



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **חדוּתא דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

### ***Melave Malka Parshas Beshalach 5761***

In tonight's portion of *Tana D'vei Eliyahu* we learn about *Kriyas Yam Suf*.

"And Hakadosh Baruch Hu had thought to cause the Nile to rise up and destroy the entire land of Egypt after *Yisrael* had departed, because the Egyptians had thrown *Bnei Yisrael* into the Nile. Why then, did he drown the Egyptians at *Yam Suf*?... Am *Yisrael* were sinners at that moment. They said, 'we are simply fleeing as fugitives do, and He doesn't have the power to save us.' Immediately, Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe:

דבר אל בני ישראל וישבו ויחנו לפני פי החירת בין מגדל ובין הים לפני בעל צפן נכון תחנו  
על הים (שמות י"ד:ב)

Speak to *Bnei Yisrael* and tell them to return and camp before *Pi Chiros* between *Migdol* and the sea, before and across from *Baal Tzefon*, should you camp by the sea.

*Pi Chiros* on one side, the *Egyptians* on another side, *Migdol* on one side, and *Baal Tzefon* on another side, and *Yisrael* in the middle. And I will show them whether there is strength in my hand to save them or not."

(תנא דבי אליהו ז:כ)

The events described in *Tana D'vei Eliyahu* require investigation, for *Chazal* taught us (שמות רבה כ:י"ט) that the *reshaim* of *Am Yisrael* died during the plague of *choshech*. Therefore, only one fifth (or one out of fifty, or out of five-hundred) of *Bnei Yisrael* went out of *Mitzrayim*. Yet here, *Eliyahu Hanavi* calls these Jews of little faith who complained and fled Egypt in a state of fear, פושעים - sinners. If they were so sinful, why did they deserve to leave *Mitzrayim* while the sinners who died in *makas choshech* did not?



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We can't really resolve this question by explaining that during *makas choshech* they were still *tzadikim*, and only sinned afterwards. For after *choshech* they experienced many more wondrous *nissim* which would only strengthen their *emunah*. Why would they suddenly begin to doubt Hakadosh Baruch Hu just after the miracles of *makas bechoros*?

Also, how can we understand that because of a few sinners, Hakadosh Baruch Hu would change His original plan to drown the Egyptians in the waters of the Nile, and instead decide to split the *Yam Suf* with myriad miracles. Could it be that all of those miracles were meant simply to demonstrate to a few *poshim* that Hashem rules over the entire world?

I would like to suggest that there truly was a difference between the sinners who died during *makas choshech* and the complainers who did leave *Mitzrayim*. The Jews who died during *makas choshech* had no desire to leave *Mitzrayim*. (as described previously in the *Tana D'vei Eliyahu*). They were so immersed in the filth and *tumah* of that land, that even witnessing the *ten makos* had no impact on them. Even though they were slaves, they wanted to remain in the immoral environment of *Mitzrayim*. Therefore, it was decreed that they would die during *makas choshech*.

However, even though the *emunah* of the foolish sinners described above was so weak that they questioned Hashem's ability to defeat *Mitzrayim*, they certainly wished to escape *Mitzrayim* and its *tumah*.

When we examine their claim that Hakadosh Baruch Hu was unable to defeat the *Mitzrim* in order to save them, we realize that this complaint itself demonstrates that they are truly *maaminim bnei maaminim* who believe in Hashem. It resembles something that I saw in the letters of the Lubavitcher Rebbe zt"l.

A woman who had survived the horrors of the Holocaust wrote a letter to the Rebbe, listing all of her complaints against Hakadosh Baruch Hu. The Rebbe replied that by reading "between the lines" of her letter it is clear



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that she certainly believes in Hashem. For if she didn't believe in the Creator, to whom is she addressing her complaints? So too, despite their complaints, these Jews truly wanted to leave *Mitzrayim* and its culture, and deserved to take part in *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

We now need to address the second question. Why would Hakadosh Baruch Hu change his original plan to drown the Egyptians in the waters of the Nile in response to some foolish accusations and complaints? Shouldn't such statements simply be ignored? Nevertheless, Eliyahu Hanavi reveals that Hashem changed the entire plan, causing Pharaoh and his army to pursue Bnei Yisrael, and then drowning them in the Yam Suf rather than in the Nile.

The explanation can be found in a *pasuk* in *Sefer Shmuel*:

וְלֹא יֵשָׁא אֱלֹקִים נֶפֶשׁ וְחֹשֶׁב מַחְשְׁבוֹת לְבַלְתִּי יָדָח מִמֶּנּוּ נֶדַח (שמואל ב' י"ד:י"ד)

Hashem favors no soul, but devises plans so that no one who is banished should be cast away.

In other words, Hashem is concerned about every individual Jew at all time. Among those who left *Mitzrayim* because they at least wanted to leave, we find some very negative characters. Dasan and Aviram were taken out of *Mitzrayim*, as was Micha who carried an idol with him as he crossed *Yam Suf*. Hashem saved them even though they lacked wholehearted *emunah* and even though their desire to leave the *tuma* of *Mitzrayim* wasn't complete. He drowned the Egyptians in *Yam Suf* in order to demonstrate to such sinners that Am Yisrael didn't simply flee from *Mitzrayim* because Hakadosh Baruch Hu wasn't able to defeat Pharaoh and his nation.

*Kriyas Yam Suf* was designed to bring even those of little faith to full *emunah* in Hashem and his servant Moshe.

There is a deeper aspect to this process. The *geulah* from *Mitzrayim* is the root of all future *geulos*. Therefore, Hashem wanted to liberate every Jewish soul by enabling each of them to experience the *geulah* tangibly,



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seeing it occur with their flesh and blood eyes and leaving no room for doubt. This foundation would enable even the lowest individuals in Am Yisrael to be redeemed in all future *geulos*, if only they yearn for redemption.

This was also the way of David Hamelech a”h the *Baal Seuda of Melave Malka*. He gathered the lost lowly souls of Bnei Yisrael. All those who had been rejected found a place in his camp. As Chazal said, “A wellspring is destined to come out from the house of David and all those who are *tamei* will bathe in it” (יומא ע”ח).

David Hamelech never forgot those Jews who have sinned. He found ways to judge each Jew favorably, because he knew the secret of how precious each Jewish soul is, no matter what. He knew that even *poshei B’nei Yisrael* are able to rise up, and when they do, they can reach the heavens. They simply need someone to help them rise up from the depths of depravity.

This has always been the way of *tzadikim* in each generation. My grandfather zy”a followed in their footsteps and did all that he could to be *mekarev* each Jewish soul.

My brother Rav Yehuda Aryeh Leib *shlita* told one of countless stories that illustrate my grandfather’s love and care for all Jews.

During these weeks of *Shovavim*, he had the custom of going into *galus*. He would travel incognito from place to place, sitting among simple Jews on the bus. Once, my brother joined him on his journey. After they took their seats on the bus, my grandfather zy”a noticed a group of soldiers sitting together. He went to join them, and spoke to them with great love and care. Then, he taught them a *nigun simcha* of Karlin, and they all sang together with him. He then stood up to put on his *tefillin d’Rabeinu Tam*. While wearing those *tefillin* he approached each soldier and offered them his *tefillin d’Rashi*. He went from soldier to soldier and continued to offer



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the *tefillin* to the other passengers until each person fulfilled the *mitzva* of *Hanachas Tefillin*.

If his fellow Jews hadn't been so close to his heart, or if he didn't truly recognize the incalculable worth of each Jew, he may have simply remained in his seat absorbed in his own Torah and *avoda*. However, the flame of *ahavas Yisrael* burned bright inside of him, urging him to do all that he could for such important, precious souls.

All of these lessons teach us that as soon as any *Shovav* (a Jew who has strayed) simply wants to escape his state of *tumah*, the gate of *teshuva shleima* opens wide before him. Therefore, none of us should despair, no matter how far we may have fallen. If Micha, Dasan and Aviram were redeemed and experienced the miracles of *Yam Suf* simply because they wanted to escape from *Mitzrayim*, those of us who believe in Hashem, the Master of the World, can certainly do *teshuva* and return.

Even if someone fell into the net of the *Yetzer Hara* who tempted him into transgressing the will of his own *neschama*, and the will of his creator, Hashem will help and support him as he progresses toward *teshuva shleima*.

וכונו - כולנו בני איש אחד נחנו - As the *shevatim* declared, we are all descendants of one man (Yaakov Avinu). All of us want to escape from our state of *tumah*. It is the *Yetzer Hara* who clouds and confuses our minds, preventing us from reaching out for the *siyata d'shmaya* that is there for us at all times. If we create an opening of *teshuva*, even as small as the eye of a needle, Hakadosh Baruch Hu will open vast treasure troves of *tov min hashamayim*.

וישפיע עלינו שפע של קדושה וטהרה, טהרת המחשבה וטהרת הלב, ונזכה לראות בטוב הנראה והנגלה, אכ"ר



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