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UNDERSTANDING GALUS MITZRAYIM

This week's *parshah* begins by discussing the *galus Mitzrayim*, followed by the *yetzias Mitzrayim*. Every time you learn a *sugya*, you have to know its essence. *Yetzias Mitzrayim* has so many lessons, but you have to understand what is the essence of *yetzias Mitzrayim*. If somebody would ask you, what does *yetzias Mitzrayim* mean to you, you'd first have to know what *galus Mitzrayim* means in order to answer that question.

How many regimes, *malchuyos*, subjugated Klal Yisrael? Four. What are those four? Bavel, Paras, Yavan and Edom. Where are they first mentioned in the Torah, and what do the four *malchuyos* represent? Each *malchus* represents a *koach hatumah* and a *koach* of *ra* that tries to challenge the *koach* of *taharah* and the *koach hatov* of Klal Yisrael. When Klal Yisrael became subjugated under each of these *malchuyos*, this became a *galus* for us. ארבע מלכויות ארבע גלויות.¹

In the second *passuk* of the Torah, it says, תהו ובהו וחושך על פני תהום (Bereishis 1:2) and the *Chazal* (Bereishis Rabbah 2:4) tell us on the spot that those four descriptions represent the four *malchuyos*.² *Tohu* represents Bavel. *Bohu* represents Paras. *Choshech* represents Yavan. And *tahom* represents the *galus* of Edom. So, the question is obvious: Where in the world does Mitzrayim fit in? I thought that was one of the *galuyos*. That was the first of the big *galuyos*. Isn't that a good question?

The answer to that question is as follows. The four *malchuyos* represent different *kochos*, challenges of *ra* to *tov*. Klal Yisrael had to face, deal with, be subjugated to, and be challenged by each of these *kochos* and overcome them, but the mother and father of all *kochos* of *ra* in the world is Mitzrayim.

To give you just a little bit of an insight, *Chazal* view the history of Klal Yisrael in *galus* as a complete human being with hands, feet, and a head. It says that the *malchus* of Bavel represents the head. Paras and Madai represent two arms. The *guf*, Malchus Yavan. The legs are Yishmael and Eisav, all the challenges of *ra* in the world. And the crown - the *shoresh* and the source of all these *kochos* - is Mitzrayim (based on Arizal in Likutei Torah, Ki Seitzei)

Now we have to understand: what is the *nekudah* that Mitzrayim represents? When we talk about the *galus Mitzrayim* and the *geulah* from Mitzrayim, what is it? For example, by Yavan, we know it was *choshech*. We got out of that *galus*

¹ כמבואר בגבורות השם שלהי פ"א אודות ארבע כוסות שהן כנגד ארבע מלכויות רבי שמעון בן לקיש פתר קרי' בגליות, והארץ היתה תהו, זה גלות בבל, שנאמר (ירמיה ד, כט): ראיתי את הארץ והנה תהו. ובהו, זה גלות מדי' (אסתר ו, יד): ויבהלו להביא את המן. וחושך, זה גלות נון, שהחשיכה עיניהם של ישראל בגזרותיהן, שהיתה אומרת להם, כתבו על קרן השור שאין לכם חלק באלהי ישראל. על פני תהום, זה גלות ממלכת הרשעה, שאין להם חקר כמו התהום, מה התהום הזה אין לו חקר, אף הרשעים כן. ורוח אלהים מרחפת, זה רוחו של מלך המשיח, היאך מה דאת אמר (ישעיה יא, ב): ונתה עליו רוח ה', באיזו זכות ממשמשת ובאה, המרחפת על פני המים, בזכות התשובה שנמשלה כמים, שנאמר (איכה ב, יט): שפכי כמים לברך, וכו'.

and experienced *ohr*. What is the *galus* of Mitzrayim?

GALUS MITZRAYIM TRIED TO NEGATE HASHEM

The *galus* of Mitzrayim was represented by Pharaoh. Now, the Torah tells us over and over again that through *yetzias Mitzrayim*, Hashem was going to demonstrate the fact that He controls and runs the world down to the nitty gritty. Hakadosh Baruch Hu runs and controls *teva*, and has the ability to change *teva*, to make *teva*. The *shem Hashem*, the גילוי כבוד שמים, the fact that Hashem is the almighty Borei Haolam and *Manhig*, with all that that entails, became revealed על ידי יציאת מצרים.

The *galus Mitzrayim* is the opposite. The greatest challenge to all the manifestations of Hashem is *Mitzrayim*. Mitzrayim is the *koach* in the world that says: “I don’t deal with spiritual *kochos*. I put up a wall, a huge wall in front of Hashem and I say, ‘Hashem, stay behind it. You don’t exist.’” And Pharaoh is confronted by Moshe Rabbeinu, who says, “I’m here on a *shlichus* from the Borei Olam. He’s telling me to tell you עמי ויעבדוני שלח את עמי.” But what does Pharaoh answer? “I have two things to say to you. Number one, ‘לא ידעתי אתה’, I don’t know Hashem. I don’t know of Him. And as far as your request to send out the Jews, הלח את ישראל לא אשלח, I’m not going to send them out.”

The *tumah* of Mitzrayim negates Hashem. You should know all the other *kochos* in the world of *ra* never negated Hakadosh Baruch Hu. You’ve got to know that. They acknowledged there was Hashem. All the *avodah zarah* in the world acknowledged there was Hashem. As a matter of fact, the *gemara* tells us how the *avodah zarahs* themselves referred to Hashem. The *gemara* tells us at the end of *mesechta Menachos* that all the *ovdei elilim*, all the idol worshippers, called Hakadosh Baruch Hu, “Eloka de’elokaya”, the Hashem over all the *Elokus*, over all the powers. Elokei Elokim. They all knew that there’s no existence in this world without Hashem. They all knew without a doubt that the only reality is Hashem and everything exists, because of Hashem, from Hashem, and by Hashem.

Pharaoh was the exception to this rule. You know what Pharaoh did? Pharaoh came along and said, “I am Hashem. I made the *yeor*, לי יאורי, the Nile is mine, ואני עשיתי, I made it” (Yechezkel 29:3). You hear that? He also said, “I made myself.” Pharaoh also claimed to have made himself. It would sound like the biggest *tipshus* in the world. You made yourself?! No one can make himself! Even a *sheiget* understands that. Even a *pruste oveid avodah zarah* understands that. Pharaoh was such a *במלכות שמים*. Pharaoh knew that he was born. Didn’t he know that? How do you know he was born? He had a birthday party. You can’t make a birthday party if you weren’t born. Birth means there was something here before me. Pharaoh said, “I had a birthday, but I am the *metzius*. I am what makes things exist. Things exist because of me. Without me, nothing would exist.” You understand that?

The famous Ramban in the beginning of *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* (1:2) says, אם יעלה על הדעת, שהוא אינו מצוי, that Hashem does not exist, אין דבר אחר יכול להמציאות, there is nothing else in the *velt* that is *shayach* to exist without the existence of Hashem, nothing else can exist. Pharaoh was the one who came and said this whole “torah,” ‘לא ידעתי אתה’, I don’t know what you’re talking about. He is the *metzius* itself. We believe all the *kochos* are from Hashem. “No, I am the *koach*.” That’s what Pharaoh said. And that’s why the

whole lesson of *yetzias Mitzrayim* was: וארא, “I will appear to them to show them: אני ה', קל שקי, אני ה' אלקים, אהיה אשר אהיה, וידעתם כי אני ה', וידעו בני ישראל כי אני ה' you are going to know.” The lesson of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is the lesson that there is a Hashem. *Galus Mitzrayim* was Klal Yisrael being subjugated, being *avadim*, to the antithesis of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. To the anti-Hashem. To the ultimate anti-*Borei*. To the ultimate *moreid* in Hashem. We became *avadim* to this man, this powerful *koach* who was *mevatel* Hakadosh Baruch Hu with his *chutzpah*. And Hashem said: that’s the plan. I want you to be under this man’s power and it’s going to look like he is in charge. He is going to make *gezeiros*, decrees. He is going to make it worse before it becomes better. He is going to show that he is the *balebus*! But *af al pi ken*, nothing doing. Hashem says: “Let me show you. Let me show you Who is the boss.”

YETZIAS MITZRAYIM DEMONSTRATES HASHEM IS THE ONLY POWER

So when you say the words, “*yetzias Mitzrayim*”, do you know what you are saying? It should mean to you, “Hashem, I know You’re the Master of all masters. You are in charge like nobody else is in charge. There is nothing that happens in this world that’s not from You.”

I have to tell you a little story that happened this morning. I got a call from another country. “Hello, is this Rabbi Brog?” “Yes.” “I am very frustrated. Extremely frustrated.” I could tell from the woman’s voice she was not a happy camper. “This is going wrong. That’s going wrong. I don’t like my job. A faucet in my house has been going off and on and now it broke and I can’t close the faucet. I’m ready to *plotz*.” I said, “Why don’t you try calling a plumber?” She said, “I called a bunch of plumbers. Either they don’t answer or they can’t come to help me. What should I do?”

I said, “First, relax. That’s the first thing. I detect serious frustration in your voice. Do you understand what’s happening?” She said, “If I understood, would I be calling you?” I said, “So let me explain it to you. Let me give you a little course. It’s called a course on how Hashem is with you. Hashem is in your life. Do you have children?” “Yes.” “Do you have a home?” “Yes.” “Do you have a husband?” “Yes.” “Do you have a job?” “Yes.” “Does your husband have a job?” “Yes.” I said, “Do you know how tightly connected Hashem is with you? Do you know how lucky you are to have Hashem in your life? Do you have pains in your back?” No. “Do you have pains in your legs? In your knees?” No. “Hashem is so tight with you, you should feel exhilarated. You should feel so happy. And the problem is that you don’t. Do you know what Hashem did? Hashem said, ‘Let me bring this family I love a little closer.’ Hashem loves you and wanted to bring you a little closer. So you know what He did? He gave you a couple of warnings. Faucet went on, faucet went off, faucet went on. You never thanked Hashem and said, ‘Hashem, I know it’s You.’ How many faucets do you have in your house? One? “No, no, I’ve got lots of faucets.” I said, “Are they working? Isn’t that a miracle? Were they all put in at different times?” “No, all the plumbing was changed at the same time.” “And only one of the faucets doesn’t work. Isn’t that funny? Hashem wants you to know you don’t appreciate Him. You don’t realize how good He is to you. You don’t realize how good you have it. How tight Hashem is with you. You have nothing to be frustrated about a *ki hu zeh klal*.”

I said, "I'm going to tell you what to do to fix the problem. I'm going to fix your faucet for you." I said, "When you hang the phone up, say as follows: I am very sorry, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, that I never appreciated how You were watching over my plumbing and taking care of my faucets, in addition to everything else in my life. I took it for granted. I overlooked it. I'm really sorry. And now You called me. You gave me the wake-up call, and now my faucet is not shutting off. Hashem, I'm sorry. I acknowledge it." I said, "I guarantee one of two things is going to happen. If I'm right, either the faucet is going to get fixed on the spot because Hashem will fix it for you. Or, you're going to get a call that the plumber is on the way. One of those two things." "And then it's going to cost me money." "It won't cost you any money either. If I'm right, it won't cost you any money. Hashem is just trying to give you a wake-up call." She said, "Thank you. I'll try it." I said, "Take a deep breath. You've got to relax. This is for your good."

Anyway, I hung up the phone and forgot about the call. An hour and a half later, the phone rang and my wife said, "Who's calling from Canada?" I said, "I don't know. What's the name there?" I asked my wife to answer the phone. My wife picked up the phone, "Hello. You want my husband? Here is my husband." I came to the phone and said, "Yes, what do you want?" "Oh, I can't thank you enough." I said, "What happened?" She said, "I got off the phone and did exactly as you told me. As I finished, my phone started to ring." "Who was it?" "My husband was on the phone. He said that thirty seconds before, he'd called the plumber who put the plumbing in the house a number of years ago. He answered on the first ring and said he's on his way. He came down within twenty minutes, fixed it, and said it's for free. I said, "Why is it free?" He said, "You're still under warranty. There is a five-year warranty on these things and you've still got a warranty." I said, "That's unbelievable. I'm so happy." I said, "Stay that way."

That's called having Hashem in your life. Everybody has this. Pharaoh said there's no Hashem at all. Anywhere, anyhow, anything. We came out of Mitzrayim. That's *yetzias Mitzrayim*. Hashem, I am Yours. אנכי ה' אלקיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים.

GA'AVAH CHALLENGES EMUNAH

Now, the Ramban at the end of *Parshas Bo* comes along and tells us many *yesodos*, *hafladige yesodos*. But if you take a look at the Ramban, you'll see he uses a very interesting language. Before we get to it though, I want to go back a step. What was the *middah* that Pharaoh utilized to challenge Hashem? What would you say? Yes - *ga'avah*. Pharaoh was the *shpitz ba'al ga'avah*. Now, *ga'avah* is the source of everybody who challenges Hashem. I don't care if you're *frum*. I don't care if you're *frummer*. If you lack *emunah* in Hashem and you don't acknowledge that all power belongs to Hashem, you are suffering from a measure of *ga'avah*. Pharaoh was the ultimate *ba'al ga'avah*. Pharaoh was the *shpitz ba'al ga'avah*. That's why he said, "I don't know השם," because the *middah* of *ga'avah* has in it the *koach* to challenge Hashem.

If you take a look in the Ramban, he uses very interesting language. He mentions many times that the purpose of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is to bring a person to be *modeh*, to admit. He says if a person does the *mitzvos*, כבר הודה בחידוש העולם, he has acknowledged the creation of the world. Through *kiyum hamitzvos*, a person is מודה בהן לאלקיו. He says the purpose of our creation is שידע האדם ויודה שבראו. He says ומן הניסים הגדולים והמפורסים אדם מודה בניסים הנסתרים שבראו. And so on.

Now what does that mean? If we say everything is to be *modeh*, it sounds like there's a discussion, that there are two sides, and one person has to be *modeh* to the other. For example, if you and I agree to go shopping, it's not that I'm *modeh* to you. But if you say, "I owe you \$100," and I say, "Do I? Do I really owe you \$100?" "Maybe you owe me?" Back and forth. I say okay, I'm *modeh*. The word "*modeh*" implies that there was a back-and-forth. There's a give and a take, and then one is *modeh* to the other. Where is the give and take in this *inyan*? I'm supposed to come out from *yetzias Mitzrayim* with the concept of: I am *modeh*.

And the answer is the following. A common question I get from people who call me with different *shaylos*, and I tell them it's all about *emunah*. It's only about *emunah*. And they say, "I have *emunah*." I say, "How about *bitachon*?" "I've got *bitachon* too. That's not the problem. I know Hashem is the Boss. You've got to help me out here, Rabbi." You know what I tell them? I say, "I'm sorry to tell you but you have no *emunah*." Recently, a guy called me up, with the same question. I told him, "You've got no *emunah*." He says, "You don't know me. I am *emunah* itself. I am *bitachon* itself." I said, "If you had *emunah* and *bitachon*, you wouldn't be wasting your breath talking to me on the phone. You've got to understand that, my friend."

You know what it means to have *emunah*? It means you've got to feel that you are *gornisht* next to Hashem. You have to feel you are not entitled to anything. You have to feel there is nothing coming to you. You have to feel that you are living by the grace of Hashem, by the *chessed* of Hashem, ועל נפלאותיך ועל עולמי. Does anybody feel like that? No. Nobody feels at all in his heart that he is completely indebted to Hashem. People have *emunah* in their minds but no one lives *emunah*. No one feels *emunah*.

³ ובעבור כי הקב"ה לא יעשה אות ומופת בכל דור לעיני כל רשע או סופר, ויצוה אותנו שנעשה תמיד זכרון ואת לאשר ראו עינינו, ונעתיק הדבר אל בנינו, ובניהם לבניהם, ובניהם לדור אחרון. והחמיר מאד בענין הזה כמו שח"ב קרת באכילת חמץ (שמות י"ב:ט"ו) ובעזיבת הפסח (במדבר ט' ג'), והצריך שנקתב כל מה שנראה אלינו באותות ובמופתים על ידינו ועל בין עינינו, ולקתב אותו עוד על פתחי הבתים במזוזות, ושנזכיר זה בפינו בבקר ובערב, כמו שאמרנו (ברכות כא. א.) אמת ויציב דאורייתא, ממה שכתוב (דברים ג' ט) "למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך", ושנעשה ספה בכל שנה: וכן כל כיוצא בהן מצות רבות זכר ליציאת מצרים, והכל להיות לנו בכל הדורות עדות במופתים שלא ישתכחו, ולא יהיה פתחון פה לכופר להכחיש אמונת האלהים. כי הקונה מזוזה בזוז אחד וקבועה בפתחו ונתפנן בענינה כבר הודה בחדושי העולם ובידיעת הבורא והשגחתו, וגם בגבואה, והאמין בכל פנות התורה, מלבד שהודה שחסד הבורא גדול מאד על עושי רצונו, שהוציאנו מאותו עבדות לחרות נכבוד גדול וזכות אבותיהם החפצים ביראת שמו. ולפיכך אמרו (אבות פ"ב מ"א) הוי זהיר במצוה קלה כבהמורה שפנן חמודות וחביבות מאד, שבכל שעה אדם מודה בהן לאלהיו, וקונת כל המצות שנאמין באלהינו ונודה אליו שהוא בראנו, והיא קונת היצירה, שאין לנו טעם אחר ביצירה הראשונה, ואין אל עליון חפץ בתחתונים מלבד שיעד האדם ויודה לאלהיו שבראו, וקונת רוממות הקול בתפלות וקונת בתי הכנסיות וזכות תפלת הרבים, זהו שיהיה לבני אדם מקום יתקבצו ויודו לאל שבראם והמציאם ויפרסמו זה ויאמרו לפניו ברייתך אנוהו, וזו קונתם במה שאמרנו ז"ל (ירושלמי תענית פ"ב ה"א) "ויקראו אל אלהים בחזקה" (יונה ג ח), מכאן אתה למד שתפלה צריכה קול, חציפא נצח לבישא (עי' ערוך ערך חצף): וזמן הנסים הגדולים המפורסמים אדם מודה בנסים הנסתרים שהם יסוד התורה כלה, שאין לאדם חלק בתורת משה רבינו עד שנאמין בכל דברינו ומקרינו שפנן נסים אין בהם טבע ומנהגו של עולם, בין ברבים בין ביחיד, אלא אם יעשה המצות יצליחו שפרו, ואם יעבר עליהם יכריתנו ענשו, הכל בגזרת עליון כאשר הזכרתי כבר (בראשית יז א, ולעיל ו ב.) ויתפרסמו הנסים הנסתרים בענין הרבים כאשר יבא ביעודי התורה בענין הברכות והקללות, כמו שאמר הכתוב (דברים ט כג-כד) "ואמרו כל הגוים על מה עשה ה' ככה לארץ הזאת, ואמרו על אשר עזבו את ברית ה' אלהי אבתם", שיתפרסם הדבר לכל האמות שהוא מאת ה' בענינם. ואמר בקיים "וראו כל עמי הארץ כי שם ה' נקרא עליך ויראו מנך". ועוד אפשר זה בעזרת השם (ויקרא כו יא) (רמב"ן על שמות י"ג:טז)

EVERYONE HAS GA'AVAH BEFORE THEY WORK ON THEMSELVES

Rav Yerucham said a very interesting thing. Rav Yerucham says that *be'emes* every single person, before he works on himself, thinks that he is a somebody. I want to explain what he means by “he thinks he is a somebody.” If he is a real louse, he thinks, “The world owes me. Hashem owes me. I am owed. I should have the best things in life, the finest things in life, the best wife in life, the best kids in life, the best house in life, the best *parnasah* in life, the best of everything.” That’s the *shpitz ba'al ga'avah*. Then you have a guy, even a worse guy, that says, “I am the *ba'al* of myself, I take care of myself. I am in charge of my life. I make things happen.” You know how many people I have spoken to? I am sure you have heard of it from a hundred people. I have heard from thousands. “Rabbi Brog, you should know I am a happening kind of guy. I make things happen. I am a take-charge kind of personality. And when I take charge, things usually go smoothly.” One time, I told a guy, “You are Pharaoh. That’s what you are. Pharaoh said the same thing to Moshe: *לא ידעתי את ה'*. I’m in charge. The Nile River runs because of me. I made myself. I made the world.”

Rav Yerucham says that a person is *shayach* to come to such a *madreigah* of *ga'avah* that he thinks that he is not *taluy* on Hashem. Once he exists, now he can take care of himself. The guy *pashut* becomes a *shtickel getchke* and he convinces himself that he is independent. Do you know how many people are walking around like this? With *shtreimelach*, with black hats, blue yarmulkes, blue and white yarmulkes, black yarmulkes, velvet yarmulkes. They’re thinking, “Give me a gun, and I will show you how you take charge. Teach me martial arts, and I will take charge. Give me some money to hire security details and I will show you how you take charge. Give me this, give me that and I will take charge and be in charge.” People think like that. It’s a *pele*. *Rachmana litzlan*.

A person could think of himself as a *ma'amin*. If you ask the guy, “Do you believe in Hakadosh Baruch Hu?” he’ll say, “Of course I believe in Hashem. Hashem is the *kol yachol*. *Vadai*. There is no *shaylah* about it.” But *be'emes* you have to know that every person has within himself this challenge of *לי יאורי ואני עשיתי*. I made my business from the bottom. I put in my sweat, my tears, and my efforts. It’s all mine! I pay the bills. I bring home the bacon. This is the *nusach* here from most people. And this is such a powerful force within a person that a person could *mamash* think like Pharaoh. *לי יאורי ואני עשיתי*.

WE HAVE NO KOCHOS WITHOUT HASHEM

The Ramban tells us that *yetzias Mitzrayim* has to bring us to the awareness of being *modeh*. Be *modeh*! And more *modeh*! Admit! Mr. Gornisht, you have no *kochos* whatsoever. Hashem does everything for you. *Modeh* means that when you come and say *מודים אמתו לך*, you’re saying to Hashem, “I am *modeh*, I made a mistake, Hashem. I didn’t realize You saved my life. A thousand times a day, You saved my life.”

Just last night, somebody called me up. Five years of terrible, terrible suffering. Five years! Strange suffering. What kind of suffering? Every twenty minutes, the person gets a spasm of pain in his back that is literally debilitating. He has to lie down in bed, where he writhes in pain *mamash* for five minutes. There’s nothing to do about it. Nothing to take for it. You get up, you continue to go back to work. Twenty minutes later, it’s like on the clock. I said, “Do you

have it also at night?” At night, it’s every hour. They went to every doctor, every neurologist, psychologist, therapist. All kinds of methods, this method, that method. You have stress in your life. You have this in your life. But the pain is real. And I thought to myself: I never heard of that. That’s a *chiddush* to me. I never thanked Hashem for that. And last night, I lay in my bed and I thought, “Wow, Hashem! I started moving my back. Wow! How come I have no spasms? Why don’t I have those spasms? I’m in such great physical shape here that I have no spasms? Why? It’s one thing. Hakadosh Baruch Hu is massaging my back all day long. All day long, He has His thumbs gently in my back, in my muscles, in my nerve endings and He’s saying, “No, no, no. Don’t hurt this man. Don’t hurt this man.” Twenty minutes, twenty-five minutes, thirty minutes, thirty-five, forty, forty-five, an hour. We don’t realize. You have nothing. You have to be *modeh* to Hashem על ניסיון ופלאותך ערב ובקר וצהרים בכל עת ובכל שעה.

NEEDING TO USE THE BATHROOM IS A REMEDY FOR GA’AVAH

Now, you know what Hashem did to teach us this lesson, to get us out of the mistake of thinking we’re in charge? You know what *metzius* Hashem created in the world to remind you that you’re not in charge? You know what that is? Going to the bathroom.

Pharaoh was a man that came up with a *narishkeit*: “I’m different from you guys. All you guys need to go to the bathroom. But I, Pharaoh, don’t have even one bathroom in my palace.” Anybody who wanted to come see it, they used to write in the papers. “Pharaoh has no bathroom in the palace.” So if you were a smart guy, you know what you said? “Boy, that palace must smell. Everybody goes to the bathroom.” No! You know what Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu? In the morning, he goes for a swim. An exercise swim. But really he’s going to the bathroom. *הנה יצא המימה*, he’s going to the water, a little cover-up of course. He made himself a *shtickel getchke* that he doesn’t need it. He doesn’t need this kind of stuff. So you go ahead, while you see him going to the river, he’s going to be in a big rush because his bladder is full. Hashem said don’t worry, I’m going to fill it a little extra. Pump it a little extra that morning there. The guy’s going to be *tantzing*, and he’s going to be telling you stories about how he needs to get his exercise. He needs his exercise! He needs exercise! Moshe you cut him off and *shmooze* him up. Tell him, “For a god, you look a little jumpy over there. What exactly is the problem? I’m seeing a couple of drops on your trousers, Mr. Pharaoh. Is everything all right? Do you have a tea under your belt? Are you carrying one of those Starbucks under your arm? What’s going on over here?”

The Chafetz Chaim says a *peledike zach*. He says like this. The purpose of why Hakadosh Baruch Hu created a person with the need to go to the bathroom is in order to remind the person of his lowliness, of what kind of *gornisht* he is, so that he shouldn’t entertain the thought - *ich bin epes*, I am something. Yechezkel Hanavi said a prophecy over Chiram Melech Tzur, the king of Tyre. You know what this Chiram did? He made himself a god. He was another one of these clowns and he thought, like Pharaoh. I’m the man. *Nu*. So you know what the *navi* told him? He said, “My friend, if you’re god, how come you’ve got plumbing? How come you have plumbing in the front and plumbing in the back?” That’s what he told him.

So the *gemara* in *Bava Basra* (75a) says an interesting thing. אמר ליה הקדוש ברוך הוא לחירם, Hashem said to Chiram Melech Tzur, בכך נסתכלתי, “You were the one I was looking at.” The Rashbam says: Hashem said, “When I created My

world, I was looking at you. I foresaw that you were going to be *moreid*, to rebel and make yourself a *getchke*. So you know what I did because of that? I installed plumbing on human beings.” Because of one clown. I’m not sure why He didn’t count Pharaoh in the clown business in the union of clowns. Hashem said He created נקבים ונקבים באדם in order to prevent a person from thinking too highly of himself. You know what the Chafetz Chaim said? The Chafetz Chaim said a *moradige ha’arah*. He said if the whole purpose of going to the bathroom is to remind the person that he’s not a *getchke*, that he’s not some kind of powerhouse, why couldn’t He arrange that people go to the bathroom once a week? Or once a month? *Vus epes* you have to go to the bathroom a number of times a day? *De heilege Chafetz Chaim zugt* do you know what you see from here? How sick people are. How bad *ga’avah* is. If the guy doesn’t go to the john a number of times a day, he can still fool himself that maybe he’s a *getchke*. Once a week.. Even once a day is not enough. A few times. The next time you go to the bathroom, don’t go to sleep on me over here. You’ve got to think of this. You’re a man that’s very friendly with the bathroom. When you go to the bathroom what are you doing in there? I’m sure you’re learning *mussar*. But now I’m going to teach you what *mussar* you should learn. Say to yourself, “I, big man, that I am: I am *modeh* to Hashem that I’m nothing but a creature and a creation of Hashem.” And then you won’t have to sit there that long. You can be in and out. Just think about the *shiflus*.

You hear how far we are from understanding the power of *ga’avah*? The power of *ga’avah* is the greatest challenge of *emunah* to Hashem. *Anivus*, humility, being *makir* the *emes*, that’s what *yetzias Mitzrayim* is about. Every morning you say, אני ה' אלקיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים, “I, Hashem, took you out of Mitzrayim. I took you out.” You know what you scream after you say that? What do you scream after you say that? What unusual cry do you say after you read that *passuk*? “*Emes!*” Or if you’re Sefardic you say, “*Emet!*” It’s not part of the *passuk*. You do it in the morning. You do it at night. *Emes!* I believe it. It’s true. And you should try to be *margish*, get it into your *kishkes*, and then you’ll understand what *yetzias Mitzrayim* is about.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu should help us all come to this *hakarah*. Be aware that human beings have *ga’avah*. They have a streak of independence. They don’t like to subjugate themselves to Hashem. A lot of people who question *emunah* are not questioning *emunah*. They’re bringing out and emphasizing their *ga’avah*. When you say and talk about *yetzias Mitzrayim*, then you’re talking about *anivus*, בריותך אנחנו, מודים אנחנו לך שאתה הוא ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו יוצרנו, Hakadosh Baruch Hu You’re the Creator. You’re everything for us. If a person recognizes that, that person is out of Mitzrayim.

❖ IN SUMMARY ❖

The essence of *galus Mitzrayim* is overcoming the *middah of ga'avah*. Pharaoh represented *ga'avah* as he negated the existence of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is the expression of *anivus*, of full understanding that Hashem is the life force and center of everything and that nothing happens in the world that's not from Hashem. Denial of Hashem in any form is evidence that a person harbors the *middah of ga'avah*. The remedy to that is to strengthen our connection to *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, admitting that without Hashem we are nothing. Actually, the Ramaban says that *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is our resource to help us come to a recognition of the existence of Hashem and to thank Hashem for all He does for us, all of the time. Hashem created us with a digestive system to remind us how human we are and that *anivus* is the golden *middah* that we should all strive to attain. This week (*bli neder*), I will think a few times about how Hashem is everything for me and that He keeps me healthy and safe and prevents mishaps. I will try to remember this, either in *tefillah*, such as by *Modim*, or when Hashem sends an annoying situation as a wake-up call, to practice coming out of *Mitzrayim*, wherever I am.

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