

פרשות תזריע והחודש

Did you read the first Rashi in our Parshas Tazria? If so, and if not, as well, let's prepare some background before we approach it.

We learn in Masseches Sanhedrin (38 a):

תנו רבנן: אדם נברא בערב שבת, ומפני מה...שאם תזוח דעתו עליו אומר לו: יתוש קדמך במעשה בראשית.

The Rabbanim learned in a *Braisa*: Odom HoRishon was created on Erev Shabbos. Why? ...Because if man will become conceited, Hashem will say to him, "The mosquito was created before you."

And now we are ready to learn the beginning of our Parsha and Rashi's introductory comment.

We read (Vayikro Perek 12/Posuk 2):

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אִשָּׁה כִּי תִזְרִיעַ וְיִלְדָה זָכָר וְטָמְאָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כִּימֵי נְדָת דֹּתָהּ תִטְמָא:

Speak to B'nei Yisroel saying, 'When a woman seeds and gives birth to a male she shall be impure for seven days, like the days of the flow of the *niddah* she shall be impure.

Parshas Tazria follows Parshas Shemini where we learned the laws of animals, fowl and other living creatures regarding their Halachic fitness to be eaten. Those creatures that could be consumed, sometimes under specific conditions, are called *tahor* – pure. Those that cannot be consumed under any conditions are termed *tomei*-impure.

Rashi thus writes:

אשה כי תזריע - אמר רבי שמלאי כשם שיצירתו של אדם אחר כל בהמה חיה ועוף במעשה בראשית, כך תורתו נתפרשה אחר תורת בהמה חיה ועוף:

When a woman seeds – Rabi Simlai said, 'Just like the formation of Odom occurred after that of the animals and the fowl at Creation, so are his laws explained after the laws of animals and fowl.

What is the underlying intent of Rashi when he quotes Rabi Simlai? Is he intending to reinforce that which we learned in Masseches Sanhedrin? Is the fact that the Torah writes the laws of *tum'a* and *tahara* of man after writing those laws in regard to the animal kingdom a sign of the lowliness of man?

On the other hand, we know that there are other explanations as to why man was created at the very end of Creation, explanations that emphasize the uniqueness of man over the Divine creations.

We read in the above Gemara:

תנו רבנן: אדם נברא בערב שבת, ומפני מה...דבר אחר: כדי שיכנס למצוה מיד. דבר אחר: כדי שיכנס לסעודה מיד.

The Rabbanim learned in a *Braisa*: Odom HoRishon was created on Erev Shabbos. Why? ...Another reason is so that he should immediately enter into a Mitzvah. Another reason: that he should come immediately to a banquet.

That is, the creation of Man was on Erev Shabbos, the final day of Creation, so that he should have an immediate reward.

What was that reward? The reward had two elements: one that was spiritual and one that was physical.

The spiritual reward was to enter this world and to immediately have the opportunity to observe Shabbos.

This is in consonance the verse in Parshas B'reishis and the Midrash Sifrei (Parshas Eikev 41).

We read in Parshas B'reishis (Perek 2/Posuk 15):

וַיִּקַּח ה' אֶת־לֹקִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחָהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ:

Hashem E...lokim took Odom and He placed him in Gan Eden to work it and to guard it.

The Midrash writes:

לעבדה זה תלמוד ולשמרה אלו מצות

'To work it' refers to learning and 'to guard it' refers to Mitzvos.

Thus, the reason that Odom was entering Gan Eden was to observe G-d's Mitzvos and thus Shabbos was given to him upon his entry into the Gan¹.

In addition, Odom HoRishon was created on the final day of Creation so that the entire world would be prepared for him in advance. And that preparation was in order to welcome Odom into the world with a lavish feast from which he could enjoy all of G-d's creations².

¹ This explanation seems to be in conflict with that which the Torah wrote that Odom was given another Mitzvah that is written explicitly in the Torah. We read the verses that follow (16-17) in that section regarding Gan Eden:

וַיֵּצֵא ה' אֱלֹהִים עַל הָאָדָם לְאֹמֶר מְכַל עֵץ הַגָּן אֲכַל תֹּאכַל: וּמֵעֵץ הַדְּעִת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בַיּוֹם אֲכַלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת:

Hashem G-d commanded Odom saying, 'From all of the trees of the *Gan* you may surely eat. And from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad, do not eat from it because on the day that you will eat from it you will surely die.'

Thus, Odom was already granted a Mitzvah to fulfill. The Mitzvah of Shabbos was not the first commandment that was placed before him and thus Odom could have fulfilled לעבודה ולשומרה without the Mitzvah of Shabbos. How is this to be understood?

In the Sefer *Daf al Daf* to the Gemara in Sanhedrin there we read an explanation of the *Be'er Moshe*, the previous Admor m'Ozorov, who cites the students of the *Ari HaKodosh*. They said in the name of the Ari HaKodosh that if Odom HoRishon would have waited until Shabbos began, that is had he observed Shabbos Kodesh, then he would have been allowed to eat from the עץ הדעת טוב ורע.

That is, Shabbos was given to Odom HoRishon as an additional/alternative Mitzvah and with its fulfillment, the need to fulfill the prohibition of eating from that fruit would have been voided!

² Odom Horishon was not allowed to eat meat. Permission to eat meat was given to Noah, but before that time it was forbidden.

Rashi writes (B'reishis Perek 1/Posuk 29):

לֹא הִרְשָׁה לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ לְהַמִּית בְּרִיָּה וּלְאֲכֹל בֶּשֶׂר... וּכְשָׁבָאוּ בְּנֵי נֹחַ הִתִּיר לָהֶם בֶּשֶׂר, שְׁנֵאמַר (להלן ט/ג) כֹּל רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר חַי וְגו' כִּירֶק עֵשֶׂב שֶׁהִתְרַתִּי לְאָדָם הָרֶשֶׁת׃ נִתְּנִי לָכֶם אֶת כֹּל:

Hashem did not allow Odom and his wife to kill an animal and to eat its flesh.

When Noah came, He permitted meat for them as it is written in Parshas Noah (Perek 9/Posuk 3).

And this was the welcome, reflecting his spiritual and physical aspects, which greeted Odom at his creation³.

Animals were created on the Sixth Day, but before Odom. Thus, it is true that that the creation of Man was delayed to the Sixth Day for him to partake of all of the good that G-d created. But, based on the above, he could have been created prior to the animals and not afterwards as did occur because in any case he could not eat their meat.

However there is a question based on Rashi's expression that 'Hashem did not allow Odom and his wife to kill an animal and to eat its flesh'. What if the animal died and wasn't killed? Would Odom been have allowed to eat the meat?

See Gur Aryeh here for his explication of Rashi.

See also Tosfos to Masseches Sanhedrin (56 b d.h. *ochal*) who writes that Odom was allowed to eat meat – as long as he didn't kill the animal.

That explanation, to which Rashi may also agree, will justify the creation of Odom after animals as well as other creatures.

³ This explanation also explicates Rashi regarding the verse:

וַיִּקַּח ה' אֶת־לֹקִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיְנַחֲהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ:

Hashem E...lokim took Odom and He placed him in Gan Eden to work it and to guard it.

Rashi writes there:

ויקח - לקחו בדברים נאים ופתהו ליכנס:

He took – Hashem 'took' Odom with nice words and persuaded him to enter.

[This explanation is similar to Rashi' commentary on B'midbar Perek 16/Posuk 1. We read there:

וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן־יִצְחָר בֶּן־קֵהָת בֶּן־לֵוִי וְאֶבְיָרָם בֶּן־אֵלִיָּאֵב וְאֹן בֶּן־פִּלֵּת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן:

Korach the son of Yitzhor the son of Kehos the son of Levi took, with Doston and Avirom the sons of Eliav and with *On* the son of Peles from the tribe of Reuven.

Rashi writes:

ויקח קרח משך ראשי סנהדראות שבהם בדברים, כמו שנאמר (במדבר כ"ה) קח את אהרן, (הושע יד/ג) קחו עמכם דברים:

Surely this welcome was not indicative of anything other than that Man was a welcome and honored guest in the Garden of Eden. Man's needs would be served completely. Every facet of Man's needs would be met in this wonderful abode.

And thus, as we approach the famous words of Rabi Simlai we find ourselves having two possible views of his intention.

One view sees man as lowly; the other views man as the epitome of Creation.

And, there is no reason to assume that Rabi Simlai wanted us to have anything other than those two possible views because both of those views are true since they represent the potential of Odom HoRishon at the moment of his creation.

Although he was certainly not the first, the Mashgiach Rav Shlomo Volbe ZT"l emphasizes at the very beginning (page 22) of Aley Shur (II) the potential of man.

He tells us of Rashi's words at the beginning when the Novi is addressed as בן אדם.

In his first explanation⁴, Rashi writes:

ויאמר אלי בן אדם וגו' - בן אדם קורא ליחזקאל מתוך שראה המרכבה הולך בין בני עלייה ומשתמש בה כמלאכים לומר אין כאן ילוד אשה אלא זה:

Hashem said to me, 'Son of Man' – He calls Yechezkel 'ben Odom' since Yechezkel saw the Maaseh HaMerkava while he was going among those

Korach took – He 'pulled' the heads of the courts that were among them with words as it says 'Take Aharon' and 'Take words with yourselves'.]

How did Hashem persuade Odom to enter into Gan Eden? Hashem told him that all of his needs would be met, spiritual and physical.

⁴ In his second explanation, the one that Rashi says that he prefers, his commentary is more or less the opposite of the first. It is very similar to the Gemara that says that if man becomes conceited, he is reminded that the mosquito came first.

higher beings who served it like and used it as did the heavenly angels. [This form of address] meant to say, 'This is *the* true nature of Man⁵'.

And yet, at the very beginning of creation, Man, whose stature encompassed all of created existence⁶, sinned almost immediately and was banished from the site reserved for where he should have lived forever.

That is, man has two potentials. And it is his *bechira chofshis*, his free-will, by which *he* determines what he will be.

Rambam writes in Hilchos Teshuva (Perek 5/Halachos 1-3):

רשות לכל אדם נתונה אם רצה להטות עצמו לדרך טובה ולהיות צדיק הרשות בידו, ואם רצה להטות עצמו לדרך רעה ולהיות רשע הרשות בידו... הוא מעצמו בדעתו ובמחשבתו יודע הטוב והרע ועושה כל מה שהוא חפץ ואין מי שיעכב בידו...

Permission is given to every person – if he wishes to turn himself to a good path and be a Tzaddik, he has permission. If he wishes to turn himself to a bad path, and to be a wicked person, permission is given.

⁵ Rashi does not use the term *Odom* from which the term ילוד אשה, one who is born of woman.

The implication of that phrase is that 'man' is a lowly creature, replete with physicality and far from spirituality.

Such a term was used by the angels when they challenged the giving of the Torah to Israel through Moshe Rabbenu, as we read in Masseches Shabbos (88 b):

ואמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: בשעה שעלה משה למרום אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבונו של עולם, מה לילוד אשה בינינו?

Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi said, 'When Moshe went on high, the angels said before G-d, 'Master of the Universe, what is this one born of woman doing among us?'

By using the term ילוד אשה here, Rashi is emphasizing the heights to which physical man can ascend.

⁶ We read in Masseches Sanhedrin (38 b):

"מסוף העולם ועד סופו, מן הארץ עד לרקיע"

Odom HoRishon encompassed from one end of the world to the other; from the earth to the heavens.

The person himself, with his knowledge and his thought knows good and bad and does all that he wishes and there is no one who prevents him.

אל יעבור במחשבתך... שהקדוש ברוך הוא גוזר על האדם מתחלת ברייתו להיות צדיק או רשע, אין הדבר כן אלא כל אדם ראוי לו להיות צדיק כמשה רבינו או רשע כירבעם... אין הבורא גוזר על האדם להיות טוב ולא להיות רע, וכיון שכן הוא נמצא זה החוטא הוא הפסיד את עצמו...

You should not think that Hashem decrees upon man from the beginning of his creation that he will be a Tzaddik or a wicked person. That is not so. Rather, every person has the potential to be a righteous person like Moshe Rabbenu or an evil person like Yerov'om [ben Novot].

The Creator does not decree upon man to be good and not to be bad. Since that is what it is, the sinner causes the loss to himself.

ודבר זה עיקר גדול הוא והוא עמוד התורה והמצוה שנאמר ראה נתתי לפניך היום את החיים, וכתוב ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום, כלומר שהרשות בידכם וכל שיחפוץ האדם לעשות ממעשה בני האדם עושה בין טובים בין רעים...

This matter is a great principle and a pillar of Torah and Mitzvah as it says, "See I have placed before you today 'life'." And it says, "See, I give before you today". That means that permission is in your hand and all that man wishes to do that is humanly possible, he can do – whether good or bad.

Torah rejects determinism and fatalism. Man can chart his own path!

Perhaps the reader will sincerely say, 'Easier said than done'. It would be hard to argue with such a statement.

So, if we reject the idea of an 'easy fix', is there some way that we are able to plot a path that leads towards the solution that will enable us to read Rabi Simlai's explanation as a boost for mankind?

Perhaps there is somewhat of a roadmap that we can find with the conjunction of the two readings of this Shabbos: Parshas Tazria and Parshas HaChodesh, and some of the themes that they present.

Parshas Tazria deals primarily with the laws of purity and impurity and thus it seems that the Mitzvah of Bris Milah which is written very early on in the Parsha is not an easy fit.

The Torah writes (ibid. Posuk 3), following the verse that we cited above:

וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו:

On the eighth day, he shall be circumcised.

It is true that Chazal do have a *drasha* that connects the time of *Bris Milah* and the impurity that comes with childbirth⁷, but in the flow of the Parsha this Mitzvah seems out of place.

On the other hand, the laws of *Korban Pesach* are part and parcel of the reading of Parshas HaChodesh. Together with the Halachos of *chometz*, Matzah and the Yom Tov itself, this is certainly the time to read about *Korban Pesach* as the Yom Tov approaches in two weeks' time.

In that section, we read (Sh'mos Perek 12/P'sukim 3, 6):

דברו אל כל עדת ישראל לאמר בעשר לחדש הזה ויקחו להם איש שֶׁה לְבַית אִבְתּוֹ
שֶׁה לְבַיתוֹ:

⁷ The Nineteenth Perek of Masseches Shabbos deals with the Halachos of Bris Milah. There are two drashos there that are relevant to our discussion.

The first is drasha (132 a) reads:

וביום השמיני ימול - ביום ואפילו בשבת:

On the eighth day you shall circumcise – on that day – even if it is Shabbos.

That is, even though Bris Milah requires actions that in other circumstances would be Torah-level Shabbos violations, *Bris Milah* is allowed to be performed on Shabbos.

However, the next *drasha* that we will see limits the situations in which the Bris may be performed on Shabbos. The Gemara writes (135 a):

וביום השמיני ימול - אמר רבה אמר רבי יוסי, כל שאמו טמאה לידה נמול לשמונה, וכל שאין אמו טמאה לידה אין נמול לשמונה, שנאמר וטמאה שבעת ימים וביום השמיני ימול:

On the eighth day he shall be circumcised – Rabbah said in the name of Rabi Yose – a baby whose mother becomes impure when giving birth has his *Bris* on the eighth day [even when it is on Shabbos]. One whose mother does not become impure when giving birth does not have his *Bris* on the eighth day [if it occurs on Shabbos].

A woman who gives birth by Caesarean section, and has no bleeding through the birth canal, does not contract the impurity of childbirth.

וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת עַד אַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וְשָׁחֲטוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל קְהַל עַדְתֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים:

Speak to all of the congregation of Israel saying, 'On the tenth of this month⁸ they should take for them, each person a sheep for the household of the father, a sheep for each house.

It should be guarded until the fourteenth of this month and they shall slaughter it – all the assembly of the congregation of Israel in the afternoon hours.

Now, the Korban Pesach is an annual obligation. However, its preparation and its 'guarding' from the tenth of the month was a law that applied to *Pesach Mitrayim* only, not to *Pesach L'Doros*⁹.

Rashi there (Posuk 6) brings the Midrash explaining why the Korban Pesach of Egypt had to be taken on the tenth of Nissan. He writes:

ומפני מה הקדים לקיחתו לשחיטתו ארבעה ימים מה שלא צוה כן בפסח דורות, היה רבי מתיא בן חרש אומר הרי הוא אומר (יחזקאל טז/ח¹⁰) ואעבור עליך ואראך והנה

⁸ Earlier (ibid. Posuk 2), the Torah had indicated that this was the first month, i.e. Nissan.

⁹ We read in the Ninth Perek of Masseches Pesachim (Mishnah 5):

מה בין פסח מצרים לפסח דורות פסח מצרים מקחו מבעשור וטעון הזאה באגודת אזוב על המשקוף ועל שתי מזוזות ונאכל בחפזון בלילה אחד ופסח דורות נוהג כל שבעה:

What is the difference between the Halachos of the offering of the Korban Pesach in Egypt [at the time of the Exodus] and the Korban Pesach that is commanded throughout the generations?

The Korban Pesach in Egypt was taken on the tenth of Nissan. It required sprinkling with the hyssop on the lintel and the two doorposts. It was eaten in haste. The holiday of Pesach was observed for only one day and the holiday of Pesach throughout the generations is observed for seven days.

¹⁰ The entire verse reads:

וְאָעֲבֹר עֲלֶיךָ וְאֶרְאֶךָ וְהִנֵּה עֵת דְּדִידִים וְאֶפְרֹשׁ כַּנְפֵי עֲלֶיךָ וְאֶכְסֶה עֲרוֹתֶךָ וְאֶשְׁבַּע לְךָ וְאָבֹא בְּבְרִית אִתְּךָ נָא אֲנִי ה' וְתָהִי לִי:

'I Hashem passed over you and I saw you and behold it was a time of love and I spread My wing over you and I covered your nakedness and I swore to you and I entered into a covenant with you', said, Hashem E...lo'kim 'and you became Mine.'

עתך עת דודים, הגיעה שבועה שנשבעתי לאברהם שאגאל את בניו ולא היו בידם מצות להתעסק בהם כדי שיגאלו, שנאמר (שם ז¹¹) ואת ערום ועריה, ונתן להם שתי מצות דם פסח ודם מילה, שמלו באותו הלילה, שנאמר (שם י²) מתבוססת בדמיר, בשני דמים, ואומר (זכריה ט/יא). גם את בדם בריתך שלחתי אסיריך מבור אין מים בו, ולפי שהיו שטופים בעבודה זרה אמר להם (שמות יב/כא¹³) משכו וקחו לכם, משכו ידיכם מעבודה זרה וקחו לכם צאן של מצוה:

Why did the Torah precede the taking of the Korbon Pesach four days¹⁴ prior to its slaughtering – a commandment that was not given for *Pesach L’Doros*? Rabi Masia ben Chorosh would say, ‘It says in the Novi Yechezkel, “I Hashem passed over you and I saw you and behold it was a time of love”. That means that Hashem said that ‘the time has come [to fulfill] the oath that I made to Avraham that I will redeem his sons. But they did not have Mitzvos with each to involve themselves so that I can redeem them, as it says, ‘You, Israel were unclothed and uncovered”.

G-d gave them two Mitzvos – the blood of the Korban Pesach and the blood of *Bris Milah* – they circumcised on that night. This is as it says, “You were rolling in your bloods”. That means ‘two bloods’. And it says, “Also with the

¹¹ The entire verse reads:

רַבְּבָה כְּצֶמַח הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְתִּירָךְ וַתִּרְבִּי וַתִּגְדְּלִי וַתִּבְאִי בְעַדִּי עַדִּיִּים שָׂדִים נִכְנֹו וַיִּשְׁעֶרְךָ צֶמַח וְאֵת עֶרְוֹ וְעֶרְיָה:

I made you increase like the plants of the field; you increased, you grew and you entered with ornaments; your breasts were ready and your hair grew and you were unclothed and uncovered.

¹² The entire verse reads:

וַאֲעֵבֶר עֲלֶיךָ וְאָרַךְ מִתְּבוֹסֶסֶת בְּדַמֶּיךָ וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי:

I passed over you and I saw You rolling in your bloods and I Hashem said to you, ‘With your blood you shall live; and I Hashem said to you, with your blood you shall live’.

¹³ The entire verse reads:

וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְכָל זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם מִשְׁכוּ וּקְחוּ לָכֶם צֹאן לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתֵיכֶם וְשַׁחֲטוּ הַפֶּסַח:

Moshe called to all of the elders of Israel and he said to them, ‘draw away and take for yourselves sheep for your families and slaughter the Pesach offering.

¹⁴ Although the Yom Tov of Pesach is on the fifteenth of Nissan, the Korban Pesach is slaughtered on its eve, the fourteenth of Nissan.

blood of your covenant I sent forth your prisoners from the dungeon that had no water.”

Since Israel in Egypt was immersed in idolatry Hashem said to them, “draw yourselves away and take for yourself” – that meant – withdraw your hands from idolatry and take for yourselves a sheep for the Mitzvah.

Undoubtedly, the Mitzvos of that first Pesach and the reasoning were as Rabi Masia ben Chorosh teaches.

The time had come for the redemption and Israel was ready, as the Novi describes them in his *moshol* regarding the young girl coming of age.

But the physical readiness was insufficient without the spiritual preparedness and thus Israel was given two Mitzvos.

What can we learn from the two Mitzvos that were given to allow Israel the physical and spiritual preparedness to be redeemed?

Both of those Mitzvos revolved around blood and the message is certainly one of fulfilling commandments that require hardship and sacrifice.

But, when we examine the two Mitzvos themselves and the hardship and sacrifice that they demanded, we can see that their parallel stops with the blood; in other ways they are not similar whatsoever.

Bris Milah was a matter of physical suffering. The blood that was let at circumcision was to remove a part of the body that was physically inappropriate for the individual who would be ready for redemption. When Hashem said that he saw the young girl of the *moshol* as physically ready - that was referring to the body that was already perfected by removing that which was inappropriate.

Bris Milah is a physical *avoda*. Its blood is real but it also relates to other physical sacrifices that a person must do to prepare oneself for Redemption.

The blood of the Korban Pesach is different. The one who brings that offering has no physical pain. However, the purpose of the Korban Pesach was not one of physical preparation that required sacrifice. It was one of spiritual preparation that, as well, could not be done without effort and determination.

The pull of idolatry was most powerful. Our ancestors had to withdraw from its power and only then could they offer the Korban Pesach.

That withdrawal was no different, and perhaps even harsher, than the withdrawal of the addict from the addiction that has overtaken his life. That withdrawal required summoning up the most powerful *kochos hanefesh*, spiritual strengths, that a person had to close the door with finality upon the overwhelming attraction of *Avoda Zarah*.

Man is physical and spiritual and thus to be readied for redemption both of those aspects must be primed.

And what does that say to us as we revisit Rabi Simlai? In fact, the choice is ours because *we* are able to turn Rabi Simlai's commentary into a positive vein or let it become negative. Such is within our power.

We are able to determine for ourselves as individuals if we are able to be the epitome of Creation, the fulfillment of the Will of G-d or a disappointment because even the lowliest of creatures is superior to us.

And, that which is true of each of us as an individual is also true regarding all of us,

כָּל עֵדֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל

All of the congregation of Israel.

So, how do we bring ourselves, individually, closer to Redemption, as well as all of Israel at the same time?

The paths to redemption of our forefathers in Egypt can be our guideposts.

We must demonstrate our readiness for Redemption in the two aspects of our existence, physical and spiritual.

What type of physical effort can we make to show that we are ready for redemption within our bodies? We can only suggest some ideas because the proper response for each and every one of us will differ.

Let us say that a healthy person has trouble getting up in the morning. Davening is rushed or it is late, or both. There is a physical effort involved in letting the clock sound its alarm for:

קומו לעבודת הבורא

Arise to serve the Creator.

Or, perhaps, our hunger drives us to cheat on waiting the six hours (or whatever our *minhag* might be) between meat and dairy and we have to overcome that physical need.

If it requires effort and we put in that effort then we have done an act to demonstrate our physical readiness. And whatever the area is, if it requires effort then it should be our focus.

When it comes to spiritual readiness, all of us know that we each have areas that require improvement, areas that inertia leads us to leave things the way they are. By making the effort, each one of us in at least one of the areas where it is called for, then we proclaim before HaKodosh Boruch Hu that we are emulating our ancestors in Egypt who awaited the Exodus.

We emulate their posture and readiness as they ate their *Korban Pesach* following the acts of Bris Milah that they performed.

How did they show their readiness? That is what the Torah writes in this week's Parshas HaChodesh (Posuk 11):

וְכָכָה תֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ מִתְנַיִם חֲגָרִים נְעָלֵיכֶם בְּרַגְלֵיכֶם וּמַקְלָכֶם בְּיָדְכֶם וְאָכַלְתֶּם אֹתוֹ
בְּחֶפְזוֹן פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה':

This is how you should eat it: Your loins should be girded, your shoes upon your feet and your staff in your hands; you shall eat it with haste; it is a Pesach for Hashem.

Your loins are girded – in your inside, your spiritual self, you are prepared.

Your shoes are upon your feet – You are physically ready for the journey towards Redemption.

Your staff is in your hand – you will take the necessary measures and aids and support required so that you can embark upon the journey.

You shall eat it with haste – because you are truly and sincerely awaiting Divine Redemption.

It is a *Pesach* for Hashem – your actions are dedicated to the Ribbono Shel Olom.
It is He Whom you wish to serve.

May this Shabbos that combines Parshas Tazria and Shabbos HaChodesh reinvigorate us as we seek to once again make the month of Nissan, this Nissan 5779, a month of Redemption.

Shabbat Shalom

Chodesh Tov

Chag Kosher V'sameach

Rabbi Pollock