

You shall say, “It is a Pesach feast-offering to Hashem, Who skipped over the houses of Bnei Yisrael in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but He saved our households.” (12:27)

Imagine, person A testifies that person B attempted to kill him. Person B is found guilty and placed in jail. Afterwards, person A makes a festive feast thanking the Almighty that he was not also incarcerated. Anyone privy to this case would certainly raise his eyebrows and wonder if person A is sane. Is that not, however, what the *pasuk* relates to us? The Egyptians sinned against the Jews. Hashem found them guilty and punished them severely. The Jews were offering their gratitude to Hashem for not also killing them! Why? It is the Egyptian who was the aggressor, and the Jew who was the victim. What could have justified punishing the hopeless victim?

Siach Yitzchak suggests a pragmatic response to this question. There were individuals in Egypt who did not want to leave. The situation in Egypt notwithstanding, who knew what the wilderness might bring? Sometimes, the status-quo, regardless of the accompanying pain and troubles, is more desirable than an ambiguous and potentially risky change. Moreover, the Egyptian lifestyle was definitely not as spiritually demanding as life in the wilderness would be. Fearing that Hashem would delay the liberation in response to these misguided individuals, Moshe *Rabbeinu* implored Hashem, asking, “Are all of us going to be held back because of these few who refuse to leave?” Immediately, Hashem caused a wind to blow the sweet smell of *Korban Pesach* into their nostrils. They were so captivated by the aroma that they acceded to leaving Egypt. This then was a great kindness from Hashem, for otherwise this minority would have impacted on *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the Egyptian exodus.

The power of an individual is incredible. We have only to look back over the last sixty to seventy years of Orthodoxy in America to note how much was accomplished by a few dedicated Jews. Whether it was lay people who understood the importance of *Torah*, or *Roshei Yeshivah* and *rabbanim* who would not permit the Nazis to destroy their will, these individuals, with *Siyata diShimaya*, Divine Assistance, overcame all odds to set in motion the great *Torah* renaissance which we enjoy today. We have also to remember that, regrettably, individuals can also destroy what has been built. We must never discount the single individual, because his potential is awesome.