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מכתב התחזקות (ו)

Our minds are perplexed, how can we happily usher in "Shevei Shel Pesach" and to joyfully sing the Shira, whilst the terrible plague of Corona is circulating in our midst ורח"ל and many people have already succumbed and others are dangerously ill. Not a day goes by without hearing more terrible and sad news of more people who have been taken from us ורח"ל and have been chosen to be a pure offering to atone for Klall Yisroel.

Chazal tell us (שמור"ר פכ"ג ד) that from the day the world was created no one ever sang Shira to Hashem until the Yidden sang Shira at the Yam Suf. The Meforshim ask, how can this be we find that many people have already sung Shira? Indeed Odom HoRishon, even sang Shira and composed מזמור שיר ליום השבת.

Explains the Sefas Emes, the Beis Halevi and Rav Gedalia Schorr, that Klall Yisroel sang Shira thanking not only for their redemption, but also on for their enslavement in Mitzrayim. No one had ever thanked Hashem until then for their suffering. The Yidden at the Yam Suf were the first ones to openly declare that their suffering must somehow also be for their own good, and if so they needed to thank Hashem for that as well.

It is not difficult to thank and to sing Shira when things are going smoothly. It is a great madreiga to be able to thank Hashem when things are not going well. This is what we mean when we say in Hallel כוס ישועות אשא ובשם ה' אקרא, צרה ויגון אמצא ובשם ה' אקרא in every situation a Yid has to sing Hallel and declare "ובשם ה' אקרא".

Gedolai Yisroel were always on this level to be able to see the good in even the most dire situations, and to thank Hashem for it. During the 1st World War, the fighting between the Russians and the Germans uprooted and destroyed whole kehilos in Eastern Europe, causing

hundreds of thousands of Yidden to lose their homes and their jobs, and to flee as refugees to other countries. The town of Chortkov was also not spared the ravages of the war. Fierce fighting took place in the city, during which much of the town including the Chortkover Rebbe's own home was destroyed.

Although the Rebbe lost his home and most of his belongings, he nevertheless accepted his loss with love and complete faith. The words that he said then (100 years ago in 1920) ring true today as well: "Our Sages have told us that סחירת זקנים בנין 'The demolition by elders is not a negative act of destruction, but is in its essence a positive act of building'. All the more so **the destruction that is an act of Hashem is definitely only for our ultimate good and is no doubt part of the preparation needed to herald a truly splendid building, that of the Beis HaMikdosh speedily in our times.** It is this belief that gives us the strength to overcome our suffering for we are sure that this is all for the ultimate good."

One of the very holy seforim, is the sefer אש קודש that which was written by the Picesna Rebbe zt"l. In his sefer, he transcribed the divrei Torah that he gave to the Yidden in the Warsaw Ghetto in their last hours, before they were all brutally murdered. In a dvar Torah on Parshas Mezorah (1940) the Rebbe wrote as follows:

We have no understanding of the depth of the Torah and the mitzvos, despite this we all know and believe that whatever Hashem does, even when we are being punished – all is for the good.

But when we see that we are being afflicted not only physically but also in ways which are causing us to become distant chas vesholom, from Hashem, **there is no Cheder for the children, no Yeshiva, no Beis Hamedrash to daven with a minyan, no Mikva and so on,** a doubt might enter our minds, how can this also be for the good?! If it is for the good, why are we not being afflicted in ways that can bring us closer to Hashem and not in a way which causes the silencing of Torah and Tefillah?

We see however from the Torah, that a person, whose house was afflicted with tzoraas, may not say that it is definitely tzoraas, he may only say כנגע נראה לי בבית it appears and it looks like tzoraas, but he may not say that it is for sure tzoraas. The reason is because underneath

the tzoraas was a hidden treasure, and when the tzoraas is removed the hidden treasure will be revealed. Therefore one can only say that כנגע it looks like a punishment.

The Sefas Emes writes (פסח תרנ"ה) "Every tragedy that befalls Klall Yisroel is part of the preparation to bring the redemption as it says **בערב ילין בכי ולבוקר רנה** the evening of tears will be followed by the dawn of rejoicing. This is so even if we are not worthy, nevertheless in the future the salvation that the tragedy heralded and caused, will be revealed. This is how it was when they left Mitzrayim, and at the Yam Suf their tears were changed into joy and this was their Shira.

I wish to conclude with the holy words of the Belzer Rebbe zt"l, which he said during his first Shabbos in Eretz Yisroel. During the War, all his children and grandchildren were killed, some of them brutally murdered in front of his eyes. The Rebbe arrived in Eretz Yisroel a few days before Shabbos Shira 1944.

At his first tish, the Rebbe said the following devar Torah. On the possuk **אז ישיר משה** Rashi tells us the word **ישיר** which is written in the future tense, alludes to **תחיית המתים**, in the future all those who were niftar will arise and will sing Shira to Hashem.

What did Chazal see in this possuk more than other pesukim that are written in the future tense, that davka here is an allusion to **תחיית המתים**? Explained the Belzer Rebbe: When the Yidden left Mitzrayim, only one fifth went out, four fifths had been niftar during **מכת חושך**. Almost every person had lost close relatives, everybody was in mourning for the many family members who had just died. How could they possibly now sing a Shira and be besimcha after going through such a tragedy?

Chazal understood that it was their emunah in **תחיית המתים** which gave them the inner strength to be able to sing Shira. They knew and believed that one day they would all be reunited, and then they would all sing a Shira together, this is what gave them the ability to sing the Shira at the Yam Suf. Concluded the Belzer Rebbe that it is with this emunah that we have to carry on and sing a Shira to Hashem until we will soon be **zoche הללוי-ה**.

It is not easy in the present situation to be besimcha, but this is our avodah; especially now over Yom Tov. We have to be mechzeik ourselves with emunah, and to believe that in the very near future we will all be zoche to sing a new Shira together with all previous generations, our zeides and bubbes, who will marvel at our perseverance and inner strength, that despite all the travails of our long and hard golus, Yidden have not given up and continued to keep the Torah and mitzvos besimcha.

ידידכם ישראל פרידמן