

# WE NEED LOTS OF HELP!

*by Rabbi Label Lam*

Then you shall call out and say before HASHEM, your G-d, "An Aramean tried to destroy my father. He descended to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation great, strong and numerous. The Egyptians mistreated us and afflicted us, and placed hard work upon us. Then we cried out to HASHEM, the G-d of our forefathers, and HASHEM heard our voice and saw our affliction, our travail and our oppression. HASHEM took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with great awesomeness and wonders. He brought us to this place and He gave us a Land flowing with milk and honey. And now behold! I have brought the first fruit of the ground You have given me, O HASHEM!" And you shall lay it before HASHEM, your G-d, and you shall prostrate yourself before HASHEM your G-d. (Devarim 26:5-10)

Everyone bringing a first fruit to the Cohen is required to make this protracted declaration year after year. By the second or third time we can imagine that the person reciting these same words that comprise a good portion of our Haggadah is going to be learning little about our history that he didn't already know. Then what's the point of repeating this speech over and over and over again?

The Ribnitzer Rebbe ztl. was widely known for his ability to facilitate miracles. The story was related to me just this week that a certain Dr. Goldstein from Queens, an ear, nose, and throat specialist was visited by a family that had a girl that was stricken with classic deafness for which there is no known cure. The Doctor would have dismissed them without any medical attention but they insisted that the Ribnitzer Rebbe had sent them to him for a treatment and a cure. So to only to appease their persistence he prescribed a regimen of vitamins and sent them on their way.

Within a short period of time the parents received a surprising phone call from one of the teachers at the special-school for the deaf the girl had been attending. It seems she started to exhibit signs of being able to hear. When it was verified that she could in fact hear, everyone was amazed, and Dr. Goldstein was crowned with the credit for his healing prowess.

Word spread that Dr. Goldstein could, indeed cure deafness. He was then faced with a steep legal challenge. Since he had honestly deflected all credit he was charged with withholding treatment which is a crime. He had to prove in a court of law that he had offered the girl no more than a placebo. Ultimately the real cause of the cure, by default was legally credited to the miraculous powers of the Ribnitzer Rebbe, and so it was duly recorded.

Years later Dr. Goldstein received a call from the Gabai- attendant of the Ribnitzer Rebbe requesting

a home visit for Rebbe to assist him with a problem that he was having with his hearing. After administering whatever needed to be done the Dr. asked the Ribnitzer the obvious question. "Why didn't the Rebbe, who was able to make miracles happen, heal himself from his own ear ailment?"

The Rebbe quoted the Talmud (Brochos 5B) where it says, "A prisoner cannot remove himself from prison!" There it tells about Reb Yochanon who had relieved others of their pain and yet required the help of someone else to alleviate his. What we do for others, often we cannot even do for ourselves. Sometimes a doctor needs a doctor, a lawyer may need a lawyer, and a psychiatrist needs a psychiatrist.

There are multiple versions of the same bad joke about the fellow who was looking frantically for a parking place in New York so he could be on time for a million dollar business deal. So desperate he became that he called to HASHEM and promised, "I'll give half the profits to charity if I just get a parking place to be on time!" Just at that moment, magically, a car pulls out from a prime parking place and after quickly maneuvering into the spot he exits the car in a hurry and addresses G-d once again stating boldly, "It's OK G-d! I didn't need Your help! I worked it out myself!"

So great is the tendency for a person to gobble up credit, and cut G-d out of the deal, whenever anything goes well, an entire history lesson is in order to remind us repeatedly of what we know already, though it's hard to admit. We couldn't have gotten out of Egypt or High School on our own. To reach this place n' time we needed and **we need lots of help!** DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](http://Torah.org).