

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

The promise of redemption: Can we hear it?

Translation by Yehoshua Siskin

- This week's Torah portion, the second in the book of Sh'mot, is Va'eira. It begins with marvelous promises regarding the nation of Israel's future:

“And I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God. And you shall know that I, the Lord, am your God who freed you from the labors of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession, I am the Lord.”

- But when Moshe delivers this uplifting promise of redemption, the people do not listen.

“Moshe related God's message to the Israelites, but they did not listen to Moshe due to their spiritual anguish and harsh labor.”

The people were so overwhelmed by their daily drudgery and sunk into such despair that they simply did not hear that their enslavement was about to end. Our commentators explain that we too, today, can miss out on what is truly important and attainable because we are simply too

busy to notice it.

- The haftara that is read in the synagogue following the Torah portion is from the prophet Yechezkel. While in Babylonian exile, after prophesying the demise of Egypt, he provides consolation with another promise of redemption:

“On that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to put out shoots, and I will open thy mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am God.”

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