

## **OzTORAH**

### **FREE AS A SWALLOW**

One of the great affirmations of the Torah is "Proclaim liberty in the land" (Vayikra 25:10).

The Hebrew word for "liberty" is unusual - D'ROR, which sometimes means a swallow. What is there about a swallow that reminds us of liberty?

A swallow can fly where it wants. The skies are open; the swallow is free.

In the Talmud, Rabbi Yehuda explains that the root of D'ROR is DUR, which means to dwell (Rosh HaShana 9b). Freedom is where a person can dwell wherever he chooses and trade in any locality he wants.

This cannot mean that anyone can ignore and override the democratically formulated local ordinances, but it shows that no-one has the right to enslave you and compel you to go where you don't want to or do things that contravene your wishes and conscience.

What about the person who is scared of making choices and decisions and prefers to be told what to think, where to go and what to do?

The Torah has no patience with people who prefer their chains, who only feel safe when Big Brother gives the orders and bosses them around.

Even if Big Brother is kind, compassionate, ethical and upright, the slave who refuses to go free, has defied God and compromised his human dignity.