

[Kohelet Discussion](#)

Parshah Pesah II

4/23/2022 by Jeff (Yefim) Zhuk

Today we celebrate the last day of Passover. We remind ourselves the details of Jewish journey to freedom.

We talked last time that not all Jewish people were ready. Not all were ready for the action required to become free.

Not all were convinced by G-d's miracles. Some Jewish folks preferred to continue life as it was in Egypt. But freedom is not a state but an action.

Jewish journey to freedom was far from easy.

When the Jews came to a sea, they looked back and saw quickly approaching Egyptian army.

Jews split into several groups. Most did not believe they could survive. Some wanted back to Egypt.

Finally, the prince of Juda tribe, Nachson, jumped into the sea and the other followed.

At this moment G-d reminded Moses to stretch out his hand to the sea. And G-d sent a strong wind to split the sea, and Jewish people crossed the sea over the dry land.

When Egyptians stepped into the sea, a lot of them ended up drowning.

Midrash tells us that their bodies were left on the seashore, so the Jews could see them. This gave the Jews the feeling of safety. Also, G-d reminded us that every human being is valued, even the enemy.

At this point the Jews turned to G-d and stated that they believed in Him and His servant Moses.

Since then, at tough times the Jewish people were tested by G-d and not all passed the test.

For centuries the Jews were suppressed.

Just recently we were able to lift our Jewish heads. U.S. was one of the first countries that declared freedom of religion and specifically acknowledged Jews not as people to tolerate, but as people of equal rights.

Today, we can see the Jews as world leaders in art and sciences, sometimes as public servants.

Today the Jewish president of Ukraine is asking Germany for help against the Russian Pharaoh. And German people complain about their counselor, Sholtz, not because he wants to help, but because his help is too small.

Ukraine commanders compare Ukraine with Israel, saying that like Israel Ukraine must not expect much help and rely on its own resources.

This reminds me the Yom Kippur war in Israel, when Golda Meir for several days called Kissinger almost every hour pleading for arms.

I know Ukraine very well, had relatives in Kiev and Zaporizhzhia. When our son, Ben, was three years old we spent summer in Mariupol. We visited Asovstal, a huge factory, where several hundred people are still hiding and fighting surrounded by Russian army. It is hard for me to listen about bombs and artillery attacks on Mariupol and other cities, so familiar to me.

(Hard to listen to announcements about help to Ukraine, when Europe pays one billion euro per day to Russia and the U.S. pays several hundred million dollars every day for Russian oil and gas.)

Today is Yizkor, the day of memory of those who are no longer with us. Besides my close relatives I also think of Ukrainians who pay very high price for their freedom. I think of my nephew, a doctor from Israel, who went to Poland a month ago to lead the group of Israeli doctors helping Ukrainian refugees.

I think of my personal responsibility. Can I do more beyond money contribution? But this is my personal matter.

For us I have a question about Exodus. How this symbol of freedom is projected to our lives, how this is passed over generations, becoming more clouded and further over time, or becoming brighter and closer?

How it is viewed by our children and will be viewed by our grandchildren?