

Here We Go Again

Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Rav Moshe Zev Granek

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<https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/4-Parshas-Beshalach-R-Moshe-Zev-Granek-dont-live-in-mitzrayim-1.mp3>

...For that which you have seen Mitzrayim today, you shall not see them ever again.

Shmos 14:13

The Mechilta says this is a mitzvas *lo sa'aseh* not to live in Mitzrayim. This prohibition is codified by many *Rishonim*, including the Rambam (*Lo Sa'aseh* 46) and the Bahag. So how were there Jewish communities in Egypt for many years?

The Mordechai (Yevamos 68) answers based on the Yerei'im, who limits the prohibition to traveling from Eretz Yisrael to Mitzrayim. He derives this from the *pasuk* (Dvarim 17:16), "...you shall not return on this road again." The Smag (227) answers that since the Gemara says that Sancheiriv moved around all the nations prior to the destruction of the first Bais Hamikdash, and the people that enslaved Klal Yisrael is not the one living in Egypt today, the *issur* is not in effect.

The Ritva (Yoma 38a) and Rabeinu Bachyei (Dvarim 17:16) answer that the *issur* applies only when Klal Yisrael is in Eretz Yisrael, not when many still live in *galus* like today.

The Rambam (Hilchos *Melachim*) appears to maintain that the prohibition remains in effect, though he cites the Yerushalmi that one may go to Egypt temporarily. So how did the Rambam himself move there permanently? (The Kaftor Vaferach reports that the Rambam signed his letters with an acknowledgement that he violated three prohibitions every day by living in Mitzrayim.) Perhaps the Rambam came temporarily but was forced to remain to serve as the sultan's physician.