



## **Parshat Behar: Worthy or Not, We Are Ready for Redemption**

Rabbi Dr. Katriel (Kenneth) Brander  
*President and Rosh HaYeshiva, Ohr Torah Stone*  
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Ever since October 7th, we have all been on the lookout for heroes. In the face of tragedy and villainy, we seek out those who can inspire us to carry on, to see the best in humanity, in ourselves that enables us to move towards redemption.

The brave soldiers and civilians who fought with every breath to save innocents during the attack. The thousands of Israelis serving on the frontlines, along with Jews from around the world who have put themselves in harm's way to show support for our homeland. Those on the home front who dropped everything to identify bodies, house the displaced, embrace the families of the hostages and the reservists, tend the fields, attend the funerals, care for the wounded, and so much more.

Each person who has done their part has left a mark on all of us, strengthening us and encouraging us that a better tomorrow will follow these dark days.

Rav Chaim Attar, the Or ha-Hayyim, in his commentary on this week's parsha, unearths a reference to the righteous people who hasten the redemption. The Torah ([Vayikra 25:25-28](#)) describes a situation in which a landowner falls on hard times, and is forced to sell off his inherited portion of land.

Under these circumstances, a relative is charged to be a 'redeemer' – to purchase the field in order to keep the land within the family. But if no redeeming relative is available or wishes to act in that role, then the land may indeed be sold to another person – but only until the Jubilee year, at which point it is returned to the original owner.

For R. Chaim Attar, this passage is not merely a directive for those who face financial difficulty; rather, it is to be read metaphorically, offering "a great insight for the dwellers of the earth." The portion of real estate is, in the metaphor, the land of Israel centered in Jerusalem, and the financially disadvantaged Jew is, in fact, the spiritually impoverished Jewish people, who are subjected to exile and loss of their freedom and sacred land.

In such a moment, it is the responsibility of the 'redeemers' – namely, the righteous of each generation who are themselves 'relatives' of God – to bring about redemption through their leadership and actions that impact the lives of our nation.



Moreover, says R. Chaim Attar, even if no redeemer from the righteous rises up, the very suffering of the Jewish people shall be seen by God, and eventually the Jubilee, the end date for the exile, will arrive, even without the Jewish people having accrued sufficient merit.

There are thus two pathways to ultimate redemption: the opportunity seized by the righteous to redeem the people, and the eventual deadline to end our suffering.

As we look around us, we can say with certainty that the time for redemption has come. Countless righteous people, of every age, stripe, and religious affiliation, have accrued for our people unimaginable merit through their unending care for the welfare of their brethren. **It is important to remember that righteous people are not defined only as those who formally observe the 613 commandments. It is those who are willing to put their personal wants to the side and focus on the welfare /redemption of the people.**

Last week, I heard Avidan Beit Yaakov speak on Channel 12 prior to the burial of his son Roi, who fell in a friendly-fire incident in Gaza. Avidan stated “the soldiers in the tank [who fired on the building where his son was located] are *tzadikim* – righteous people. This happens in war, and I have no anger towards them ... I hug them and their commanders need to hug them; after the war is over and they have finished their mission – not before – they are invited to come to our home for us to give them hugs with no questions asked.”

Our suffering in these past few months, when taken along with all the suffering of our people in its millennia of exile, should certainly be enough by now as well. Whatever the pathway, whether God considers us worthy or not, we are ready for ultimate redemption, to embrace “the day after,” when our people will be united and our wounds will be healed. This cannot come fast enough. In the meantime, we will continue to look for, and strive to be, heroes.