲזַתְכֶם/eretz achuzatchem* – ‘the land of your heritage’ refers to the land of the living – the heritage of your souls. *גְּאֹלָה תִתְּנוּ לְאֶרֶץ/geulah titnu la'aretz* – “redemption you shall give to the land,’ denotes the physical Land of Israel. When we have the intention to redeem the holy sparks imbedded within the land, we will be able to bring about its redemption. As soon as all the sparks have emerged from their husks, then all husks and blockages will vanish forever. At this point, we will experience final global redemption, may it be soon! (Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, *Agra d'kalah, Parasaht Emor*).