

Jewish Latin Princess Episode 51: Shlepping Mirrors and Tambourines: a Feminine Perspective on Redemption

Welcome to Jewish Latin Princess everyone! I’m Yael Trusch your host. This is the final countdown to Passover. Are you ready? I wish I could say I was ready but this year I’m more behind than ever I think. As you may know I was speaking at Houston’s JCC last night. In addition, my youngest son turned 6 this past Shabbat so mazal tov to him. Maybe I was this behind 6 years ago when he was born and possibly in 7 years - with a Bar Mitzvah only a few days before Pesach. I’m not sure. But anyways, here we are. Last night was a lot of fun and now I’m really tackling Passover, as I’m sure you all are. So I want to leave you with some words of inspiration as you finish preparing your kitchens and everything else, getting it all ready for the big day. This is something I wrote initially for the Jewish Herald Voice Passover Magazine a few years ago and those of you who listen to the episodes in Spanish, you will have also caught it in Spanish last week.

Oh and I wanted to let you know that past JLP Podcast guest, Rebekah Saltzman founder of Balagan Be Gone - she was on Episode 27 - is launching an online course that looks fabulous for all of us who suddenly realized, ok it’s time for me to take control of my clutter, because my clutter is controlling me!? Enter Control Your Clutter - a ten week challenge that will leave you clutter free and so much more. Go check it out at rebekah-saltzman.com and just for Jewish Latin Princess readers and listeners, Rebekah is offering \$100 off your course subscription when you use the code JLP100 at checkout. In addition Rebekah is so passionate about her program and the 10 week challenges that she is giving participants \$30 for every challenge they complete. That’s right, if you do this course, you will end up getting \$300 back. I think that’s a great way to incentivize all of all to finally get this clutter under control. So check it out ladies, at Rebekah-Saltzman.com and use the code JLP100 at checkout to claim your \$100 off.

And here we go, Shleppng Mirrors and Tambourines, a Feminine Perspective on Redemption, by yours truly. Enjoy!

Shlepping is not only a Jewish thing. It’s a feminine Jewish thing. The Mishna says, “In every generation a person must see himself as though he

has come out from Egypt.” (Mishnah, Pesachim 10:5) The Sages explain that this is a personal directive - we must believe that we, individually, were once Redeemed. In fact, the belief in Redemption is such a fundamental element of Judaism that it is one of Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles of Faith. We believe in Redemption. We are called “*maaminim, b’nei maaminim*” (believers, the children of believers).

The Talmud says, “in the merit of the righteous women of the generation, our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt.” (Talmud, Sotah 11b) What did the Jewish women do that they merited this? The Midrash Tanchuma (Pikudei 9) paints an interesting picture. During the peak of our nation’s slavery in *Mitzrayim* (Egypt), *Pharaoh* decreed that the men could not go home at night, and must stay out in the field working. The women would catch fish, prepare it, and go out to feed their husbands. In addition, they would take copper mirrors, beautify themselves, and seduce their down-trodden husbands. G-d would bless them, they would conceive immediately, and give birth to multiple children at a time.

If all this wasn’t strange enough, let’s look at what happened afterwards. When the Jewish nation was ready to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle), and everyone eagerly contributed to its construction, the women brought their copper mirrors as their contribution. Yes, the copper mirrors they had *shlepped* from Egypt!

Moshe was not pleased, to say the least. Mirrors that had to do with vanity, with physical desire!? What place could they have in the Holy House of G-d!? Yet, G-d said to Moshe, “Accept them, for these [mirrors] are more precious to Me than any other gift, because through them, the women raised generations in Egypt.” (Rashi on Shemot 38:8)

Now, we can’t forget another odd occurrence that happened after we left Egypt: the dancing scene after the Splitting of the Red Sea. The entire nation praised H” with song and dance. But, the women took this celebration to the next level. They used tambourines. What!? Where did these tambourines come from!? Praising the Jewish women, the Midrash answers that Miriam and the women had prepared these tambourines back in Egypt.

Seriously, didn’t they have enough to *shlep* out (copper mirrors included)!? Didn’t they leave in haste? Mind you, they each had at least six babies to nurse and *shlep* with them. Who had time to *make and pack* tambourines!?

These mirrors and tambourines give us a powerful insight to Redemption and our lives as Jewish women well beyond our Passover Seders. The women did not merit the Redemption because they beautified themselves with mirrors, nor because they sang with tambourines. They merited the Redemption because of what these two represent: their unwavering faith. The understanding of a deeper reality, one that is not perceived with physical eyes, but rather with the soul. A reality that they acted upon, and one we might venture to call: Redemption.

Back in *Mitzrayim*, the women clearly understood that Redemption was imminent. They could see beyond the physical reality, which hinted otherwise. They did not doubt it. So much so, that they took an active part in making the Redemption real. It might have seemed dire and dark, but this did not deter the women from moving forward. An unshakable faith in a deeper reality - G-d's reality, if you will. Faith that He will deliver. To them, there was no excuse to give up; there was only reason to keep building. The women didn't believe there would be a chance to celebrate; they *knew* they would celebrate. Thus, they prepared for the celebration. No one asked them to, no one told them. They just believed. "*Maaminim, b'nei maaminim.*"

Soon we will sit at our Seders to re-tell the story of the previous Redemption, and eat matzah, the bread of faith. This entire experience is meant to help us fine tune our current perspective of reality. Matzah, free from all but the most essential ingredients, epitomizes freedom. We can all free ourselves from our limitations, our personal *Mitzrayims*, a word derived from the Hebrew word *meitzarim*, limitations. We, the spiritual descendants of the women in Egypt, can rid ourselves of whatever is holding us back from looking at the world through the perspectives of our souls.

Our souls are not limited by physical reality. Our souls can see the world from G-d's perspective. With the resolve to act upon the soul's desires, no matter what the physical reality suggests, we can repeat the pattern of the first archetypal Redemption. Then, it shall be that in the merit of the women of this generation, the Final Redemption will come. And for that, I'm ready, regardless of what I'll have to *shlep* this time.

B"H

Thank you for being here. Have a Peach Kasher v'sameach and I'll see you back here on the other side of freedom I guess! Boy, wouldn't that be great! Have a great week everyone! Happy Passover!