

HAGGADAH

תשע"ט



Manhattan High School for Girls

Leah Harris

One of the most classic presentations of the Ramban, which MHS Girls learn in depth, is found at the end of *Parshas Bo*. In it, the Ramban emphasizes how the belief in the *nes* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is the cornerstone of our *emunah* as the *Am Hashem*. It is for precisely this reason that we have myriad commandments that are defined as *zecher l'Yetzias Mitzrayim*; *Shabbos*, *Moadim*, *mezuzah*, *tefillin*, to name a few. The *yom tov* of Pesach serves as the bedrock of our *emunah*, as we expound upon the numerous miracles that Hashem performed, to redeem us from the bondage of *Mitzrayim* and to take us as His nation. *Leil HaSeder* is an annual rejuvenation and restrengthening of our *emunah*.

The Seder is a microcosm of our classrooms. The commandment of **והגדת לבנך** is actualized not merely on *Pesach* by fathers at the head of their *Seder* tables, but also by teachers in their classrooms. The underlying theme that pulsates through all the lessons in MHS, is that of **אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים**- the uplifting message of the supremacy of *Klal Yisrael* as the *Am Hashem*. The education that the girls receive in MHS establishes the foundation of their *emunah*, the faith upon which they will draw when they leave the hallowed walls of our school.

This year's *Haggadah* is an anthology of *Divrei Torah* written by students of every grade; some are based upon ideas they have learned in the classroom, and others represent their independent exploration and study. Thank you to all those who contributed for enhancing the publication. Thank you to our talented student editors, Avigail P. Deutsch, Yehudis Haas, Yael Mehlman, Chani Shulman, and Bayla Weiner. Thank you to Rebbetzin Neuberger for her tireless dedication towards the editing of this publication.

Chag kasher v'sameach,
MHS Haggadah

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We are grateful for the exceptional efforts of our Haggadah Editors

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Chani Shulman, and Bayla Weiner**

קדש



Chanie Malek

Kadeish

Golda Schuster, Adapted from *The Artscroll Yetzias Mitzrayim Haggadah*

“ותתן לנו ה' אלקינו באהבה מועדים לשמחה”

“And you, Hashem, our G-d, have lovingly given us appointed times for gladness”

Why did Hashem place us into additional danger at the *Yam Suf* just seven days after we left Egypt?

The *Ben Ish Chai* answers based on a *midrash* (*Midrash Tehillim 114:1*) which compares the Egyptian reaction to *Yetzias Mitzrayim* to that of an obese man, who, exhausted and weary from a bumpy journey, is hoping to reach his destination quickly so that he can dismount. And the donkey, overburdened by his heavy load, is wishing that he might reach his destination and divest himself of his passenger. When they finally reach their destination and the rider dismounts, it is hard to know who is happier- the traveler or the donkey.

So too, says the *midrash*, the Egyptians suffered so during the plagues, that they were as anxious for the Jews to leave as the Jews were to be redeemed. When we finally left, concludes the *midrash*, it is hard for us to know who was happier, the Jews or the Egyptians. Thus the verse states:”*Samach Mitzrayim bitzaisam*”, meaning *Egypt was glad at their departure* (*Tehillim 105:38*).

Had Hashem allowed the Egyptians to remain in *Mitzrayim* and recover from the plagues, says the *Ben Ish Chai*, they would eventually have turned the 15th of *Nissan* into a national festival to commemorate the day that they finally divested themselves of the Jews. But our *Yomim Tovim* are exclusively for us; Hashem established them as occasions for the Jewish people to rejoice, with each other, and with Him.. He therefore made Pharoh reconsider his decision to free the Jews and pursue them into the *yam suf*. He then drowned the Egyptians while pummeling them with five times the number of plagues that had assailed them in Egypt.

Had the Egyptians not chosen to pursue *Bnei Yisrael*, and remained instead in *Mitzrayim* after *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, they would have shared the festival of *Pesach* with us. It is *because* of that very danger into which Hashem placed the Jews at the *Yam Suf* that we can say: ותתן לנו ה' אלקינו באהבה מועדים לשמחה.

And you, Hashem, our G-d, have lovingly given us appointed times for gladness - for now *Pesach* is a festival solely for us, and not for the Egyptians.



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Urchatz

Lele Book

When looking at the rituals performed at the *Seder*, each one of them seems to make sense and have a place- but what does *urchatz* have to do with the *Seder*? Furthermore, the *Shem Mi'Shmuel* asks: why isn't *urchatz* before *kadesh* if there is a *halacha* that you have to wash your hands before immersing in a *davar kadosh*, and *kiddush* would not be considered a *hefsok* from the washing to the eating of the vegetables? If the reason we are washing our hands is for purity, then *urchatz* should be before *kiddush*.

Rabbi Rudinsky, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshivas Ohr Reuven* in Monsey, and *Rav* of *K'hal Adas Yitzchok*, answers that throughout the *Haggadah*, we are thanking Hashem for keeping His promise. Why do we thank Hashem for keeping His promise? Hashem has an obligation to keep His promise- why are we thanking him for that?! Isn't that an embarrassment?

There is a *meshal* of a *Rosh Yeshiva* who promised he would give his *talmid* \$1,000 if the latter kept the rules of his institution. He then realized that this *talmid* would be away on the date when he was supposed to come pick it up, so the night before he personally delivered the money to his house. This is far beyond 'keeping his promise.' What *would* have been thought of as 'keeping his promise' would have been to wait in his house and hope for the *talmid* to show up.

The *nimsbal* is that Hashem took us out of *Mitzrayim* way before He needed to because if not, we would've been stuck on the lowest level of *tumah*. If He would not have taken us out at that time, and we had gotten stuck, it would not have been considered that He broke His promise, because He promised that in 400 years we would be taken out.

Hashem went above and beyond and did what He did not promise He would do. He never promised that he would take us out early to protect us. That's the *gadlus* of the *Seder*. We are thanking Hashem for going above His promise and taking us out even when we didn't deserve it.

This is exactly the order of the *Seder*. Hashem first took us out, as symbolized by *kadaish* - He was *mikadaish* His people. We really should've done *urchatz* first and cleaned ourselves to be *zoche* to be taken out but instead Hashem was *mikadaish* us first and then we did the *urchatz* step and cleansed ourselves. That's the meaning of "*Shomer havtachaso*"-Hashem protected His promise and took us out so that He can ultimately keep His promise of bringing the *geula*.

כרפס



Karpas

Dina Rothman, Adapted from Rav Schachter on the Haggadah

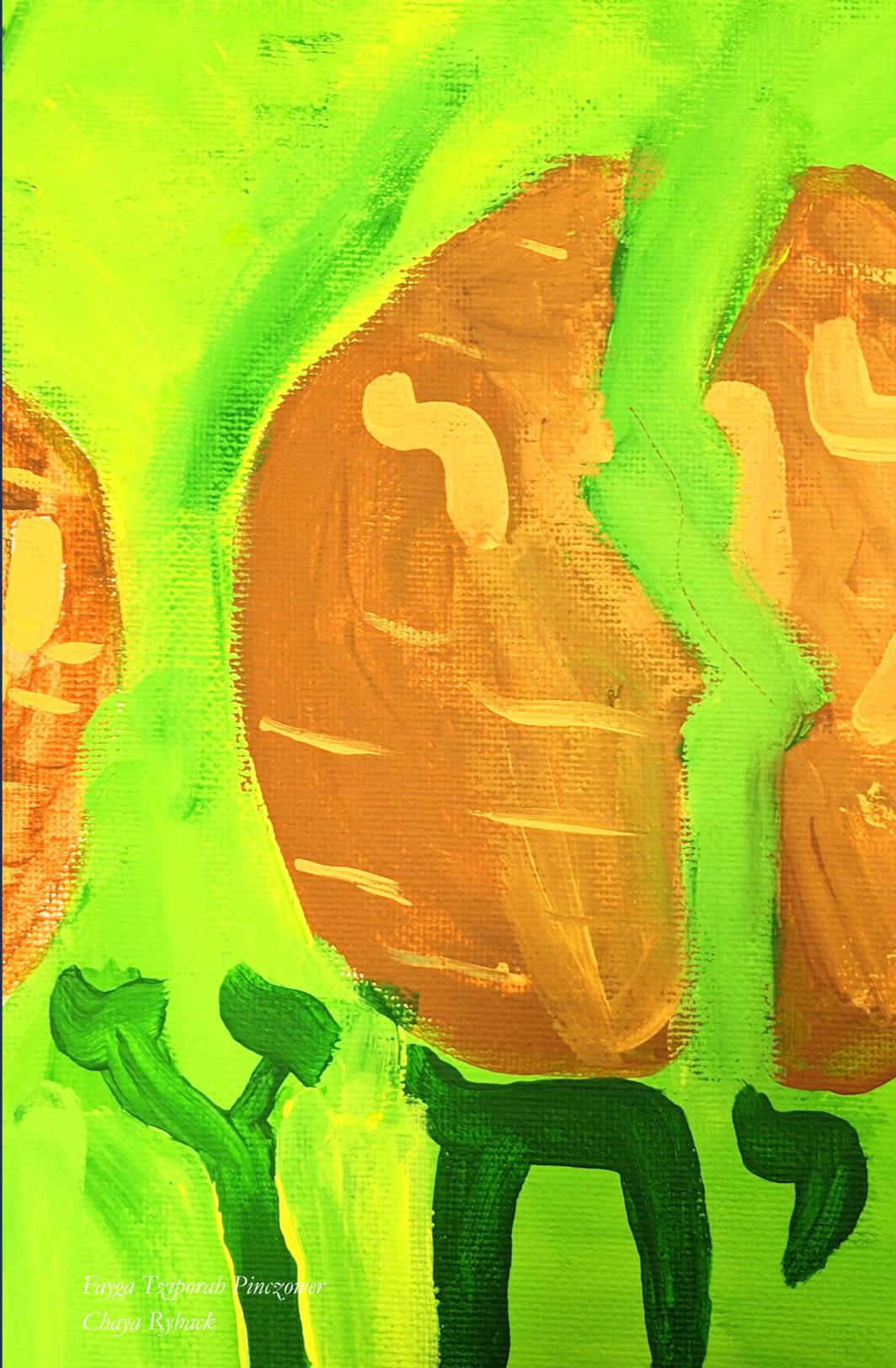
Why do we eat *Karpas*? And why are we supposed to eat less than a *kezayis*?

Rav Soloveitchik ז"ל explains that according to the Rambam, the reason we have *Karpas* is "היכירא לתינוקנת", so that the children should see it and ask questions in order for them to participate in the seder. Once it became a part of the Seder, though, the *Rabbanim* made it a mitzvah to eat *karpas*, and therefore one has to do so even if no children are at the *seder*. Following this reasoning, we also can understand why one does not need to eat a *kezayis* of *karpas*. Since the main purpose of having *karpas* is to encourage the children to participate in the *seder*, the amount of *karpas* that one is required to eat is not the regular amount required in a mitzvah of eating; the regular mitzvah of eating a *kezayis* is not necessary.

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Abuva Mermelstein, Adapted from Yismach Yisrael

Karpas is the first time that we “dip” at the *Seder*; specifically, we dip a vegetable into salt water. We all know the classic symbolism of the word and how the *gematria* translates to hard labor. However, what’s rarely addressed is the symbolism of this *mitzvah* in particular. Why do we dip a vegetable into water and not any other form of dipping or eating another food? Though the explanation is simple, it teaches a beautiful lesson. A person should never be content with the spiritual level they have gained and nor should one doubt his ability to reach greater heights. Both of these concepts are symbolized by the *mitzvah* of *karpas*. Although a vegetable is planted under the ground and grows entirely below the surface, it appears on the holy *seder* table of a Jewish family. From here, we learn that Hashem can raise us from the lowest of lows to the promised redemption. It’s important to know that, regardless of how bleak a situation may seem, Hashem is full of *rachamim* and can bring a person to see his or her own personal rescue. We should all work towards reaching higher levels of *ruchniyus* and bring the ultimate redemption *b’yamainu*.



Fayga Tzjporah Pinczower
Chaya Ryback

Yachatz

Rivka Notkin

In *Yachatz* we divide the middle matzah in two. The larger portion is hidden away as the *afikoman*, symbolising the *Korban Pesach* and representing royalty and majesty. The smaller portion remains on the table, where it sits until *Motzi Matzah*. This represents *lechem oni*, the poor man's bread. The *afikoman* is eaten after the meal, *al basovah*, on a full stomach, while the Matzah is eaten *l'e'avon*, with an appetite. The smaller piece represents *galus* and the *afikoman* represents *Geula*. We see so many opposites between the two pieces. How can they come from of the same piece of matzah?

The answer is suggested in *Tebillim 118*, "Out of the straits I called to *HaShem*; and *HaShem* answered with expansiveness". This teaches us that the very wide begins with the very narrow. The same piece of matzah which represents hardship also represents prosperity.

The middle matzah is teaching us that what at one time seems terrible and tragic can become glorious. Our hardships are the source of our redemption. All we need to do is recognize *Hashem*, which is seen in the next step of *maggid*. Even at times when you want to give up hope because you can't see through the cracks, remember that the struggle is just a process from *HaShem*, and if you pull through it you will be able to take part in the *geula*, and be *zoche* to take part in the real *korban pesach*, *bemheira bi'yameinu Amen!*



במבט

Ayala Cweiber



The Order of Maggid

Rena Seidemann

The main portion of the *Seder* is *Maggid*. What is the rationale behind the placement of the passages in the order that they appear?

Rav Chaim Soloveichik used to explain them by asking the following question. Since there is a *mitzvah* to remember *Yetzias Mitzrayim* always, what is different about the *mitzvah* on *seder* night?

The difference is that on Pesach, one has the obligation to tell others the story, to relate the chain of events, and to explain the reason behind the *mitzvos*.

On every other day of the year, simply reminding oneself suffices. But on the *Seder* night, one is obligated to retell it in a question-and-answer format. Furthermore, if someone is alone on *Seder* night, he is obligated to relate it as if he is telling others, while on every other night, remembering alone would suffice.

Another difference on *Seder* night is that we are obligated to recount the story starting from our exile all the way until our redemption. Lastly, there are many *mitzvos* we do in conjunction with the *Seder*, and we are obligated to explain them and why we do them.

It is these three things that distinguish the *mitzvah* of remembering *Yetzias Mitzrayim* on Pesach from the *mitzvah* of *zechiras yetzias Mitzrayim* on every other day of the year.

Rav Pam explains that this answer of Rav Chaim Soloveichik sheds light on the placement of the passages. Starting from the four sons, we learn that the *Haggadah* should be retold in Q&A style. Starting with the paragraph “*M’ichilá*”, the *Haggadah* records the chain of events that ended with our *geula*. Finally, after we finish reciting the story, we explain the *mitzvos* with “*Rabban Gamliel Omer*”.

Only once we have demonstrated how this *mitzvah* is different from every other night can we sing praises to Hashem in *Hallel*. We begin this with “*L’fichach*” which is included in the *Maggid* section.

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הא לחמא עניא

Adina Feldman

Year after year, while sitting comfortably at our *seder* tables, Jews worldwide proudly declare “*Ha lachma anya d’achlu avasana- kol dichfin...*”, an open invitation for everyone and anyone to come and enjoy the meal with us. But is it a real invitation? The door is closed, the meal has started, there’s barely any room left at the table for *Eliyahu Hanavi* - let alone an uninvited guest. We can answer this question by considering *Chazal’s* idea that Hashem gifts us with *nissim* in recognition of our *mesirus nefesh*. So what was this great *mesirus nefesh* of the Jews, that led to the biggest, most obvious *nissim* in all of human history?

Rav Yerucham Olshin addresses this issue by quoting an idea from the brother of the *Tur* that each of the *Shalosh Regalim* directly parallels one of the *Avos*. *Pesach*, he explains, is a representation of *Avraham Avinu*. The *Chofetz Chaim*, in his *sefer Ahavas Chesed* quotes the *Tana D’vei Eliyahu* to explain why the Jews in *Mitzrayim* were worthy of being compared to Avraham, the greatest paragon of *chesed* and selflessness. While in *Mitzrayim*, once the Jews realized that their slavery was not coming to an end anytime soon, they resolved to create a pact - a pact of *chesed*. These slaves who had next to nothing solemnly promised each other that whatever little food or scraps they were given were to be shared among all of them. It was through this act of selflessness, of *mesirus nefesh*, that they merited a glowing comparison to Avraham Avinu, and ultimately, salvation.

Every year when we say *Ha Lachma Anya*, we give special recognition to the *matza*- the *lechem oni* we survived on in the desert, and what it represents. These words are not just an invitation to a meal but they signify our *nissim* and *zechuyos*! So as we say the age-old words, we are reminded of the *mesirus nefesh* of Jews throughout the centuries, and pray that those will serve as *zechuyos* that will eventually bring the *Geulah Shleimah*.

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מה נשתנה

Tzirel Shteierman

If we do unusual things on the *Seder* night to inspire the children to ask questions, why do we have a *Ma Nishtana* which spoon feeds the children these questions?

The *Malbim* states that the *Ma Nishtana* does not contain the questions we

expect the children to ask later on. Each child, according to his or her level of comprehension, will ask questions when unusual events pop up during the *Seder*. What the *Ma Nishtana* does is to present a clear contrast of the two themes running throughout the *Seder* – slavery and freedom. The first two questions symbolize slavery – *Matza* and *Marror*, and the second two symbolize freedom – *Matvilin* and *Miswin*. This difference allows us to realize how much we owe Hashem for giving us freedom. With this feeling of gratitude now swelling up inside us, we are now fully awakened and prepared to relate the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* with the proper feeling and emotion. This is why one must say the *Ma Nishtana* even when sitting alone at the *Seder*.

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עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים

Zahava Giloni, Adapted from Rabbi Gelley

The *Korban Pesach* had to be brought “בהפזון,” in haste. The *Midrash Tanchuma* asks why the *geulah* had to be brought in this way. The answer is that *Klal Yisrael* were at the 49th level of *tumah* and if they would have fallen any lower, the promise that was made to the *Avos* assuring them that Hashem would take care of their children would not have been fulfilled, thereby removing *Klal Yisrael* from their position as children.

When thinking of *Klal Yisrael's* spiritual situation in *Mitzrayim*, one wonders how they were so low when they didn't have the Torah or any obligatory *Mitzvos*! This is seen in many examples of *Galus Mitzrayim*. We know that we were saved because of the *Nashim Tzidkaniyos* who stayed married and continued having children even though babies were being killed. They were *moser nefesh* to build families-how could they have been at the lowest levels of *tumah*? They were doing exactly what they should have been doing because they didn't have any *Mitzvos*! Even more so, one of *Rashi's* many *psbatim* on, “והמושים עלו בני ישראל,” is that only one fifth of *Klal Yisrael* left *Mitzrayim* because the remaining four fifths were *resha'im* who did not deserve to leave. If so, how could they have been on such a low level of *tumah* when there were no more *reshaim*! Additionally, *Shabbos Hagadol* is called “great” because of the great *nes* which took place on *yud nissan* when the *Mitzryim* did not kill them for

taking the sheep, their god. They also were *moser nefesh* to do this, why were they so low in *tumah*? Furthermore, they had *zechuyos* from doing *bris milah* before bringing the *korban*, and from receiving the *mitzvah* of Shabbos. They had even more *zechuyos* for keeping their Jewish clothes, names, and language. They were *makpid* on these things which we, today, are not as careful to do. How can we understand that they fell so low in *tumah*?

Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch explains that even though *Klal Yisrael* were freed from a physical bondage, there was still a spiritual bondage in place. This is referring to the times that one goes through the motions of what he should be doing, while being completely spiritually disconnected. For example, we are given many ways to enjoy Shabbos to help us connect to Hashem. However, sometimes we get stuck in the external actions but don't take it to the deeper level, internally. If we remain with only these externals, there will always be a disconnect between us and *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*.

In *Mitzrayim*, *Klal Yisrael* remained at the lowest level of *tumah* because they were very disconnected. They were at the 49th level of *tumah*, not because of any specific sin, rather because they were disconnected through *tumah*. So low was their 'disconnect,' that they had to be taken out quickly, "בהכזון."

When thinking of our everyday lives, we should reflect on *how* we are involved in *mitzvos*. We ought to analyze if the *mitzvos* are building us as people, and are having an internal impact on us as they should be. It is important to recognize that the purpose of *mitzvos* is to bring us closer in our connection with Hashem. May we be careful to not make the mistake of the Jews in *Mitzrayim*, but rather, be able to understand the purpose of *mitzvos* and use them to strengthen our connection with *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*.

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אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה...

Elana Spearman

Rabbi Elazar *ben* Azariah said, “Behold I am like a man of seventy years and I had not merited to understand why the exodus from Egypt should be said at night until Ben Zoma explicated it, as it is stated, “In order that you remember the day of your going out from the land of Egypt all the days of your life.”

What is the difference between the requirement of *Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim* every day, as stated in *Devarim*, and now at the *Pesach seder*? The *Dorash Dovid* tells us that the *Haggadah* quotes this *mishnah* which talks about the regular mitzvah we do every day, because of the differences between the two obligations.

The Rambam explains that the remembrance we do every day need only be the *mentioning* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. But at the *seder*, it is our obligation to get involved and tell the story at great length. We need to recount the details of the *nissim* and describe every moment throughout the events in *Mitzrayim*. May we be *zoché* to remember *Yetzias Mitzrayim* every day, and to describe the incredible saga at the *Pesach seder*.

ברוך המקום, ברוך הוא.

Ayelet Reichman

ברוך המקום, ברוך הוא. ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל, ברוך הוא. כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה: אחד חכם, ואחד רשע, ואחד תם, ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול.

In this passage we bless Hashem, first, for giving us the Torah, and then, for giving us instructions for four types of children; a *Chacham*, wise son, a *Rasha*, wicked son, a *Tam*, simple son, and a *She'aino Yode'ab Lish'ol*, one who doesn't know how to ask.

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik asks what connection there is between thanking Hashem for giving us the Torah, and the four types of children. He suggests that in this world we have all different volumes of teachings. There are math books, science books, and literature books. In all of these types of textbooks there is a different edition for each person based on their age. So, a child in first grade is not learning the same math as a child in twelfth grade. The Rav

points out that Torah is vastly different. We have one Torah from Hashem, and this Torah is the same exact one learned by the *Gedolei Hador* and by the young children in first grade. In this passage we are thanking Hashem both for giving us the Torah which is our oxygen and fuel every day, and for giving us the Torah which is able to reach all people and be learned at every age and stage of life, no matter one's religious level or capability. From this we can understand that in every part of the Torah, there is something for us to learn from and be grateful for. This coming Pesach may we be *zocheh* to continue learning Hashem's special Torah, and constantly remember that the Torah was given for us to learn and be inspired from. In the merit of all Torah learning may we see the coming of *Mashiach, bi'meirah bi'yameinu*.

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ונצעק אל ה' וישמע ה' את קלינו

Adi Hacker

As the *Yiddin* approached the *Yam Suf* and realized that they had nowhere to go, they began to cry and daven to the *Ribono Shel Olam*. Hashem asked *Moshe Rabbeinu*, 'why are the Jews screaming to me?,' *Ma Titz'ak Eilai?* Rashi explains that Hashem told Moshe that now is not the time to daven. Hashem said to tell them to go forward into the *Yam Suf*, *דבר אל בני ישראל ויסעו*. The *Nesivos Shalom* asks an incredible question, 'what else is a Jew supposed to do when he is in a dire situation? Don't we all know that *Tefilla* is our only real option? Weren't we all taught to rely on Hashem and to daven to Him? Of course the Jews should have davened during that time of desperate need!

The *Nesivos Shalom* offers an answer based on the *Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh* who says that when the Jews got to the *Yam Suf*, the sea did not want to split for them. The sea 'told' Hashem that 'both the Egyptians and the Jews worship idols, so why should I split to save the Jews and drown the Egyptians?' The *Ohr HaChaim* says that that was a valid claim, as the Jews at that point were really not worthy of the splitting of the sea; indeed, they had sunk to the 49th gate of impurity. Hashem told the Jews, 'I want to help you, but you are not on the level. I have advice for you,' said Hashem, 'have *Emunah* and *Bitachon* and jump into the sea up until the point that you are about to drown. That will bring forth the *nes* of *Krias Yam Suf*.'

To understand this on a deeper level you can say that there are times that our prayers hit stumbling blocks on the way up. These blocks can be our bad actions and bad deeds. This idea can be derived from the comments of the *midrash* on *Tehillim Perek 22*, which contains the pleas of *Esther HaMalka*. As

Esther entered the palace of Achashverosh, the *Shechina* left her due to the fact that there were so many idols over there. At that frightening moment, Esther pleaded, “Hashem I am calling to you during the day and you are not answering, and at night as well you are not responding”. If that’s the case, what are we supposed to do in these situations? The only One that can help us is Hashem, and the only thing we can do is daven. The answer is that when a *Yid* trusts in his Father, the One above, and believes that no matter how big of a stumbling block is in the way of his prayers, Hashem will still help and save him, he will be saved *only* because he trusted in Hashem. This can be explained with the following *masbal* offered in *Midrash Tehillim* on the *pasuk* in *Perek 25*, “Hashem, in you I trusted, may I not be ashamed”. There was once a person who was committing a crime late at night, when the police came and arrested him. As they were arresting him, he started yelling at them, ‘how can you arrest me, I am the king’s best friend!’ Due to the fact that it was late at night, the police were not able to recognize him so they said, we will wait until the morning and bring him in front of the king. In the morning, when they came before the king, he said, “honestly I have no idea who you are, but since you trusted in and relied on me, and knew that I have the power to save you, I will grant you your life”. That is what *David Hamelech* is saying in *Tehillim*, ‘because I trusted in you Hashem, may I not be ashamed, may my enemies not exult over me.’ This is really what happened with Queen Esther right after the *Shechina* left her. She said in the next *pasuk*, “I learned from my forefathers who trusted in You and got rescued by You, who cried to You and escaped; in You they trusted and they were not disappointed”. Esther was telling Hashem that even if right now I’m in a situation where prayers are not going to work, I have full trust in you, and I am depending only on You, Hashem. Because of this I know I will be saved, because the *koach* of *bitachon* can work even when *Tefilla* can’t. There is nothing that can stand in the way of real *Emuna* and *Bitachon*.

This is what Hashem told Moshe, ‘your prayers are not going to help now, there are really strong *kitrugim* that are valid, and I cannot split the sea for you even if you daven, but I do have one idea for you: jump into the ocean, show Me that you trust Me with your lives and depend only on Me. Move forth into the water, and when I see that I am forced to split the ocean, I will.’ That’s why the sea split only when the water came to their noses, when they were able to shout out to Hashem: ‘look, we are willing to go into the water because we trust in You and we know that You will save us.’ When they were about to drown, the ocean split.

There is a true story that is told about one of the *rabbonim* of the previous generation who was traveling with his two kids on a boat from Europe to *Eretz Yisrael*. On the way the boat capsized, and immediately the *rav* grabbed his two children and started swimming towards shore. Halfway to the shore, he saw he had no strength to carry both of his kids, so he had to make the

unimaginable decision: either, continue like this and have all three of them drown, or just let go of one and then he and the other child would survive. The *Rav* decided to let go of one of them and he tried to quickly swim away without looking at his child that was drowning. As he did this, the child started yelling and crying, “Daddy, Daddy, you’re my only father, the only one that can help me now, how can you let me drown, I trust you!” When the father heard this, he grabbed the child and with inhuman power and strength, he made it to shore with both of them. When they got to their destination, the father told his child, “I want you to remember what happened to you for your entire life. Shout the same words you shouted at me to Hashem whenever you’re in desperate need. Shout to the heavens and say, ‘Father in heaven, You are my only Father, You are the only One that could help me, and You are the only One I trust.’ You will see that when you fully rely on *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, He will help you even if you are not deserving of it.”

May we all be *zocheh* to utilize this *Yom Tov* of *Pesach*, the *Yom Tov* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* to grow in our *Emunah* and *Bitachon*, and know that we have no one to rely on besides *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*.

אין לנו על מי להישען אלא על אבינו שבשמים.

עשר מכות

Tova Schwartz

The *makos* are central to the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, and therefore they are a large portion of *maggid* during *Seder* night. Rav Yisrael Meir Druk *shlita*, enhances our understanding of the *makos* by showing the correlation between the ten *makos* and the *Aseres Hadibros*. In his *sefer*, *Esh Tamid*, Rav Druk explains that each *maka* specifically corresponds, in order, to each its respective one of the *Aseres Hadibros*, and that the *makos* were actually administered as a preparation for *kabbalas hatorah*.

The first 5 of the *Aseres Hadibros*, which are *bein adam laMakom*, correspond to the first 5 *makos*, as follows. The first *makah* was *Makas Dam*. *Dam* was not brought on the *Mitzrayim* themselves, but rather, on their god, the *ye'or* (the Nile river). This *maka* was inflicted to prove that their god was powerless, and that Hashem is the only G-d. This is connected to the first *dibrah* of “*Anochi Hashem Elokecha*” which says that Hashem is the One and only G-d. The second *maka*, *tze'fardaya*, was brought forth from the *ye'or* since the *Mitzrim* believed that the *ye'or* could only provide good. Previously, the *ye'or*

had existed to water their land to grow fruits. However, through the destructive frogs, Hashem showed that the *Mitzrayim* could not rely on the *ye'or* to only give them positive things such as sustenance, since from the *ye'or* there also came destruction. So too, Hashem said the *dibrah* of “*lo yehiye lecha elohim acherim*” to teach that one cannot rely on any other gods, only Hashem. The third *maka*, *Kinim*, showed Hashem’s power and honor because as we know, even the magicians reacted to this *maka* by saying “*etzbab Elokim bee,*” it was Hashem who performed this miracle. Similarly, the third *dibra*, “*lo sisa es shem Hashem Elokecha lashav,*” forbids us from saying Hashem’s name in vain because that brings His name *kavod* and shows His strength. The fourth *maka*, *Makas Arov*, was brought upon *Mitzrayim b’derech middah k’neged middah*. Through their evil ways, the *Mitzrayim* would mix up *kodesh* and *chol* and *tavor* and *tamay*. Therefore, Hashem brought *Arov*, a mixture of animals with a destructive force to prove the need for *hardalah*. Accordingly, in the fourth *dibra* Hashem commanded *B’nei Yisrael* to observe Shabbos and separate *kodesh* from *chol*. Also, during this *maka*, Hashem specifically separated Goshen, further proving the point that *Klal Yisroel is muvdal mikol ha’amim*. The fifth *maka* was *Makas Dever*. This *maka* made animals die very quickly; one night they were alive and the next they were not. In correlation, Hashem gave us the *mitzvah* in the *Aseres Hadibros* of “*keibud av vami*” because it brings about the reward of *arichus yamim*.

The next *mitzvos* of the *Aseres Hadibros* are *mitzvos Bein adam lechavero*. Different from the first 5 *makos*, it seems that the next 5 *makos* were done to show *B’nei Yisrael* a need for these types of *mitzvos*. The sixth *maka* was *Sh’chin* and anyone who was afflicted with this *maka* was not able to be in the presence of people, as we know that the magicians were not able to stand in front of Moshe. The commandment of *lo sirtzach* was given *k’neged* this *maka* with the lesson that just as someone with *Shchin* can not stand before people, a murderer needs to be exiled and can not be with others. The seventh *maka*, *Barad*, brought together the elements fire and water that usually are **never** combined. This was in connection to *lo sinaf* because just like water and fire should not be combined, a forbidden relationship should not occur. Because *Mitzrayim* was a *makom* of *znus*, they were given the *maka* of *Barad middah k’neged middah* to demonstrate that just like fire and water, there needs to be a separation when it comes to *znus*. The eighth *maka* of *arbeh* correlates to *lo signov*, because the locust had the effect of stealing the crops. So too, Hashem instituted *lo signov* not to steal. The ninth *maka*, *chosbech*, was done because a *rashah* is compared to darkness, as a *rasha’s* actions are dark and sometimes nobody sees or knows how wicked they are. In correspondence, Hashem gave the *mitzvah* of “*lo sa’anech be’re’achab ed sheker*” because Hashem knows the truth of a matter and does not want false witnesses. Rather, nothing is dark to Hashem, because He knows the truth. The final *maka* was *Makas Bechoros*. During this *maka*, Hashem took the *Bechoros* who are the most desired of people as it says in Hoshaya “*יהמתי מהמדי בטנם*”. Therefore, Hashem gave

them the mitzvah of “*lo sachmod*,” do not desire. Alternatively, there is another connection between *Makas Bechoros* and *lo sachmod*. The issue of desiring is something that can not be seen by other people because it happens in a person’s heart. A person may think that Hashem will never know if he transgressed this commandment, and therefore, *Makas Bechoros* proves that Hashem knew where the *Bechoros* were, just as he knows every person’s inner thoughts and desires, *l’tov* or not.

I believe that there is an important personal lesson for us in this correlation that Rav Druk points out between the ten *makos* and the *Aseres Hadibros*. Sometimes, in life, people go through certain experiences that, at first, appear difficult, but only later does a person see the good that comes out of them. For example, my Alta Bubby Batsheva left Europe well before the Holocaust, all alone in difficult times, only to later find out that most of her family was killed in the Holocaust and she was spared. What appeared at the time to be a hardship, later turned out to be the greatest *Yeshuah*. The reason that she went through so many hardships was made clear to her only after she survived and built a family here in America. When we think about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and all the difficulties that *Klal Yisrael* go through during this long *Galus*, we have to understand that it is all *Hashgachas* Hashem and one day, *iyH* soon, we will understand that it was all *l’tov* when we see the *Geulah Shelayma* with the coming of Mashiach *b’mihayrah b’yamaynu*.

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עשר מכות

Nechama Mandel, Adapted from The Haggadah of the Roshei Yeshiva

Hashem could have destroyed the *Mitzriyim* quickly and easily, in one blow, while still displaying His incredible strength. Why, then, did He plague them with 10 different *makos*?

The reason for this, says Rav Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky, was to convey all of Hashem’s power and might, by demonstrating each aspect of that strength individually, through the distinct *makos*.

דם showed Hashem’s control over the water, as He was able to turn it from water to blood instantaneously.

צפרדע showed that, not only does Hashem have control over the water, but He is also Master of the water creatures. The fact that when one frog was hit many more emerged from it, exhibited Hashem’s ability to manipulate the natural order of the world; the frog that was hit did not return to the water,

rather it sprouted more and more frogs.

From **מַכַּת כִּינִים**, we saw that Hashem's mastery spreads beyond the water, and He controls the earth as well. This was apparent when Hashem turned the sand into lice, a task that even the Mitzri magicians noted was so obviously from Hashem.

Through **מַכַּת עֲרוּב**, Hashem showed that His strength extends to being Master over all of the animals, and is not limited to the water animals.

מַכַּת דָּבָר showed that Hashem has the capability to decide which animals will live and which will die, as the animals of the *Mitzryim* died while those of *Bnei Yisrael* remained perfectly healthy.

From **מַכַּת שַׁחִין**, we learned that Hashem has complete power over our physical health. The *Mitzryim* were completely healthy one minute, and plagued with boils the next.

Though **מַכַּת בָּרָד**, we were able to derive two lessons. First, we observed Hashem's control over the weather. We also learned that Hashem can change the laws of nature at His own will since He is the One Who created them. The fact that the fire and ice "made peace with each other", in complete contradiction to the laws of nature, shows the strength of Hashem.

מַכַּת אֲרֵבָה showed that Hashem controls the world of flying creatures, as well as the wind patterns, as the eastern wind brought the grasshoppers to Mitzrayim.

Through **מַכַּת חוֹשֶׁךְ**, we once again saw Hashem's ability to manipulate the natural way of the world as He caused Egypt to be in complete darkness for six days. This means that Hashem stopped the sunrise for almost a week, revealing His unlimited power over the heavenly spheres.

Finally, we witnessed from **מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת** that not only does Hashem control the lives of animals as had become apparent through **דָּבָר**, but He also controls lives of people and decides who lives and who dies.

From the *makos* we can learn a very important lesson: everything is done for a reason. The entire purpose of the makos was to reveal to the world that Hashem is truly and completely in charge. Hashem brought ten plagues upon the Mitzryim which displayed every aspect of His power. By inflicting these makos on the *Mitzryim*, Hashem showed the world that He is Master of the universe.

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דינו

Nechama Schwartz, *From the Ephod Bad*

דינו ... אילו הוציאנו ממצרים ולא עשה בהם שפטים, דינו

The first proclamation in *Dayeinu* goes as follows: If He had taken us out of Egypt and not made judgements on them; [it would have been] enough for us.

Why do the authors of the *Haggadah* elect to begin *Dayeinu* with this proclamation?

Rambam, in *Morah Nevuchim* part 3, explains that there are four perfections. The first perfection is material, which can be attained by amassing wealth and assets. The second is physical, and can be achieved by eating healthy and working on one's body. The third is personal, which can be accomplished by being attentive to one's character. The fourth perfection is human perfection, which can be attained by developing one's intellect and amassing Torah knowledge. One cannot achieve any of these perfections while under the enslavement of another, as true slaves have no control over their own destiny. This makes the liberation from slavery the fifth perfection, the perfection upon which all of the others depend. Earlier, the *Haggadah* says:

ואילו לא הוציא הקדוש ברוך הוא את אבותינו ממצרים, הרי אנו ובנינו, ובני בנינו משעבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים

If ה' hadn't taken our ancestors out of Mitzrayim, we and our children and our grandchildren would all be enslaved to Paroh.

The *Haggadah* emphasizes that without our physical freedom, nothing else would have been possible. By gaining physical redemption, we also gained the opportunity for spiritual redemption. *Dayeinu* is all about the numerous forms of perfection- physical, material, personal, and human (or Torah,) so we begin with the ultimate form of perfection-freedom. May we all be *zocheh* to the ultimate freedom *bi'meheira bi'yameinu*.

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דינו

Dini Bell

אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני ולא נתנה לנו את התורה, דינו

As we are singing *Dayeinu* with our families on *seder* night, we recite the line, “If He had brought us close to Mount Sinai and had not given us the Torah; [it would have been] enough for us.”

This stanza should stand out to us, because would it really have been enough if Hashem had only brought us to *Har Sinai* and not given us the Torah? No, it would not have been enough. So what are we really saying? Many different *mefarshim* comment on this question.

The *Rashbam* explains that it doesn't mean that we would not have gotten the Torah. Rather it means that instead of Hashem directly giving it to us, the Torah would have been given by a *shaliach* from Hashem.

The *Ben Ish Chai* learns that even “**just**” Hashem bringing us to Har Sinai was such a *nes* because it brought an element of *achdus* and *busha*. He offers a *masbal* of a simple villager who went to a store and bought a suit. He came back the next day and complained that the suit didn't fit anymore. Knowing that the suit must still fit, the owner told him to try it on in the store. The villager put the suit on over his other clothing, and of course, it did not fit properly. The owner explained to him that in order for the suit to fit properly he must shed his old clothing. We see this when we came to *Har Sinai*. We needed to shed our bad *midos* and *chata'im* in order to accept all of Hashem's *mitzvos*. Even if all we had gotten was the chance to shed our bad *midos*, and to acquire the good ones, this would have been enough even without the Torah.

The *Avudraham* says that by standing by Har Sinai we got rid of the Yetzer Hara of Klal Yisroel.

Rav Moshe Shternbuch explains that we started off as servants to Pharaoh and then Hashem took us out in order to bring us close to Him. We learn that even from the lowest of the low places, Hashem wants us to cling to Him. And so, even if Hashem had just brought us to Har Sinai to bring us closer to Him, but not given us the Torah, it would have been enough. From coming close to Hashem, the Torah would have been brought into our lives.

The common denominator between all these answers is that you need Torah hand in hand with middos. We can not only work and learn Torah all day, we also must perfect our middos. We all can apply this to our lives by taking all the opportunities we have to become closer to Hashem, which may come

through ways we had not imagined. But if we keep our eyes and mind open, we will grow closer to Him. We will also be working on our middos and growing in Torah just by coming close to Hashem. This is why the phrase says “אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני”, to remind us that Hashem wanted to bring us close to Him at Har Sinai, so that we could obtain the Torah as well.

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פסח. מצה. מרור.

Elana Newhouse

Rav Moshe Feinstein delves into the significance of clearly stating the reasons behind the three mitzvos of Pesach, matzah, and maror. These three mitzvos are key concepts that guide us all throughout our lives and on Pesach.

We see from Hashem’s act of passing over the Jews’ homes and not killing any of our firstborn sons, how everything that Hashem does is exact and precise. All Egyptians male firstborns were killed; none of them were able to hide. In addition, Hashem didn’t accidentally kill any Jewish firstborns. “Pesach” teaches us an important lesson: everything that happens in each of our lives, from minor to major, is for a precise purpose. We may not always see it but we have to know it is always there.

From “matzah” we see how Hashem is able to completely change a situation from bad to good in a matter of seconds. One second we are being tortured by a powerful enemy and next thing we know they are begging us to leave their land because they are scared of what will come next for them if we don’t. We didn’t stroll out of Mitzrayim, out of slavery, but rather, we were freed in such a hurry that our bread couldn’t even rise, and turned into matzah instead. From this we learn to never lose hope even if a situation seems hopeless. Hashem, the “Kol Yachol” is capable of everything and can change anyone’s circumstance in a moment.

From “maror” we see that even when a nation seems kind to us, they can quite abruptly turn on us with a wicked fury. This is what happened to Paraoth in Egypt; he seemed nice enough when Yosef was alive and second to the throne, and then totally changed years later when Bnei Yisroel had multiplied, and he forced them into slavery. The change may be obvious, like a clear flashing billboard, or can be so subtle that it goes unnoticed until we open our eyes. Either way, we must be attentive to it because throughout history, if we have learned anything, it is how wicked nations of the world can be. Therefore, maror teaches us that while maintaining a good relationship

with other nations is definitely important, it does not provide assurance of our safety. Instead, we must turn to Hashem and daven that we be deserving to live in freedom and security.

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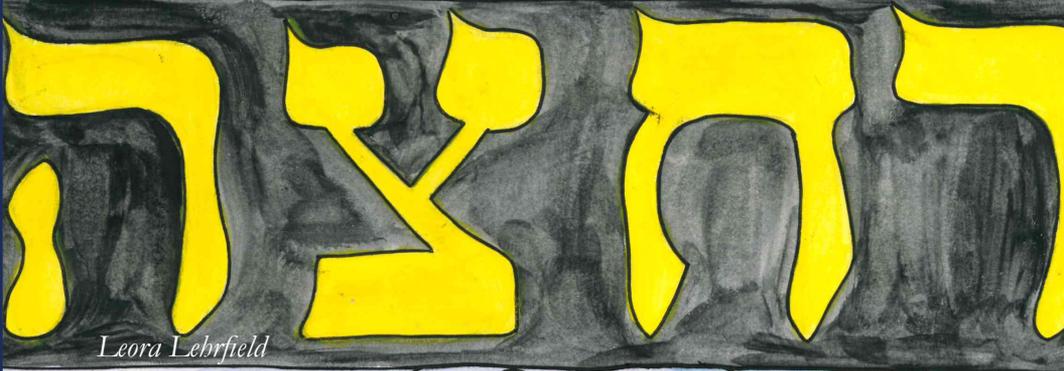
פסח. מצה. מרור.

Michal Englander, Adapted from Rabbi Yosef Stern

In *Sefer Shemos* it says “וְאַתֶּם לֹא תִצְאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ עַד בֹּקֶר” which means “None of you (*Bnei Yisroel*) shall leave the entrance of your house until morning.” Ramban comments on this *pasuk* and says that if even one of the Jewish people would have gone out of his home on the night of *Makas Bechoros*, their fate would have been the same as the *Mitzriyim*. Even though it is true that Hashem made a decree that the *Bechoros* of *Bnei Yisrael* should not be killed, it was on condition that they would not stray from their homes.

Now, looking back to the fateful night of *Makas Bechoros*, we might not think it was such a struggle for *Bnei Yisroel* to stay inside of their homes, but we must consider the screams and chaos that the Jews must have heard coming from the *Mitzri* homes. *Bnei Yisroel* had *Eemunah* in Hashem and stayed inside; this is why they merited to have a different fate than the *Mitzriyim*.

This is the reason that the *Gemara* in *Pesachim* gives for why one cannot eat the *Korban Pesach* in two different locations. Additionally, this is also the reason why now we do not leave our houses on the *seder* night. In fact, the question of the wicked son, the *rasha*, may have to do with this prohibition. He says, “*Ma Ha'avoda Hazos Lachem?*” which may be explained as “why is this custom of eating the *Korban Pesach* only practiced by *Bnei Yisroel* and not the other nations?” The Torah responds by saying וְאַתָּה בְּתִינוּ הִצַּלְתָּנוּ, which means, “He saved our households”. Therefore we are supposed to stay in one location to remember that Hashem saved us in the *zechus* of us remaining at home.



Leora Lehrfield



Rachtza

Rosie Katz, *Adapted from Rabbi Berel Wein's Haggadah: Through The Prism of Experience and History*

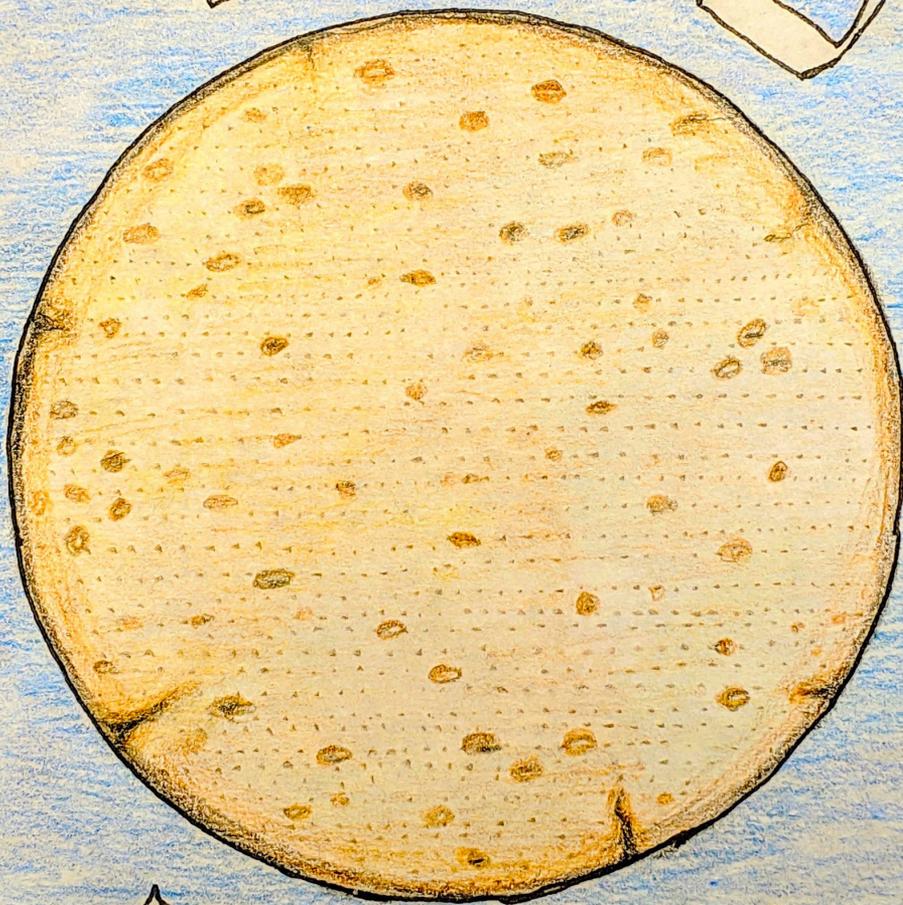
It is a *mitzvah* to wash our hands before eating bread, or in this case, *matzah*. While cleanliness is a fundamental Torah value, the purpose of *netilas yadayim* is spiritual in nature, and not connected to the cleanliness aspect of hand-washing. Rabbi Berel Wein states that “eating in Judaism is seen as an act of holiness and dedication, and not as a matter of necessity, pure enjoyment, and gluttony.” When we wash our hands in preparation for a meal, we are acknowledging the spiritual dimension of our meal, and sanctifying it. We are also recognizing The Source of our sustenance, Hashem, Who Is “*HaZan Es Hakol*.”

To teach us a valuable lesson, Rabbi Wein contrasts the first time we wash our hands at the seder, for *karpas*, without a *brachah*, to *rachtzah*, when we again wash our hands, and do recite a *brachah*.

When washing our hands for *Karpas*, we have not yet discussed *yetzias Mitzrayim*. Without discussing the exodus from Egypt and appreciating how we became the nation that we are, it can be hard to understand the spiritual depth and *kedushah* of the rituals of *Yiddishkeit*. However, by the time we wash for *matzah*, we have relived *yetzias Mitzrayim* and its miracles through the recounting (*sihur*), and have realized how much we owe *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. We appreciate that every act of ours, even washing our hands before eating, is a way of serving Hashem, and requires a *brachah*.

How fortunate we are to be sanctified and connect to Hashem through what may seem as a mundane *mitzva*, like *netilas yadayim*!

מַצוֹת



מַצוֹת

Motzi Matzah

Rivka Hakimi

In *Maggid* the *Haggadah* asks: “על שום מה?”

What is the reason for eating the Matzah?

The *Haggadah* answers: “על שום שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמיץ”

Because there was no time in *Mitzrayim* for the dough to become leavened.

From this we learn why it is necessary to eat *matzah* on *Pesach*. Yet there is more to it. Hashem instructed the Jews to bake *matzah* instead of waiting for bread to bake, in order to help *Bnei Yisrael* set their priorities straight. Given the chance, many of the Jews may have delayed the *geulah* in order to bake delicious breads. But *Hashem* wanted more from *Bnei Yisrael*. Leaving *Mitzrayim* with just a few *matzos* did not allow for much materialistic enjoyment in the *midbar*. Furthermore, it meant that the Jews would not be able to last for a very long in the *midbar* without relying on the help of *Hashem*. The *geulah*, therefore, was a demonstration of *emunah*, and the journey in the *Midbar* was a informed with the belief that *Hashem* was going to provide for them and help them along the way. It meant that the Jews would have to turn to *Hashem* to answer their *tefilos*. This teaches us that it is easier to tap into our *emunah* when something we need is lacking. The *Zohar* even calls *matzah* the “bread of faith”. *Bnei Yisrael* did just what *Hashem* told them to do, quickly baked a few *matzos*, and left. In a matter of minutes, they were out of their comfort zone of *Mitzrayim*, completely reliant on *Hashem* to protect them.

Just as *Bnei Yisrael* learned to rely on Hashem, we also have to discover where in our lives we have a void that will help us learn to rely on Hashem. These voids are where Hashem is telling us to believe that He will help us and always provide us with what we need. Whether it's a pair of shoes, a *shidduch*, or better health, these are our opportunities to get closer to Hashem by strengthening our *emunah*. When we leave our own comfort zone, our own personal Egypt, we are able to grow closer to Hashem.

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Nearly every *mitzvah* which is connected to eating something specific is no longer in practice, due to the absence of the *Beis HaMikdash*; none of us has eaten *terumah*, *maaser sheni*, or a *korban pesach*. There is only one exception-eating *matzah*. We receive just one chance a year to fulfill a *mitzvah* of eating, therefore we must be extremely careful with it.

The *Zohar* refers to *matzah* in two ways: One way is as **מיכלא דאסותא**, meaning “food of healing”. The *Gemara* says the rising of the yeast represents the *yetzer ha’ru*’s ability to arouse a sense of arrogance within a person. Once a person becomes brazen, this leads him to believe that he can transgress Hashem’s will. *Matzah*, however, is made of the most simple ingredients, flour and water, which don’t rise and represent humility. As a result, *matzah* is a cure for the *yetzer ha’ru*. *Matzah* also has no extra added ingredients, to teach us not to listen to the *yetzer ha’ru* by going after pleasures. *Matzah* is an example of “spiritual nutrition” because man is affected by what he eats. In the case of *matzah* he learns to be humble, but there are also foods which can affect us negatively. In *Iggeres Taiman*, the Rambam responds to questions of *emunah* sent to him by a *rav* from Yemen. The Rambam’s answer was that he is unable to answer the question, but the *rav* must check his *shochet*’s knife. This puzzled the *rav*, and he wrote back to the Rambam assuring him that he only eats kosher, but the Rambam remained adamant that he must check the *shochet*’s knife. The *rav* did as he was told, and sure enough the knife had a nick in it, and as a result, the people had been eating non-kosher. The *rav* was amazed and wrote that the Rambam must have *nevuah*. The latter answered that this was not the case, but that non-kosher food can leave someone with doubts of *emunah*. All foods can affect one positively or negatively.

The *Zohar*’s second reference to *matzah* is **מיכלא דמהימנותא**-the “bread of faith.” *Matzah* is something tangible that reminds us of all the miracles Hashem performed for us when He took us out of *Mitzrayim*. Speaking about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* alone is not enough. We learn from the *Sefer HaChinuch* “האדם נפעל כפי פעולותיו”: and as a result we need a tangible symbol to remember the miracles Hashem performed for us in *Mitzrayim*. The *Meshech Chochmah* adds that when the Jews left *Mitzrayim*, they left with no food except for *matzah*, yet they did not question Hashem nor ask how they would survive. When we eat the *matzah*, we should remember and learn from this deep rooted *emunah* they had when they left *Mitzrayim*.



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Maror

Chava Bamberger

At the *seder*, we eat *matzah* before we eat *maror*. This order of ingestion is strange, being that *matzah* represents the freedom of leaving Egypt in such haste that the dough did not have a chance to rise, while *maror* represents the bitterness of servitude, and preceded our freedom from slavery. Would it not be more appropriate to first eat *maror* and *then matzah*?

The *Beis Halevi*, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik ז"ל, explains that only after one tastes the sweetness of freedom can he truly appreciate the bitterness of his slavery. The nature of slaves is that while they are toiling in their bitter situation, they begin to become numb to the desperation of their plight. Only once they are freed from slavery, and look back at their experience, can they actually realize how bad their situation was. We eat the *matzah*, symbolizing emancipation, to be able to taste the fullness of freedom, so that we can then experience how bitter our servitude was with the tasting of the bitter herbs of *maror*.

We may add to this thought that an elephant is a huge animal of considerable strength, yet it is locked up not with metal chains, but with a simple rope. The reason for this is that it is so used to being in captivity, that it doesn't feel capable of breaking out from its bonds of simple twine. This is what slavery does to a person as well. It paralyzes an individual into being unaware of the hardship he is currently enduring. But once the slave is set free, and is able to spread his wings, he now, as a result of his newfound independence, realizes how much bitterness he was forced to experience.

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Zahava Laufer, Adapted from The Haggadah by Rabbi Joseph Elias

According to one opinion (*Pesachim* 114a), the *charoset* is merely used as an antidote for the toxic bitterness of the *Maror*. It should not, however, remove the bitter taste of the *Maror* altogether, and therefore we shake off the *charoset* before we eat the *maror*. The *Talmud* also emphasizes that the *maror* should not be swallowed without first being chewed (*Pesachim* 115b). Another opinion maintains that dipping the *maror* in *charoset* does not only have health benefits, but it is religious obligation; the *charoset*, symbolic of *motar*, is to remind us of the brickmaking in *Mitzrayim*. We take the second view; but we do not say a blessing over *charoset* because it is not a separate duty, rather part of the obligation to eat *maror* (*Avudraham*). Since the dipping of *maror* in *charoset* is part of the obligation to eat *maror*, the *Maharil* recited the blessing over the *maror* before he dipped it into the *charoset*. Similarly, he recited the blessing

for *karpas* before he dipped it into salt water; in this case, too, he considered the dipping part of the custom of eating *karpas*. Before eating *maror* we do not recite פרי האדמה בורא, the blessing usually pronounced before eating produce of the field. The reason is that we recite it before eating *karpas* and, at that time, have the *maror* in mind. However, even if we forgot to think of *maror* then, we need not repeat this blessing now. We can rely on the opinion of the Vilna Gaon that the *maror* does not require such a blessing at all because it is eaten after the *matza*, and therefore is exempt from a blessing, like all foods that are eaten as part of a meal.



Tamar Spoerri

Korech

Chani Shulman

We eat the *Korech* לִמְקַדֵּשׁ כֹּהֵלֵל. There was an argument between Hillel and Rabbi Yochanan on eating the *korban Pesach* with *matzah* and *marror*. Rabbi Yochanan maintained that the *korban*, *matzah*, and *marror* should be eaten separately, each with its own *bracha*, so that no one food would dull or overwhelm (*mevatel*) the taste of another food, as often happens when foods are eaten together. However, Hillel contended that one should eat them all together. Because we don't have the *korban Pesach* anymore, the only worry of *mevatel* is from the *marror* and *matzah*. But, because the *marror* is *derabanan bizman hazeh*, it is not *mevatel* (taking away from) the *matzah*. Also, each component does not take away from the other two components because they all represent the same thing: the essence of *Pesach*. The *korban Pesach* is a recognition of Hashem choosing us in *Mitzraim*. He passed over us (פָּסַח) in *Makas Bechoros*. Before *korban Pesach*, we never ate from the *korbanos* that we brought. But, after Hashem passed over us, *Bnei Yisroel* reached the level of מַמְלַכְת כּוֹהֲנִים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ. Once we reached this level, we were able to eat the *korban Shlamim*. The *matzah* that we eat in *Korech* represents our becoming *Avdei Hashem*. As children, we are told that we eat *matzah* to commemorate *Bnei Yisroel* leaving Egypt with *matzah* because the bread did not have time to rise. However, *Bnei Yisroel* were forewarned of their departure. After being told to leave Egypt, *Bnei Yisroel* still remained there until the following day. This, then, begs the question: why did the bread not rise? It certainly had ample time to do so. Miraculously, the dough did not become *chametz* after eighteen minutes (and in the time that followed). It remained *matzah* because that is the bread of poor people. In maintaining the status of “*matzah*”, the Jewish people were reminded that they are no longer servants to Pharaoh; they only serve Hashem. The *marror* represents the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. We continue to commemorate this bitterness because it was through this bitterness that we merited freedom. Without the bitterness of slavery and the subsequent joy of freedom, the Jewish people would not have realized that Hashem is watching over and looking after us. Through the components of the *Korech* that we eat, we celebrate an important theme of *Pesach*: Hashem choosing us to be His nation.

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Tamar Spoerri, Based on ideas of Rebbetzin Twersky and of Rabbi Benji Gordon

”כִּן עָשָׂה הַלֵּל בְּזִמְנֵי שְׁבִיטַת הַמְּקַדֵּשׁ הֵיחָה קִיָּם: הֵיחָה כּוֹרֵךְ מִצֵּה וּמְרוֹר וְאוֹכֵל בְּיַחַד.”

When the *Beis HaMikdash* still stood, Hillel used to eat the *matzah* and *mar-*

marror together. And to this sandwich of Hillel's, we add charoset on top of the *marror*. Why?

Marror symbolizes the apparent bitterness of *Galus*. Hashem sends us hardships—from the ordeals of slavery in Egypt to the anguish we feel today when we can't see His Presence—for a purpose. Through our pain, we call out in prayer, allowing us to merit salvation. *Galus* is the seemingly difficult (yet necessary) catalyst for *Geulah*, whose sweetness is symbolized by *Charoset*. We eat the *marror* and *Charoset* together to recognize that *Galus* and *Geulah* come hand in hand, both orchestrated by Hashem. He does everything for our good.

Ignorant people cannot understand Hashem's greatness, as it says in "מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת" the chapter of *Tehillim* designated to be sung on *Shabbos*.

“אִישׁ-בַּעַר לֹא יֵדַע וְכֹסֶל לֹא-יִבִין אֶת-זֹאת:” (תהלים צב:ז)

How, they wonder, can Hashem cause bad things to happen to good people, and vice versa? *Dovid HaMelech* answers:

“בְּפֶרֶחַ רְשָׁעִים כְּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָל-פִּעְלֵי אֶןן לְהַשְׁמֵדֵם עֲדֵי-עַד ... צְדִיק כְּתֹמֵר יִפְרַח כְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגֶּה.” (תהלים צב:ח, יג)

Ultimately, the wicked will be punished and the righteous will be rewarded. But why do we read these concepts specifically on *Shabbos*?

Shabbos is the day on which Hashem completed creating the world. Everything became perfect. For this reason, the day is imbued with a greater potential for us to see the often unfathomable, yet flawless, Divine plan. *Shabbos* is also the day that is **זָכַר לַיְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם**. On Pesach, when we are actually experiencing *Yetziat Mitzraim*, we have even greater clarity. The unusual capability of understanding we have during the *Seder* makes the night the ideal time for us to recognize the sweetness in the *marror*. Only then does the necessity of *Galus* become obvious.

“וְאֵהֱבֵת אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיךָ בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ.” (דברים ו:ה)

We are commanded to love Hashem “בְּכָל מְאֹדְךָ” which Rashi explains, citing Sifri.

“בְּכָל מְדָה וּמְדָה שְׂמוּדָד לָךְ, בֵּין בְּמְדָה טוֹבָה בֵּין בְּמְדַת פְּרַעְנוּת...”

We should love Hashem through everything He measures out to us, in good

situations or bad ones. He then cites *Dovid HaMelech*, who, as we saw earlier, had a full awareness of this:

“צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא. וּבְשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא... כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא וּבְשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא.”
(תהלים קטז)

Both in times of agony and salvation, Dovid calls out to Hashem, knowing that Hashem loves him and has the power to save him. He understood that, as we say in *Shema*, we love Hashem no matter what He deals us.

“אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים.”
(במדבר טו:מא)

These words are from a subsequent chapter of *Shema*, in which we fulfill the commandment of remembering **יציאת מצרים**. Why does this follow the earlier chapter of *Shema* and *Veahavtah*?

Hashem took us out of Egypt to make us His Nation. Then, He gave us the *Torah* so that we could observe His commandments, connect to Him, and merit His blessings, which is the ultimate goal of Creation. By referencing *Yetzjat Mitzrayim*, we are acknowledging all that Hashem did for us in order that we bond with Him.

Hashem could only take us out of Egypt by exiling us there in the first place. Consequently, *Galus* was essential to making us into the **עם הנבחר** and bringing us to the lofty role we occupy today, as Hashem's servants. As we eat the *marror* together with *Charoses*, stacked between two layers of *matzah*, we appreciate the abundant sweetness and blessings brought by the pain.

ליל חתונה



Shulchan Oreich

Sara Nordlicht

Following our recital of *Maggid* and eating of the *matzah*, we take a break to have a *Yom Tov* meal. However, the *mitzvah* of the night- that of יציאת מצרים סיפור - still remains. It is therefore appropriate to engage in saying *divrei torah* at this time, particularly the ones that you didn't have time to say earlier, during *Maggid*.

Generally, it is best to accompany a meal with *divrei torah*. The *Mishnah* in *Avot* states:

שלושה שאכלו על שולחן אחד ולא אמרו עליו דברי תורה כאלו אכלו מזבחי מתים
(אבות ג:ג)

Both רש"י and רע"ב concede that one can fulfill this obligation through the recitation of *Birchas Hamazon*. However, it is certainly best to bring up the name of Hashem at some point in the meal, especially when it is a מצווה של סעודה של, as is the case tonight. By doing so, we are showing that we aren't merely eating to satisfy our stomachs, but are eating because it is a *mitzvah*. In fact, we are careful not to overeat, for we need to maintain an appetite for the *Afikoman*. By elevating the physical to the spiritual through the inclusion of *divrei torah*, the *Mishnah* tells us that כאלו אכלו משלחנו של מקום, *it is as if we are eating from the table of Hashem!*

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אברהם יצחק



Tzafun

Chedvah Levine

Once we have completed the meal which comprises *Shulchan Oreich*, we enjoy dessert: another delicious piece of *matzah*. It's an interesting way to end the *seudah*, and the uniqueness of this food choice highlights its significance. At the beginning of the *seder*, the *chacham* asks what the *chukim* and *mishpatim* are about. We answer him by teaching that we can't eat anything after the *afikoman*. This idea is relevant to the story of Yaakov and Eisav, brothers who are renowned for their unique relationship. The *midrash* says that after Yaakov got the *brachos*, Eisav came and asked his father Yitzchak what he had eaten. Yitzchak said, "I had meat." There are two different animals on the night of *Pesach*, one for the *korban Pesach* and one for the *korban Chagiga*. Eisav knew that as long as he could bring his food, *matamim*, as he was asked to do, he could still be blessed by Yitzchak. The power of the *korban Pesach*—the *afikomen*—was that it was completely satiating, and only this could warrant a *bracha*. Therefore, Yitzchak couldn't eat the food Eisav gave him because he was already full. When he realized this was the case, Eisav started crying. In this way, he was able to open new gates. While a *bracha* is usually only given with the *korban Pesach*, new opportunities were made available because of his crying. What a lesson for us in concluding the feast that celebrates our freedom! Hashem made *Brachos* limitless; we just have to ask. At *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, we are told that *Bnei Yisroel* cried out a great cry, a *ze'akah gedolah*, which Hashem heard, thus prompting a response of salvation. We can learn from *Bnei Yisroel* in *Mitzrayim*, and *lehardil*, Eisav, to have total faith in Hashem.

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Mia Lubetski

The *afikoman* is hidden away during *Yachatz* at the beginning of the *seder*. The splitting of the *matzah*, and the time of each piece's use, have important significance. The *Chasam Sofer* tells us that each piece alludes to half of the *seder*. The half that we ate already alludes to the first half of the *seder*. In the first half of the *seder*, we thanked Hashem for our redemption from Egypt. However, we are still in *galus* and patiently awaiting the final *geulah*. In the second half of the *seder*, we ask Hashem for this *geulah*. The piece of *matzah* we eat now symbolizes this. Just as this piece of *matzah* was hidden away, so is the date of our *geulah*.

Many families have the *minhag* to encourage the younger children to

steal the *afikoman*. We often explain this to be a fun incentive to keep the children awake until the end of the *seder*. If we are trying to teach our children about Torah, how can we teach them to steal? The *afikoman* represents the future, and hopefully very close, *geulah* which is *hidden* from us. *Matzah*, which can only be eaten after eating an appetizer to make us hungry, represents a yearning for truth. *Eliyahu HaNavi*, whom we welcome to our *seder* with a fifth cup of wine at the end of the *seder*, “will return the heart of the parents to the children and the children to the parents.” The “gap” that prevents the younger generation from relating to the previous one is our biggest problem. When a generation takes the potential they have been given, and misappropriate it by not applying it to Torah, the one thing that helps us bridge the gap between all past generations, they are stealing our future hope. We want our children to steal the *afikoman* instead, they should crave the “quest” for Torah, represented by the *matzah* of the *afikoman*, so that our final hidden *geulah* can be revealed.



CHAM

Bareich

Bruria Schwartz

In *Shofoch Chamascha*, we daven that the nations of the world who oppress us should suffer from the anger of Hashem. That reminds us of a fundamental question about *Pesach*. For what reason did Pharaoh deserve to suffer? In *Parshas Lech-Lecha*, Avraham is promised that

“יָדַעַ תְּדַעַ כִּי־גֵר יִהְיֶה וְרַעַךְ בְּאַרְצֵי לֹא לָהֶם וְעַבְדוֹם וְעָנּוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה”

You should surely know that your descendants will be in a land that is not theirs, and they will enslave them and they will torture them for 400 years”. If Hashem promised Avraham that *Bnei Yisrael* would suffer, then Pharaoh was really carrying out *ratzon Hashem*, so why did he need to be punished? The answer, explains the *Lev Avram*, can be understood through the words of *Shofoch Chamascha*.

“שָׁפַךְ חַמְתָּהּ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדְעוּהָ וְעַל־מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ.”

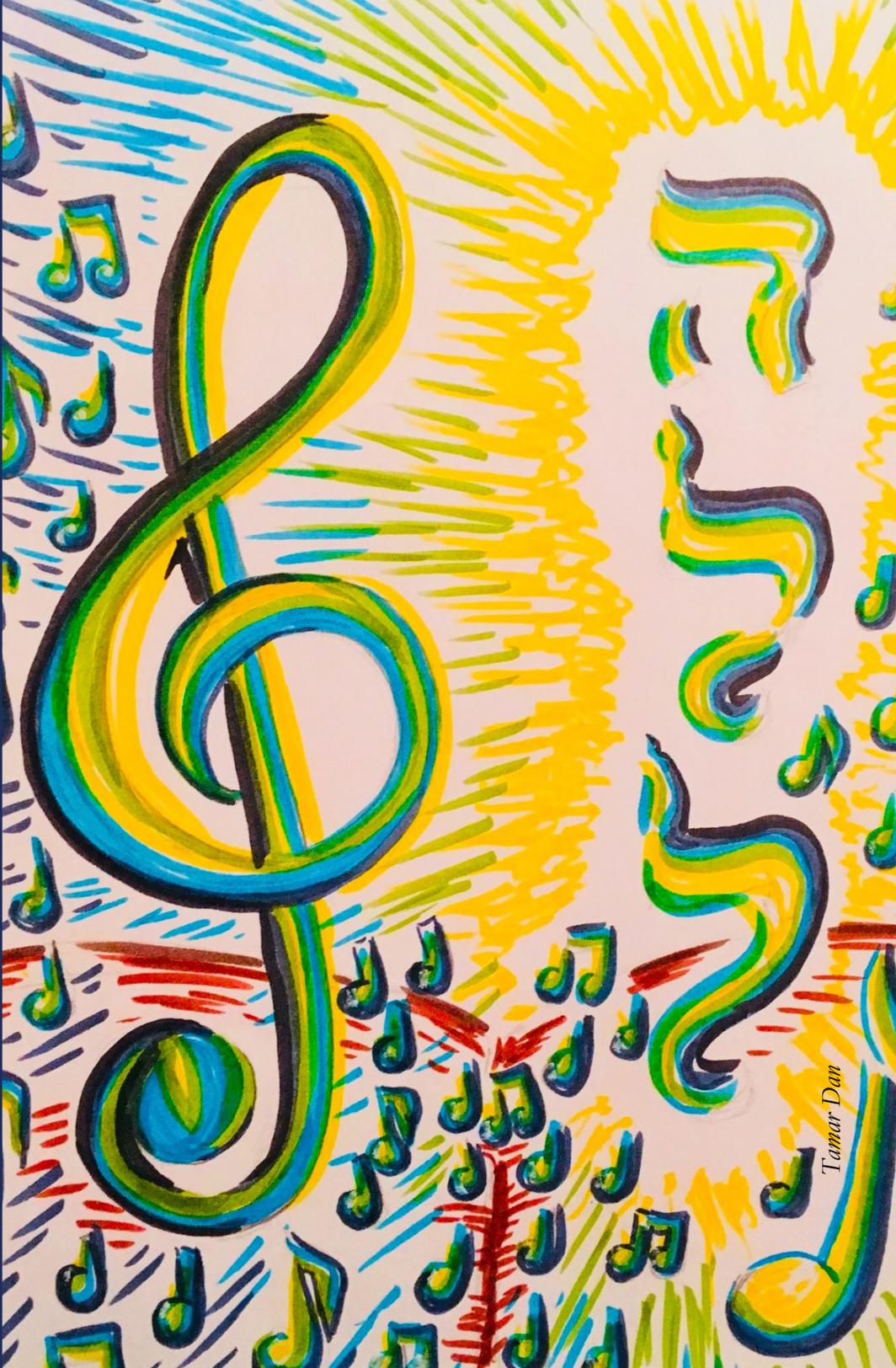
hints to the true intentions of Pharaoh. He did not hurt the Jews solely to fulfill the *ratzon Hashem*. In fact, Pharaoh doubted Hashem's very existence.

“מִי ה' אֲשֶׁר אֲשַׁמְעֵ בְקִלְוֹ לְשַׁלַּח אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֵת ה'”

Pharaoh didn't believe in Hashem, so when he harmed the Jews it wasn't out of a desire to do *ratzon Hashem*. The *Lev Avram* also provides a second explanation.

“כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת־נֹוֹהוּ הַשָּׁמוּ”

hints to the extent to which Pharaoh went to harm the Jews. Pharaoh went above and beyond what was necessary to fulfill the words of the *בין הבתרים*, *ברית*, harming the Jews out of intense, blinding hatred. Since Pharaoh hurt the Jews out of hatred, he deserved to be punished.



Tamar Dan

Hallel

Mia Lubetski

In shul every year on *Pesach* morning, after saying ‘Good *Yom Tov*,’ the first two questions that people ask each other are ‘How was your *seder*?’ and ‘What time did it finish?’

There is a perception that the longer your *seder* lasts, the frummer you are. However, that’s not necessarily the case. In *Mishna Masechet Pesachim* there is a debate between *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel*, concerning *Hallel*. *Beit Shammai* believes that we should say just the first paragraph of *Hallel* before the meal. However, *Beit Hillel* maintains that we should recite *two* paragraphs before the meal, which is what we do.

The second paragraph starts with the words *B’zeit Yisrael mi-Mitzrayim*, referring to *Yetziat Mitzrayim*, which is the primary theme of *Maggid*, the central part of the *seder* before the meal. It is interesting to note that *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* uncharacteristically agree that we should split *Hallel* in two, and not complete it before the meal. They both understand that there will be hungry people around the table, usually children, and oftentimes adults too, and we shouldn’t keep them waiting.

During the *seder*, we should try to empathize with the people that are there, and be sure not to drag it out too long, lest we lose the attention span of some of the participants. By having a *seder* that lasts until the wee hours of the morning as a result of delving into the words of the Haggadah, one might be sacrificing the opportunity to have an inspirational and memorable *seder* experience. It is very possible that one can have a very short *seder* and still have the perfect *seder* experience. So if your answer to the question of “What time did your *seder* end?” isn’t ‘3 or 4 AM,’ rest assured that even though your *seder* might not be as long as others, you still may have achieved the perfect *Pesach* experience.



Noa Garfinkel

Nirtzah

Rachel Fogel, Inspired by the words of Rabbi Berel Wein

לשנה הבאה בירושלים

As we end the *seder*, we sing spirited songs in joyful tunes, such as *Chad Gadya*, and conclude with the confident proclamation of לשנה הבאה בירושלים. Twice a year, at the end of both the *Pesach seder* and *Yom Kippur*, we give expression to our anticipation to return to the Jewish homeland. *Yerushalayim* constantly remains an integral and central piece of our faith as it completes our history and gives us hope for the future. Our Rabbis clearly write about the *kedusha*, beauty, and destiny that lies in *Yerushalayim*, which is why it is no surprise that this is how we end our *Seder*. However, because on the surface *Chad Gadya* can seem like no more than a playful song, some have challenged its holiness and inclusion in the *Haggadah*. Rabbi Chaim Joseph David Azulai assures us that this poem is more than a childish song by describing a Jewish community that banned a Jew because he mocked it.

The Vilna Gaon describes this song as one which holds hidden *kedusha* by representing the constant struggle for power as seen through Jewish history and the ultimate salvation. The kid is compared to Yosef, and the cat is the brothers who sold him to Egypt, the dog. The stick represents first, the *makos*, and later on *Galus Edom*, *Mashiach*, and finally the arrival of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. There are many ways to read this beautiful poem; on the surface it promises us that there will always be justice brought through *Hashem*, and with a deeper look we find an even more hopeful promise. Even though our history can testify to our multiple downfalls at the hands of outsiders, *Hashem* will save us in the end and return us, for next year shall be in *Yerushalayim!*

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Bruria Schwartz

A lot of people have been bothered by the omission of *Moshe Rabeinu's* name from the *Haggadah*. After all, Moshe was the one who led the Jews out of *Mitzrayim!* Why would such a central figure in the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* not appear in the *Haggadah*? It is worth noting that, although Moshe's name doesn't appear explicitly in the *Haggadah*, there are a few hints to him. One opinion in the *Gemara* is that the 2 cooked dishes on the *k'arah* represent Moshe and Aharon (Pesachim 114:). Another allusion to Moshe can be found in *Nirtzah*. The *gematria* of 'Nirtzah' is 345, which is the same as the *gematria* of 'Moshe'. Although we don't explicitly mention Moshe in the *Haggadah*, there are references to Moshe. According to the *Rambam*, if one has a child that is wise and understanding, he relates to him the *nissim* which happened through Moshe. But why don't we mention that the *nissim* was done through

Moshe to the other children? We don't want to *chas v'shalom* cause them to think that Moshe was the one doing the *nissim*, not *Hashem*, so we refrain from mentioning his name. However, at the end of the *seder*, at *Nirtzah*, we are all on the level of the *chacham* and can understand that it was *Hashem* performing the *nissim* through Moshe. We can allude to Moshe without having to worry that it might cause someone to mistakenly believe that Moshe performed the miracles that the Jews witnessed during *yetzias Mitzrayim*.

