



# הגדה תשע"ח

Manhattan High School for Girls

מכון יעקב לבנות

# Letter From the Editors

*Pesach* is not simply a commemoration of the justice Hashem enacted upon the *Mitzrayim*. Rather, it is a celebration of “*Ki hotzi Hashem es Bnei Yisrael mi mitzrayim*,” that Hashem liberated us from our *tzaros*, rendering us a free nation. The *Meshech Chochma* explains that the *goyim* celebrate military victories, taking a sadistic pleasure in the downfall of their adversaries. This is not so with *Klal Yisrael*, as the *mishna* states, “*bnfol oyvecha al tismach*.” The *Medrash* explains that this is why the Torah does not refer to Pesach as a *simcha* and we do not recite full *hallel*. We do not rejoice in the face of another’s destruction, Jew or gentile alike. That is not the essence of our *Yom Tov*. Pesach is about our relationship with Hashem, fostering a bond that began when we emerged as a nation, forged in the crucible of *Mitzrayim*. Pesach is an opportunity for us to come closer to Hashem. It our hope that through the compilation of *Divrei Torah* MHS students contributed, we can indeed access the power and *kedusha* of Pesach, and grow closer to Hashem.

**We would like to take this opportunity to extend a sincere thank you to our esteemed teacher, Rebbetzin Neuberger, who invested tremendous efforts in editing this Haggadah.**

*Chag kasher v’sameach,*

Moadim Crew

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**ילכו מחיל אל חיל**

**We are grateful for the exceptional efforts of our Haggadah Editors**

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# Introductions

*Ariella Seidemann*

הג הפסח: We refer to the upcoming *Chag* as *Pesach*, while the *Haggadah* refers to it as *Chag HaMatzos*. Why is this? Rav Chaim Volozhiner explains: The words *matzos* and *mitzvos* have the identical spelling in Hebrew, suggesting that as a result of the hasty exodus from Egypt and receiving the Torah, Bnei Yisrael now have the opportunity to do *mitzvos* and earn great reward. On the other hand, *Pesach* means “passed over”. This word alludes to the miracle we experienced when Hashem passed over the houses of Bnei Yisroel and only killed the Egyptians. With this word, *Pesach*, we emphasize the good that Hashem did for us.

Our *Chachamim* teach us not to serve Hashem for the reward or *schar*. Rather, we need to serve Hashem out of a sense of awe and gratitude. By choosing to call the *chag Pesach* we are placing the emphasis on the good that Hashem did and continues to do for us, and we de-emphasize the reward that comes along with each *mitzvah*.

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*Noa Klein*

“הנה לא ינום ולא ישן שומר ישראל” - *The Guardian of Israel never sleeps.*

While most of us have heard this phrase many times in our lives, where do we really see it come alive? To answer this, we turn to the first night of Pesach- *Leil Shimurim*. It is in the *zechus* of eating the *afikoman* that *Leil Shimurim* is gifted to the Jewish people. *Leil Shimurim* can be translated in two different ways. The first is “a night of protection”. This protection that we get on *the first night of Pesach* lasts for the entire year, as is described in *Sefer Shemos*: *Shimurim L'kol bnei yisroel l'dorotom* (*Shemos* 12:42)- a protection for all children of Israel for their generations. It protects us from the dangers of the night, not only for that night, but rather for the entire year, hence the plural formulation of *shimurim*.

The second way in which one can translate *Leil Shimurim* is “nights of waiting”. *Bnei Yisroel* and Hashem anticipate the *Seder* with great excitement. In fact, the more one anticipates the *Seder*, the more he can benefit from it spiritually. Additionally, all Jews know that the eating *chametz* on *Pesach*, *Chas Vesbalom*, can result in *kares*, the cutting off of one's soul. This all comes together in a beautiful lesson for *Bnei Yisroel*- obviously, we all wait in excited anticipation

for *Pesach*. We daven to Hashem, celebrate with family, and practice exciting *minhagim*. However, Someone else is also waiting in anticipation with us- Hashem. Through making the eating of matzah at the seder mandatory, and even more so, making one receive kares for eating matzah, Hashem built in for us a way to get protection. Not only is it protection, but it is protection from the best protector in a never-ending cycle- as soon as one year's protection ends, the next one has begun! Over and over again, we see Hashem's deep love for us and desire to protect us.

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*Shira Safrin*

ליל שימורים: My intention today is to have you consider the juxtaposition of the season of spring and the *yom tov* of *Pesach*. The season of blossoming and growth, of taking something from thought to actualization. We watch the development of a tiny, lifeless seed planted deep inside the earth as it forms a bud and then a gorgeous flower, branch, or fruit tree. This miracle of nature is much akin to the extraordinary capabilities of the human spirit on *Chag HaPesach*. The *Arizal* states that the word 'passover' alludes to the ability of a human being on the night of *Pesach* to leap to tremendous spiritual levels which normally cannot be attained. Kabbalistic commentaries go as far as saying that there is no requirement to daven *maariv* on that night because it is known as *Leil Shimurim* -the night of protection and watchfulness - and on this night we are able to reach these extreme heights without necessarily having to work for it. Yet even though we aren't *required* to, we still daven *maariv* so as to ride the wave of Divine providence which Hashem initiates for us on that night, *Leil Shimurim*. *Pesach* is an appropriate time for a Divinely ordained spiritual surge. After all, isn't that what happened on the original *Pesach*? In what seemed to be dark, dreary circumstances, a 'seed' buried deep underground in the 49th *shaar batum'ab* flourished and blossomed in a moment into what became the Divinely chosen nation. The heights to which we rose from the depth of impurity, also known as **מיצר ים**, the border of the 50th, were spectacular. That's how low we were and yet only 49 days later we witnessed the giving of the Torah, the greatest gift *kelal yisroel* has ever recieved. That was our nation's highest moment, and it happened during the spring season. This indicates to us that the springtime is not simply about physical blossoming and renewal. *Pesach*, also known as *Chag HaAviv*, the holiday of springtime, contains the ingredients which can help us make that jump. If we want to reach these heights it is wise to strive in this season to determine who you want to be - for yourself and for Hashem - because we can reach the most heavenly peaks in this season of miraculous growth.



# The Purpose of Man

*Devorah Amsel*

*“Baruch ata Hashem, mikadesh Yisroel v’bazmanim”*

Rabbi J.B Soloveitchik teaches that man is the only creation to experience time. We are the only ones who can feel its passage, sense its movement, and, therefore, seize its moments. Hashem demands that we master time and have “time awareness”. We can master time by infusing significance and quality into every moment. The Rav explains that in order to complete this task we must understand the three dimensions of time: retrospection, anticipation and appreciation.

**Retrospection** refers to a person’s ability to re-experience the past. One takes a memory and re-examine it in the present.

**Anticipation** is a person’s projection of goals and aspirations for the future. We regulate our present life with the expectation to of fulfilling our dreams, so ultimately our present is shaped by the visions we have for our future.

These two aspects, retrospection and appreciation are only significant if they transform the present. At any moment visions can be realized or destroyed.

**Appreciation** is a step above the former two because its life lies in the very person, and can withstand circumstance so long as the individual allows it to. Appreciation causes an individual to view the present as a precious possession and embrace it as a gift

The *Haggadah* incorporates all three elements of time into the *seder*.

**Retrospection**- if there is no retrospection then there can’t be a *mitzvah* of retelling the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*. The *seder* itself is a recreation and revival of the past into a present reality.

**Anticipation**- through anticipation we move from reminiscing and memories into visions and expectations. Therefore, anticipation serves as an impetus for actions that will help us actualize our vision. The *haggadah* opens with *avadim hayinu*, “we were slaves” (retrospection), and concludes with the cup of *Eliyahu Hanavi* and “*nishmas kol cha?*”, both of which express anticipation and our vision for the future.

**Appreciation**- here we are compelled to value every moment. *Kiddush* declares the sanctity of the moment. The *Shebecheyanu* we make in *kiddush* thanks Hashem for allowing us to reach this special time in our lives and

appreciate the moment.

By incorporating **Retrospection**, **Anticipation** and **Appreciation** into our *Seder* we learn the lesson of merging past, present and future into all of life's moments, and can properly infuse meaning into every moment.

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## Beginning the Seder with Kadash

*Becky Bral*

We start the Pesach seder with *kiddush*. The word “kiddush,” sanctification, conveys a sense of uniqueness, a state of being set apart and outstanding. Each individual holds phenomenal talents, skills, and qualities to contribute to the world. The first step to personal freedom is to acknowledge these strengths. Once we recognize them, we can use them to make personal progress, and help the world. In exile, the Egyptians forced B'nai Yisrael to build towering structures, which caused misery amongst the Jews. Those cities were laid on marshy sand, so the monuments sank deep into the mud overnight. Since the Jewish slaves could not perceive their accomplishments, they lacked the awareness of their unique abilities. On Passover, we emerge towards the first step of personal freedom by asking: What assets and talents can I contribute to benefit and protect the world?

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## Searching for Answers

*Ariella Seidemann*

The *Gemara* in *Psachim* instructs us that after *kiddush*, one pours the second cup of wine and then the son asks his father, “*Mah Nishtana*”. The *halacha* is that even if someone doesn't have a son, and there are simply two *talmidei chachamim* sitting together, they must ask each other questions. Even if someone is alone, he should ask himself questions. Why is the *Seder* on *Pesach* night formulated as a series of questions and answers?

We know that the first question ever asked in the world was that of the *nachash* who asked Chava, “*Af ki amar elokim lo toachlu mikol eitzi bagan*”? This question trapped Chava and made her doubt Hashem's word. Hashem responded to this event with 4 questions:

1. *Ayekah?* Where are you?
2. *Mi bigid licha kei arom atab?* Who told you that you are naked?
3. *Hamin haetz asher tzivisayich livilti achal mimenu achalta?* Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?
4. *Mah zos asisab?* What is this that you have done?

The *nachash* asked one question and introduced doubt into the world, and Hashem's four questions were an attempt to undo this doubt.

Similarly, Pharaoh asked a question that imbued doubt into the minds of *Bnei Yisroel*. He said *Mi Hashem asher ashma bikolo lishloach es yisroel?* To this, we respond with four questions at the Seder, because the point of the *Seder* and more specifically the four questions, is to remove all doubt from within us. *Amalek* also put doubt into our minds but *Amalek* was so strong that they caused *Bnei Yisroel* to ask the doubtful question themselves: *Hayaish Hashem bikirbeinu o ein?* We ask 4 questions on *Seder* night to remove the doubts that assail us during times of *Galut*. The *passuk* of "*V'iaeilu sbemos bnei yisroel habaim mimitzrayim*" alludes to this with the word *Habaim*- *Beis*-=Bavel. *Alef*- Edom. *Yud*- Yavan. *Mem*- Madai. Each question we ask relates to one of the four exiles that caused us to doubt *Hashem*. The point of the *Seder* is to create order, *Lisader*, amongst the worldly chaos, confusion, and doubt.

- Shvilei Pinchos

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# Jumping Into Kedusha

Tamar Spoerri

We wash each others' hands before *karpas*, similar to a ruler who has a servant wash his hands before eating anything. Why don't we instead clean our hands before *kadesh*, before we start the seder? Even those who regularly wash their hands *before* kiddush do not do so on the seder night. Why is that?

One theme of Pesach is that we do things *Bichipazon*, in a hurry. We are hurrying to start talking about the *kedusha* of Pesach, so we jump immediately into the seder and make kiddush, before we even wash. We see this hurriedness in the way that Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim, in the space of a single day. He allowed us to experience a sudden jump in *kedusha*, taking us all the way from our place at the 49th level of impurity—when we were about to hit the very bottom—to actually being able to see Him at the *Yam Suf*. At the Seder, we emulate Hashem's hurry to bring us close to Him by washing only after we make kiddush.

For many people, the Seder is the highlight of the Yom Tov. Why isn't it at the end of Pesach, so we can build up our excitement throughout the week for the Seder?

The Seder is on the first night because we are rushing to experience the high level of *kedusha* which it affords us. By doing so, we portray the very meaning of the word Pesach, *jumping* to a high level. On the seder night, we have the opportunity to jump to a level beyond one we could naturally reach. At this extraordinary height, we can set for ourselves goals that seem unrealistic, and we can dream of greatness that is currently beyond our reach. By envisioning what we can achieve, we transform the seder night. It becomes the first milestone on a new path which we create for ourselves, one which brings us closer to Hashem with every step.

On Pesach, we're in a hurry to become great. When we start the seder by *immediately* sanctifying the yom tov, we show our eagerness to take advantage of the night's *koach* of dreaming. Even if the goals are currently beyond our reach, this night of intense *kedusha* can set us on the path to new heights.

- Rabbi B. Gordon

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# Dippin Twice

*Yehudit Cohen*

During the Pesach seder, we perform the dipping ceremony twice, once for karpas and later on for maror. The *Ben Ish Chai* points out two places in the Torah where we find *tivul*, dipping.

In Beraishes, Yosef Ha'Tzaddik's special coat was dipped in the blood of a goat. This scenario was a paradigm of *sinaas chinom*. The bitterness of this event that exemplified the hatred of the *Shevatim* towards Yosef corresponds to dipping karpas into salt water. Pirush Rashi on the Torah and the Rambam both say that the *kesonas pasim* and *karpas* correspond with each other and share the same letters. The event with the *kesonas pasim* was the reason for *yeridas Mitzrayim*. The event with the *kesonas pasim* was a bitter event and to commemorate the difficulty, we dip *karpas* into bitter, salt water.

In Shemos, by *Leil Pesach Mitzrayim*, Bnei Yisrael were told to dip *agudas ezov* into the blood of the *korban Pesach* and from there to spread it on their doorposts. On the night of Pesach, Bnei Yisrael became an *agudah achas*, one united nation. We dip maror into *charoses*, which contains a sweet flavor because this represents a different *tivul* than the dipping of karpas in salt water. By eating a food dipped into something sweet, we are showing that Bnei Yisrael left Mitzrayim together, as a unified nation with *abavas Yisrael*.

Through these two *tivulim*, we see the transition from the *sinaas chinum* the *shevatim* first exhibited that caused the *yeridah*, to the *abavas Yisroel* exhibited when Bnei Yisroel left Mitzrayim.

- Rabbi Aharon Cohen

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# Karpas

*Ayelet Wein*

Why start the *Haggadah* with *karpas*? *Gemara Rosh Hashana* states:

אמר רבי, כשהלכתי לכרכי הים היו קורין למכירה כירה

“Rebbi said, when I visited the islands of the Mediterranean Sea I heard them use the term *כירה* when selling,” thereby proving the point

that the כר in *karpas* is referencing a “sale”.

פס is associated with the ownership of the כתנת פסים, referencing Yosef. We start the *Haggadah* with the כר פס to recall that the entire story of Mitzrayim began with the sale of Yosef. The baseless hatred of brothers led to the slavery in Egypt.

In *Gemara Pesachim* it describes the process of the *korban Pesach*. After sacrificing the *korban Pesach* on *erev* Pesach, one would fling the slaughtered *korban* over one's shoulder and carry it home for the Seder that night. The *Gemara Pesachim* explains that this is the manner in which Arab merchants carry their merchandise. Rashi says: דרך סוחרים ישמעאלים הוא זה. This directly correlates *korban Pesach* to *Mechiras Yosef* as Yosef was sold to a caravan of *Yishmaelim*! We start the ceremony with *karpas* to remind ourselves how it all began.

- Minchas Yitzchok





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# Looking Ahead

*Minka Nussbaum*

If one looked around in different *Haggadah's*, she would find many different *psbatim* as to why we break the *matzah* in half. For example, the *Da'as Zekainim* maintains that it is symbolic of the splitting of the Yam Suf. The *Chida* suggests that it is representative of how *Hashem* split the time we were meant to be *avodim* in Mitzrayim. Still others say that it symbolizes the back-breaking labor and our broken spirits, and reminds us that Hashem picked us up, brought us out, and made us whole again.

But a question still remains: why is it that we break it now and save a piece for later? Why don't we just break it later when we are ready to eat it?

Here, the *Haggadah* teaches us another powerful lesson. As free responsible people, we are required to always plan ahead; to live not just in the moment, but even in the future. We must make decisions now while taking the future into account as well. As Chazal teach us "*Eizzebu chacham? Haro'eh as hanolad*" meaning "Who is wise? Someone who plans ahead." Planning ahead can be hard and frustrating, but a mature person is able to realize that it is often worth getting little pleasure now, for the sake of having greater pleasure later. Putting away the bigger half for later teaches us that we are waiting patiently and planning ahead for the right moment in which we will get a bigger reward. This relates to making the right decisions for later in this world, as well as in the next. Throughout our lives we are faced with challenges of overcoming our *yetzer harah* now, in order to reap the benefits in *Olam Habab*. This can be extremely challenging at times, but the lesson of *yachatz* is that it's worth it for the bigger reward later.

Planning ahead and waiting for later requires patience. Later seems very far away and we want the pleasure now, but our job is to train ourselves to have patience. This applies to many areas and many situations throughout our lives and is crucial to our success. We therefore symbolize it here on Pesach night as one of the important *simanim* and perform it immediately before *maggid*, to teach us that a key to our redemption from Mitzrayim and, as well, to our ultimate redemption, is to be patient and continue our efforts to do the *ratzon Hashem*.

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# Love Each Jew

*Devorah Amsel*

We break the *matzah* as a symbol of the ‘poor man’s bread’ that the Jews ate in Mitzrayim as slaves. One way of understanding this, is that a poor person never knows where his next meal will come from, so he breaks off a piece of his bread and saves it for later. Rav Soloveitchik offers a different interpretation. The Rav points out that there were varying degrees of slavery in Mitzrayim; *Chazal* tell us that the *Leviyim* were never even enslaved. This must mean that some had access to food while others did not. The Rav points out that those who did have access to food would break off a piece of their bread and share it with other Jews who had less (hence the name “poor man’s bread”). When we break the matzah in half as a fulfillment of *yachatz* we are commemorating the *chesed* and love that our ancestors had for all their fellow Jews, even when they themselves had so little.

- Adapted from the *Hagaddah* “The Night That Unites”

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# מצג'ד



# Pesach Unlimited

*Nechama Weiner*

The primary objective of the *Pesach Seder* is to verbally recount our bitter, oppressive experience as slaves in Mitzrayim, as well as our miraculous deliverance from that country. As the *pasuk* states:

“והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים”

In contrast to the daily *mitzvah* of remembering *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the *Gemara* in *Pesachim* tells us, this *mitzvah* of retelling requires active, detailed participation and discussion. So imperative is the need for active dialogue that even a person who is alone, or is not in the presence of another individual who is able to ask the four questions of him, as well as *talmidei chaichamim* who are well versed in all matters related to the *geulah*, must ask the four questions of the *Mah Nishtana* of *themselves*. Nobody is excepted.

The obvious question is, why is this necessary? Why is the *mitzvah* such that even if a person is alone he must ask himself questions at the Seder? Why are scholars who have, presumably, little left to learn, still required to actively participate in the seder?

Furthermore, our *chamim* instruct us that this *mitzvah* of retelling is boundless. “He who increases in his recounting of the exodus is praiseworthy”. Typically, there are quantifiable limitations associated with *mitzvos*. Why is this particular *mitzvah* different? After all, once you have told the entire story, what is there to add?

Rambam states that a person's obligation in this area is of such significance that it is not sufficient for a person to simply view himself as one who has personally left Egypt. Rather, he must act as a slave who is *currently* experiencing the exodus, by engaging in the type of behaviors that symbolize both slavery and freedom. These include the various *mitzvos* of the Seder, such as eating *maror*, and reclining while eating *matzah* and drinking wine. In addition, we practice numerous customs which are designed to reinforce this concept, including carrying sacks over one's shoulders, so as to reenact the *galus*. To properly fulfill one's obligation at the seder, it is not sufficient to merely *know* that which occurred. Rather, we are required to relate the story by relating *to* the story. Speaking, asking, answering, declaring - all create sense of awareness that is essential to re-enacting the experience, even if it means asking oneself the questions and retelling information that one already knows.

In *Michtav M'Eliyahu*, Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, posits that Jewish festivals are not merely anniversaries of important historical events, designed to remind us of them. Rather, they are annual spiritual opportunities. We do not simply

commemorate events, we experience them. We do so by tapping into the unique spiritual energy that is unleashed during each respective time period.

Similarly, the freedom of *Pesach* is an ongoing, never-ending process. It is for this reason that the *mitsvah* is limitless. Each of us suffers from our own “Mitzrayim”. Our Mitzrayim can take many different forms, such as a personal inclination towards sin or the influence of the general culture. Each year, at this time, we are granted special *siyata dishmaya* to confront and overcome these particular challenges.

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## The Secret Author of the Haggadah

*Ayelet Wein*

Considering *Moshe Rabbeinu's* crucial role in the Pesach narrative, why isn't his name mentioned at all in the Haggadah?

Everyone else's children had come out of Egypt with their parents, and knew first-hand the story of *yetziat Mitzrayim*. And so, the first year in the *midbar*, when Pesach arrived it was easy to tell to them what had happened—it was simply review. The only person whose children had not experienced the *geulah* was Moshe Rabbeinu, as his children had been with Tziporah and with Yisro. They joined *Bnei Yisrael* few months later. Moshe Rabbeinu had to come up with a text which would tell the story to his children because they had not witnessed it firsthand. So the first Haggadah, the one we use as the basis of our own, was written by Moshe. He was so humble that he didn't mention his own name! *Tehillim perek tzadi* begins with the “למשה איש האלקים” “תפילה”. *Chazal* comment that Moshe wrote it and Dovid HaMelech copied it over. Ibn Ezra asserts that it must have been Moshe because the next words are “ה' מעון אתה היית” -- You, Hashem, are an abode, a place.” Moshe refers to Hashem as a *makom*, a place, much like the *Hagaddah* does in the words *Baruch hamakom baruch Hu*. The Ibn Ezra points out that only Moshe uses that term. For example, in *Vzot Habracha* Moshe states “מענה אלקי קדם”. R' Yaakov Hominick writes that when an author wants to hide his name within a text, he incorporates a secret signature. At the very end of the *Hagaddah* we sing סדור פסח. In that paragraph Hashem is referred to as מעונה. Only Moshe, according to the Ibn Ezra, describes Hashem as a מעונה. The use of that depiction of Hashem is a secret way to show that Moshe wrote the *Hagaddah*, yet doesn't include his name because he's so humble. As it says in *Parshas Beha'alozecha* “והאיש משה עניו מאד”.

# The Seder of Maggid

*Zabava Giloni*

In the *Malbim's* *bakedamah* to the *Hagaddah*, he asks fourteen questions regarding the order of the paragraphs within Maggid, and offers insights into some of these paragraphs as well. For example, the *Malbim* wonders why the *Baal Hagaddah* included the statement *Ve'afilu kulanu chachamim kulanu nevonim v'cholei...* if we do, indeed, know the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*? What is the reason for for those who already know the story to need to tell it again? He also asks why the *Baal Hagaddah* begins the phrase with a *van* *bachibur* - the connecting *van*? This phrase seems to be unrelated to what comes before and after it. His final question is - why do we refer to the *Hagaddah* specifically as a *Hagaddah*? Shouldn't it be called a '*Seepur*', because essentially we are telling the **story** of *yetzias mitzrayim*?

The *Malbim* explains that the order of the *Hagaddah* follows the *pasuk*, "והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים" - "Each phrase of this *pasuk* is the theme of one section of *maggid*. The first section is "והגדת לבנך", which includes the paragraphs from *avadim hayeenu* until the end of the *arba banim*, and discusses the actual *mitzvah* of telling the story of *yetzias mitzrayim* to our children. This answers why we say *ve'afilu kulanu...* to describe the actual *mitzvah* of *sippur yetzias Mitzrayim*. The second section is, "ביום ההוא", which includes the paragraph of *yachol me'rosh chodesh*, and discusses the specific timing of when we do this *mitzvah*. The third section is "לאמר", the actual telling of the story, "*seepur yetzias Mitzrayim*", consisting of the paragraphs from *mi'techila ordei avodah zara* until *dayyeinu*. The fourth section is "בעבור זה", which includes the paragraph of *Raban Gamliel* and the *chiyuv* to say the three words of *pesach, matzah, and marror*. This has a focus on the word "זה" from the *pasuk* and therefore, we say it so many times as we point to the *matzah* and *maror* on the table. The fifth section is "עשה ה' לי", which includes the paragraph about each of us trying to feel as though we experienced *Hashem* taking us out of *Mitzrayim*. And the final section is "בצאתי ממצרים", concluding with parts of *Hallel* praising *Hashem* for redeeming us from *Mitzrayim*, including the words "בצאת ישראל ממצרים".

According to the *Malbim*, this *pasuk* provides a framework for the order of *maggid*. Now, we can understand why it is appropriate for the *Hagaddah* to have this name specifically: the whole *Hagaddah* is based on the *pasuk* of "והגדת" and the essence of *maggid* is the recitation of the *Hagaddah*. Finally, this *pasuk* organizes and clarifies the order of the *Hagaddah* and the *leil ha'seder*, which at times seems perplexing and not particularly *b'seder!*

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# הא לחמא עניא

*Lele Book*

הא לחמא עניא can be divided into 3 parts:

1. Talking about the *matzah* or לחם עוני
2. Inviting all those in need to join us at the *Seder*
3. Proclaiming that now we are in *galus* but next year we will be free in *Eretz Yisroel*.

What is the connection between these 3 parts?

The *Magen Avraham* records that after *yachatz* some have the *minbag* to take the piece of *matza* that will be used for *afikoman* and place it on their shoulder - *zecher l'yetzias Mitzrayim*. What is the significance of this seemingly minor detail?

The *Gemara Pesachim* posits that after each family brought the *korban Pesach*, they would place the *korban* in the skin of the animal, swing it over their shoulders, and carry it home. The *Gemara* adds - אמר רב עיליש – טייעות - they would carry it like Arab merchants. The question is, what difference does it make how they carried it home? **Rav Shlomo Kluger z"l** explains that it was because of the sin of *Mechiras Yosef* when the brothers sold Yosef to Arab merchants that *Bnei Yisroel* went down to *Mitzrayim*. In order to remember the cause of the שעבוד, we carried the *korban Pesach* on our shoulders and this is the source of the *minbag* to place the *afikoman* on our shoulders.

The *Boruch Moshe* elaborates and explains that the sin of *mechiras Yosef* came about through the sin of *sinas chinam*, and this is the cause not only of *galus Mitzrayim* but of the destruction of the *Bais Hamikdash* and our current *galus* as well. We therefore recall *Mechiras Yosef* on Pesach in order to inspire us to be *metaken* this great sin and thereby be *zoché* to the *geulah*. With this, we can explain הא לחמא עניא: we start off saying that we have this לחם עוני now for the same reason “די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים” that our forefathers had to suffer in *Mitzrayim* namely because of *sinas chinam*. We then go on to try to bring a *tikun* for this by saying “כל דכפין ייתי וייכל” - that everyone is invited to join us. This will create a sense of *abavas chinam* and *achdus* amongst *Bnei Yisroel*. Finally, (and in the *zechus* of *abavas chinam*) we end off with

השתא הכא, לשנה הבא בארעא דישראל  
השתא עבדי, לשנה הבא בני חורין.

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# מעשה ברבי אליעזר

Alicia Russo

The *Hagaddah* states that the *tannaim* R' Eliezer, R' Yehoshua, R' Elazar, R' Akiva, and R' Tarfon were sitting in Bnei Brak. Why is the location significant?

The *Gemara* in *Makos* recounts 2 stories in which Rabban Gamliel, R' Yehoshua, R' Akiva, and R' Eliezer were walking on the road after the destruction of the second *Beis Hamikdash*. The first describes that from 12 miles away they heard the sounds of the Romans shouting in the Plaza of Rome. All of them began to cry, except R' Akiva, who instead began to laugh and seemed to be rejoicing. They all turned to R' Akiva, incredulous that he could laugh at a time like this. When they confronted him, R' Akiva replied by questioning how *they* could possibly weep! He explained that if these treacherous Romans received such great rewards in this world, the servants of Hashem and the *Talmidei Chachamim* must have so much more waiting for them in *Olam Haba*. The second story is among the most famous in all of Jewish lore. It presents a picture of *tannaim* who were walking on the outskirts of Jerusalem. As they approached *Har Habayis* they saw a fox emerge from the former site of the *Kodesh Hakodashim*. Once again all the other sages began to weep as R' Akiva began to laugh. In confusion, they asked R' Akiva how he could be happy at such a sad time. R' Akiva replied that if the prophecy that predicted the destruction of the holy city came true in such detail, the prophecy of the salvation and resurrection would be just as great. The *chachamim* replied "Akiva *nichamtanu* Akiva *nichamtanu*", acknowledging that R' Akiva had comforted them.

These Tanaim lived under Roman rule, and their lives were constantly in danger. Additionally, it was the time of the Revolt of *Bar Kochva*, which is known to be a very treacherous and bloody time for Bnei Yisroel. It is said that the blood in Beitar where the last battle was fought reached up to the noses of horses. It is for this reason that the *Haggadah* makes a point of stating that they reclined in Bnei Brak, where R' Akiva lived. R' Akiva was able to see the bigger picture and the broader context of tragic events. They therefore chose to gather close to R' Akiva, because in such times he became their consolation and only source of hope.

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# כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה

Avigail P. Deutsch

One of the more famous parts of *Haggadah* is the description of the Four Sons. Although there are deeper meanings to this paragraph, it aligns with the theme of the *Seder*, passing on the *Mesorah* of Judaism to the children. But when the smart son shows interest in learning about and accepting the *Mesorah*, why does the *Haggadah* instruct the father to teach him *Hilchos Pesach*? Specifically, what is the significance of “אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן”?

Rav Avigdor Miller explains that this is *exactly* the lesson to impart to the wise son. He is currently at the most idealistic point of his life, where the taste of Torah is so sweet to him, and his passion to embrace it is strong. But his father reminds him that although he will grow older and mature, he must always leave this taste of *afikomen*- the taste of the Torah- in his mouth. No matter how much he grows, no matter what he experiences, and no matter how sophisticated he feels as he gets older, he must always keep the taste of Torah as fresh as it is now.

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# מה העדות והמשפטים והחוקים

Avigail Spira

One important part of the *Seder* is the depiction of the *Arbah Banim*, the four sons, each of whom poses a question to his father, who then responds. When it comes to the wise son, however, we find the interaction perplexing. The wise son asks “What are the testimonies, decrees, and ordinances which Hashem our G-d has commanded you?” And the *Haggadah* instructs the father, “Therefore explain to him the laws of the Pesach offering: that one may not eat dessert after the final taste of the Pesach offering.”

How is this a sufficient answer to the son’s question?

The wise son’s question can be understood to mean: why do we need so many *mitzvos* connected to *yetzias Mitzrayim*, wouldn’t one or two be enough? Aside from the abundance of *mitzvos* performed on Pesach alone, there are also other *mitzvos* such as *tefillin* and *Pidyon HaBen* which are *zecher l’yetzias mitzrayim*. Why is this necessary?

The answer may be derived from the *Sefer HaChinuch* which explains that *adam nif’al ke’fi penuloso*, a person is influenced by his actions. How we act determines what we become. On Pesach we are meant to feel like kings and queens. By acting like royalty (for example, by not biting a bone) we begin to feel kingly.

Picture a very compassionate man who accepts a position which requires that he be cruel in order to help deal with the mafia. Although he is a very good person, over time he will change, and become cruel because how we act influences us. And the opposite is also true; a cruel person will inevitably become more righteous if he is constantly busy doing good.

This is why there are so many *mitzvos* which command us to act like royalty. Because if we busy ourselves with them, then the mitzvos will change us into better people. This is the impact which *mitzvos* have on us. They can help us change and they leave a lasting impression on us.

- Rabbi Frand

## ועברתי בארץ מצרים בלילה...

Rena Seidemann

ועברתי בארץ מצרים בלילה הזה - אני ולא מלאך.

והכיתי כל בכור בארץ מצרים - אני ולא שליח.

On *Pesach* night Hashem went into *Mitzrayim* and killed the firstborn Egyptians. Normally when Hashem wants to punish people, He sends *malachim* to do his bidding, and yet on *Pesach* night He Himself visited and killed 600,000 Egyptian first borns. Our Rabbis tell us that this direct involvement of Hashem indicates a special relationship between Hashem and the 600,000 Egyptian first borns. It is true that He killed them, but by killing them Himself, and not through an angel Hashem was demonstrating that these first borns had some merit. What merit did these 600,000 Egyptian firstborns have?

*Chazal* teach us that on *Shabbos HaGadol*, four days before *Yetziat Mitzrayim*, each Jewish family took a goat and tied it to their bed post. The goat was the Egyptian god and most revered symbol in their society. When the firstborn Egyptians saw that their loftiest icon was in danger, they realized that they, as firstborns and the most highly regarded humans in society, were also in danger.

The 600,000 firstborn Egyptians begged their fathers to let the Jewish people go. Only if the Jews were set free would the head of the Egyptian gods and the head of Egyptian families (the firstborn sons) be saved. Their fathers, however, refused to persuade Pharaoh to let the Jewish people go.

As jarring as it is, the *midrash* relates that on that night of *Shabbos Hagadol* these 600,000 first born Egyptians killed their 600,000 fathers. When they killed their fathers they were demonstrating that they were afraid of the G-d

of the Jews, and strangely enough, this served as a great merit for them.

The 600,000 fathers that were killed on *Shabbos Hagadol* were killed because they did not recognize Hashem. It was a punishment without merit. They were killed by their own sons. There is no greater punishment than that.

The 600,000 firstborn were killed after recognizing Hashem. It is because they did so that they deserved to have their lives taken by Hashem Himself.

Their death acted as an exchange for the 600,000 Jews who were released that night.

- Shvilei Pinchos

## The Hidden Nature of Makos

Tova Schwartz

Rav Shimshon Ma'Ostropoli says that it is a great *inyan* to study, at least once per year, the hidden nature of the *makos* and the difficult statements of the Ar"i Hakadosh about the *makos*. Specifically, he refers to the belief of the Ar"i that the *makos* were brought upon the *Mitzriyim* through the force of 3,280 *maalachai chavala*, or angels of destruction. Rav Shimshon explains how the Ar"i arrives at the number 3,280 in two ways.

The first is from a pasuk in *Yeshayahu* (58:4) which says: ולהכות באגרף רשע

This *pasuk* is describing the way in which Hashem punishes wicked people by hitting them with his fist. Hidden in this *pasuk*, Rav Shimshon explains, are the same 3,280 *maalachai chavalah* that were used to punish the *Mitzriyim*, as follows: The *aleph* and *gimel* of the word *egroph* (fist) may be switched around to denote *Gimel Alaphim*, or 3,000, and the *raish peh* add up to 280 in *gematriah*, for a total of 3,280. Shown below:

$$3,280 = \text{א'ג'ר'פ' = ג' א'לפ'ים ר'פ'}$$

The second way, Rav Shimshon explains, is through the *gematria* of each of the actual *makos* themselves added together, as follow

דס	44
צפודע	444
כנס	110
ערב	272
דבר	206
שחין	368
ברד	206
ארבה	208
חשך	328
מכת בכורות	1094
<b>Total</b>	<b>3280</b>

The problem with this calculation is that the *makos* of *keinim*, *arov*, and *chosbech*, are all *chaser*, or missing, *yuds* and *vavs*. Rav Shimshon explains that this is actually not a problem, because in this calculation, these words are tallied using the exact spelling written in the Torah (*and not* as they are written in the *Hagaddah* or *siddurim*). Consequently, they do, in fact, add up to the 3,280 *malachei chavalah* which the Ar"i claims Hashem used to hit the *Mitzriyim*.

Rav Shimshon also brings the following words of the Ar"i:

ובמה שהקב"ה מכה, בו מרפה הגלות

The Ar"i asserts that the means with which Hashem punishes, are the very same means through which he brings the *refuah*, the cure. In *Mitzrayim*, when the *Mitzriyim* were smitten with the *makos*, *Benei Yisrael* were receiving their *refuah* through those same *makos*.

Every year my father recalls the teaching of my great grandfather, Rav Zalman Adleman, who was a Rav in Denver, Colorado and in other cities. As he poured out the wine from his *kos* when the *makos* were recited, he would point out that the reason for this is for us to remember the suffering of the *Mitzriyim*. We do this, my great grandfather would say, because we have *rachmanus* on the *Mitzriyim* even though they hurt us. The Ar"i pointed out that while the *makos* brought destruction to the *Mitzriyim*, they also resulted in our *refuah*, the *Geulah*. To bring these two ideas together, we have *rachmanus* because through the pain and suffering that the *Mitzriyim* endured during the plagues *Benei Yisrael* acquired Redemption.

## כמה מעלות טובות למקום עלינו

*Aliza Brody*

The Torah tells us that "Yisro..heard everything that Hashem has done for Moshe and for Israel..and Yisro came to Moshe" (Shemos 18:1-5). Rashi, paraphrasing *Zevachim* 116a, asks- what exactly did Yisro hear that prompted him to throw his lot in with the Jewish people in the desert. The answer, *Rash* writes, is, "He heard about the splitting of the Red Sea and the war against Amalek." Why does the *Gemara* seek to limit the cause of Yisro's enthusiasm to one or two events? Why should we not say that he heard about the Clouds of Glory, the miraculous preservation of their clothing, the *mann*, etc?

R' Moshe Feinstein answers that, in fact, the Torah is teaching us a very important lesson in its analysis of the story of *Yisro*. When people hear a report with many inspiring details, it is the nature of each individual to be particularly moved by a specific aspect of the story. Some will be inspired by victory against Amalek; others will be influenced by the suppression of the

laws of nature by G-d, as represented by the splitting of the Yam Suf. Each perspective is a valid one, and reflects the character of the observer, who perceives the events in his own personal way.

It is for this reason that the Haggadah lists these fifteen “levels of good” that were involved in the Exodus, for every facet of our redemption will touch each individual uniquely.

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## דיינן

*Layla Crystal*

*Malbim* explains that the recitation of *Dayenu* serves a crucial purpose. Once we get up to *Dayenu* we have finished saying all the passages describing how we were able to leave Egypt and what happened to us there. At this point, the next step would be to thank Hashem for all the miracles he performed for us in Egypt. Before we say *Hallel* and offer these praises, we want to make sure that we fully understand what Hashem did for us. *Dayenu* remind us of all the detailed events through which Hashem redeemed us. He deserves thanks for each of these steps individually even if the next one wouldn't have occurred. Yes, Hashem split the sea for us, but what if he hadn't brought us onto dry land? We still have to thank Hashem for this action which allowed us to become a nation. *Dayenu* doesn't mean it would have sufficed; it means that this act alone obligates us to offer thanks to Hashem. When we say *Dayenu*, we keep in mind the fifteen acts of kindness Hashem bestowed upon us. Each one alone deserves appreciation. After we say *Dayenu* we should feel inspired, and when we come to these praises in the Seder we should recite them sincerely and with a full heart.

- Adapted from Rabbi Yehuda Prero

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## אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני...דיינו!

*Ariella Seidemann*

אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני ולא נתן לנו את התורה, דיינו!

In *Dayenu*, we sing, “If [Hashem] would have brought us close to *Har Sinai* and not have given us the Torah, *Dayenu!* There is an obvious question here. Wasn't the giving of the Torah the entire point of Hashem bringing Bnei Yisroel to *Har Sinai*? How could simply coming close to *Har Sinai* be enough?

Rav Ruderman z"l explains the following: we are taught that our forefathers kept all of Hashem's commandments because they worked on themselves and reached great spiritual heights, which allowed them to understand what Hashem expected of them. At *Har Sinai*, when Hashem revealed himself to Bnei Yisroel, they, too, were brought to that great spiritual level and were able to understand all that Hashem wanted from them. Therefore, even if they had not been given the Torah, they still would have been able to uncover everything in it. A second answer is as follows: the *pasuk* tells us that "*Vayichan sham Yisroel neged habar.*" Rashi famously explains that when the Torah says "the Jews encamped opposite the mountain," it specifically uses the word "*Vayichan*" in singular as opposed to *Vayachanu*, its plural form, because Bnei Yisroel were "*k'ish echad b'lev echad.*" There was so much unity among them that they were like one entity. Rav Kirzner explains that had this unity been the only thing Bnei Yisroel would have achieved at *Har Sinai*, that would have been enough--*Dayenu!*

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## דינו ... על אחת כמה וכמה

*Leora Shwekey*

דינו ... על אחת כמה וכמה טובה כפולה ומכפלת למקום עלינו

One of the expressions of thanks that we say on the Seder night is the "*Dayenu*," where we recount Hashem's acts of kindness one by one, singling out that each kindness alone "would have been enough for us." Curiously, right after mentioning this, we repeat the same idea, but in a different format, expressing all of the deeds in one paragraph. Why did our Rabbis place a seemingly superfluous passage after everything was already spelled out in detail? What deeper message were our Chachamim trying to convey for us on this special night?

Our Rabbis are laying the groundwork for gratitude, and how to attain such feelings of appreciation.

If somebody did you a favor that was very impactful, you would *probably* remember this single act for the rest of your life. I say probably, because that would be true if we didn't have later predicaments that others helped us overcome. In today's "what have you done for me lately" culture, with the passage of time the older chessed would lose its luster. The first "*Dayenu*," where we express our thanks to Hashem, singling out each chessed, teaches us that it's important to acknowledge and mention the earlier acts of kindness. Doing so will instill within us a heightened awareness of how much thanks we owe Hashem, who was responsible for every act of kindness. (Perhaps that is the meaning of another part of the *Haggadah*, which, citing the *Mishnah*

in *Masechet Berachot*, teaches that the obligation to mention our redemption from Egypt applies even during the era of the Mashiach.)

The second, seemingly redundant paragraph, teaches us that we have to link the acts of kindness that Hashem has done for us, weave it into one thread, and notice how each one was built upon the other. Even if we might feel that in comparing the acts of kindness, one wasn't such a big deal, by reading the entire paragraph strung together as one, we are able to perceive how instrumental each event was for our development as individuals and as a nation. One link missing from the chain breaks the entire experience.

If we can take these tools for gratitude and apply them to our dealings with others, we would appreciate not only what people *do* for us, but what they *have done* for us as well.

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## ... בכל דור ודור

*Zahava Laufer*

בכל דור ודור חיב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים

To this point, on the Seder evening, we have talked about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and discussed the *mitzvos* connected with it. The *Haggadah* now explains the purpose of the *mitzvos*- namely, that we should actually see *ourselves* leaving Mitzrayim. The *Chever Ma'amarim* avers that "a person is obliged literally to transform himself into one of those who left Egypt. This state can only be achieved through performing the commandments...only in the way that the *Haggadah* provides, through the מצוות of the *Seder*, can this goal be achieved, for they have the power to change the person." The *Haggadah* stated previously that we would still be slaves in Mitzrayim if Hashem had not taken out our ancestors. Now the *Haggadah* further explains that we should not view *Yetzias Mitzrayim* strictly as a historical event that happened long ago. Rather, we have to see it as a personal experience in which we are directly involved. One might ask how can we feel like one who was redeemed when the reality is that once again we are in *galus*?! Our *galus*, however, cannot be compared to that of the Jews in *Mitzrayim*. The freedom from Pharaoh's rule was final and we attained an *olam cheirus*, that was sealed by *Matan Torah*. Unlike the Jews in Mitzrayim we have the Torah with us in our *galus*, and through it we can indeed recapture the lessons of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. Because we are still caught in the same web of human weaknesses that marked the *Galus Mitzrayim*, our enemies still rise against us in every generation.

At the same time, however, we are challenged in every generation to seek our

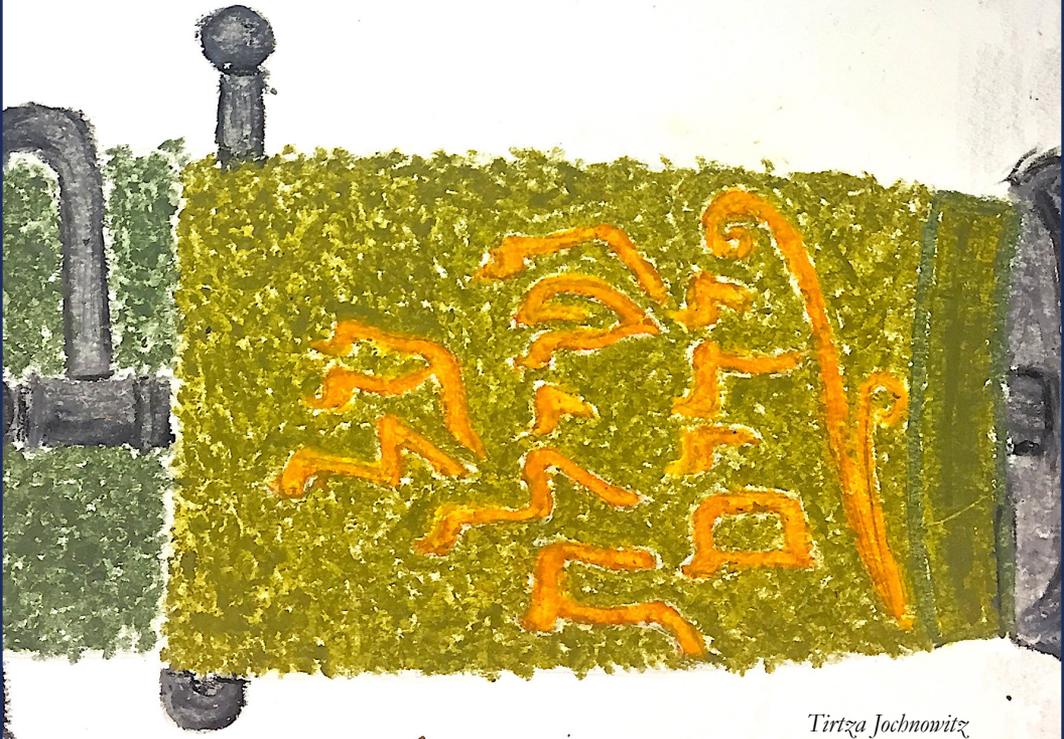
*yeshua*.The *mitzvos*

of the Seder are able to lift us up to those levels of *kabalas ol malchus Shamayim*,which will bring *Moshiach* speedily in our days.

- Source: The Artscroll Haggadah By Rabbi Joseph Elias

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Tirtza Jochnowitz

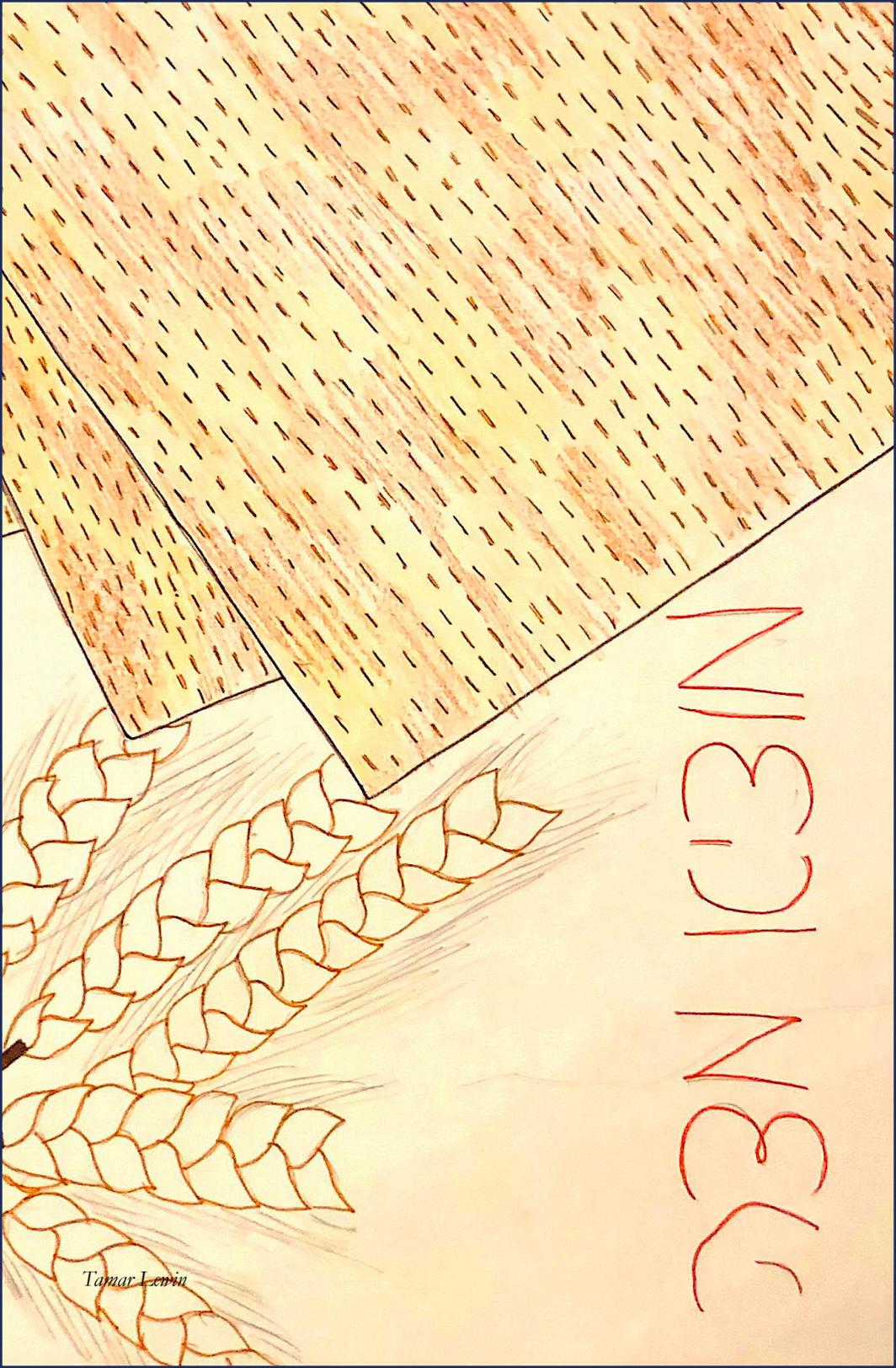
# The Different Washings

*Ariella Seidemann*

It is noteworthy that during the *seder* we wash our hands twice-- once as a fulfillment of *U'rchatz* and another to observe *Ruchtz'a*. *U'rchatz* is an imperative "and wash", while *Ruchtz'a* is a more general form of the word, meaning "washing". Why does the same action have a change in the nuance of the name?

Rav Kook explains that the earlier washing of *U'rchatz* is the imperative for the **individual** to remove any impurity before eating food. *Ruchtz'a*, on the other hand, removes more than just impurity. It signifies the end of slavery discussed in Maggid. This is a *national*, all-encompassing washing, so its name is altered to *Ruchtz'a*.

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СВН ІСІВІ

*Tamar Lenin*

# Motzi Matzah

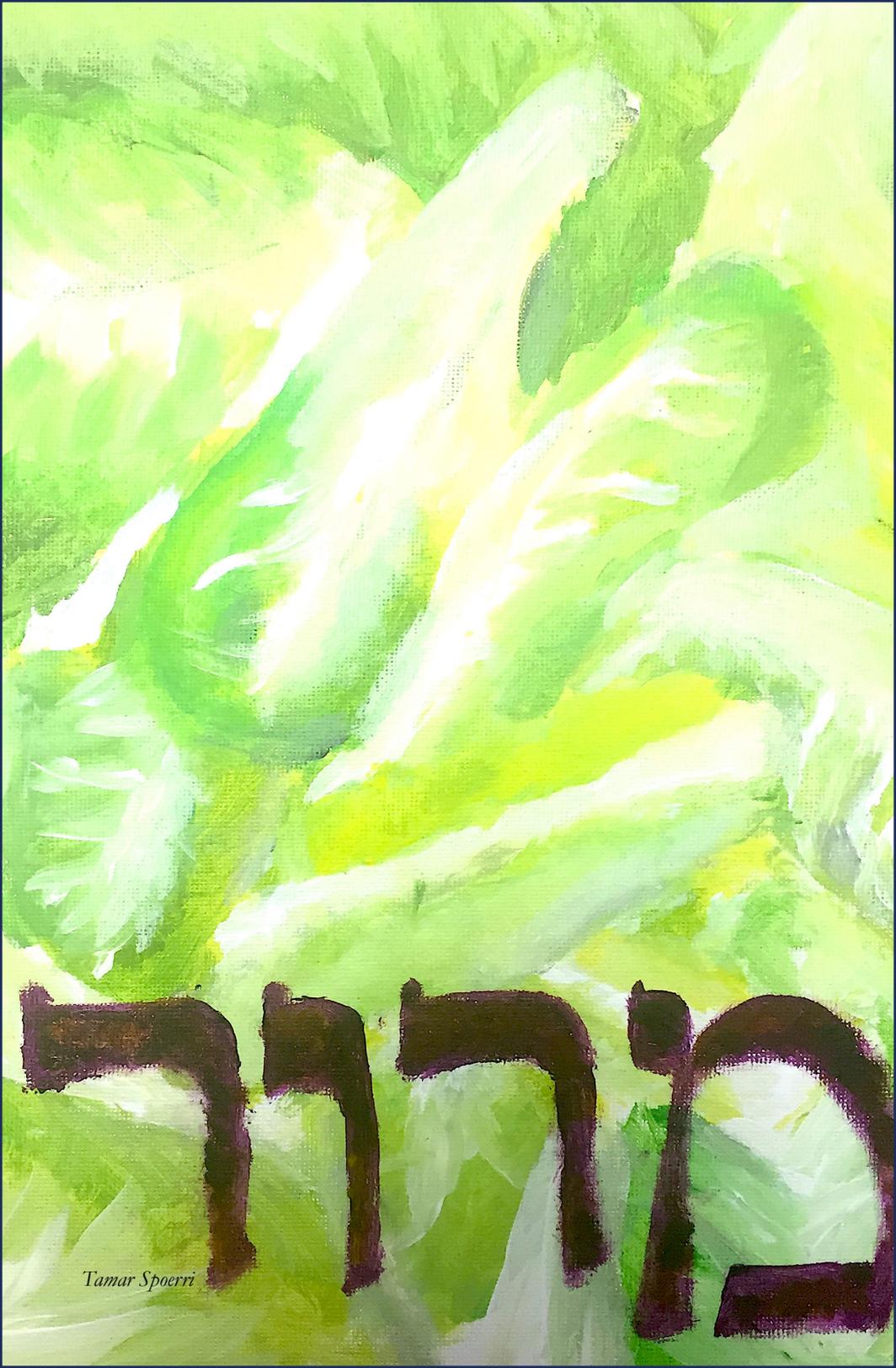
*Chani Shulman*

While the *bracha* of *hamotzi* is recited over one of three *matzos*, the *bracha* for the *mitzvat* of eating *matzah* is recited over a different *matzah*. The *Netziv* explains that this is done in keeping with the principle that “*mitzvos* may not be performed in bundles”, hence we split the two blessings between two different pieces of *matzah*.

This idea also applies to the two blessings that we recite over the *maror*: *Al achilas maror*, and *borei pri ha'adamah*. While we say only one *bracha* immediately before eating the *maror*, the *bracha* of *ha'adamah* is still maintained from the prior eating of the *karpas* (as it is customary to have in mind that the *ha'adamah* should encompass both the *karpas* and the *maror*). Ostensibly, though, this contradicts the *Gemara's* view on the addition of *karpas*- that the children should ask questions. If the reason for *karpas* is to avoid dual *brachos* over the *maror*, why would the *Gemara* maintain that *karpas* is an opportunity to arouse children's curiosity?

The *Netziv* explains that we need both reasons to explain *karpas*; each explanation on its own is insufficient. If *karpas* was instituted to arouse the curiosity of children who would then ask questions, why was it specifically a vegetable (and not any other food) that was dipped? He answers, so that there would not be two *brachos* made on *maror*. And if *karpas* came out of the need to ensure there would be only one *bracha* made over the *maror*, why could there not have been two separate pieces of *maror*- one for each *bracha*- as it is with the *matzah* at *Motzi Matzah*? We have the dipping instead of two pieces of *maror* so that the children should ask questions.

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*Tamar Spoerri*

# Marror on Pesach

Mia Lubetski

The *Hagaddah* tells us that “the Mitzriyim embittered the lives of our fathers in Mitzrayim; they made their lives bitter with hard labor, with mortar and brick and through all manner of labor in the field...” On a surface level, it would seem that we eat *maror* to remember the *avodas perech* of Bnei Yisrael in Mitzrayim, as well as to remind us of the bitterness of *galus*. It may seem strange that at a time of such celebration, when we are commemorating our *genulah* from Mitzrayim, we inject such a tone of bitterness by eating *maror*. One possible answer to this question, is that even though we were rescued by Hashem from slavery, we must still remember the bitterness, as the experience will be repeated again until the coming of *Mashiach*. The *Bais HaLevi* alludes to this when he poses the question of why, when eating *maror*, we have a reminder of the bitterness of slavery but no symbol of the riches Bnei Yisrael gathered at the time of liberation? He answers that the riches which Bnei Yisrael took with them soon disappeared, but the bitterness lasted through the ages. On another level, the riches that Bnei Yisrael took with them were ill-fated, as they ended up being used to build the *eigel hazahav*, at the time of *cheit haeigel*. Another interesting point which can help explain why *maror* is eaten at the *Seder* can be derived from the *pasuk* following the discussion of *maror* in the *Hagaddah*. The *Hagaddah* cites the following *pasuk* from *Sefer Shemos*:

“והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה יהוה לי בצאתי ממצרים”

In every generation, one is obligated to regard himself as though he himself had actually left *Mitzrayim*. Earlier in the *Hagaddah*, Rabban Gamliel proclaims: “Whoever has not explained the following three things on *Pesach* has not fulfilled his obligation: *Pesach*, *Matzah*, and *Maror*.” One is obligated to experience the *yetzias Mitzrayim* as if he himself were actually there, and by eating *maror*, we are actually able to experience the bitterness of slavery. By observing *Pesach* in this way, we are truly able to fulfill the commandment of experiencing and explaining *Pesach*. By experiencing the bitterness of *galus*, we will truly be able to appreciate the ultimate *genulah*!

- Adapted from a Dvar Torah by Rabbi Schwartz

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# פסח. מצה. ומרור.

*Rivka Notkin*

Rabban Gamliel says that one who does not discuss *pesach*, *matza*, and *marror*, has not fulfilled his obligation. Generally a *mitzvos asey* requires a physical action as well. Why do these three *mitzvos* require only articulation?

Rav Yaakov Meir Padua of Brisk explains that these three *mitzvos* signify cornerstones of our faith. Therefore, we must explain their meaning to our children on the night that celebrates our freedom and the birth of a spiritual nation.

The *Maharam Padua* writes that these *mitzvos* allude to our three *Avos*, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, who in turn represent the three pillars of Jewish faith on which the world stands, Torah, *Avodah*, and *Gemillas Chasadim*.

*Matzah* represents Avraham Avinu. Avraham instructed Sarah to bake *matzah* for the angels who visited him. At the beginning of the Seder we invite all those who are hungry to come and eat. From Avraham we learn the importance of the *mitzvah* of *Gemillas Chasadim*.

The *Korban Pesach* is a form of *Avodah*. When Yitzchak wanted to bless Eisav on the 15th of Nissan, he requested two goats, one symbolizing the future *Korban Pesach*, and the other signifying the accompanying *Chagigah* sacrifice. For this reason Yitzchak represents *Avodah*, and the *mitzvah* of Pesach.

*Marror* alludes to Yaakov, because *marror* is called *chasa*, which literally means lettuce, but carries within it the word for “merciful”, a term that refers to the Torah, because it is filled with the “mercies” of HaShem. Yaakov is known as the pillar of Torah.

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בורך

# זכר למקדש כהלל

*Tzirel Shteirman*

Eating the *korech* combination seems superfluous, as we have just eaten *matzah* and *marror*. Why now put the two together in a sandwich? Furthermore, by combining the two, neither have a distinct taste, and one would seemingly not be fulfilling the *mitzvah*.

According to *Bais Hillel* the *mitzvah* was to make a sandwich, but *Bais Shammai* says that you must eat *matzah* and *marror* separately. Nowadays, in order to satisfy everyone's opinions we first eat the *matzah* and *marror* separately and then put them together for *korech*.

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Chavina Berger

# שלשה שאכלו על שלחן אחד...

Bassy Reissman

שלשה שאכלו על שלחן אחד ואמרו עליו דברי תורה ' כאילו אכלו משלחנו של מקום

In *Pirkei Avos* we are taught that when someone sits down to have a meal it can either be an uplifting event or a degrading experience. "When three people eat together and do not speak words of *Torah* at the table, it is as if they had eaten of an idolatrous offering..But if they did speak words of *Torah* it is as if they had eaten at G-d's own table"(3:4). Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky offers a beautiful explanation of this *Mishna*. There is a fundamental difference between Jewish philosophy and that of many other religions. Most gentiles believe that the physical and spiritual aspects of life exist independent from each other, indeed they are often at odds with each other. In Judaism, however, we infuse every aspect of our physical lives with a spark of *kedusha*, and thereby elevate it. This is why a non-Jew may not bring a peace-offering in the *Beis Hamikdash* but can bring a burnt-offering. The flesh of the peace-offering is eaten by humans, representing the relationship between physical indulgences and spiritual fulfillment. The burnt-offering, however, is completely consumed by the fire on the *mizbeach*, signifying isolated spirituality. Eating is a basic necessity. If one's food is not accompanied by spirituality, that person lowers himself to a lesser ideology. When we have *kavanah* during *shulchan oreich*, we eat "at G-d's own table".

- Adapted from the Haggadah of the Roshei Yeshiva

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# צפון



# Afikomen

Meirab Feldman

The Mishna 10:8 in Pesachim states "אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומין". The simple explanation for this is that one can not eat *afikoman* after eating the *korban pesach*. The Gemara explains afikomen as, *afiku man* which means to 'bring out food.' This refers to dessert which is brought out at the end of the meal. Some say it is based on the Greek word epikomon, which means dessert. Therefore, this statement means, one can not eat dessert after eating the *Korban Pesach*. Today, however, when we no longer have the *beis hamikdash* and do not bring the *korban pesach*, we eat the matzah that was eaten with it instead (*Rashi*). Therefore, because we were not allowed to eat anything after the *korban pesach*, so that it would be the last taste in our mouth, we are not allowed to eat anything after the *matzah* that substitutes it. Since the *matzah* is the last thing that we eat after dessert, we began to call it the afikomen (based on *shiltei giborim* quoting the *Rif*). We can now understand the mishna's statement as, we don't eat anything after the afikoman, which is referring to the last piece of *matzah*. This line is also quoted in the Haggadah as the answer to the *chacham*, teaching him to not eat after the *afikoman*.

The *Gemara* encourages us to grab the *afikoman*. When the children eat they become tired so the parents are supposed to snatch away the matza in order to entice them to remain awake and engaged. This is the source of the *minhag* of hiding the *afikoman*. The Rambam says it is another one of the unusual things we do to get the children to ask questions. Interestingly enough, there are some people who object to this *minhag* because they are afraid the children will think it is okay to steal!

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## The Afikomen

Rosie Katz

Before midnight we eat from the *Afikomen*, which is the last food eaten at the *Seder*.

In the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *afikomen* was the meat of the *korban Pesach* itself. Today, the *afikomen* is a piece of *matzah* broken off at an earlier point in the *seder*, during *yachatz*.

After enjoying the meal, the *afikomen* is the taste with which we leave the *Seder*.

In fact, we are not allowed to eat anything else after the *afikomen*. The *afikomen*, which we eat to be *mekadesh* a *mitzva* rather than to satisfy our hunger, also fulfills a spiritual need. Regardless of how satisfied a person is after a meal, he will be hungry again a few hours later. By contrast, our spiritual food, which includes our *avodas Hashem*, *mitvos*, following and creating a *mesorah*, and spending time with our family, is a taste that remains for a lifetime. “The *afikomen* food, like all spiritual qualities, knows no limits of time and place. Its “taste” remains with us always. Its memories allow us to survive the dark night and unavoidable in life.”

We then head into a beautiful *Hallel* and a *Nirtzah* of singing Hashem’s praises, and *daven* for the taste of the *afikomen* to linger on towards the coming of *Mashiach*, *B’mbeira V’iyamanu*.

- Adapted from Rabbi Berel Wein’s Pesach Haggadah- Throughout the Prism of Experience and History

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# Leil Shimurim

*Chedvah Levine*

The minhag is universal, and children, especially, look forward to opening of the door for *Eliyahu Hanavi*. This is the night we call *leil shimurim*, as we know that Hashem is protecting us even more than usual from all the dangers of the world. Rashi explains that this was the night that Hashem established as the night He would redeem the Jews. The *Yalkut Shimoni* expands on this idea by explaining that Hashem's protection extends into the rest of the exiles as well, and that every time Jews go into exile, the Shechinah comes along, protecting us at every moment. There is actually a history behind this tradition of opening the door on this night. In the Middle Ages in Europe, at the pinnacle of the era of tragic blood libels, the Jews were frightened on Pesach that a body would be planted on their property, so every Seder night they would look outside, and check to make sure the coast was clear. Along with this physical protective measure, they added on the *pesukim* we say to this day, pleading with Hashem to protect us from the vicious nations who are out to get us. Indeed, it was on this specific night, that the need for Hashem's special protection was most needed and appreciated. And this year, when we say this *pesukim*, we should keep in mind not only the *neis* in *Mitzrayim*, but, as well, the *nisim* we see all the time in the *galus* we are still in.

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## שפך חמתך

*Sara Nordlicht*

שפך חמתך אל הגוים אשר לא ידעוך ועל ממלכות אשר בשמך לא קראו

כי אכל את יעקב ואת נוהו השמו (תהלים עט: ו-ז)

These *pesukim* from *Sefer Tehillim* are recited when we open the door to invite Eliyahu HaNavi into our homes on *seder* night. The *Metzudas David* explains that we are asking Hashem to remove His “anger”, *keviyachol*, from us and pour it onto the *goyim* instead. At first glance, this verse seems problematic. How can the *goyim* be deserving of Hashem's wrath if everything that they did to hurt us was *ratzon Hashem* because we were deserving of punishment? Several answers have been offered:

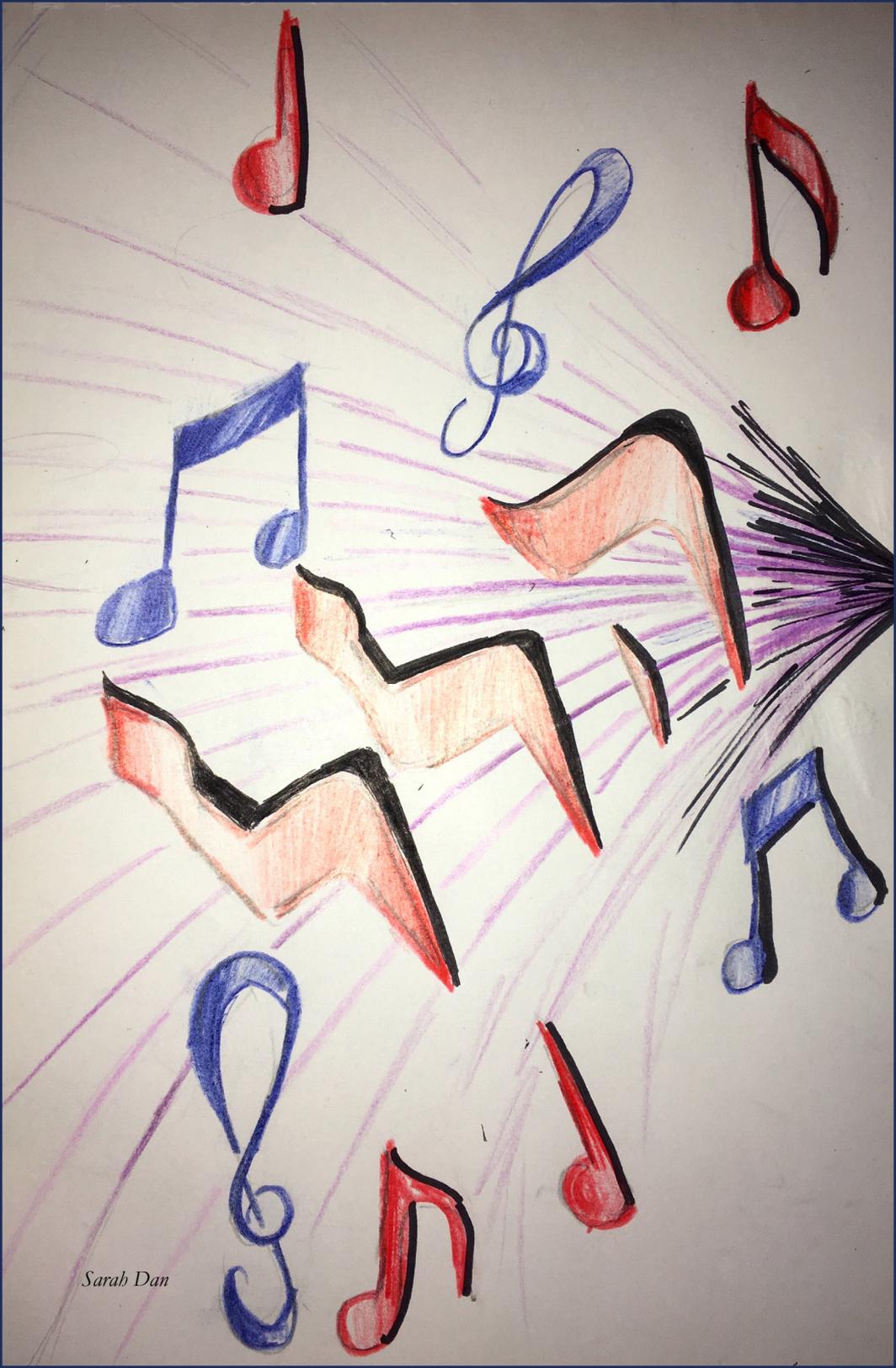
One is, that although what happened to us was *min HaShamayim* and would have happened regardless, the *goyim* who implemented our punishment did

not have to be the ones to carry out the *ratzon Hashem*. Others could have completed this *shlichus* yet they are held responsible because they willingly chose to do it. Another reason they are deserving of punishment is because they did more than they had to do; they hurt us in especially cruel ways. In the case of the Mitzriyim, they tortured us by having the men do women's work and the women do men's work, which was hardly necessary. The *Malbim* suggests that this verse refers specifically to those who destroyed the *Beis HaMikdash* as it says *v'es naveihu beishamu*. Although it was acceptable for them to have destroyed the *Beis HaMikdash*, they need not have hurt Yaakov as well, and the fact that they did so was needlessly cruel and went far beyond that which was decreed upon us. A third reason is that while it was permissible for them to do what they did, they are punishable because they did it *b'simcha*.

Whatever the reason for their punishment, we say these *pesukim* by our open doors to show that we do not need to fear the *goyim* tonight, as it is *Leil Hashimurim* and we have an added level of protection from them. Immediately prior to our opening the door, we pour the fourth cup, symbolizing the final *galus*, as well as the *kos shel Eliyahu*. We hope and daven that Eliyahu will come soon and provide further relief from our enemies, as he heralds the final *geulah*.

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*Sarah Dan*

# Living in the Moment

*Avigail Ovitsb*

One of the most common questions regarding Hallel on Pesach is why is there no *bracha* before the recitation of Hallel on the Seder night, when normally Hallel is introduced by a *Birchas HaMitzvah*- אשר קדשנו במצותיו- וצונו לקרוא את ההלל? Rav Hai Gaon posits that there are two types of Hallel recitations. The first is a formal recitation of Hallel, which is the traditional *Hallel* that we read every *Yom Tov* and *Rosh Chodesh* to commemorate the special day which we are celebrating. The second kind of *Hallel* is *Hallel הנס* – a spontaneous expression of thanks and praise at the exact moment when a miracle is performed for us, such as the *Hallel* recited at *Krias Yam Suf*.

During the night of the *Seder*, the Rambam stresses that we must view ourselves as though we are leaving *Mitzrayim* right now. He maintains that must experience and teach our children that *yetziyas Mitzrayim* is real, current, and applicable to us. The *Hallel* that we recite, therefore, is not to commemorate the event which happened 3,000 years ago, but rather, a spontaneous expression of gratitude for a *nes* we are experiencing now. This second form of *Hallel*, recited at the exact moment when a *nes* occurs, has no *bracha*, and therefore, the *Hallel* which we recite on the night of the *Seder* is not preceded by a *bracha*. This is also the reason why this particular *Hallel* is said sitting as opposed to the customary mode of standing, and is an obligation for men and women alike, as that is the manner in which the second form of spontaneous *Hallel* is recited. It is therefore incumbent upon each and every one of us to embrace the statement of *הייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים*, and truly feel as if we can genuinely praise Hashem in the present for taking us out of *Mitzrayim*.

- Adapted from Rav Shimon Isaacson

## Hallel

*Chaviva Berger*

In the beginning of *Hallel*, Bnei Yisroel are described as “*ordei Hashem*.” But the Seder night is all about praising Hashem for freeing us, for taking us out of *avdus*, so are we really free or are we still servants?

There are Jews who believe that freedom includes the right to neglect and dilute out Torah and *mitzvos* because they tie them down. This concept has been around for almost three thousand years, beginning with *Matan Torah*. The *midrash* describes how Hashem went around to all the nations and inquired if any of them wanted to accept the Torah. *Edom* replied that they cannot accept the Torah because it forbids them to murder, and they need the freedom to kill whomever they want, whenever they want. The *Yishmaelim* responded that they need the freedom to take possession of whatever they please and Torah forbids them to steal.

So if freedom implies the lack of restrictions, is a free person allowed to steal and kill?

Most would answer that no one has the right to harm others. This brings up a tricky topic, because what is considered harm? Can one keep quiet if something bad is occurring, and can one lie if it won't harm anyone? When people set their own standards of what is considered right and wrong the lines start to get blurred. Additionally, those who believe they are free are usually not. Most of them are addicted to physical pleasures and enslaved by the pressures society places upon them.

So what is true freedom?

Our *Chachamim* teach us that being free is the ability to overcome our animal instincts or the *yezter hara*. A person who is not enslaved to their *yezter* is truly free. For example, if someone has *lashon hara* on the tip of her tongue but is able to hold herself back because she knows it's *assur*, she is truly free. She restricts herself and holds herself back from blindly following her *taavos* and impulses. Therefore, we define a free person as a servant of Hashem. The words do not contradict each other; rather they work together. When we choose to use our freedom to follow Hashem, that is when we achieve true freedom.

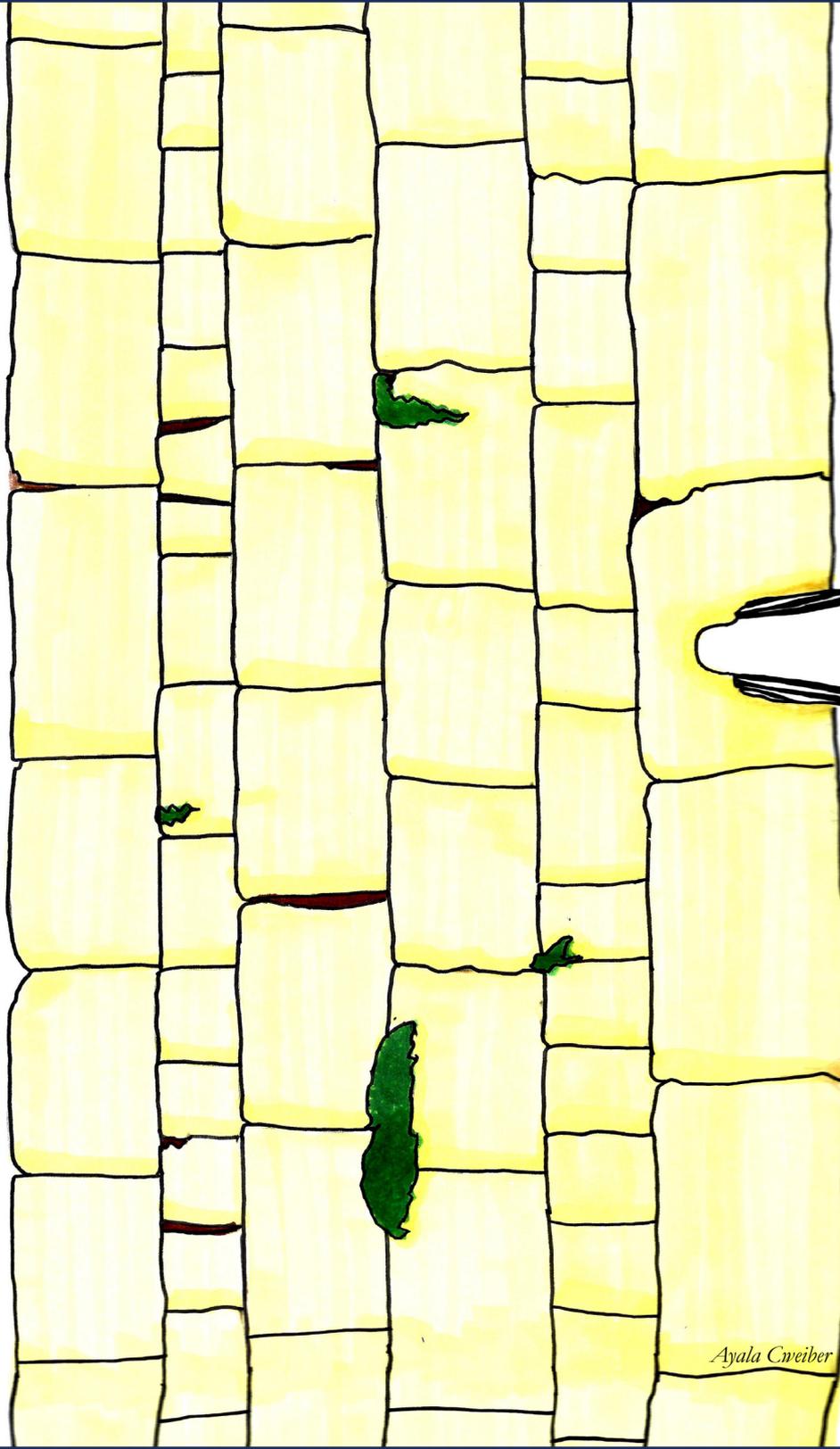
- Little Medrash Says Haggadah

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ברצח

למורט. האבן היא



Ayala Creiber

# חסל סידור פסח כהלכתו

*Abuva Mermelstein*

At the end of the Seder as we begin *nirtzah*, we say חסל סידור פסח כהלכתו. The word *chasal* is usually translated as 'concluded', and thus the phrase means that we have concluded the Seder of Pesach. Most of the time, however, the word *chasal* is not understood in this way. For example, in Devarim 28:28, the phrase "כי יחסלנו הארבה" means that the locust ate something - finished, and completely destroyed it. Although *chasal* does mean to finish, it is most commonly used in relation to destruction. Additionally, in modern day Hebrew, *chasal* is used as the verb for killing someone. How, then, do these translations relate to חסל סידור פסח כהלכתו at the end of the Seder? The simple meaning is of course that we have *completed* the Seder of Pesach. Upon further consideration, we can see that there is a hidden prayer here. We are davening for Hashem to 'destroy' the Seder Pesach that we have today. We ask Him to bring *Moshiach* and restore for us the *previous Seder Pesach* by allowing us to bring the *Korban Pesach* in the *Beis Hamikdash*. Now, as we complete our Seder, we hope that we have finished for our last time the חסל סידור פסח כהלכתו, the Seder Pesach of *Galus*.

- Adapted from Rabbi Reisman

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# קול דודי הנה זה בא...

*Chayala Hauptman*

קול דודי הנה זה בא מדלג על ההרים מקפץ על הגבעות (שיר השירים)

The voice of my Beloved! Behold it came suddenly [to redeem me] leaping over mountains, skipping over hills.

A *midrashic* comment emerges from this *pasuk* and describes that when Bnei Yisroel heard that they were leaving *Mitzrayim*, they didn't believe Moshe Rabbeinu. They did not believe that they had the amount of *zechuyos* necessary to be redeemed from *Mitzrayim*. Moshe assured them that Hashem would be overlooking their sins, because if He paid attention to them, Bnei Yisroel would never be redeemed. Moshe explained that it was because of his father Amram and his *bais din* and all the other *tzadikim* that Bnei Yisroel were being redeemed. Additionally, in the merit of Bnei Yisroel who followed Amram's advice and guidance, Hashem was going to redeem them.

This *Midrash* teaches us that Hashem will bring a *yeshua*, even if the people aren't worthy, in the merit of the leaders and *tzadikim* among them. A similar idea is found in *Parshas Vayera* when Avraham Avinu begs Hashem to save S'dom if there are 50 *tzadikim* there. Avraham continually lowers the number until he gets to 10, but after 10 he stops, because he realizes that Hashem will not save S'dom. It would seem that Avraham Avinu already knew that there weren't enough *tzadikim* in S'dom so why did he ask? The Dubno Maggid suggests that while this didn't help the *S'domim*, it set a very important precedent for the future and would be the basis for the justification of Bnei Yisroel's exodus from Mitzrayim. The Jews did not consider themselves worthy of redemption but because of the few *tzadikim*, they were redeemed.

This is a great source of *nechama* for us in *galus* because though it may seem to us that we are a lowly generation, with huge amounts of intermarriage and people who disregard Torah and *mitzvos*, Hashem will redeem us in the *zechus* of the *tzadikim* and great leaders among us. It is therefore our responsibility to make sure that we do our part to safeguard Torah and *mitzvos* and bring the world to its ultimate *tachlis*.

- Rav Pam on the Festivals

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