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A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

שבת הגדול

דְּבְרוּ אֶל כָּל עַדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר, בְּעֶשֶׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם אִישׁ שְׁה לְבַיִת אִבְתּוֹ שֶׁה לְבַיִת.
(שמות יב, ג)

Speak to the entire assembly of Klal Yisroel, saying: On the tenth of this month they shall take for themselves – each man – a lamb or kid for each father's house. (Shemos 12:3)

Hashem commanded Klal Yisroel to set aside the *korban pesach* four days before Pesach. The Chizkuni explains that in the year when Klal Yisroel left Mitzrayim, the 10th of Nissan, the day when the *korban pesach* was designated, fell on Shabbos. We commemorate this day as Shabbos HaGadol because Klal Yisroel performed their first *mitzvah* on that day.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* brings a concept from R' Yitzchok Eizeik Chover which can provide a deeper understanding of the significance of this *mitzvah* (see Issue #29 at length). R' Yitzchok Eizeik Chover explains that Hashem's covenant to act as our G-d and guide us according to the Thirteen Tributes of Mercy was dependent on Klal Yisroel performing *mitzvos* and keeping the Torah as a nation. The observance of Torah and *mitzvos* by Klal Yisroel facilitates a world full of spiritual purpose, a universe that transcends the physical world and is centred around fulfilling Hashem's will and coming closer to Him.

This was only realised on the 10th of Nissan when Klal Yisroel, as a nation, took the lamb for the *korban pesach*, being the first *mitzvah* they fulfilled. Thus, this day marked the beginning of the elevated state of existence that Hashem had promised. As a result, we honour this day as Shabbos HaGadol, to acknowledge this significance and to pay tribute to the fact that the ultimate form of our world was reached today because of Klal Yisroel fulfilling *mitzvos*.

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### הגדה של פסח

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אָכְלוּ אַבְהֵתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכָפִין יִיתִי וַיִּיכַל, כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יִיתִי וַיִּפְסַח.  
הַשֶּׁתָּא הַכָּא, לְשָׁנָה הַבְּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. הַשֶּׁתָּא עַבְדֵּי, לְשָׁנָה הַבְּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין. (מגיד)

*This is the bread of affliction that our fathers ate in the land of Mitzrayim. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and join in celebrating the Pesach festival. This year we are here, next year may we be in Eretz Yisroel! This year, slaves, next year – free men! (Maggid)*

We begin the main part of the Haggadah – Maggid – with הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא, which refers to the Matzah eaten by our forefathers in Mitzrayim. The Meforshim raise numerous questions in this passage. Why are we inviting guests at this point, shouldn't this invitation have been made earlier? Furthermore, since we no longer have the *korban pesach*, why are we inviting others to partake in it?

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* brings the Kol Bo who explains that this portion of the Haggadah begins addressing the role of Matzah, which we break into two pieces during Yachatz. We emphasise the aspect of Matzah being לַחֲמַא עֲנִיא - the bread of affliction and poverty eaten by our ancestors during their years of slavery. A poor man does not feast over a whole loaf because he is never certain that he will have food for the next meal. Furthermore, Matzah is a food that can be produced easily and provides long-lasting satiation. We then say the words of כָּל דְּכַפִּין וְכוּ', לְשֵׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרֵין which were said in **Mitzrayim** the night before they left. One person invited another to join in his *Seudas Yom Tov* and *korban pesach*. When they were in Mitzrayim, they expressed to each other their confidence in the imminent *geulah*. Our fathers were telling each other that this trial and tribulation of *Golus Mitzrayim* was nearly over. Even though they were still exiled in Mitzrayim at that moment, they believed that the next year, they would be free men in Eretz Yisroel!

With this novel interpretation, we can answer the above questions. We are not inviting anyone to join *our* Seder or *korban*. Rather, we are retelling the dialogue of our fathers in Mitzrayim that night. Thus, we are referring to the actual *korban pesach* that was in existence at that time.

The Rosh Yeshiva explains that we recall the exchange of our forefathers to strengthen our Emunah. In Mitzrayim, they were stuck in *golus* having suffered greatly and eating לַחֲמַא עֲנִיא, yet they still trusted Hashem and had faith that they would be saved. We should follow their example, and even though we may face difficulties and struggles in our own lives, we should not lose hope. Just as our ancestors in Mitzrayim trusted in Hashem, so too should we await our *geulah* and reassure ourselves how Hashem can deliver the *yeshuah*. Even though this year we are here and in *golus*, we hope and *daven* that in the coming year we will be *zoche* to be in Eretz Yisroel as free men, with the ultimate *geulah*!



שִׁפְךָ חֲמַתְךָ אֶל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעוּךָ, וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ. כִּי אָכַל אֶת יַעֲקֹב, וְאֶת נְוֵהוּ הִשְׁמֹו. (בְּרַךְ)

*Pour forth Your wrath upon the nations that do not recognise You, and upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name. For they have devoured Yakov and destroyed His habitation. (Barech)*

In this portion of the Haggadah, we ask Hashem to punish our enemies that have caused us so much suffering during our long history of *golus*. However, the wording of this *tefillah*, taken from Tehillim (79:6-7), might seem puzzling. We ask that the nations be punished for their evil deeds - כִּי אָכַל אֶת אֶל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעוּךָ, וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ הִשְׁמֹו. So why do we mention יַעֲקֹב וְנְוֵהוּ הִשְׁמֹו – that they did not recognise Hashem and did not call on His name? Why is this point relevant?

To resolve this issue, the Rosh Yeshiva cites a Ramban (*Bereishis* 15:14). The Ramban explains that the *goyim* cannot absolve themselves from responsibility for all the harm that they have caused to Klal Yisroel, even if it was decreed by Hashem for us to be punished. He gives two reasons for this. First, since the nations were not aware of Hashem's decree, their sole motive was evil. Second, even if they knew of Hashem's will, they did not have the intent to follow it, so they are still held wholly accountable. This is like the liability of someone who murders another person, even though it was decreed on Rosh Hashanah that the person would die. The murderer acted out of malice and deserves punishment, regardless of Hashem's calculations.

This Ramban helps us gain a deeper understanding of these *pessukim*. We beseech Hashem to punish the *goyim* for all that they harmed Klal Yisroel, however, we need to emphasise that although this was previously decreed upon us, it should not serve as an excuse for their misdeeds. The *possuk* states, הגוים אשר לא ידעו, meaning that they were unaware of the *gezeirah* from Hashem and should therefore be held accountable for their actions. Furthermore, אשר בשמך לא קראו, even if they were aware, they were still acting out of wickedness and not fulfilling Hashem's will.

May we be *zoche* to see the fulfilment of this *tefillah* speedily in our days!



אֶחָד מִי יוֹדֵעַ? אֶחָד אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. אֶחָד אֱלֹקֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאָרֶץ, וְכוּ'. (נִרְצָה)

*Who knows one? I know one; one is our Hashem, in heaven and on earth. (Nirtzah)*

The Rosh Yeshiva brings the following explanation into this *piyut*. One way to test what is truly important to a person is to tap into their subconscious. To do this, one can experiment with what comes to mind when a certain word is mentioned. For example, when the word "knife" is mentioned, most people naturally think of "fork" due to their association. Similarly, when the word "one" is heard, people usually think of "two" due to their sequence.

In this *piyut*, the *paytan* expresses that after experiencing the whole Seder, retelling the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim, and internalizing the great *emunah* we must have in Hashem, our priorities should be clear and unmistakable. When we hear the word "one," the first thing that should come to mind is "One is our Hashem," and so on. We are expected to have gained such clarity that our minds are solely tuned into spirituality and uncluttered from any other thoughts!



## שביעי של פסח

וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִלְכוּ בִּיבֹשָׁה בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם וְכוּ'. וַיֹּשַׁע ה' בַּיּוֹם אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם, וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל שַׁפַּת הַיָּם. וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת ה', וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּה' וּבַמָּשָׁה עַבְדּוֹ. אַז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת וְכוּ'.

(שמות יד, כט – טו, א)

*And the Bnei Yisroel went on dry land in the midst of the sea ... On that day Hashem saved Klal Yisroel from the hand of Mitzrayim and Klal Yisroel saw the Mitzriyim dead on the seashore. Klal Yisroel saw the great hand that Hashem inflicted upon Mitzrayim; and the people revered Hashem, and they had faith in Hashem and Moshe, His servant. Then Moshe and the Bnei Yisroel chose to sing this song ...*

*(Shemos 14:29 - 15:1)*

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* brings an important and inspiring observation from R' Yosef Leib Bloch of Telz into this *parshah* of the Shirah. The *possuk* emphasises **אֶז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה** - **then** they sang Shirah, but not beforehand. Even when Klal Yisroel experienced the greatest miracle of הַיָּם, walking through the sea on dry land, they did not say Shirah. The *possuk* continues, וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת - Klal Yisroel witnessed the demise of their greatest enemies, but they still did not say Shirah. - וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' בְּמִצְרַיִם. They saw all the great deeds Hashem had

performed against the Mitzriyim, yet they still did not say Shirah. 'וַיִּירְאוּ הָעָם אֶת ה' - The people drew *Yiras Shomayim* from what they had experienced, but still did not say Shirah. Only when it was, וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ, וַיִּבְמְשָׁה עֲבָדָיו בְּה' - they had acquired trust in Hashem, that אָז יִשִּׁיר מִשָּׁה - **then** they sang Shirah.

The Telzer Rov explained that the Shirah was for that which they had been *zoche* to see and acquire for themselves *emunah* in Hashem. He explained that the most fortunate and privileged person is the one who has *emunah* and complete trust in Hashem, as it is the greatest possession one could ever attain. This is the ultimate reason for praising and singing to Hashem.

Rashi questions why the Torah uses the word יִשִּׁיר, *will sing*, in the future tense, instead of שָׁר, *sang*, when describing the joyous song that Klal Yisroel sang after crossing the Yam Suf. R' Simcha Zissel of Kelm explains that during happy moments in life, people may dance and celebrate, but it is difficult to predict how long that joy will last. However, at the crossing of the Yam Suf, Klal Yisroel experienced a moment of such great *emunah* in Hashem that they knew it would provide them with a lifelong source of joy and serenity. *Emunah* and *bitachon* are the most prized possessions a person can acquire, enabling a life full of true goodness unaffected by any circumstance that may befall him. This is what the *possuk* was alluding to with its choice of the word יִשִּׁיר, as Klal Yisroel realised that this was not just a temporary cause for celebration, but a lasting one.

During this special Yom Tov, may we be *zoche* to attain a great *chizuk* in our *emunah* and *bitachon*. Strengthening ourselves in these areas will enable us to carry the lessons we have learned into our future and experience a long-lasting *simchah*!

## בברכת חג כשר ושמח!

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