

שבת חול המועד פסח

This adaptation is dedicated in honor
of my dear wife, Devorah,
and my dear son, Moishe.

שביעי של פסח

"My beloved, precious son ... take delight in the joy of this holy festival, in which we merited Hashem performing such miracles as these, that He brought us out of Egypt and split the Sea for us. It is incumbent upon us, even in this generation, to be jubilant over the splitting of the Sea, where Hashem revealed his G-dliness, mastery and dominion with this amazing and awesome revelation - that has never been replicated - to the point that even the maidservants at the Sea witnessed more than later generation prophets observed and children were able to point and say, "this is my G-d and I will glorify Him." Be merry, my son, that you have merited to be part of the Jewish people, the Chosen Nation, who all of these miracles were performed for."

— The words of your father, who petitions for your well-being with love, Nossion of Breslov.¹

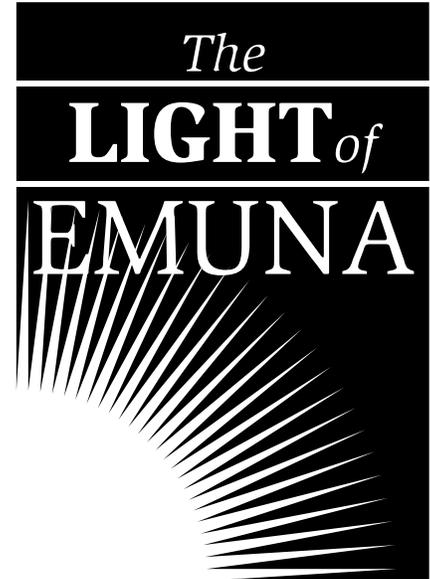
"אז ישיר משה ובני ישראל" (שמות טו, א)

HKB"H longs to hear our voices, the voice of every single Jew. "השמיעני את קולך... כי קולך ערב" We have such sweet and pleasant voices – why do we not sing our *tefillos*? Man is created to recite songs and praises. Song and melody is the most wondrous bond of connection that a person has with His Creator. When a person hums and sings, he is immediately attached to the Creator. "It is beneficial for a person to accustom himself to live with a tune because it is a great and high matter, it contains tremendous power to awaken and draw a person's heart to Hashem."²

In the heart of every Jew, in the depths of each soul, a melody is played. This tune is hidden in

¹ עלים לתרופה, עד

² שיחות הר"ן, רעג



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai's "Ohr Ha'Emuna"

most people. It is covered under piles of sadness, worry, anger and confusion. **The seventh day of Pesach is the time to renew the melody of the heart.** For on that day, Hashem finally heard the Song of the Jewish people.

Moreinu Harav: From the day that HKB"H created the world until the day that the Jewish people stood by the Sea, we do not find anyone having sung. Hashem wanted Adam Harishon to sing – it was the first day of Creation, begin to sing to the Master of the World. Instead, he sinned with the Tree of Knowledge. Then, he fasted and performed acts of contrition – but he never sang. Hashem saved Avraham from the fiery furnace and the war with the four kings – yet he did not sing. When Sarah Imeinu gave birth to Yitzchak after so many barren years – she did not sing. Yitzchak was saved from the knife but did not sing. Yaakov was saved from the angel but did not sing. Even later on, Hashem wanted Chizkiyahu to sing but he felt that it would be a waste of time from Torah learning and so he too failed to sing. He was arrogant about his learning and so he lost the privilege of being Moshiach. Failure to sing can stem from arrogance. When the Israelites came through the Sea, they began to sing before Hashem. Hashem said, "This is what I waited 2448 years for." It was cause for great joy.

Singing opens the heart. If we are fortunate, it can even bring a tear to the eye. A melody

pours new strength into a person and illuminates hidden paths to his Heavenly Father.

There are many types of melodies that are sung in the world. First amongst them:

A Melody of Emuna

The seventh day of *Pesach* is the holiday of the revelation of the light of *emuna*. What category of *emuna*? **The *emuna* that there are no laws of nature at all.** All of the miracles that occurred for us during the Exodus, testify, like a thousand witnesses, that HKB”H is the only administrator in the world. All of the laws of nature are suspended at His whim - at His will, the Sea is divided into twelve paths of solid ground so that the Jewish people can walk on paved road.

On the seventh day of *Pesach* we receive an incredible invitation to reveal, within the innermost parts of our souls, that there really is “nothing aside from Hashem.”

The secret of Creation is that there is nothing here - only Hashem. Whatever exists, is G-dliness. We are G-dliness. We have G-dly souls and we are therefore constantly drawn upwards, desperate to experience G-dliness. All wisdom is to help us set aside our suffering and to ponder what brings us close to Hashem. We are assessed precisely in these matters – how successful we are at elevating ourselves, detaching ourselves ever so slightly from being overly particular, from anger, from materialism, from our urges, from silliness. The test lies in what excites us, what impresses us, what gladdens us – the frivolity of this world vs. those things that connect us to the purpose of life. **At every moment we have the option to set aside everything and focus on real things that bring us close to Hashem and instill joy in our hearts.** When a person lifts his head, he is already connected. When he opens his mouth and begins to converse with Hashem, he is already clinging.

We make so many efforts and we forget that it is all Hashem. We tend to imbue our own

ego into everything. We forget Hashem. We become confused by the honor that others afford us. We forget to say that it isn't us, it is all Hashem.

We must seek out true *tzaddikim* who are not of this world and then we will realize that there is more than just the cold Diet Coke that we are enjoying – there is something above and beyond us – something real, stronger, and higher. We may not be on the *tzaddik's* level, but we acknowledge that it is the true path and we want it too.

A Melody of Love

The amazing melody that plays throughout the world on the holy days of *Pesach* reveals Hashem's love to every Jewish soul. Hashem's love for us is so strong, unlimited and everlasting. One who merits to experience this can accept whatever happens in life with more *emuna* and more sincerity.

A story is related about R' Moshe Dwek zt”l who suffered in his final days. When he asked his son if he would remove his pain if he could, his son responded that he certainly would. He replied, “Hashem loves me many times more than you do, there is no limit to HKB”H's mercy! Moreover, He can remove all of my agony – so why doesn't He?” After an awkward pause, he explained, “Not only does He not remove the suffering, it is He Who inflicts it upon me. Do you know why? Precisely because He loves me, precisely because He has unlimited compassion does he visit such pain upon me. Not despite His being compassionate ... **because** He is compassionate.”³

To earn complete pleasure, we must abandon self-love in favor of the amazing expansiveness of love for others. There are Jews who always judge others favorably – who have unlimited patience for others, who constantly honor others.

“Many taxi drivers, when summoned to a certain

³ מתוך ספר לזכרו "זכרון משה" ³

address, will honk a few times and, if no one appears, they will move on. One night, I was called to a certain address and I honked several times, but no one answered. I decided to knock on the door and heard the sounds of dragging behind the door. After a few minutes, an elderly man, definitely in his eighties, answered the door, pulling a large suitcase behind him. I quickly grabbed the suitcase in order to help. During my brief entry into the apartment, I noticed that it was completely bare. There were no pictures or any personal effects to be seen. I loaded the suitcase into the trunk and waited as the man settled into my car. He gave me the address of his destination and then, curiously, asked me to take a circuitous route. I explained that it was not the most direct route and it would be far more expensive. He told me that he didn't mind. He repeatedly asked me to drive down different out-of-the-way streets. Over the course of our drive, he explained that he was checking himself into a nursing home, he had no family left and wanted to drive by some meaningful spots for the last time. Immediately, I turned off the meter without him noticing. He pointed out the building where he once worked, another where he and his wife first lived after their wedding and a shop that used to be a *simcha* hall that he used to attend. When we arrived at the nursing home, he asked me how much he owed me and I told him nothing. When he protested as to how I would make a living – I told him that Hashem provides. I didn't pick up any passengers for the rest of that shift, I just drove around aimlessly thinking about how fortunate I was to have given this man his last drive down memory lane. Imagine, I thought, if a less patient taxi driver had been called to his home..."⁴

A Melody of Humility

Humility is the secret of life. If we humble ourselves – life will be good, pleasant, happy and satisfying. When a person is humble, it is a sign that he has *emuna*. He realizes that he is weak, limited, that he cannot do it alone. He is aware of his deficiencies, he acknowledges the dangers that he faces, both spiritual and physical

– and he constantly turns to Hashem, never ceasing to speak with Him. **Every endeavor is preceded with a prayer and a request.**

Humility is the recognition that we cannot do it alone, we need HKB”H. Arrogance is the feeling that we did it, we accomplished – it separates us from Hashem. One who attempts to conceal whatever he does, all of his successes, because he does it for Hashem's glory and not his own – he deserves honor - not one who misappropriates it for himself.

“Master of the World, I know that I am owed nothing. Everything that I request of You, Father, is unearned. Therefore, when I do receive something, I am so overwhelmed, so grateful.” The melody of humility plays for anyone who honors others, who does not feel superior to any other Jew.

With humility, we can perceive the countless favors that HKB”H does for us and we can thank Him for every single one. That is another melody – the **tune of gratitude**.

We begin with the song of *emuna* and we conclude with the song of *bitachon*. ***Bitachon* is a higher level of *emuna*.** An example of *bitachon* is the Jewish people on the seventh day of *Pesach*. The Sea was in front of them, the Egyptians were behind and there were wild animals to the sides. So they cried out. Hashem's response: “Why are you crying out to Me, proceed.” The famous and obvious question is: **to whom else should a Jew cry out when faced with difficulty other than Hashem?** Why does Hashem rebuke them for doing so? The entire impetus of the redemption was because they cried out to Hashem in Egypt? Hashem was telling them: proceed, enter the Sea before I split it and in the merit of your *bitachon* I will perform miracles.⁵

Life is a melody. Where there is *emuna*, love, humility and *bitachon* – the melody is one of Gan Eden.

⁴ בין איש לרעהו

⁵ אור החיים הקדוש

תפילה

Master of the World! Help me turn to You in everything that I do and ask for Your help – that the letter that I am sending arrive in a timely fashion; that words I am about to utter be appropriate and do their job and enter the heart of the other person; that the friend I am going to meet be on time and I need not wait because I so hate waiting; that thing that I am going to buy be the right choice and that I not regret the purchase afterward.

Master of the World! I do so many things in one day, teach me to regularly stop and turn to You and not to forget that, with You, things are so much more successful.

Master of the World! Help me not requisition honor for myself. Often, when things succeed and go well I am overjoyed and I remember to say “Thank G-d” and “Thank You, Father.” Yet, there are so many other times that I forget, that I am so happy and retell my conquests at home and I am so pleased with myself - and then I suddenly remember, “Oy, I forgot to say thank You, I forgot that it is not me who is responsible for this success.”

Forgive me, Father. Help me not to forget. Even for the little things that do not appear to be a big deal, like when I finish eating – to say thank You for the food that You have given me and that no one disturbed me while I was dining. **Help me, Father, to look at my day as a chain of miracles that I do not deserve credit for and to repeatedly express my gratitude.**

Master of the World! Do not allow me to forget that we are not here forever. Therefore, it is not worthwhile to become engrossed in small and silly matters that waste precious moments of life – anger, insults, stubbornness, humiliations, disappointments, etc.

Help me, Father, to be elevated a bit, to accept everything more graciously, to remember that after 120 years what remains is only what I have done to get closer to You, to feel You, to remember you, to live with you.

Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,

Dov Elias

Notice: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the Parsha Sheet, *Ohr Ha'Emuna*, disseminated by Harav Menachem Azolai *Shlita* and is not a complete or exact adaptation of *Ohr Ha'Emuna* and is not necessarily even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented therein. *Ohr Ha'Emuna* is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azolai has not reviewed this material - any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*. Thank you Mordi Blass for your help with some of the Hebrew expressions.

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