

# Freedom from Egypt Via Emunah

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Basic to the lessons of Chassidus in general and the Rebbe's teachings in particular is the understanding that the Jewish holidays are not celebrations of events which happened long ago. They are special times of year which Hashem has granted us, in order to give us as spiritual gifts the ability to be elevated to new, higher levels in Avodas Hashem appropriate to the particular Yom Tov. Regarding Pesach, for example, the Rebbe outlines for us in Likutei Moharan I, 7 exactly what the exile in Egypt and the Exodus meant on the spiritual plane, and how it applies to each of us today.

The Rebbe explains that a Jew is intrinsically at home in Eretz Yisroel, a plane of complete faith that everything that happens is a miracle. The realization that there really is no such thing as nature, and that prayer defies nature is at the essence of a Jew. A Jew knows that he must rely on Hashem every moment for everything; just like in Eretz Yisroel we are dependent on Hashem sending rain for our sustenance.

When a person doesn't feel the security of Hashem's Hand leading him and wonders whether everything will really work out all right, he falls into exile. Exile is when someone loses his awareness of Emunah. When a person comes to depend on the natural order of things in order to get by, he is living in an aspect of 'Egypt', just like the Egyptians who

got used to living off the Nile and didn't realize the necessity of asking Hashem for His help in every step of life. While in exile, a person comes to feel as if things just "have to be this way". He thinks that there's some law that fixes everything in their place, leaving no room for miracles, and certainly not prayer.

How do we rebuild our Emunah in order to go out of Exile? The Rebbe teaches that this is through infusing ourselves with truthfulness, since the only way to find Emunah is by searching for it with sincerity.

The way to come to truthfulness is by following the advice and teachings of the Tzaddikim which are based on truth. When we accustom ourselves to conducting our actions and thoughts in accordance with truthful paradigms, we train ourselves to be more sincere in our outlook, which in turn brings us to a stronger Emunah.

However, as Reb Nosson explains in Likutei Halachos, Hil' Pesach 7:5, when somebody is in a spiritual Egypt, he can't wait to get out of Mitzrayim. He's in danger, and there's no time to first build up the Emunah little by little by following the advice of the Tzaddikim and slowly developing his Emes until he's able to have proper faith. By the first Exodus, Klal Yisroel was in danger and had to leave immediately. They weren't able to hear the Mitzvos, Hashem's advice, and start training themselves into the proper outlook. So too, a person in a spiritual Egypt has to first get out of the danger of the Golus Mitzrayim, and only afterwards can he build himself up to proper Emunah.

Reb Nosson (ibid 7:7, 7:11) writes that this is the miracle of Pesach which every Jew can experience every year by the Seder night. Throughout the whole year the only way we can achieve sincerity and honesty is by following the advice of the Tzaddikim which is based on truth. But tonight Hashem grants us a gift by shining into us the light of truth itself without

our own preparation for it. With this light and understanding we can achieve a sufficient level of Emunah with which to run out of Galus.

Every person in his own spiritual exile can jump out of his Galus with the special light which Hashem gives him in order to run out, even before he's ready for it.

The next level, which is after coming out of exile to start building ourselves up until we achieve a real level of Emunah, is the Avodah of Sefiras HaOmer, which we will discuss next time.