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GETTING OUT OF OUR GALUS

PERSONAL MITZRAYIM: THE ROLE OF BITACHON

Pesach is the birth of Klal Yisrael. Pesach is the beginning - that is where it all starts. The *geulah* of Mitzrayim is the father of all *geulos*. Throughout our lives we find ourselves getting stuck in ruts. People find themselves in situations where they feel walled in - in a *matzav* from where there seems to be no escape. This is many people's personal Mitzrayim. For some, it is a lifetime of being in Mitzrayim, and for others it is shorter. However, in order to know how to get out of that Mitzrayim, to know how to respond and what to expect - we must study the precedent of the *geulas* Mitzrayim.

Rabbeinu Bechaya, in his sefer *Kad Hakemach* writes, בזכות הבטחון נגאלו ישראל ממצרים - Klal Yisrael was redeemed from Mitzrayim in the merit of their bitachon.¹ He quotes Midrash Tehillim (22): אליך זעקו ונמלטו - to You they cried out and they were spared. Why is that? Why were they spared? he asks. The reason is: In You they trusted and weren't shamed, everything was in the merit of their bitachon. That is the same *perek* of Tehillim that Esther said when she was faced with calamity. Chazal tell us that Esther herself learned this lesson from *geulas* Mitzrayim.

When a person is preparing himself to go through a Pesach (as the gemara teaches in Pesachim [116b]: הייב אדם לראות - a person is obligated to see it as if he went out of Mitzrayim). He must understand that there are many aspects of how to prepare himself. First, you have to see yourself as being born again. Second, you have to see yourself as having experienced a redemption from a terrible *galus*. And third, you have to strengthen yourself. To get out of your own present day *galus*, you need to employ these three tactics.

BELIEVING IN THE FUTURE REDEMPTION

There is a famous *shmuess* from Rav Yerucham in *Daas Chochmah Umussar* (חלק ג עמודים ב-ג). The pesukim in the beginning of Parshas Va'era say as follows: HaKadosh Baruch Hu tells Moshe to say to the Bnei Yisrael, סבלות מצרים, והצלתי אתכם מעבודתם וגאלתי אתכם בזרוע נטויה ובשפטים גדולים ולקחתי אתכם - אני ה' והוצאתי אתכם לאתכם לי לעם והייתי לכם לאלקים.²

Chazal tell us there are four *leshonos* of *geulah*, because in every *galus* there are many different aspects of the *galus*: והוצאתי וגאלתי וקחתי. What does that mean, וידעתם, כי אני ה' אלקיכם. In the conclusion of that passuk, Hashem says, וידעתם, כי אני ה' אלקיכם. What does that mean, וידעתם, כי אני ה' אלקיכם? The Seforno explains that it means, הכירו והתבוננו שכל זה יתאמת, Moshe was commanded to tell Klal Yisrael to take note, to recognize, to think about the fact that all this will become true. In other words, Hashem was saying, "This is what I am going to do for you and I want you now to be *makir* (to recognize) and I want you to be *misbonen* (to internalize) that this *will* happen; *Who supervises your every aspect, and מוציא ומשתדל עתה להוציא אתכם - because I am Hashem Who takes you out, מפטור עליכם בפרט, and I am the One who is taking you out and is involved with you [to take you out].* You have a special *hashgachah pratis* that I am personally taking you out. So אין ספק שאעשה כל מה שאמרתי, there is no safek (doubt) that this is what is going to happen."

¹ וזו"ל: בזכות הבטחון נגאלו ישראל ממצרים, שכן אמרו במדרש תהלים (כב) 'אליך זעקו ונמלטו', וכל כך למה בד בטחו ולא בשו הכל בזכות הבטחון. ומפני שמדת הבטחון עיקר גדול מעיקרי התורה לכן מצינו שהתורה מיוסדת עליה, ונקראת בטחון על שם מדת בטחון, הוא שכתוב (משלי כא) 'עיר גבורים עלה חכם ויורד עוז מבטחה'.

² וכו' ולמידין מזה עיקר גדול בהנהגת השי"ת, כי ראשית כל הנהגתו היא מקודם להבטיח ולא יותר, והמכוון מזה הוא שהמובטח יאמין בזה אמונה שלימה ולהיות בטוח, וזה יהיה סבה לבוא מזה למדת הקיום, שיקום בו הבטחון של המבטיח, ודוקא על דרך זה, וזהו ידועה חדשה במדותיו של הקב"ה, ויסוד גדול, כי יסוד ראשית כל הדברים היא האמונה והבטחון, דס דטרף פריער דורכניין, וזאת תהיה סבה לשלימות הקיום של המקיים. ועד"ז הנהגת הקב"ה עם אבותינו הקדושים, שהבטיח להם כל האחרית, והם האמינו בו ובטחו ע"ז בבטחון גמור, וזה היה הזכות והיסוד אשר ממנו זכינו לענין יציאת מצרים, ר"ל קיום הבטחה. וזהו והאמין בה' ויחשבה לו לצדקה (בראשית טו, ו), ענין האמונה והבטחון של א"י ע"ה היתה לו זאת לצדקה, ובזכות האמונה זכינו לכל ההצלחות, ואם היה ח"ו חסר מעט באמונה ובטחון לא באנו לידי קיום הדברים. ואחרי התבוננות בכל אלה מצאתי לי תניא דמסייע על כל דברי בהספורנו (שמות ו-ז ט), על ענין הנ"ל. כתב על פסוק וידעתם כי אני ה', "הכירו והתבוננו שכל זה יתאמת כמו וידעתם וכו' כי בהיות א' משגיח עליכם בפרט וכו' אין ספק שאעשה כל מה שאמרתי. והבאתי אתכם כו' כאשר תתבוננו בכל זה תהיו ראויים שאביאכם וכו' ולא שמעו אל משה להתבונן בכ"ז בענין שיבטחו בישועת הקל ית' ויחשבה להם צדקה כענין באברהם, וכן לא נתקיים בהם ונתתי אותה לכם אבל נתנה לבניהם. מקצר רוח כי לא נאמנה את א' רוחם ולא נתנו לב להתבונן וכו'". עיי"ש שמביא כי לולא העבודה הקשה היו נותנים לב לדברי משה והיו מבינים מטענותיו שראוי לבטוח. הרי כל דבריו מכוונים עם דברינו. ולהשתומם מאד, כי הוא בעצמו אומר כי זאת אשר לא התבוננו לא היה זאת כי אם מעבודה קשה ולא ח"ו מחוסר בטחון, ובכ"ז ראה מה הגיע להם מואת, כי לא זכו ליכנס לא"י, כי אם בניהם זכו, והם לא זכו לזה, הרי כדברינו, כי מדרכי השי"ת הוא כי לא יתכן לאדם לזכות בשום דבר כ"א אחרי הבטחון מקודם בהמבטיח, זהו מדתו של הקב"ה בדוקא, ונמצא אחרי כי השר להם מעט בבטחון להמבטיח לא היו יכולים לזכות בהבטחה. ובאמת יסוד גדול הוא לכל דבר ודבר. מתחילה להבטיחו ושיאמין בזה, ודוקא אח"כ יתקיים הדבר. וזהו ענין סדר גאולת מצרים, וכו'.

THE KEY TO UNLOCK THE DOOR OF GEULAH

After HaKadosh Baruch Hu tells Moshe that Klal Yisrael has to be *makir* and *believe* that this is going to happen, the passuk goes on and says: והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ אשר נשאתי את ידי לתת אותה לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב - *I am going to bring you to the land that I promised the Avos.*

The Seforno explains that Hashem said to Moshe: “Tell Klal Yisrael that this *hakarah*, this *hisbonenus* is very important, because it is the key that is going to unlock the door to get them into Eretz Yisrael. By being *misbonen* in all of this, you will then be *ra’uy* to be brought to Eretz Yisrael and I will give it to you.” But what happened next? וידבר משה כן אל בני ישראל - Moshe tells this to Bnei Yisrael. What is their response? Did they say *hineni*? No. It says ולא שמעו אל משה מקצר רוח ומעבודה - *they could not hear Moshe because of the shortness of breath and because of the difficult avodah.* Says the Seforno, do you know what that means? The *yidden* could not get their mind focused on this idea, they could not get “into the zone”; בענין שיבטחו בישועת הקל יתברך - they could not be *botei’ach* in the *yeshuah* of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Avraham Avinu was told he is going to have a child, and he was *ma’amin* and *botei’ach* - והאמן בה' ויחשבה לו צדקה - that was the “magic key” that opened for him, the door for having children. But Klal Yisrael could not get there. Says the Seforno, לכן לא נתקיים בהם, this promise was not fulfilled in them. The generation that left Mitzrayim was not *zocheh* to the brachah of getting into Eretz Yisrael. They were not *zocheh* to the land that was given to Avraham, to the *Avos*.

Why wasn't Klal Yisrael *misbonen* and *botei’ach*? מקצר רוח - they did not have the spirit, they were *tzebrochen*, they could not focus their hearts, to have a *lehetbonen*. They did not have their wits about them. Says the Seforno, כי לולא העבודה הקשה, if not for that *avodah kashah*, they would have been *nosen lev* (paid attention) to the words of Moshe, והיו מבינים, and they would have understood לראוי לבטוח that it is *ra’uy* for them to have *bitachon*. So it is very interesting that they were able to get out of Mitzrayim without the proper *bitachon*. They didn't get to the right level of *bitachon*, and yet, they got out of Mitzrayim! With the right level of *bitachon* they would have also gotten into Eretz Yisrael. They didn't have that *bitachon* and Hashem still came and took them out of Mitzrayim.

BRINGING THE BITACHON OUT

So it turns out that the reason why they were not *botei’ach* is not because they weren't *botchim baHashem*. It is because of *avodah kashah*. If not for the *avodah kashah*, they would have had the *bitachon*. Says the holy Rav Yerucham, that there is a tremendous *chiddush* here. It is mind boggling, he says. The passuk is saying according to the Soforno, that the reason they were not *misbonen* and did not have *bitachon* was because they were *anusim*. Because of the *avodah kashah*, and not because essentially they lacked the *bitachon* in Hashem! Do you know what kind of *chiddushim* I see over here? Amazing *chiddushim*. That you could have a person that is *ra’uy be’emes* to have *bitachon* in Hashem but he needs to have *hisbonenus*. He needs to get his mind in the right place to bring that *bitachon* out, to employ that *bitachon*. Sometimes a person does not have the *bitachon*, simply because of *avodah kashah* - he finds himself overwhelmed.

There are some people who don't have *bitachon* to start with. The person is lacking in *bitachon*. But there is another person who really has the *bitachon*, but he can't think right now. He feels like there are a ton of bricks on him. However, says Rav Yerucham, it does not make a difference. It doesn't matter why you don't have the *bitachon*. If you lack the *bitachon*, you cannot be *zocheh* to the promise that Hashem made. Rav Yerucham says, ובאמת יסוד גדול לכל דבר ודבר, That is, initially you have to have *bitachon* and you have to believe in a *zach* and think about the *hashgachah pratis* that Hashem did for you. And only then that which you are hoping for will be fulfilled. That is the *seder* of *geulas Mitzrayim*.

Let's say somebody is looking for a *shidduch* and they are “over the hill,” and they start exhibiting negative feelings. You know what happens? They've lost their *bitachon* already. I have spoken to tens and tens of people in that situation, who said to me, “I've tried everything. I did everything already. I did it all. It is not working. If Hashem wants to send it, He'll send it and if He doesn't want to send it, then He won't send it.” They lack *bitachon*. Sometimes they tell me, “I'm burnt out already.” That's the reason why they never received it. It's the קצר רוח - that is why they don't have *bitachon*. They used to have *bitachon*, but they lost it because of קצר רוח, of being overwhelmed. This is a tremendous insight!

AS LONG AS YOU HAVE BITACHON, THERE IS HOPE!

Just today, I spent 38 minutes fielding a phone call with a young woman, a mother of five little ones. It was right after I saw this Rav Yerucham. I had just fallen asleep and my phone rang. She said, “Can I talk to you for a few minutes? I'm sorry to burden you with my issues.” She was very very apologetic. I said, “What's on your mind that I can help you with?” It didn't sound like a serious issue at first, as she sounded upbeat. She said she has *nebach yeneh machleh*. I asked when it started and she told me her whole history: about the surgeries, and how they discovered it. She told me that for some strange reason orchestrated by the Ribbono Shel Olam they never made a full-body scan. The doctors were very positive

about where it was found and they felt it would be easy to remove and it would be a passing dream. Then she told me that they forced the doctors to make a full-body scan. The doctors said, "It is all over your bones, not like we thought. We're sorry, we forgot to do the full-body scan. It is stage 4 now." That was only the beginning of her *tzaros*. She has a lot of *tzaros* besides that. As they say, when it rains it pours. I was talking to her and I told her, "You know, I am amazed. How do you sound so upbeat? I get this phone call at least once a day and most of them are not upbeat. I thought you were going to say that you have a small issue, maybe you got a ticket, your foot hurts you, or your tooth hurts you. It is amazing." I said, "I want you to know that that in itself is a tremendous brachah because when a person is overwhelmed with a *tzarah*, they often lose it, and it is normal, as the *yidden* in *Mitzrayim* lost themselves מקצר רוח ומעבודה קשה. They couldn't be *botei'ach* in Hashem, they couldn't be *makir*, they couldn't be *misbonen*. When a person loses his ability to think, that is the worst part of the *onesh*, because as long as you have your mind with you and you are able to be *misbonen*, you could have *bitachon*. כל זמן שיש בטחון - As long as there is still *bitachon*, there is hope, but if there is no *bitachon*, then surely there is no hope."

You have to know that every single *matzav* that you are in, the first thing you have to do is to seek out the *bitachon*. That's where you go first because that might be the key that unlocks the *geulah*. You have to have *bitachon*.

"HASHEM CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN"

Rav Yerucham quotes the Alter of Kelm who says the same concept. The Alter writes that Klal Yisrael was only *zocheh* to be redeemed from *Mitzrayim* in the merit of their *emunah*.³ If they would not have had the *emunah* that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is able to redeem them from *Mitzrayim* and He is in charge of everything, they would not have gotten out of *Mitzrayim*. It says ויאמן העם - and the nation believed (Shemos 4:31). You must have *emunah*. You have to be able to say: "Hashem could help me. I believe that Hashem is the Al-mighty and I believe that HaKadosh Baruch Hu can change my fate. I believe that if I am sick Hashem is אלהי ישראל. I believe that if I need *parnassah*, Hashem could send me the *parnassah*. If I need a *shidduch*, Hashem could send me a *shidduch*. If I have mental health issues, Hashem could send me a *refuah*." But the problem is that you go to the doctor and he says, "You are not getting better. This is your life sentence. Accept it." What happens is that this attitude undermines your *emunah*.

Klal Yisrael had to be *mischazek* their *emunah* before Yetzias *Mitzrayim*. The Rambam writes in the beginning of *hilchos avodah zarah* (1:3) that the *Yidden* in *Mitzrayim* were at a very low level and they were very far from the ideals and from the foundation that Avraham Avinu had laid. The Rambam uses a powerful *lashon*, כמעט קט היה העיקר ששתל אברהם נעקר - the principles that Avraham Avinu had planted had almost become uprooted, והחורין בני יעקב, to the point that the *bnei Yaakov* would have turned back למטעות העולם ותעויותן, to the mistakes of the world and their estrangement. So in order to get out, they had to be *mechazek* their *emunah*. They had to believe. You can assume that when you are in *galus* and you are *nisrachek* (distanced) from Hashem, it is because your relationship, your *emunah* in Hashem is weak. You have to first strengthen your *emunah* and if you strengthen your *emunah* then you are going to be *zocheh* to *hashgachah pratit* and be redeemed. Rav Yerucham points out that *emunah* does not simply refer to an intellectual belief that there is a *Ribono shel Olam* who runs the world. It means that you have complete faith in Hashem and are *botei'ach* in Him.⁴ Klal Yisrael needed to display their *emunah* and *bitachon* in Hashem to be *zocheh* to the *geulah*.

We see, Rav Yerucham says, before the *geulah* Hashem commanded us to bring a *korban Pesach*. You know what the *korban Pesach* was? To give them some degree of *bitachon*. That was the minimal amount of *bitachon* they needed. They had to act in the face of the *Mitzrim*. They had to buy the *korban Pesach*, tie it to their bed and tell everybody, "The reason why it is here is because we are going to *shecht* your gods." They had *bitachon*. The whole night they had to sit there and eat מתניכם הגורים

they couldn't sit there without their shoes. You know why you have to sit with shoes? Because they were ready to leave. They couldn't leave in the middle of the night.

³ (שם) ונעתיק מה שמצאתי בבתי אדמו"ר זצ"ל מקלם במאמרו הנפלאים והנוראים, במאמר סדר גאולת מצרים (ח"מ א' מא' א' וז"ל "ואח"כ נעמד על ענין הלכה למעשה, הנה בפ' ששי פסוק כ"ט כתוב, וילך משה ואהרן ויאספו כל זקני בני ישראל וגו' ויאמן העם וישמעו כי פקד ה' וגו' ואח"כ כתוב ואחר באו משה ואהרן אל פרעה וכו' כה אמר ה' שלח את עמי וגו' ודקדקנו הלא טוב היה לכאורה שילכו מקודם אל פרעה ואח"כ יבשרו את ישראל כי היו אצל פרעה לאמר לו שלח את עמי, והנה בואם אל פרעה מלך אדיר היה שלא ברשות ובפרט משה היה מחויב מיתה לפרעה ואך החיה אותו פרעה? ובפרט כי הבקשה היא מרידה במלך, ואין לך מורד במלכות יותר מזה, לומר עשה לנו בני חורין, ואין לך נס גלוי יותר מזה, וזה היה תנחומים גדולים לישראל, ולמה הקדים אסיפת בני ישראל מקודם? אלא ע"כ כי לא היו ראויים ליגאל בלי זכות האמונה ולא היה קרה להם הנס הגלוי בבואם לבית פרעה ולכן הקדים להודיע זאת לישראל וכתוב ויאמן העם וישמעו כי פקד ה' ולכן כתיב תיכף "ואחר", פי' אחר שהאמינו "באו אל פרעה". ולולא האמונה לא היו יכולים לבא אליו, ובפרט לומר לו שלח את עמי, ורק אחרי האמונה היו מורדים בו ולא היה יכול לעשות להם מאומה. והנה כאשר נדקדק בציווי השם נראה עין בעין כסדר הזה. מתחילה אמר הקב"ה למשה קוטב השליחות מה שצריך לו, לכה ואשלחך אל פרעה והוצא את עמי וגו' וזה קוטב השליחות מה שאני צריך לך, ואח"כ מסר לו מה שיאמר לישראל "ה' א' אבותיכם שלחני אליכם", בזה השם יבוא לישראל לבשרם לגאולה, ואח"כ בפ' חמשי סדר לו אך יעשה, כי דוקא בסדר הזה נגאלים, לך ואספת את זקני ישראל ואמרת אלם ה' א' אבותיכם נראה אלי וגו' פקוד פקדתי וגו', ובפסוק שאחריו כתיב ושמעו לקולך, פי' יאמינו בזה, וכפי' רש"י כבר סימן זה מסור בידם שבלשון זה הם נגאלים ולכן יאמינו לך, וכיון שהיה בידם זכות האמונה -- אח"כ דוקא, ובאת אתה וגו' אל מלך מצרים ואמרתם אליו וגו', ועפ"י הסדר הזה עשו משה ואהרן, ויאספו זקני בני ישראל וגו' ויאמן העם ואח"כ באו משה ואהרן לגאול אותם, הא לנו סדר הגאולה וכו' ואח"כ זכות אמונה, וגאולה, והנה גאולת מצרים סימן לגאולה העתידה נזכה להכין עצמנו כסדר הזה וטוב לנו בזה ובבא אכני"ר". עכ"ל

וכל דבריו הם יסודות בדרכי עבודה, ואני הנני מוסיף בזה, כי כל הנהגת השי"ת עם עם סגולתו הם עד"ז, וכל זכויותינו ותקותינו הם ג"כ דוקא עד"ז, מתחילה אמונה ובטחון. הנה כאשר אנו ראויים ומתבוננים כי קודם הגאולה נצטוונו במצות קרבן פסח, וכל המצוה היא דוקא מדרך הבטחון, וכל הנהגות קרבן פסח, הקרבנות, ואכילתו, הם ג"כ עד"ז להורות האמונה והבטחון כאלו כבר נעשו בני חורין, וזהו וכה תאכלו אותו מתניכם חגורים נעליכם ברגליכם ומקלכם בידכם (שמות יב יא), ומה נעמו דברי הספורנו ע"ז, וז"ל, מתניכם חגורים מזומנים לדרך כענין וישנם מתני להורות על בטחון בלתי מסופק באל ית' בהיותם מכינים עצמם לדרך בעודם בבית כלא, עכ"ל. ובאמת זהו סוד כל המצות ושכרה, היום לעשותן ומחר לקבל שכרם (עירובין כב), ר"ל כל עבודתינו להאמין ולבטוח בה' ובמצותיו כי הם חיינו ואורך ימינו, ובהם אנו חיים וקיימים, וכל אשר הלך אחרי בעל פנור השמידו ה' א' מקרבך ואתם הדבקים בה' א' חיים כולכם (דברים ד, ד-ג), וזהו היום לעשותם, באמונה שלימה בלי שום ספק הרחוק כלל, כאלו כבר קבלנו את השכר של המצות, וכו'.

⁴ Ed. note: According to Rav Yerucham, complete *emunah* or *emunah shleimah* (as opposed to *emunah p'shuta*, where one simply believes that there is *Ribono Shel Olam*), means you believe to the extent that you also have *bitachon* - i.e. you feel *batu'ach* in the One you are believing, that He will do what He promised.

Even if they wanted to, they couldn't leave until Hashem said, עד עצם היום הזה. They weren't allowed to leave their houses at night. But Hashem said, "I want you to sit in your house with a staff in your hand, with your belt tightened. I want you to have those shoes on your feet ready for the trip." Says the Seforno, ממתניכם הגורים, מזומנים לדרך, prepared for the way, להורות, על בטחון בלתי מסופק בקל יתברך, בהיותם מכינים עצמם לדרך בעודם בבית כלא - to teach that they trusted Hashem without any doubt by preparing themselves for the road. They were still in jail and yet they prepared themselves to get out! That is *bitachon*.

UNLOCKING THE PRISON CELL WITH BITACHON

That *bitachon*, like Rabbeinu Bechaya wrote, was enough to get them out the door. But it was not enough *bitachon* to get them into Eretz Yisrael. *Bitachon* has *madreigos*. There was basic *bitachon*, or *bitachon* 101, that got them out the door. Then there is what's called a 'graduate school' *bitachon*. The whole mitzvah of *korban Pesach* and all the *mitzvos halaylah* - of matzah, the blood on the doors, etc - were all *miderech habitachon*, בלתי מסופק בקל יתברך. It says in the passuk that Klal Yisrael said: הן נזבח את תואבת מצרים לעיניהם - *are we going to slaughter the abomination of Mitzrayim that they worshiped and the Mitzrim are not going to stone us?* But Hashem said, וראיתי את הדם ופסחתי עליכם - *I will see the blood on your doors and I will pass over your doors* (Shemos 12:13).⁵ Says Rabbeinu Bechaya, אין הדם מונע הנגף, blood on your door does not prevent you being plagued, ולא מניעתו, and not having blood does not bring the plague, אבל למדך הכתוב, the Torah teaches us, כי מי שהאמין, בהקב"ה אמונה שלמה ותלה בו בטחונו ולא חשש לאימת פרעה וגזרתו וזבח בפרהסיא תועבת מצרים ונתן מדם הפסח על המזוזות ועל המשקוף הרי זה צדיק ובטח *anyone who believed in Hashem with complete emunah and had bitachon in Hashem and wasn't concerned of Pharaoh or his decrees, and slaughtered [the sheep] which was the Egyptian deity, the to'avas Mitzrayim, and placed its blood on his doorposts, was considered a tzaddik who trusted in Hashem, and deserves to be saved from the plague.*

My friends, this lady said they gave her some kind of medicine now, they don't even know if it works, or how long it is going to work. I said to her, "This is a test. No doctor could tell you how long a medicine is going

to work." The worst thing I deal with when I speak to people with *yene machleh, r"l*, is when the doctor says to them, "There is no cure. We are just trying to buy you some time. That's all this medication does." I say this to everyone and I said it to this lady, as well. I said, "That's a *sheker*, that's a test. It's a test to see if you believe that Hashem is the One who decides how long the medicine will work, and whether there is a cure." I said to her, "I am not guaranteeing you a cure, but I am telling you one thing. *Bitachon* has been the key to unlock the jail of many people's lives in history - the jail, the *beis hakele* that we find ourselves in throughout history. The key to *geulah* from Mitzrayim, the greatest of all prisons, was *bitachon*. That was the key that was needed to unlock the door. So if it works for Klal Yisrael don't you want to try it?" In Mitzrayim, Hashem said to them, "I am taking them out." Hashem told them, "I am going to redeem you." But when you were not told this clearly is already a much bigger *madreigah*. *Sechar* for it you get. Everything you do to gather that *bitachon* and strengthen that *bitachon*, you are going to get *sechar* for that. It's a mitzvah *de'oraisa* every single second. It's not about davening Shacharis. It's about connecting and feeling Hashem is close to you. You must feel that Hashem is your father.

The fool who has a healthy wife and thinks, "Ah, I'm fine. As long as my wife can work, I am good to go." What a silly thing to think. The only reason you are getting anything is because of Hashem. You have to constantly remind yourself of this. You have to develop a *mehalech* of how to be *mechazek* yourself, and others in this inyan. There is hope, there definitely is hope. Klal Yisrael was on a very low *madreigah*, but they were *mechazek* their *bitachon* in Hashem and were redeemed.

FAILING KIDNEYS

I remember years ago talking to a person, a young fellow 28-years-old, who was told by doctors that his kidneys were failing. They basically said to him, "You are going to experience a life-changing event." The guy was overwhelmed. He had a family history of bad kidneys. I will never forget walking with him on Bishop Road and trying to be *mechazek* him. Then I walked him to his place where he was staying. After that, he did not come out for a couple of days. I didn't see him. I told somebody to go find out what was going on and he said the guy is in extreme depression. I went to visit him and I said to him, "Why are you doing this?" He said, "It's easy for you to talk. Do you know anybody whose kidneys are failing?" I said, "Yes, I have a sister-in-law, my wife's older sister, the mother of a large family, her kidneys failed. She had a brother, a *tzaddik*, who gave

her a kidney. That also failed. Then the other kidney failed. Then she passed away. Yes, I know about these things. But you know what? What does that have to do with you? I don't believe what the doctors say." He said, "Do you have any words of *chizzuk* for me?" I said, "Yes, I do."

וראיתי את הדם ופסחתי עליכם. אין הדם מונע הנגף ולא מניעתו מביא הנגף אבל למדך הכתוב כי מי שהאמין בהקב"ה אמונה שלמה ותלה בו בטחונו ולא חשש לאימת פרעה וגזרתו וזבח בפרהסיא תועבת מצרים ונתן מדם הפסח על המזוזות ועל המשקוף הרי זה צדיק ובטח בהקב"ה, ראוי הוא שיגין עליו מן הנגף והמשחית.

THE PRAISE OF THE WAVES

I said, "It says that Hordes made the outside of the Beis Hamikdash out of marble. The gemara asks, what is the purpose of blue marble? What was the plan behind this architecture? The gemara answers that it was made to look like 'the waves of the sea.' Hordes wanted you to see the waves of the sea when you looked at the outside of the Beis Hamikdash." This fellow said to me, "Do you understand why?" I told him, "When I learned this gemara in the past, I always wondered what he wanted with the waves of the sea? But just recently, I heard a tremendous *vort*. If you look in Tehillim (89:10), we say every day in selichos, בשוא גליו אתה תשבחם - when the *galim*, the waves roar, You, Hashem, are *meshabei'ach* them. *Meshabei'ach* means you quiet (or still) them down. The waves roar and Hashem quiets them down. If you look in the Midrash, it says, תשבחה דימא - the storming of the seas is the praise of the sea. The question is what kind of praise is that? The answer is, the waves know that when they hit the seashore, they are going to break apart and they will not become waves anymore. Do you ever see when waves wash up on the sand? It looks like a little puddle. Beforehand, they were roaring in with all their strength. And the waves 'know' that they are going to break up. You know what the waves say? 'As long as I am able to storm the shore, I will do what my Maker created me to do. The fact that I am going to break as I wash ashore, is not my business.'"

Hashem says that this is the praise of the sea. I turned to this young man and said, "Learn from the waves. Hordes made the Beis Hamikdash like that. In Hordes' time they already foresaw the *churban* Beis Hamikdash. The writing was on the wall, as they say. They realized this beautiful building was going to be destroyed. But they put the picture of the waves outside. And כל זמן, as long as the building stood, they said, 'We are going to do it right.'" I said to him, "My dear friend. Stand up, let's dance. You could dance, can you?" He said, "What are you dancing about?" I said, "You know why? Because we can. We didn't hit the dry land yet. You are still standing. Your kidneys are still working." I told him, "If you will have *bitachon*, if you get yourself up and don't eat yourself alive, your kidneys could get better. I don't believe one thing the doctors say. By me, doctors have הזקת שקרנים. What do they know? The Steipler said, 'What do they know? Once in a while they get it right.' And a lot of times, the reason why they get it right is because you believe in them. That's what makes it right."

This young man perked up and we danced and he got better. The doctor realized there was something they could do for it. They gave him some medicine and he got better. He *shteiged os* in an amazing way, and became a big *ben aliyah*, a *mashpiah* of Torah today, a very *choshuve yungerman*. He got married, and he has a Yiddishe family!

HASHEM IS YOUR FATHER

A person has to know, that is how you have to view a challenge. That is how *bitachon* has to be. I told this lady, "I don't know for sure what the end is going to be. I have no idea. No one has a crystal ball." She started to ask me about the *shitah* Chazon Ish, R' Yisrael Salanter. I told her, "Forget about all these *shitah*s. The only *shitah* you have to have is that Hashem is your Father, and Hashem could heal you. Hashem wants to heal you and He will heal you if He can heal you. The question is, what key fits in the door. Put the key into the lock, try the *bitachon* key," I told her. I said, "You have a tremendous *brachah*. You know what that *brachah* is? You have a *mish'an* (support). You have a tremendous *mish'an*. I have never spoken to a person in your situation who, *pashut*, sounds so good." She says, "I have to be *mechazek* my husband. He is a wreck." I said, "You are an amazing person, what should I tell you. Are your parents able to help you?" She said, "No, my father is very sick. He's an old man, I'm a *bas zekunim*." I told her, "And you still have it straight. That is a tremendous *brachah*. That is Hashem telling you, 'I am with you.' Look at all the good. Do you have *parnassah*?" She said, "Baruch Hashem." Hashem sends *shluchim*, they had *parnassah*. "My husband sits and learns," she told me. I asked, "Do you have help with the kids?" "Yes, Hashem helps with that also." I told her, "That's your *mishan*."

A person has to realize that this is what we have to be *misbonen* in. I told her, "Go and meditate. Go think deeply, go to a room, close your eyes and say HaKadosh Baruch Hu, I believe in You and I trust in You. I rely on You, get me out of this *galus*. If that is the key to unlock the *galus*, think about it, and if it is not, at least you get the *sechar*. Say, 'Thank you Hashem for giving me this opportunity to have *emunah* and *bitachon* in You.' At least have *menuchas hanefesh*."

I spoke to another *yungerman*, maybe two weeks ago. A talmid chacham, he was very depressed. Somebody told me to speak to him. He is a big talmid chacham and he was in a very serious *matzav*. It was *geferlach*. The guy knew too much. Sometimes if you know too much it is also not good. I was thinking to myself, "The guy *nebach* has the *klalah*. The *klalah* is that Hashem took away that *mish'an*." He wanted to do crazy things. I said, "What do you have to do nonsense for? Remember what the Chazon Ish used to say, 'When I get stuck in a pickle you know where I always turn? To the *hishtadlus* that is guaranteed to work. If there is another *hishtadlus* that is *berurah*, I do it, too. But if I don't have *hishtadlus* that's *berurah*, I always turn to *tefillah*. *Tefillah* is always guaranteed.' By doing the mitzvah you are accomplishing something, you are davening to Hashem."

HaKadosh Baruch Hu should help each and every one of us get redeemed from this *galus*. I don't care if it's the *yetzer*

hara, I don't care if it's emotional health, I don't care if it's financial health, I don't care if it's physical health, I don't care if it's a *shidduch* crisis. I don't care what the problem is. Get out of your *galus*, free yourself, follow in the footsteps, צאי לך בעקבי הצאן - go in the footsteps of the holy sheep (Shir HaShirim 1:8), the צאן קדושים, like we read this week in the *haftorah*, in the path of our holy forefathers that Hashem prepared for us מעשה אבות סימן לבנים.

❖ THE BOTTOM LINE ❖

When we find ourselves in the constraints of our personal Mitzrayim, the first thing we need to do is internalize and recognize that Hashem can (and will) redeem us; this will strengthen our *bitachon* in Hashem. However, very often, our doubts, fears and concerns - in short, our *avodah kasha* - prevent us from internalizing this truth and don't allow us to bring out the inner *bitachon* that we intrinsically have. In these few remaining, precious days, before Pesach - no matter what my current *matzav* may be - I will think about these lessons, and I will strengthen my *emunah shleimah* that Hashem can and will redeem me; I will also think about what Hashem is already doing for me (and continues to do) and let that serve as a *mishan* for me; I will also talk to Hashem in my davening like He's my Father, asking him to redeem me from my *galus*. And in the *zechus* of strengthening my *emunah* and *bitachon*, may I and the rest of Klal Yisroel, merit to see tremendous *yeshous* and *refuos* this Pesach, and witness the ultimate end of this long *galus*, with the coming of the Mashiach Tzidkeinu, *b'mchera b'yomeinu*, Amen!

