

And I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt; I shall rescue you from their service; I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm... I shall take you to Me for a people... and you shall know that I am Hashem Your G-d, Who takes you out from under the burdens of Egypt. (6:6,7)

The nature of a person is to entreat the Almighty when he is confronted with adversity. At the times in which a person requires a salvation of sorts, he immediately turns to Hashem with tears of supplication. He runs to the righteous Torah leaders – both to those who are alive, and to those who have passed on to their eternal reward. He tumults and weeps, recites countless *perakim*, chapters, of *Tehillim*, and beats his chest until, finally, Hashem responds, “Yes!” His *tzarah*, trouble, is over.

Let us take an example and be more specific. A family member is stricken with a terrible illness. Hashem sends a good agent, a wonderful doctor, who is able to arrest the disease and provide a healthy prognosis for the patient. In another situation, a person is teetering on financial ruin. Without an infusion of a large sum of money, he will be in serious trouble. Suddenly, out of nowhere, he receives a gift from a kindhearted person – the exact amount required to extricate him from his financial woes. There is also the family that is plagued with a child who is seriously at risk. Nobody has succeeded in reaching him – until, out of the blue, someone is able to get through to the child and turn his life around.

In all of the above scenarios, shortly after salvation has been achieved, the beneficiary slowly seems to forget the real Source of his “pardon.” He no longer recognizes that it was Hashem Who intervened; he believes that the solution to his problem was “natural”; it was a great doctor, an astute *rebbe*, a wonderful philanthropist. They forget that it was all Hashem. Without the Almighty – nothing would have happened.

Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita, quotes an exposition to explain an enigmatic phrase which we recite nightly during *Tefillas Maariv*: *V’haseir Satan milfaneinu u’mei’achareinu*, “And remove the Satan from before us and after us.” It is understandable that we must contend with Satan’s guile prior to executing a *mitzvah* or a good deed, but what can Satan do after we have already completed the *mitzvah*, after we have carried out the act of kindness? What is done is done. He explains that we remember Hashem and reach out to Him before the *mitzvah* which we hope will catalyze His salvation. We need His help. We know that, without Him, we have no chance of subduing the *yetzer hora*/Satan. After we have successfully completed our service to Him; after we have emerged from adversity with our feet on the ground; now that we have health, we are financially sound, our family is in order; do we remember Hashem, or do we say, “Nature took its course. It was the doctor, the philanthropist, the rabbi.”? It was not them. When we do not think of Hashem as the true and only Source of our salvation, we fall right into Satan’s tentacles.

This idea is emphasized by the Torah. Even after the Jewish People had been redeemed from Egypt, they were to remember that their Savior was none other than Hashem. We must continue to transit this truth throughout the generations and reiterate it constantly: Our only source of salvation is the Almighty. While this injunction is addressed to the collective nation, *Rav Gamliel* observes that it applies to each individual Jew as well. We each have our personal *yetzias Mitzrayim*, exodus from Egypt. For some, it is called "illness"; others see it as a financial crisis; yet others view it through the lens of *tzaar gidul banim*, the pain associated with raising children. In any event, we all confront personal adversity in life for which we pray, and Hashem listens rendering a positive response. Yet, shortly after we have experienced our personal deliverance from distress, we often forget that it was Hashem Who unshackled us from misery. Gratitude is a lifelong endeavor. Once we owe, we may not forget, because life as we presently experience it would have been drastically altered had Hashem not responded favorably to our entreaty.

Once a *chasid* of **Horav Yochanan, zl, m'Karlin** came before the *tzaddik* and asked that he pray for his son who was ill. The *Rebbe* sent the *chasid* to a specific physician. After visiting the doctor with his son, he returned to the *Rebbe* with the declaration that his son was fine. Not even a hint of disease was in his system.

The *Rebbe* looked deeply into his *chasid's* eyes and said, "Do not say it that way, as if there was never anything amiss with your son's health. There was something wrong. Your son was gravely ill. Hashem intervened and healed him. Therefore, the doctor saw nothing wrong. You went to the doctor to discover that Hashem had healed your son. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the original diagnosis was incorrect!"

We pay gratitude to Hashem. The issue is how much and for how long. Regrettably, we quickly forget that it was Hashem, Who provided us with the answer to our problem. This is normal and, unfortunately, predictable for a human being. This does not, however, make it right.