

And now, behold! The outcry of Bnei Yisrael has come to Me. (3:9)

There is *tefillah*, prayer, and there is *tze'akah*, crying out, yelling or effusive prayer laden with emotion and expression. *Tze'akah* is the prayer one offers when he is literally up against the wall with nowhere to go. He sees no way out, no form of salvation. Imagine one is walking in a forest when he suddenly chances upon a bear. He screams. Will the scream make a difference? Bears are really not moved by the screams of a human being. Nonetheless, when one realizes that this is it, he has no way out – he screams. *Klal Yisrael* was in Egypt suffering from every form of persecution the diabolical Egyptians could devise. The Jews were certainly not on an appropriate spiritual plane, having sunken to the forty-ninth level of *tumah*, ritual defilement. They thought that assimilation would garner further acceptance for them within Egyptian society. They were wrong. As far as the morally bankrupt Egyptians were concerned, they were still Jews. They cried; they screamed. They had come to the end of the road.

Chazal (Bava Metzia 85a) relate that *Rebbe, Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi*, suffered terribly during the last years of his life. He had everything: money, glory, Torah erudition and achievement, and he was in debilitating pain. The ironic part was that this was Heavenly decreed due to an incident that had occurred. A calf being brought to the slaughter broke away and attempted to find refuge with *Rebbe*. The venerable redactor of the Mishnah, who made *Torah She'Baal Peh* accessible to us, replied, *Leich, ki l'kach notzarta*, "Go, because this is for what you were created." Since he showed no compassion for the calf, he was stricken with pain for the rest of his life.

Horav Nosson Wachtfogel, zl, asks: What did *Rebbe* do wrong? He responded with the truth. The calf was created to serve as food for human consumption. He explains that if someone relies on you, if someone comes to you and pleads for help, you may not just send him away to his death. You must find some way to help him. So, too, does Hashem respond to us when we are *tzoeik*, cry out with extraordinary emotion. "Hashem, we can turn to no one but to You! Please help us! Without You, we are gone!" Surely, if we express ourselves with genuine sincerity, He will listen.

Horav Yechiel Meir Tzucker, Shlita, relates a powerful incident that occurred in Yeshivas Knesses Chizkiyahu in K'far Chassidim. It was right before *Tekias Shofar*. The *Mashgiach* of the *Yeshivah*, the saintly *Horav Eliyahu Lopian, zl*, was ascending to the lectern to address the yeshivah, to arouse and inspire them before the *tekios*. Suddenly, out of the blue, *Rebbetzin Renah Mishkovsky* came running in to the *bais hamedrash*; with a tear-stricken face, she ran over to the *Aron Kodesh*. *Horav Dovid* and *Renah Mishkovsky* lived in the dormitory with their very young son, *Itzele* (named for his grandfather, *Horav Itzele Peterberger, zl*). *Itzele* was very ill, and the doctors, who despaired for his life, had sadly sent him home to leave this world in his own bed.

Rebbetzin Renah saw that the end was near. She galvanized what little strength she had and opened the doors of the *Aron HaKodesh*. In front of the *Mashgiach* and the entire *yeshivah*, she

cried out with bitter tears, pleading with Hashem to grant her young son a reprieve. She finished weeping, closed the doors, and respectfully backed away from the *Aron HaKodesh*.

The *Mashgiach's shmuess*, ethical discourse, was no longer necessary. The *yeshivah* had its most powerful inspiration. He banged on the lectern and called out: *Tekios!* The cries of a Jewish mother were all the inspiration they needed.