

Parsha Pearls

Shoftim 5767

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the announcer, who proclaims peace, announces good, proclaims redemption, who says to Zion, your G-d has reigned. The watchers have raised their voices, and sing together, for they will see eye to eye when Hashem returns to Zion." (Yishaya 52:7-8)

The Chasam Sofer (1763-1839) explained that the future redemption will not be similar to past redemptions. In the past, it was not clearly sensed by all that Hashem dwelt among us. The Jews heard it from the prophets and sages who felt it with their holy inspiration, and believed them; they also saw many miracles that testified that the Divine Presence was with them. But it was not openly seen with the eyes. But in the future redemption, we will be able to point with our fingers and say, "Behold, this is our G-d!" as the Gemora says at the end of the tractate Taanis.

Perhaps, wrote the Chasam Sofer, the Jewish people have already deserved many times to be redeemed through an incomplete redemption, or that peace should be made between us and the nations among whom we live, or – better yet – there could have been a real redemption as in the time of the Second Temple and the like, but that is not desirable. Even if we ourselves would settle for such a redemption – just to be redeemed – our holy forefathers would not consent now to anything less than a complete redemption. It is better for Jewry to suffer for the duration of the exile in order to ultimately experience a redemption that is complete in every way.

Thus the verse: **"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the announcer"** – should really be translated: What good are the feet of the announcer for the mountains, i.e. our forefathers? Our forefathers do not want a redemption that has to be announced. They are waiting for a redemption that will be clear to all and will need no explanations: "Like a banner raised on mountains you will see, and like the blowing of the horn you will hear." (Yishaya 18:3) The verse continues: **"...who proclaims peace"** – even if the announcer proclaims peace between the Jews and the gentiles – **"announces good, proclaims redemption"** – or even if he announces a higher level, an actual redemption from exile like that of the Second Temple, that is only **"who says to Zion, your G-d has reigned"** – and Zion will have to believe the announcer, but she will not recognize on her own that it is so. So what good is this kind of redemption to them? But the real redemption will be when **"the watchers have raised their voices"** – that they themselves will watch it - **"for they will see eye to eye when Hashem returns to Zion."** (Toras Moshe, Shoftim)