

Then Moshe and Bnei Yisrael sang this song to Hashem. (15:1)

The verb *yashir*, he sang [will sing] is written in the future tense, although it is clearly a reference to an event which had already taken place. *Rashi* explains that the future tense is related to a past occurrence, the time that Moshe *Rabbeinu* first considered singing. In an alternative exposition, he quotes *Chazal*, who interpret *yashir* as referring to an event which will yet take place in the future. This *pasuk* is a *remez*, allusion, that the axiom, *Techiyas HaMeisim min haTorah*, the Resurrection of the Dead, is referenced in the Torah. Indeed, Moshe and all *Yisrael* sang then, but they will all sing again one day after *Techiyas HaMeisim*, when the dead will come back to life. We have yet to explain the nature of *shirah*, a song of praise, after the Resurrection of the Dead. What will be its content? What aspect will we praise?

The *Talmud Pesachim* 50a, discusses the difference between *Olam Habba*, the World to Come, and *Olam Ha'zeh*, this world. *Chazal* distinguish between the blessings one recites for good and bad news. In this world, when one hears good tidings, he blesses *HaTov v'Hameitiv*, "Who is good, and Who does good." When one hears bad tidings, he blesses *Dayan Ha'Emes*, "The truthful Judge." In *Olam Habba*, everything is (the blessing is always *HaTov v'Hameitiv*) good. *Rashi* explains that in the World to Come, there will be no bad tidings. Thus, the only blessing that is recited is *HaTov v'Hameitiv*.

In his commentary to *Meseches Pesachim*, the **Tzlach** raises the following difficulty. Why does the *Talmud* focus on the blessings for good and bad news? It could simply have said that in this world there are both good and bad tidings, while in the World to Come, everything will be good. The issue should not be concerning the blessings, but rather, regarding the news one receives.

The *Tzlach* quotes **Horav Ephraim Risher, zl**, who explains that, indeed, nothing truly bad issues from Hashem – even in this world. The suffering and pain which Hashem, at times, visits upon a person are intended for his own good. By virtue of *yissurim*, troubles, one's evil inclination is subdued or his soul is purified, so that, when it returns to its Source, it will be as pristine as when it was originally taken to be placed within man. In this world, however, we do not appreciate the benefit derived from experiencing suffering and tragedy. It is only in the next world, the world of pure truth, that we will look in retrospect and see that which we had perceived as bad was actually good – for us. We will then acknowledge its inherent goodness. Armed with this new perspective on the life he lived in this world, he will exult in the blessing of *HaTov v'Hameitiv* – in regard to all of the suffering that he had previously experienced.

Hashem's Oneness is not fully appreciated, and certainly not acknowledged in this world, since it is difficult for the individual to reconcile pain and tragedy with Hashem's Divine Attributes of Mercy and Kindness. In the next world, the story will be quite different. There, man will

experience only good, thereby stimulating acknowledgment and glorification of Hashem's Oneness.

Le'asid lavo, in the future, in *Olam Habba*, we will see with a clarity of vision unparalleled to anything we have heretofore experienced. All of the *tzaros*, troubles, pain and suffering, will have transparency through which they will appear as only the true good which they are. In the next world, we will confront the truth which has eluded us in this world. The test of man, however, is not in the next world, but in this world. We must believe *b'emunah sheleimah*, with complete and unequivocal faith, that everything which transpires in this world does not "just happen." Coincidence is not a word which should be in the observant Jew's lexicon. Everything has a reason. Hashem knows it and, one day, we will also know it.

Knowing that there is a reason for everything and that Hashem is behind every occurrence in our lives should provide us with the hope necessary to overcome life's challenges. Without hope, one will find it most difficult to survive. With hope, one can look death in the face and not be afraid. The following episode attests to this verity:

One evening, **Horav Aryeh Levine, zl**, was seen walking in the Bukharian quarter of the holy city of Yerushalayim. "What brings the *Rav* to this neighborhood?" he was asked by a prominent member of Yerushalayim's elite.

"Come with me," *Rav Aryeh* replied, displaying his infectious smile. They continued walking together until they arrived at a wedding hall. The ceremony had yet to begin, as everyone was milling around anticipating the opening music, heralding the beginning of the wedding. The *chassan*, bridegroom, was sitting at his place of honor at the head of the table. When he saw *Rav Aryeh* enter the room, the *chassan* jumped up, ran over and embraced the *Rav*. The embrace was reciprocated. People were surprised at this display of affection between the *Tzaddik* of Yerushalayim and the *chassan* from the Bukharian community. Sensing this, the *chassan* put his arm lovingly around *Rav Aryeh* and called the gathering to attention. "Let me share with you a story which is the background of my unique relationship with the *Rav*," the *chassan* began.

"Under the British Mandate, I unfortunately was imprisoned on a trumped-up charge and sentenced to death. I joined the ranks of the 'red-clothed elite' in the British prison in Yerushalayim – those who had been sentenced to death. As I sat in my cell brooding over my fate, I found myself broken in spirit, plunging deeper and deeper into depression. All I saw before me were the hangman's gallows.

"It was the first *Shabbos* of my incarceration, and the *Rav* appeared at my cell. We talked long and earnestly. He tried to imbue me with courage and hope. I had none. He was unable to budge me from my melancholic state. Finally, completely out of the blue, he said to me, 'Promise me that you will invite me to your wedding!'

“I looked at the *Rav* incredulously. This was the very last thing I had expected to hear from him. Married? I did not even know a girl. Yet, the *Rav* repeated his request once again with utmost confidence, as though it were a *fait accompli*.

“When I heard these words emanate from the *Rav*’s mouth, it changed my entire outlook. The *Rav* had given me his promise. How could I go wrong? His hope and good cheer stayed with me, imbuing me with hope until that wonderful day that my sentence was commuted. The end of the Mandate brought my release from prison, after which I met my *kallah*, bride. *Rav* Aryeh kept his promise.”