

And I have heard its outcry because of its taskmasters. (3:7)

The *Zohar Hakadosh* points out that among the various expressions used to describe an impassioned plea to Hashem, the most intense and most meaningful is "*tzaakah*". This form of crying out is a supplication which emanates from the innermost recesses of one's heart. It is the essence of truth and reaches up to the source of truth--Hashem. **The Ozrover Rebbe, zl**, makes an analogy to lend deeper meaning to this idea.

In the *Mishnah, Meseches Keilim 17:13*, *Chazal* assert that if one makes skins from the hides of creatures that live in the sea, they are *tahor*, ritually clean, and not susceptible to *tumah*, contamination. The sea dog, however, is one sea creature that is not included in this law. The *Rosh* explains that for every creation on land, its a counterpart lives in the sea. If a sea creature is under attack, he will not escape to land. Rather, he will submerge himself deeper into the sea. The sea dog, on the other hand, runs to the land. Since it identifies with the land in times of danger, it is categorized as a land creature. Although the sea dog *lives* in the sea, in times of stress it reverts to the land. According to *Chazal*, this indicates that the sea dog is essentially a land animal. The determining factor of its integral personality is where it turns in times of trouble, when its "real self" is manifest.

The same analogy applies to *Bnei Yisrael*. Some Jews have regrettably strayed from the path of observance, turning their backs on the religion of their ancestors and betraying the Almighty Who gave them *everything*. Are these Jews really gone? Have they permanently deserted their G-d and their people or have they just fallen under negative influence? The answer, claims the *Ozrover*, is dependent on whom they turn to in an *eis tzarah*, a time of anxiety and pain. In time of affliction, usually the facade of arrogance is removed, the guise of indifference and cynicism fades away, as the real *pintele Yid* emerges, pure and untainted.

When the cry emanates from the Jewish heart, it demonstrates the real Jew , the one who had never really turned away from Hashem. Where the Jew turns in his moment of affliction--and to Whom he prays in his time of need--determines the reality. *Bnei Yisrael* lived in Egypt, the center of moral degeneracy. They succumbed to a culture that was the antithesis of their belief and heritage. They "acted" like Egyptians. They seemed to have rejected everything Jewish. When the decrees against them surfaced from the nation which they had adopted, from a people who they foolishly believed accepted them, however, they turned to Hashem. They relied upon the G-d of their forefathers, the one Who has always been there waiting patiently for them, as a father waits for his child.