**7. Redemption**

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| See our affliction, and fight our fight.  And redeem us quickly for your name.  For you are a mighty redeemer.  Blessed are you, Adonai, who redeems Israel. | רְאֵה בְעָנְיֵנוּ. וְרִיבָה רִיבֵנוּ.  וּגְאָלֵנוּ מְהֵרָה לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ.  כִּי גּואֵל חָזָק אָתָּה.  בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', גּואֵל יִשרָאֵל: |

This berakhah shifts the theme from the three personal berakhot (intelligence, repentance and forgiveness) to a more national theme—the redemption of Israel.

Remember, the Amidah was written after the Second Temple was destroyed, at a time when Israel did not rule over itself in its own land. Today, Jews have returned to the land of Israel and created there an independent Jewish state. One siddur in Israel has even changed the second line to reads, "And quickly redeem us with a **complete redemption**." The person who made this change wanted to show that through the State of Israel, the Jews have begun to be redeemed.

* What does redemption mean? What are we asking to be redeemed from?
* How do we make sense of this prayer in a time when most Jews in most places are not oppressed?

**Geulah (Redemption) in Jewish Literature**

The word גואל, to redeem, appears in many different places in the Tanakh. Think about how it is used differently in the following verses. What kind of redemption do you hope for?

**Genesis 48:16 (Jacob is speaking, right before he dies)**

The Angel who has redeemed (הַגֹּאֵל) me from all harm — May he bless the boys. In them may my name be recalled, and the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, and may they become many upon the face of the earth.

* What does a redeemer do in this verse? What is Jacob asking him for?

**Exodus 6:6 (God is speaking to Moses)**

Say, therefore, to the Israelite people: I am the Lord. I will take you from the hard, exhausting work of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you (וְגָאַלְתִּי) with an outstretched arm and through great judgments.

* What does it mean to redeem in this verse? How is this connected to the redemption in the Amidah prayer?

**Leviticus 25:47-48 (According to this law, if a Jew is sold into slavery to pay off a debt, he can be redeemed by one of his family members)**

If a foreigner who lives among you prospers, and one of your family member grows poor and is sold to the foreigner living with you, or to one of his family members. After he is sold he has the right of redemption (גְּאֻלָּה). One of his family members shall redeem him.

* What kind of redemption is described in this verse? How does it compare to the redemption in the other verses?