



into tears. Imagine, the *Rov* had asked him a simple question, and he could not answer!

Many years later, young Shlomo Zalman, now the renowned *posek* and *tzaddik*, **R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ZT"L**, once paid a visit on *Chol HaMoed Pesach* to a friend. Turning to the youngsters in the room, R' Shlomo Zalman asked, "Tell me, children, why did you ask the 'Four Questions' this year? After all, you asked the same questions last year, and you already received the answer!"

The children came up with a variety of answers, each trying a different approach. It was obvious that R' Shlomo Zalman relished listening to the bright remarks. "*Boruch Hashem*, the children have good heads. When I was your age, someone once asked me this very same question," he said, smiling gleefully. "But I could not think of an answer. You know what I did? I broke down and cried!"

**כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה: אחד חכם, ואחד רשע, ואחד תם, ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול וגו' (הגדה של פסח)**  
Why does the *Baal Haggadah* use the word "כנגד" - which literally means "*opposite*"? **R' Elazar Menachem Mann Shach ZT"L** beautifully illustrates this point: In the most recent generations, we have seen man debase himself to the lowest forms of human depravity. The Nazis YM"S aptly depicted how far a human being can fall and we are left to ponder the sad state of humanity with fear and trepidation.

Yet, through it all, there is cause for optimism. *Chazal* tell us that every creation in this world has its counterpart, and just as a person can stoop to the lowest levels of impurity, wickedness and debasement, he also has the free will to choose to elevate himself to the highest and most glorious heights of holiness, righteousness and spirituality. This is the lesson of the *Baal Haggadah*: The four sons are indeed "opposites" - counterparts. For every רשע, we must strive to counter with a חכם and a צדיק!

**אלו ספק צרכנו במדבר ארבעים שנה ולא האכילנו את המן דיינו וגו' (הגדה של פסח)**  
Several weeks before the start of *Pesach*, a young man by the name of Avner Israeli, president of the Jewish Society of the University of Vilna, was contacted by the world-renowned giant of his generation, **R' Chaim Ozer Grodzenski ZT"L**, and asked to come speak with him. Since he was a prominent member of the Histadrut, an organization whose philosophy was not in accord with *Torah*, and he had never met the *Gaon* personally, Mr. Israeli had no idea as to the reason for his being summoned.

After serving him cake and tea and putting him at ease, R' Chaim Ozer informed him that he had learned that there were impoverished students attending the university who, with the advent of the approaching holiday, might not have sufficient funds for food and wine for the *Pesach* holiday. R' Chaim then gave an envelope containing money to Mr. Israeli and instructed him to distribute it to the needy students. Dumbfounded and astonished at this beneficence, Mr. Israeli took the money and left.

"How," he thought later, "does such a man who is the focus of Orthodox Jewry, incessantly besieged by halachic inquiries, find the time before *Pesach*, to so concern himself with these students, who in all probability, are diametrically opposed to his way of thinking?" Such was the greatness of R' Chaim Ozer.

**תשעה מי יודע? תשעה אני יודע. תשעה ירחי לידה וכו' (הגדה של פסח)**  
How does "*nine months of pregnancy*" fit in? All the other items connect in some way to holiness and spirituality. Where is the spirituality in the natural cycle of a nine-month pregnancy?

**R' Yosef Sholom Elyashiv Shlit'a** explains: The entire miracle of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* came about through *Moshe Rabbeinu*. Moshe, himself, was saved miraculously from the hands of the Egyptian oppressors who murdered every newborn Jewish boy. But if not for the fact that Moshe was born prematurely - in the seventh month - his mother could have not outwitted the Egyptian hunters and saved him, for they only began searching for him after the full nine-month term. Thus, the natural order of a nine-month pregnancy was precisely what allowed Moshe to remain hidden, ultimately saving his life!

אדם לבדוק את עצמו אם הבטחון שלו חזק כמו אבותינו, שבזכות זה זכו לניסים ונפלאות. והיינו עיקר טעם אכילת מצה, לזכר שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמיץ, ובכל זאת יצאו בלי שום פקפוק. ועלינו לזכור כל ימי חיינו לשים בטחוננו בהשי"ת, וזהו דכתי' "למען תזכור את יום צאתך ממצרים" - צאתך דייקא - מעצמך.



**ותתן לנו ה' אלקנו באהבה ... את יום חג המצות הזה זמן חרותינו מקרא קודש זכר ליציאת מצרים (קידוש)**  
*Yetzias Mitzrayim* literally translated, means "the departure of Egypt." The departure of Egypt? Egypt did not depart to anywhere! It was the Jewish people who departed from Egypt. Why is the Exodus called "*Yetzias Mitzrayim*"; it should be called "*Yetziah MiMitzrayim*" - the departure from Egypt?

Explains the **Satmar Rebbe, R' Yoel Teitelbaum ZT"L**, "*Mitzrayim*" symbolizes the lethargy that dulled the minds of the Jews during the years of Egyptian bondage. *Bnei Yisroel* were spiritually immature, easily swayed by the dictates of the *yetzer hara*. Following selfish impulses, they fell to the lowest degree of impurity until they worshipped Egyptian idols. Mercifully, like alcoholics in a drunken stupor, *Hashem* did not hold them fully accountable for their sins. Because of their apathy and drunken state, *Hashem* exempted the Jews from their sin of abandoning Him in favor of Egyptian worship.

On *Pesach*, we recall "*Yetzias Mitzrayim*" - the departure of Egypt - the departure of the Egyptian mindset: the idolatry, depravity, materialism and "drunkenness" from our minds. This lifestyle called "Egypt" that had poisoned the minds of the Jewish people - with the *Geulah* - was now gone.

**שבעת ימים תאכל מצות .... מצות יאכל את שבעת הימים וכו' (בא יג-ז)**  
In Egypt, we deteriorated to the depths of the forty-nine "gates of impurity," and were we to have remained there any longer we would have plummeted to the fiftieth level, from which we would have never been able to lift ourselves henceforth. *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* hurried to save and redeem us with overt miracles and wonders. In commemoration of the hastiness and urgency of the redemption, we are commanded to eat *matzah*. But now that we are redeemed and saved from the depths of impurity, writes **R' Moshe Alshich ZT"L**, we may think to ourselves that the world now runs by the force of nature.

The Almighty, therefore, commands, "*Matzos shall be eaten all seven days.*" The seven days of eating *matzah* correspond to the seven days of creation, teaching us the eternal lesson that even in the natural course of life, *Hashem's* Providence watches over everything. The power of miracles, clearly manifested in Egypt, does not allow a Jew to sink in the depths of impurity, and it continues to guide us forever!

**מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות .... עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים וכו' (הגדה של פסח)**

On the first day of *Pesach*, young Shlomo Zalman was walking with his father through the narrow, streets of Yerushlayim, returning from the *Kosel Maaravi* where they had *davened*. They came face to face with the Chief Rabbi, **R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld ZT"L**. After exchanging the customary "*gut yom tov*" wishes, R' Yosef Chaim turned to young Shlomo Zalman and gently pinched his cheek. "Tell me, my son," he asked warmly, "did you ask the 'Four Questions' at the *seder*?" The boy nodded proudly.

"Did you ask the 'Four Questions' last year too?" R' Yosef Chaim caressed the young boy's cheek.

"Yes, of course," Shlomo Zalman replied with conviction. "Well then, what answer did you receive for these questions?" The boy exclaimed, "*Avadim Hayinu* - we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt."

"Well," said R' Yosef Chaim with a twinkle in his eye, "if you heard the answer last year, why did you ask the same questions again this year? Did you forget?"

The boy just stood there tongue-tied. He did not know what to say. Flustered and confused, he broke