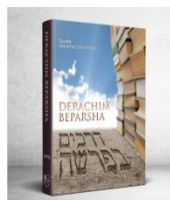


**דרכים
בשנה
שביעי ואחרון
של פסח**

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**ויאמר ה' אל משה מה תצעק
עלי דבר אל בני ישראל**

***Hashem said to Moshe,
“Why are you crying out to me?
Speak to the Bnei Yisroel and let
them journey ahead.***

In “vecharos imo habris” which we say each morning at the end of pesukai d'zimrah, the Navi Nechemia recounts the trials and tribulations of Klal Yisroel; how HaShem made a pact with His children to give them Eretz Yisroel, and how they were saved from the Mitzriyim and the Yam Suf. ותרֹא את עֲנִי אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאֵת HaShem saw the affliction of our forefathers in Mitzrayim, and our cries were

heard at the Yam Suf. (Nechemia 9:9).

In lashon hakodesh, there are many ways to say the word “cry”. Pointing out a few of the common ones, there is צַעֲקָה - tze'aka, אֲנָחָה - anacha, בְּכִיָּה - bechiya, קְרִיָּה - kriya, שׁוֹעַ - shava, and זַעֲקָה - ze'aka. Although they all mean to cry, each one carries its own meaning and specific usage. Some are outward cries, and some are inner cries of anguish that remain hidden to the onlooker.

It is interesting to note that the type of cry that the Navi Nechemia mentions, Ze'aka, וְאֵת זַעֲקָתָם שָׁמַעַתְּ - Ze'aka, is not found at all in Parshas Beshalach. We do find that Vayitzaku el HaShem, but that is tze'aka, not ze'aka.

Looking through these parshiyos, the word זַעֲקָה - ze'aka is found in Parshas Shemos (2:23). וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאנְחוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הָעֲבֹדָה וַיִּזְעֻקוּ וַתַּעַל שׁוֹעַתָם אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים. The king of Mitzrayim died, and Bnei

Yisroel groaned from the work and cried out, and their cry ascended to HaShem.

There are clear instances of tefillah in our pesukim, and still, the navi chose a word which finds itself represented in a possuk from much earlier. What are we meant to learn from this?

Another question that needs to be asked is: וַתַּעַל שׁוֹעַתָם אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים – Did the tefillos really ascend to Hashem? If Anything, matters only got worse after that. Was it not another full year until things started to get better?

Nechemia HaNavi is teaching us something incredible. The tefillos that were offered up at the very beginning had indeed ascended to Hakadosh Boruch Hu, and were already sitting by the kisei hakavod, waiting to be used. The reason why they weren't used then is because the timing was not yet right. The moment of redemption had not yet arrived. Moshe

Rabbeinu still had to become the leader of Klal Yisroel, things still needed to get worse, and the makkos needed to come down on Mitzrayim for the world to see that HaShem runs the world. But when the time came, it was the very first cries that were heard. וְתָרָא אֶת עֲנֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ בַּמִּצְרַיִם וְאֵת זַעֲקָתָם שִׁמְעַת עַל יָם סוּף *HaShem saw the affliction of our forefathers in Mitzrayim, and our cries were heard at the Yam Suf.* The original זַעֲקָה from the very beginning of their cries was heard and used at the Yam Suf. So when Hashem told Moshe מֶה תִּצְעַק עָלַי דְּבַר אֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁאֹר, the pshat is not that Hashem didn't want them to daven at that point. Rather, the tefillos that were said much, much earlier were being put to use now and there was nothing to worry about. Hence the different uses of the words זַעֲקָה and צַעֲקָה.

It happens often that one can offer what seems to be a most perfect tefillah with all the proper

kavanos, and feel as if, yes, that tefillah is the one that will make its way up to Hashem. And yet, it just does not seem to happen. From here we learn not to despair because that there is no such thing as a wasted tefillah, and Hashem will put them to use at the moment that He feels is the very best.

This idea is also found in Parshas Va'eschanan. וְאַתְּחַנֵּן אֵל ה' בַּעַת הַהוּא. *And I pleaded with HaShem at that time, saying (3:23).* The Midrash tells us of the intensity of Moshe Rabbeinu's tefillah which was learned from the gematria of the word "va'eschanan" (515). After 515 times of asking for the exact same thing, over and over, relentlessly, HaShem finally asked Moshe to stop.

But what of all these tefillos? What happened to them? Were they all for naught? In general, what happens to our tefillos when we daven for something and the tefillah just doesn't seem to

knack? No doubt, one can feel very discouraged with tefillah, especially when we don't feel like we are making any headway. Rav Nachman in his magnum opus, Likutei Moharan, writes an explanation of the words בַּעַת הַהוּא - at that time, that really is a great tool to keep in mind.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A WASTED TEFILLAH! Every tefillah that we utter from our mouth goes straight up to shomayim. The fact that we don't see "progress" is not an indicator of wasted tefillah. We must continue davening, never letting up. So where do the tefillos go? Rav Nachman answers that HaShem holds onto each and every tefillah, storing them for the proper time. בַּעַת הַהוּא - at the moment that one of our tefillos penetrates all the way to the kisei hakavod, לֵאמֹר, - the storage house of tefillos gets opened and all the tefillos are said. HaShem holds each tefillah awaiting the proper

moment to utilize it. Our tefillos are precious to Him.

Our Tefillos continue to be stored in an otzer (storage house) waiting for that exact moment when HaShem “feels” that it is the most opportune time, the בעת ההוא - at the moment.

ויאמר ה' אל משה מה תצעק עלי דבר אל בני ישראל
Hashem said to Moshe, “Why are you crying out to me? Speak to the Bnei Yisroel and let them journey ahead.

The Bnai Yisroel had arrived at the Yam Suf. With the Egyptians on one side and the water on the other, there was no place left to run, and nowhere to hide. So what did the Bnai Yisroel do? How does any Jew react in any difficult situation? *ויצעקו and they cried out.* תפשו אומנות אבותם.

adopted the craft of their forefathers, namely, prayer.

At that very moment, a conversation between Hashem and Moshe took place which needs to be understood. Moshe and the Bnai Yisroel davened and Hashem tells Moshe, מה תצעק עלי דבר אל בני ישראל *Hashem said to Moshe, “Why are you crying out to me? Speak to the Bnei Yisroel and let them journey ahead.* Rashi explains: Now is not the time for prolonged davening; the People are in distress and immediate action must be taken.

The *meforshim* all ask the obvious question here: Was there ever a better time to daven than at this very moment? What was Hashem telling Moshe?

Famously the Ohr HaChaim offered that in order for tefillah which is based on rachamim and chesed to take effect and overcome the strict attribute of *din*, there must be something

inside of one’s “bank account”. But at this time, after having served Avoda Zara in Mitzrayim, Bnai Yisroel had taken on the appearance of the Egyptians, and they were “in the red”. So Hashem said that this is not the moment to daven, i.e. it won’t really help now. What they should do is defy conventional wisdom; go against their nature and perform an act of emunah by proceeding into the water. The emunah is looked at as tzedakah which would in turn fill up their accounts thus activating Hashem’s rachamim.

The Sforno shares a fascinating approach. Moshe was part of those that were davening. However, his own tefillah was not the same as the others. Hashem had already foretold that the Egyptians would fall and they would never even see their faces again. So the davening of Moshe was not due to fear of Pharaoh. Rather, it was a cry of complaint against the Yidden for falling from their lofty levels and

doubting Hashem by proclaiming, "were there no graves in Mitzrayim that we needed to come her to die instead?" To this Hashem responded, "Moshe, you are being חושד בכושרים - accusing "kosher" people! מה תצעק עלי דבר - Speak to them; tell them to travel into the water and you will see that their *emunah* is as strong as ever - a bedrock of faith!

Digging deeper into this idea, we see that Moshe could not believe how a nation that had just witnessed the *makkos* and the miraculous escape from Mitzrayim could ask to turn back to Mitzrayim. How had they fallen from such a great high to a desperate low? To this Hashem responded that while it may be true that they are saying such things ("graves in Mitzrayim"), this is not who they are! Test them with an action that has no possible way of explaining other than pure *emunah* and you shall see who they really

are. When they willingly go forward into the sea, you will understand what a Jew is made of.

"My Children," says Hashem, "are מאמינים בני מאמינים." Don't ever think differently about them. Perhaps at times, the *emunah* needs to be stirred up and aroused, but at their core, *emunah* is their very essence.

This idea that Hashem looks at His Children in this manner is not only reserved for the greatest *tzadikim* and those on high levels. Every person that carries the identity of a Jew has this deep *emunah* embedded within. At times it may be dormant, but remove a layer and it is right there. This has been proven time and time again throughout our history, in every generation, and again most recently on Simchas Torah. Not just the great *tzadikim* but every Jew. To hear the stories of how a girl that gets dragged into captivity in Gaza and suddenly on

her own accord decides that she must keep Shabbos and kosher? She begs her captive for a siddur to daven from? **"My Children," says Hashem, "are מאמינים בני מאמינים."**

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik zt"l once pointed out that the Gemara states (Pesachim 25b): if a *goy* comes to Yid and says, "kill this other Jew or I will kill you", the halacha is יהרוג ואל יעבר - one must allow themselves to get killed rather than killing another Jew. The logic, says the Gemara is that, "who says your blood is redder than his?" Why do you think that you are more valuable to Hashem than the next Jew? Rav Chaim explained that if the discussion was to kill the greatest *tzaddik* or get killed, one would of course say, well in this case, sure, the *tzaddik* takes precedence. After all, how can a regular simple Jew compare to a great lofty *tzaddik*.

Zogt Rav Chaim Brisker – the Gemara makes no such qualification! In fact, we don't even need a Gemara to tell us this. The Gemara's novelty is that even when comparing the simplest Jew, we say this halacha. Why? Because we absolutely have no way of measuring the value of another Jew in Hashem's "eyes". The greatness of their Yiddishkeit within may not always be on full display, but it is most definitely always burning, waiting to burst forth. "My Children," says Hashem, "are בני מאמינים מאמינים."

כְּאֵלֶּה

Like these

In many shuls in Klal Yisroel today, there seems to be a widespread *shtick* that throughout Pesach, when the *baal*

korei reaches the word כְּאֵלֶּה during the *maftir*, many people loudly join along with him. Many Bar Mitzvah teachers of Parshas Pinchas even instruct the boys to pause and wait for the *tzibbur* to say it out loud before continuing (bonus points if you remember it then).

Without a question, this is something that is forbidden to do during the kriyah and unfortunately has led to a lot of leitzanus. But why in fact is there such an excitement? I heard once that this is based on the Shaarei Efraim 8:24. The Shaarei Efraim discusses what one does if they skipped the possuk beginning with כְּאֵלֶּה. Thus there are those, who out of concern that it may be missed, say it out loud.

Perhaps there is a much simpler explanation. Throughout the year, when we light the candles and make Kiddush for yom tov, we always recite the bracha

of *shehechiyanu*. The only Yom Tov days that we do not recite it is the last days of Pesach. This is not because something is missing from the Yom Tov, but rather the opposite. The world we live in trains us to always look for exciting and new things. On Yom Tov, for each meal some expect a brand-new menu and every day another *chol hamoed* trip. Pesach teaches us that it is not that way. The daily korban was the exact same (a korban copy), which explains why we only recite "half hallel", unlike on Sukkos, where there was a brand-new daily korban. Not only that, but in fact there are no special mitzvos done on those days. At best, if one wants to eat matzah, perhaps he gets a mitzvah (like the Gra).

But the beauty of this Yom Tov is that we do not need that innovation. We can learn to truly appreciate what we have without the need to constantly seek new things. The final days of Yom Tov

teach us that one can truly make a Yom Tov out of what is already ours, reaching higher and greater levels than we may have previously reached with that exact item. One does not need a *shehechiyanu* to achieve this.

Accordingly, it can be explained that the *avodah* of the word כאלה which means “like these” is purposely said out with a tangible excitement felt by one and all. “I did this yesterday, I am doing it now, and I will do it again tomorrow, and yet I will be excited each and every time.”

In Yeshiva, we would always hear the call for *hischadshus*. “Rabbosai, there is now an amazing opportunity to start anew and really take advantage.” But at the same time we were reminded that any *hischadshus* must come from within for it to become something. The remaining days of Yom Tov give us that chance to really grab onto what we already

have with a true excitement and make something of it.

**והמשים עלו בני ישראל
מארץ מצרים** *And Bnei yisroel
were armed when they went up
From Mitzrayim*

In his first explanation of our *possuk*, *Rashi* explains והמשים to mean “armed.” This requires explanation in light of the obvious question: what did their weapons consist of? Where did the Jewish people obtain weapons in the short span of time that was allotted to them in order to prepare to leave? They did not even have time to prepare food, let alone search for weapons. (It also would not be plausible to suggest that the gold and silver vessels that they requested of the Mitzriyim prior to their departure were referring to their own weapons as that would

indeed be an incredible *chiddush* in *pshat*.)

Rashi then quotes the Midrash which offers another explanation, that והמשים is derived from the word חומש, “a fifth.” According to this explanation, the *possuk* would then be understood as saying that the *Bnei Yisroel* was only one fifth of their original amount when they left Mitzrayim, i.e. four fifths of the Jewish People did not make it out. Apparently, the bulk of the *Bnei Yisroel* was prepared to adopt the Egyptian lifestyle and not move forward to realize the purpose of the entire sojourn in Mitzrayim which was for the sake of becoming HaShem’s People. It is true that they did not want to be slaves, but at the same time, they were not prepared to leave the country which represented everything that they knew about in this world. The fate of these four fifths was that they died out during the three-day plague of חושך.

From the words of the *Targum Yonasan ben Uziel*, we have yet a third explanation. *Targum* writes that each Jew left Mitzrayim with five children. This is interesting as one may wonder why it should be that each family had the same amount of children, and especially if it is understood that the ages of the adults ranged from 20 to 60. Furthermore, from וישרצו וירבו *and they teemed and increased* we learn that during those years in Mitzrayim, HaShem activated the powers of nature and very many delivered six at one time.

In his *Be'er Yosef*, Rav Yosef Salant zt"l, offers a brilliant explanation of וחמשים (armed), which integrates all three ideas, demonstrating how each one actually complements the other. However, before doing so, he adds a fourth explanation. Quoting the *Targum Yerushalmi*, he suggests that the “*weapons* that they were armed with” were

the *mitzvos* and *ma'asim tovim* (good deeds) that they did.”

This is difficult as we find that HaShem gave us the mitzvos of *dam pesach* and *dam milah* because we were completely bare of mitzvos (as we recite in the *haggada*- ואת ערם ועריה ואעבור עליך ואראך מתבוססת בדמיו ואמר לך בדמיו חיי ואמר לך בדמיו חיי *but you were naked and bare. And I passed over you and saw you downtrodden in your blood and I said to you: “Through your blood you should live!” And I said to you: “Through your blood you should live!”*) Accordingly, how can we explain it to mean that we left armed with *mitzvos*? At what point did they perform these mitzvos and *ma'asim tovim* that the *Targum Yerushalmi* refers to?

Rav Salant explains: We mentioned in Rashi's second explanation that four fifths of the

Jews died because they were not ready to commit. The *halacha* is that there is no death penalty prior to the age of twenty. This would mean that the four fifths that died in the plague were only the adults. It comes out that there four out of every five families were left without parents. These children were now orphans. At that moment, the fathers of the remaining one fifth went ahead and adopted all the families. Hence, each Jew left Mitzrayim with five children, i.e. five families (their own plus the four more). The Midrash relates that וישרצו וירבו refers to a second *bris* as well: The pledge that the Jews made to each other at that moment was the pledge of חסד.

Now, all four explanations are one and the same. Indeed, only one fifth of Bnei Yisroel left Mitzrayim. However, they were armed with the great weapons of mitzvos and *ma'asim*

tovim which refers to the adopting of the other four families.

This sheds light on the possuk in *Yirmiyah*: זכרתי לך חסד נעורייך. HaShem says that He remembers the חסד that we did when we were a young fledgling nation. Normally, this refers to the fact that we went with full *emunah*. HaShem considers it a חסד when we put our trust in Him. Based on the above, it can be explained that the חסד HaShem referred to was our willingness to adopt four new families.

The Seder began with the opening words of כל דכפין ייתי ויכל - let all that are hungry come and eat, and השתא עבדי לשנה הבא בני חורין. Now we are slaves, next year may we be free! It was the merit of the incredible חסד ברית של with which we exited Mitzrayim, therefore our Seder began once again with that same clarion call for more chessed, ending with the tefillah

that in this same zechus we merit the geulah.

The chessed we did back then served as our armor. The world is at war and there is a heavy darkness at this moment. Let us remember this lesson and double down on our acts of chessed. Surely this will protect us once again. Just as HaShem remembered the חסד that we did when we left Mitzrayim, so too, during these days of Pesach, we ask that HaShem take note of it as well. אמן כן יהי רצון

אחרון של פסח

What is the reason that the last day of Yom Tov is known as אחרון של פסח? (We do not find such a title given to the last day of Sukkos or the second day of Shavuot.)

Yirmiyah HaNavi tells us: לכן הנה ימים באים נאם ה' ולא יאמרו עוד חי ה' אשר העלה את־בני ישראל מארץ

מצרים - *Assuredly, a time is coming—declares Hashem, when it shall no more be said, “As the Hashem lives, who brought the Yisroel out of the land of Mitzrayim,”*. The days will come that we will no longer even mention the redemption of Mitzrayim. This refers to the days of *Moshiach* when we will no longer look back to those times because we will have a new redemption to look at. Therefore, we call the final day of Pesach פסח של אחרון as a תפילה to HaShem that this should be the גאולה שלימה and that this shall be the very final Pesach for us.

גאולה שלימה - We find the word שלימה used in four main instances: תשובה שלימה, רפואה שלימה, אמונה שלימה, and גאולה שלימה.

I heard a beautiful explanation from HaRav Nissan Kaplan shlita explaining the word שלימה in these

contexts: Rambam in Hilchos Teshuva (2,2) explains that teshuvah is only complete if Hashem Himself, (the *yodea talumos*), would be able testify that this person will never again return to this sin. Of course he is well meaning when he accepts upon himself to do teshuva, but will it stand the test of time when he is put to test yet again? At the point that he will certainly no longer return, it is called **תשובה שלימה**.

The same idea can be expressed with the other three usages as well. When we wish upon someone a **רפואה שלימה**, what is it that we are really asking of Hashem? We proclaim, "Hashem, we are not only asking that the *choleh* be healed but that the illness should be completely removed, never to return again.

Similarly, when it comes to *emunah*, we all have our moments when we *mamish* feel

the *emunah*. But does it last? What happens when we hit the next bump? Are we still holding steady and strong? **אמונה שלימה** is the idea that our resolve to have faith in Hashem will remain with no going back.

Finally, with regards to the **גאולה** **שלימה**, we have been in and out of *golus* numerous times, but we daven to Hashem, begging Him that this should be the final time. Let us finally be redeemed, once and for all, never to return back to this bitter *golus*.

*Now, as we enter into **אחרון של פסח***, we ask of Hashem that these should all occur. At the time of Kriyas Yam Suf, the Torah relates that **ויאמינו** - it was an incredible moment of *emunah*. As we relive those moments, we ask that the *emunah* remains with us. The inspiration and *hisorerus* that the

Yom Tov brings should lead us to **תשובה שלימה** as well. Ribono Shel Olam, there are so many *choilim* in *Klal Yisroel*. Please grant all of them a **רפואה שלימה**.

And lastly, may we merit to finally experience the **גאולה שלימה** that we have been waiting for, making this the true **אחרון של פסח**. We hear Moshiach's footsteps already, please see our pain and finally allow him to open the door! **אמן כן יהי רצון**

מרדכי אפפעל, Good Yom Tov