



# הַמִּזְרָחִי

# HAMIZRACHI

## PARSHA WEEKLY

PARSHAT TZAV – SHABBAT HAGADOL 5783 • 2023










**ISRAEL**  
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אֵשׁ תָּמִיד תּוֹקֵד עַל  
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא תִכָּבֵה  
וַיִּקְרָא ו'ו'

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# The Pesach Plot

## The Hagaddah on One Leg



**Rabbi Doron Perez**

Executive Chairman, World Mizrahi

The following story is a personal one, our family story.

After all, the central mitzvah of the Pesach Seder is that of מגיד - telling over to ourselves and our children the story of the birth of our people. This story about my maternal grandfather of blessed memory was a defining one for our family, one which he would tell us time and time again. It was about his lucky escape from Lithuania as a 17-year-old boy with his family on one of the last boats out of Europe before the outbreak of World War Two.

Louis Gecelter was a young man from Kovno, Kaunas Lithuania and a keen sportsman who participated regularly in Maccabi sporting events. In the summer of 1937, he represented Maccabi Kovno at a regional sports festival for young Jews from across Europe. Here he met young German Jewish boys his age for the first time. While talking to them, he was shocked by the stories he was hearing – the yellow star, public discrimination and disgrace at all levels of German society.

He immediately sensed the enormity of these events and that he must convey to his mother that she ought to come and hear these terrible stories for herself. Although the sports grounds were hundreds of miles away – and he would only be coming home after the festival had ended – he found a creative solution. He wrote a note to his mother and asked the captain of one of the steamships on the river next to the grounds to deliver the note to the lady who runs the kiosk further upstream - his mother - where all steamboats stopped for refreshment outside Kovno along Lithuania's longest river, the Namanus. Thankfully, the note made it to his mother, my

great-grandmother Sonia, and its message was clear: "Come now on the very next boat and hear for yourself what's happening to the Jews in Germany!"

And she came indeed and listened very intently to the young German boys and girls. The moment my grandfather returned home, she gathered the family together, and – in my grandfather's words – she declared to the family in Yiddish, "Mir muzech packen, dir kinder zogen dem emes" – we must pack, the children speak the truth.

Thank G-d, my great-grandmother had the wisdom and insight to decide it was time to leave and within months they had gone. They wanted to go to Palestine but the gates were closed due to British immigration restrictions, so they made their way to South Africa.

Tragically, all extended family who stayed behind perished in the Holocaust.

My grandfather arrived in South Africa and married my grandmother (a marriage that lasted 75 years!), built a family, became a Jewish community leader, and they made aliyah when he was 59. All his direct descendants subsequently followed suit and live in Israel today. He passed away peacefully 5 years ago at the age of 97. He would always say how he owed his life to that fortuitous meeting with these young German teenagers at the sports festival and his mother's great wisdom and foresight.

### National Storytelling

Like myriads of other Jewish family stories, I believe our family story reflects the essence of Jewish history as told in the Haggadah - from potential destruction to ultimate deliverance. From clouds of

darkness to radiant light, and from the brink of despair to a bright and hopeful future.

After all, no festival shapes our collective identity more than Pesach. It is the time we engage in national storytelling. We sit together as a family and attempt to crystallize the meaning of our people's very existence – our birth, our suffering and our salvation. We aim to tell our children what it means to be a part of the Jewish people. We tell our collective family's story.

Indeed, the stories we tell ourselves are critical to our collective identity. According to Harvard History Professor, Jill Lepore, this is the crisis facing America today.<sup>1</sup> She argues that Americans have forgotten how to tell their national story with clarity. She suggests the reason for this is that over the last 50 years, much of academia has shunned any discussion of nationalism, seeing it as something negative and dangerous. By doing so, others step into the vacuum and create stories which don't necessarily reflect the true American story. Lepore says a country must have a national story, otherwise it risks losing its way. Yes, writing national history creates plenty of problems.

But not writing it creates more.

Our Prophets and Sages understood this well and created our national narrative

at the very dawn of Jewish history. They defined what our collective identity and destiny are all about. This is the story of Pesach and this of course is our Haggadah.

### Our Story in a Nutshell

What is the essence of our story? What is the foundational idea at the core of the Haggadah?

Our Sages posit that the quintessential theme of the whole story can be captured in four words – מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח – begin with shame, end with praise.<sup>2</sup> This short and sharp insight not only captures the primary plot of the Exodus but reveals an underlying pattern in all of Jewish history.

Life comes with difficulties and challenges. But it is in no way defined by them.

Whether the challenges are physical or spiritual,<sup>3</sup> one thing is clear. It is the beginning of the story and not the story itself. The story may begin with darkness, pain and suffering but somehow always ends with light, hope and redemption.

The Jewish story contains tragedy but is never tragic.

Life has bitterness, lots of it, but it is fundamentally sweet.

There is evil in the world, a lot of it, but good eventually and ultimately prevails. Life is full of twists and turns, challenges and crises, sometimes in the most

unexpected ways. The windy road, though, is somehow leading us somewhere; there is indeed light at the end of the tunnel.

The Pesach Haggadah grants us a unique paradigm through which to view these inevitable ups and downs of the vicissitudes of life.

Although the future always remains uncertain and none of us know how things will exactly unfold, we believe and know that it will somehow be for the better. We know from our collective family story that pain, suffering and uncertainty will transform into a better and brighter future. We will emerge with greater resilience and resolve to face the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Pesach is a unique time in the present to dwell on our past in order to understand our future. It is a time to look back at our history in order to understand our destiny. Shabbat Shalom and Chag Sameach!

1. Foreign Affairs Periodical, March/April 2019, p. 10.
2. Mishna Pesachim, 10:4.
3. With respect to the Haggadah's theme of מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח, the Talmud (Pesachim 116a) mentions two opinions. Rav says it's referring to the spiritual realm, the journey from idolatry to belief in G-d, and Shmuel says it's referring to our physical survival – from suffering and servitude to freedom and redemption. Rav Yitzchak Alfassi rules that both opinions are accepted in practice and both appear in the Haggadah.



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PIRKEI AVOT

# True Character



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בן זומא אומר, איזהו חכם, הלומד מכל אדם, שנאמר (תהלים קיט) מכל מלמדי השכלתי כי עדותיך שיהא לי.  
איזהו גבור, הכובש את יצרו, שנאמר (משלי טז) טוב ארך אפים מגבור ומשל ברוחו מלכד עיר.  
איזהו עשיר, השמח בחלקו, שנאמר (תהלים קכח) יגיע כפיך כי תאכל אשריך וטוב לך. אשריך, בעולם הזה. וטוב לך, לעולם הבא.  
איזהו מכובד, המכבד את הבריות, שנאמר (שמואל א ב) כי מכבדי אכבד ובזי יקלו: (אבות ד:א)

Each one of *Masechet Avot's* perakim begins with a central teaching.<sup>1</sup> The fourth *perak* opens with Ben Zoma's definition of four characters: the *chacham* (wise), the *gibor* (strong), the *ashir* (rich), and the *mechubad* (respected).

## Not The Ultimate Values

The first three characters — *chacham*, *gibor*, and *ashir* — were already referenced by Yirmiyahu HaNavi,<sup>2</sup> who discouraged taking pride in possessing these traits. Though society values them and (thus) people invest significant time and effort trying to attain them, they are not reflective of life's true mission. Yirmiyahu recommends taking pride, instead, in knowing Hashem and living by His values, *chessed*, *mishpat* and *tzedakah* — kindness, justice and fairness. This is what Hashem values and, thus, what our lives ought to be about. Living this way is something to be proud of.

## Still Valuable

Though these traits are not the ultimate goals, they are still somewhat valuable. In fact, even Hashem values them. The gemara<sup>3</sup> in *Masechet Nedarim* asserts that Hashem only "rests His Presence upon" (meaning that he only offers prophecy through) someone who has these characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

Like the gemara in *Nedarim*, Ben Zoma attributes value to these traits. His goal is to help us define them properly. Ben Zoma also adds a fourth characteristic to the mix — "*mechubad*". Most people's ultimate goal is respect. Some hope to be respected because of their wisdom, others because of their strength, and still others because of their wealth. Ben Zoma recognizes people's yearning for respect and, therefore, seeks to define this trait as well.<sup>5</sup>

## Internal and External

Though Ben Zoma relates to each of the traits separately, his words about all four share a common goal: to correct our thinking about

which traits depend upon our internal, personal perspective and which hinge upon things external to ourselves.

People measure *ashirut* by one's money and possessions and *gevurah* by one's ability to control other people or things. Ben Zoma disagrees, explaining that both traits are actually internal.<sup>6</sup> The true *gibor* is the one who has the strength to control *himself*; the real *ashir* is the one *satisfied* with what he has.<sup>8</sup>

Why should we value the ability to control others? Even if that had value, what difference does that ability make if we cannot control ourselves? Finally, self-control is harder to achieve than the control of others.<sup>9</sup> Self-control is both a true accomplishment and also the accomplishment that truly matters.

True *ashirut* is also internal. What significance do material riches have if they do not make us happy? Many rich people spend their lives desperately trying to acquire more wealth. No matter how much they have, their jealousy of others keeps them from being satisfied with their lot. Being happy with our blessings from Hashem<sup>10</sup> makes us truly rich. We live happily with the knowledge that we have what we are meant to have.

Ben Zoma has a similar approach to *chochmah* and *kavod*, but in the reverse direction. People generally define a *mechubad* as someone respected *by others*. Ben Zoma defines the *mechubad* as one who respects others. The one who respects others is the one who should be shown respect and is inherently respectable.

Sadly, many people are "full of themselves" — they feel that they are "G-d's gift to humanity." In truth, what truly makes us special is the fact that we are created in Hashem's image. This fact is, of course, shared by all of humanity. A true appreciation of ourselves should bring us to a similar appreciation of all other human beings.<sup>11</sup> This appreciation makes us worthy of respect.<sup>12</sup>

Ben Zoma defines a *chacham* similarly. People generally assume that a *chacham* is intrinsically intelligent. Ben Zoma explains it otherwise: the *chacham* is the one who learns from others. No one knows it all. Hashem scatters wisdom among all of those He creates in His image. The more people we learn from, the smarter we become. The ultimate *chacham* is the one who learns from *everyone*.<sup>13</sup>

## What We Accomplish

The Midrash Shmuel and Netivot Shalom highlight another thread common to Ben Zoma's teachings. The blessings of wisdom, strength, and wealth are all G-d-given and thus not reasons for one to be prideful or shown respect. It is what we achieve on our own that is praiseworthy.

We should not be proud of our natural intelligence; we should be proud of the effort we invest in learning from others. We should not celebrate natural strength; we should celebrate the self-control we develop. We have no reason to show off the riches with which Hashem gifts us; we should be proud of the appreciation we foster for the source of what we have. We should not be proud of the respect others show us; we should be proud of our understanding of the basis and importance of showing respect to others.

May Ben Zoma's words help us appreciate the true meaning of wisdom, strength, wealth, and honor, and may they inspire us to focus on the personal growth that helps us achieve their proper form.

● Summarized by Rafi Davis

1. See Maharal, *Derech Chaim*, Introduction to Avot Perak Bet.  
2. Sefer Yirmiyahu 9:22. Rabbeinu Yonah (*Avot* 4:1) points out that Ben Zoma uses the same language and order as the Yirmiyahu.  
3. *Masechet Nedarim* 38a.  
4. See the midrash (*Badmibar Rabbah* 22:6) which explains that these characteristics are only significant when they are seen as coming from Hashem.

Continued on page 9

HAFTARAH - PARSHANUT ON THE PARSHA

# Shabbat HaGadol: Haftarah & Haggadah



**Rabbanit Shani Taragin**  
Educational Director, World Mizrahi

Unlike the haftarot of the four parshiyot which are codified in the Mishnah and elaborated upon in the Talmud (Megillah 291-b), the haftarah for Shabbat HaGadol, the Shabbat preceding Chag HaPesach, is not mentioned in the Talmud. The custom to read from Malachi 3:4-24 dates back to the Middle Ages though it may have originally been read as the haftarah for parashat Tzav based on the Eretz-Yisrael triennial cycle for reading the Torah (opening with the parallel “mincha” offering). The Maharshal suggests that the name for this Shabbat, “Shabbat HaGadol” (the great shabbat), is related to this haftarah, beginning with the words (Malakhi 3:4), “And the offering of Yehuda and Jerusalem will be sweet to Hashem,” and concluding: “Behold, I will send you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the GREAT (HaGadol) AND AWESOME DAY OF HASHEM.” But the very choice of this haftara is problematic for a haftarah, by definition, is related to and complements the weekly Torah reading or the special maftir for special occasions. But on Shabbat HaGadol there is no special reading (maftir) from the Torah. Why, then, is the regular haftara that accompanies this week’s parasha (Metzora) from Melachim Bet 7:3-20, set aside in favor of a haftarah that has no connection with the parasha or clear connection to Pesach?

Post-facto, one may find still find connections between this week’s haftarah of “ve-arvah” (opening verse) and the upcoming festival of Pesach. One such connection may be found in the mysterious appearance of Eliyahu HaNavi, both at the conclusion of the haftarah and on the Seder night, as he comes to herald the final redemption. There are other connections as well that may be learned from this final prophecy of Malachi, the final

pesukim of prophecy in the Tanach as we approach the holiday recounting our first national *geulah*.

The farewell to prophecy depicted by Malachi reminds us of the first era of prophecy to the Jewish nation on the eve of Yetziat Mitzrayim, as we close the cycle of prophecy and await future opportunities. Malachi opens his prophecy with Hashem’s words of an abandoned father speaking to His beloved children who serve G-d in a perfunctory and disrespectful manner. The nation, kohanim included, living less than a hundred years after the rebuilding of the second Beit HaMikdash, have been indifferent to their misbehavior and disrespect in worshipping Hashem, “robbing Him” of due gifts of recognition. They have betrayed their G-d, their Jewish identity and their wives who have been cast aside in favor of the Samaritan women, “the daughter of the foreign god” as their wives covered “the altar of Hashem with tears.” The prophet then assures us that Hashem will eliminate the wicked in preparation for ultimate salvation as the haftarah begins – “Then the offering of Yehuda and Yerushalayim will be pleasing to Hashem as in the days of old and in previous years.” The prophet exhorts the nation for “veering away from My laws” and encourages them to “return to Me, and I will return to you,” reminding us of our cycle of exile, repentance, redemption, sin and exile. But he also provides us with the key to breaking this cycle and avoiding “*asher lo sam libo*” (not paying heed), with the words “*Zichru Torat Moshe avdi*” – “Remember the Torah of Moshe, my servant.” Herein lays a strong connection with the upcoming Pesach holiday when we actively remember the stories of Moshe and the commencement of Jewish identity recounting the narrative and collective memory of *yetziat Mitzrayim*.

The Rambam (*Hilchot Chametz Umatzah* 7:1) explains that the basis of “mitzvat sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim” on the night of Pesach is the commandment “זכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים” (*Shemot* 13:3), highlighting the active remembrance through speech.

As Malachi’s words end the era of prophecy, he reminds us through his rhetoric that we are not dependent on intangible ethereal communication to maintain a relationship with the Divine. We are enjoined to speak and teach “Torat Moshe,” perpetuating the prophecy of Moshe through the mitzvot of the Torah, particularly through parents relating to their children! The three final pesukim of the haftarah (Malakhi 3:22-24) echo in our hearts on the night of Pesach: “Remember the Torah of Moshe My servant, which I commanded him at Chorev for all of Israel; the statutes and the judgments. Behold, I shall send to you Eliyahu the prophet, before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will return the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their father, lest I come and strike the land with a curse.” Eliyahu, the (apparently) childless and zealous prophet, the prophet who hovers in ambiguities of time and space, will come to fill the void between generations and herald redemption. Perhaps that’s why he awaits by our doors on the Seder night – waiting to hear parents and children engaged in dynamic dialogue of Torat Moshe as they question and answer, excited by story and song. For when they do, he and we know that redemption may be revisited, accompanying us from the darkness of exile through the doors of exodus.

Shabbat Shalom and Chag Kasher VeSameach!

# Halachic Q&A



## Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon

Head, Mizrahi Rabbinic Council | Rabbi of the Gush Etzion Regional Council  
Rosh Yeshivah, Jerusalem College of Technology | Founder and Chairman, Sulamot and La'Ofek

The next few weeks will feature Q and A's regarding the different stages of the seder night.  
These are taken directly from Rav Rimon's book, "Pesach Haggadah - Shirat Miriam"

### Karpas

#### Question: Why does one dip?

Answer: So that the children will notice that we are dipping twice (Ran and Me'iri), or that we are eating vegetables before the meal (Rashi and Ramban).

#### Question: What is the answer to the children's question as to why we dip twice?

Answer:

- Bach: Eating a vegetable before the meal is a sign of freedom.
- Another answer of the Bach: One eats *karpas* in order not to be hungry when the haggadah is recited.
- Maharal, Taz: In order to emphasize that we dip *marror* in *charoset* (as it is the fulfillment of a mitzvah), we also dip the *karpas* so that there will be two dippings, underscoring the act of dipping itself on this night.
- Rabbi Yosef Tuv Elem: In order not to make two blessings on *marror*, one first recites the "ha'adamah" blessings on *karpas* and thus absolves the *marror* from this blessing – that way, one will need to recite only a single blessing on the *marror*.
- Peri Chadash: This is a question without an answer, which is meant to keep the children awake to ask more substantial questions.

#### Question: What kind of vegetable does one eat?

Answer: According to the law any vegetable can be used.

Maharil and Agur: The custom is to use *karpas* – parsley – for the four letters, *chaf*, *resh*, *peh*, *samech*, stand for *samech* (sixty

*ribo* (ten thousand = 60,000) who worked *befarech* (*peh*, *resh*, *chaf*), in hard labor. Either parsley (Tosfot Yom Tov, Chayei Adam) or celery (Chatam Sofer).

Aruch Hashulchan: Today, we use other vegetables (that are not *karpas*) like potatoes or radishes for *karpas*.

#### Question: How much does one eat?

Answer: According to most of the Rishonim, one does not need to eat a *kezayit*, and Maharil writes that it is better to eat less than a *kezayit* in order to avoid the dispute as to whether one must recite a concluding blessing. That is the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch, and that is the prevalent custom.

There are those whose custom is to eat a *kezayit*, because less than that is not considered to be "eating," and one must fulfill the requirement to eat *karpas* (Rambam, Gra, Chazon Ish, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik). Whoever wishes to do so may, especially if it will help him concentrate on the retelling of the Exodus until the meal. If one eats a *kezayit*, he does not recite the concluding blessing (Mishnah Berurah).

### Yachatz

#### Question: Does the broken matza add or detract from the two loaves over which the blessing is made?

Answer: The Rishonim differ as to how many *matzot* one uses at the seder.

According to Rif and Rambam, there are two *matzot* at the seder, and after one of them is broken, there are one and a half *matzot*. It appears that to them *lechem oni* is meant to decrease the number of *matzot* (Gra).

According to Rashi and Tosafot, there are three *matzot* at the seder, and after one is

broken, we are left with two and a half. The reason is that we need two whole *matzot* for *lechem mishneh* – two (whole) loaves – as on every Shabbat and festival meal. The *lechem oni* is expressed by eating the broken *matzah* (Rashi), or is expressed by means of the *hamotzi* blessing as a symbol of the broken *matzah* and not in terms of the number of *matzot* (Tosafot).

It is possible that Rif and Rambam do not require *lechem mishneh* at the seder, and the broken *matzah* is considered as a whole loaf for the poor. Most people have the custom of using three *matzot*, except for Yemenite Jews and those who follow Gra, who take two *matzot*.

#### Question: When does one break the matzah and why?

Answer: According to most Rishonim, one breaks the *matzah* before *maggid* (unlike Rambam, who holds that one does so before the *hamotzi* blessing), even though there is still a long time until the *matzah* will be eaten. It is possible that this is done just to arouse the interest of the children, but it might also be done for a basic reason – that the haggadah should be recited over a broken *matzah*, *lechem oni* (Shulchan Aruch HaRav, based on Itur, Kolbo, and others).

#### Question: Why is it that the larger part of the matzah is saved for afikomen?

Answer: It is possible that one wants to set aside the larger piece for the afikoman so as to have the size of two olives for the afikoman, or to leave a small piece as a symbol of *lechem oni*. The smaller piece is placed between the two whole *matzot*.

● Compiled by Yaakov Panitch.

# דיון משפחתי: פרשת צו

הרבנית שרון רימון  
Tanach teacher and author



ג. יחד עם קרבן התודה מביאים כמות גדולה מאד של לחמים ומצות, ובמקביל לכך, יש מצווה לסיים את האכילה של הקרבן בזמן קצר מאד - עד הבוקר. כך יוצרת התורה סיטואציה בה אדם חייב להזמין הרבה אנשים להשתתף איתו באכילת הקרבן, כך שלמעשה נוצרת סעודת הודיה, בה האדם מספר על ברבים על הנס וההצלה שלו, ומשבח את ה'.

קרבן הפסח דומה מאד בהלכותיו לקרבן התודה, ומהווה למעשה קרבן תודה לאומי, בו כל עם ישראל מודה לה' על הגאולה ממצרים. אולם, בקרבן הפסח לא אוכלים חמץ, מכיוון שהיציאה ממצרים היא רק תחילתו של תהליך הגאולה. סיום תהליך הגאולה הוא בחג השבועות בו חוגגים את מתן התורה ואת ההודיה על הארץ הטובה שה' נתן לנו ע"י הבאת הביכורים לירושלים. דווקא אז ראוי להביא את שתי הלחם, מחמץ, כביטוי לשמחה בטוב שה' השפיע עלינו וכהודיה על השלמת תהליך הגאולה.

מדבריות שהגיעו למקום יישוב; חבוש בבית האסורים שהשתחרר; וחולים שהתרפאו.

הדינים המיוחדים של קרבן התודה מביאים לידי ביטוי את התחושות של האדם המקריב:

א. קרבן תודה הוא קרבן שלמים. אחד המאפיינים של קרבן שלמים הוא שלא כולו מוקרב על המזבח, אלא יש שלושה שותפים באכילתו. דבר זה מבטא את הקשר והאהבה שבין ה' למקריב הקרבן (בשונה מתחושת היראה וההכנעה המבוטאת בקורבנות חטאת ועולה).

ב. יחד עם קרבן התודה מביאים לחמי חמץ. בדרך כלל התורה אוסרת להקריב חמץ, מכיוון שרוב הקרבנות אמורים לבטא תחושה של חוסר שלמות, לעומת החמץ המבטא שלמות ואפילו גאווה. לעומת זאת, בקרבן התודה יש מצווה להקריב יחד איתו חמץ, ובכך לבטא את תחושת השלמות, הגאולה, והשפעה, וההודיה לה' על כך.

קרבן התודה הוא הקרבן הבסיסי ביותר. משחרר ההיסטוריה הרגישו בני האדם צורך להודות לה' על שפע הטוב שנתן להם, או על הצלה מסיטואציות קשות, והקריבו קרבנות כדרך לבטא את ההודיה שלהם לה' (כך קין והבל הקריבו לה' קרבן כהודיה על שפע הפרנסה שניתן להם, ונח הקריב קרבן לה' לאחר הצלתו מהמבול).

בפרשת צו, התורה ממסדת את קרבן התודה, ומצווה על בני ישראל באיזה אופן עליהם להקריב אותו. לכאורה, קרבן זה אמור להיות קרבן נדבה, שהאדם מביא מרצונו החופשי, מתוך רגש טבעי של הודיה לה'. אולם, מאחר ולא כל אדם מגיע להכרה זו באופן טבעי, יש צורך לחנך בני אדם להודות לה'. לכן, חכמים קבעו סיטואציות מסוימות בהן האדם חייב להודות (ע"י קרבן תודה או ברכת הגומל). הסיטואציות נלמדות ממזמור ק"ז בתהלים, המתאר ארבעה סוגי אנשים שניצלו מצרה המרגישים צורך להודות לה' ברבים על הצלתם: יורדי ים והולכי



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# I'm not a robot... or am I?



**Sivan Rahav Meir and Yedidya Meir**  
World Mizrahi Scholars-in-Residence

**A**re you familiar with the annoying rectangle that appears on your computer or cell phone screen with the "I'm not a robot" message? In order to proceed, we need to check a small box inside. Even though we have already answered this question in the negative hundreds of times, perhaps we really are robots.

In parashat Tzav which we read this Shabbat, there is a description of the duties of the Kohanim in the Mishkan. Among the various components of their service was the responsibility of maintaining a fire on the altar: "A continuous fire shall burn upon the altar; it shall not go out."

יש פה אמירה לאהרון הכהן (ובעצם לכולם, לדורות, אחריו) להזדרז. להירתם לכל משימה רוחנית תיכף ומייד. פרשנים רבים מפתחים מכאן דיון שלם על מידת הזריזות שהיא הבסיס של כל העשייה שלנו. בספר "מסילת ישרים", למשל, "מידת הזריזות" מופיע כאחד השלבים הראשונים בעבודתו העצמית של האדם. הנה רק פסקה אחת משם על הנקודה הזו של חשיבות הזריזות:

"ותראה כי טבע האדם כבד מאד, כי עפריות החומריות גס, על כן לא יחפוץ האדם בטורח ומלאכה. ומי שרוצה לזכות לעבודת הבורא יתברך, צריך שיתגבר נגד טבעו עצמו ויתגבר ויזדרז, שאם הוא מניח עצמו ביד כבודות, ודאי הוא שלא יצליח."

Rabbi Yoni Lavi writes about the expression "continuous fire" as follows: On the one hand it's a fire and its flame is variable. It flickers, changes colors, and aspires to go up. Yet, on the other hand, it is continuous. It is routine, permanent, quotidian, and perpetually consistent.

In his words, all of us operate sometimes on "automatic pilot." We are likely to do things out of habit, without thinking, because that's just the way it is or so we have been told. The most important aspects of our lives – marriage, learning, work, prayer, raising children – can be experienced without emotion or deep connection, by rote and in predictable sequence until 120.

הרבי מלובביץ' מסביר ש"אש תמיד" בוערת בלבו של כל אדם – ניצוץ פנימי של התלהבות, שמחה ואמונה ורצון להיות טוב ולהידיבק בטוב. אבל כשם שיש להוסיף תמיד עצים כדי להדליק אש, כך שהאדם צריך "להדליק" תמיד את הנפש פנימה, לדאוג לה תמיד לחומרי בעירה חדשים כדי שהיא לא תכבה. זו אמנם אש טבעית שבוערת בו מעצם בריאתו, אבל עליו תמיד לטרוח ולהוסיף "עצים" למדורה ולהגביר אותה על ידי קשר לתורה, מעשים טובים ואנשים טובים.

שימו לב למשפט חזק של הרבי מלובביץ', על הצורך להגביר תמיד את ה"אש" הזו שקיימת בתוכנו. כששאלו אותו פעם על מצב רוחו הוא ענה: "אני תמיד שמח, ואני אף פעם לא מרוצה".



בפרשת צו שמתחילה היום, עוד לפני הצלילה לתוך פרטי הקורבנות, מופיעה המילה צו: "וידבר ה' אל משה לאמור: צו את אהרון ואת בניו לאמור...". דורי דורות של פרשנים קופצים על המילה הזו "צו", ושואלים: למה לא כתוב "תצווה"? למה לא כתוב "תגיד"? מסביר רש"י: "צו – לשון זירוז, מייד ולדורות".

We need to be aware of the danger of falling into habitual patterns, and instead try to take actual control of the steering wheel in our hands. To think before everything we do, to devote time and energy in finding flavor and freshness, and to understand that nothing should be taken for granted or minimized. Let's ask ourselves what we can do differently to enhance each moment, especially on Shabbat, but also on the morning ride with the kids to school and throughout the day, starting now.

We need to make every effort to declare: "I'm not a robot" or, in the language of the parasha, to light a "continuous fire" that burns throughout our lives.

פרשת צו מסתיימת "שבעת ימי המילואים" (שבעה ימי עבודה של הכהנים במשכן החדש).

יש מי שמקביל בין שבעת הימים האלה לבין שבעת ימי בריאת העולם, ומדבר על הקוסמוס הגדול מול המשכן הקטן. קטונתי.

נציין רק את הפסוק האחרון בפרשה, שהוא לכאורה פשוט: "ויעש אהרון ובניו את כל הדברים אשר ציווה ה' ביד משה". וכותב על כך רש"י:

"ויעש אהרון ובניו – להגיד שבח, שלא היטו ימין ושמאל".

התורה מקדישה פסוק שלם רק לציין לשבח את מי שמקבל הוראות - ומבצע אותן באופן מדויק, כמו שצריך, בלי לשנות לכאן או לכאן. כנראה זה לא כזה דבר פשוט, בעניינים של קדושה ובכלל בחיים.



"אֵשׁ תְּמִיד תִּקְוֶה עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, לֹא תִכָּבֵה"

הפסוק הזה הוא לא רק הוראה שפרשת השבוע ("צו") מספרת לנו על העבודה סביב המזבח, שם דלקה תמיד אש, אלא עיקרון חיים.



# For the Shabbat Table



**Rabbi Danny Mirvis**

Deputy CEO, World Mizrachi

Rabbi of Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Herzliya Pituach

“**A**nd Hashem spoke to Moshe, as follows, ‘Speak to Aharon and to his sons, as follows, ‘This is the law of the sin offering, in the place where you slaughter the burnt offering you shall slaughter the sin offering before Hashem, it (the sacrifice) is holy of holies’” (Vayikra 6:17-18).

In this week’s Parsha, we continue the laws and details of the sacrifices. Regarding the location of the sin offering, we read that it should be offered “in the place where you slaughter the burnt offering”, which was on the northern side of the altar.

Based on the Yerushalmi (Yevamot 49b), many commentators explain that the sin offering was brought in the exact same location of the burnt offering in order to save the sinner from embarrassment. Anyone seeing a person bringing a sin offering could assume that it was a burnt offering which was brought as a donation and not necessarily as atonement for a transgression. The fact that we are concerned, even for the honour of the sinner, teaches us how important

it is to save people from embarrassment, whoever they are and whatever they may have done.

However, there is a certain weakness in this idea (as pointed out by the Kli Yakar, Vayikra 6:18). Though the sin and burnt offerings may have been offered in the same place, the difference between them remained visible. Firstly, whereas the burnt offering was brought from a male animal, the sin offering was brought from a female. Furthermore, upon seeing that the animal was not entirely burnt, but taken to be eaten in the courtyard, it was clear to any observer that this was not a burnt offering, but came as the result of transgression.

Whilst it is still possible to say that the casual onlooker who did not pay attention to detail could assume this was a burnt offering, I would like to suggest an alternative explanation. The aim was not only to hide the fact that this was a sin offering, for as we have seen, this was not entirely possible. The reason why the sin offering was brought in the same location as the burnt offering was in order that there should not be a place exclusively

for sinners. In order to save sinners the embarrassment of having to bring their offerings in the “sinners’ area”, a joint location was created for the sin and burnt offerings.

Every individual has regrets, makes mistakes and experiences occasional falls. Though there may be room for improvement, it is essential that those who have sinned or erred (who do not pose any threat to others), especially those who wish to correct their ways, can feel at home in our communities.

Though the backgrounds, motivations and procedures may be different, both the burnt offering and the sin offering belong “before Hashem”,

Shabbat Shalom and Chag Kasher veSameach!

Continued from page 4

5. Note that the issue of “*kavod*” threads through Avot’s entire fourth perek. (See 4:4-6,10,12,and 21).

6. Judaism deemphasizes physical strength. Lionel Trilling observed that “Not all cultures develop the idea of the heroic. I once had occasion to observe in connection with Wordsworth that **in the rabbinical literature there is no touch of the heroic idea.** The rabbis, in speaking of virtue, never mention the virtue of courage, which Aristotle regarded as basic to the heroic character (Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*).

7. See Bereishit 4:7 where Hashem highlights self-control as the way to avoid sin. Avot D’Rebbe Natan (Perek 33) and the medrash (Vayikrah Rabbah 1:1, Midrash Tanchuma Vayikra 1) explain Sefer Tehillim’s (Tehillim 103:20) usage of the term “*giborei koach*” as referring to those who fulfill mitzvot. Ester Rabbah sees the difference between *tzaddikim* and *reshaim* in that *tzaddikim* control their emotions while *reshaim* are controlled by them. See also Kuzari (3:5) who defines a *chassid* as the one who is in control of himself and

the Mishneh Berurah (571:2) who speaks about the significance of self-control. See Sha’arei Teshuva (1:10) who sees this as part of Hashem’s intention when he presented man’s basic responsibilities in this world (Bereishit 1:26,28). Chazal (Talmud Bavli, Masechet Yoma 69b) see Hashem Himself models this trait. We refer to him as the “*gibor*” because he holds back from punishing evildoers. See Bamidbar 14:16 which also seems to imply this understanding of Hashem strength.

8. See Talmud Bavli, Masechet Shabbat 25b which expressed a similar sentiment.

9. See Chovat Helevavot (Sha’ar Chamishi, Yichud Hama’aseh 5) who describes controlling oneself as the great war (as opposed to physical wars as smaller ones). See also Or Hachayim Devarim 21:11. Rav Yisrael Salanter famously remarked that changing one *middah* is harder than learning all of Shas.

10. See Rashi (Avot 4:1), who explains the word “*chelko*” this way.

11. Understandably, Ben Zoma refers to the other people we are meant to respect as “*br’iyot* — creations.” It is the fact that all people are Hashem’s creations that makes them worthy of respect. It is also noteworthy that Ben Zoma derives the importance of showing respect to other people from a pasuk that describes showing respect to Hashem. When we show respect to Hashem’s creations, we show respect to Him.

12. We are, of course, familiar with the importance of showing respect to one another from the gemara (Talmud Bavli, Masechet Yevamot 62b) which explains that Rabbi Akiva’s 24,000 talmidim perished because they violated this principle.

13. Rashi (Bereishit 1:26) explains that Hashem taught this lesson by example when he ‘consulted’ with the angels about whether to create man. This idea applies both to Torah scholarship (Talmud Bavli, Masechet Eiruvin 19a and Masechet Berachot 63b) and general knowledge (Orot Hakodesh 1:13).

# Understanding Sacrifice



Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

One of the most difficult elements of the Torah and the way of life it prescribes is the phenomenon of animal sacrifices – for obvious reasons. First, Jews and Judaism have survived without them for almost two thousand years.

Second, virtually all the Prophets were critical of them, not least Jeremiah in the *Haftarah* for *parshat Tzav*.<sup>1</sup> None of the Prophets sought to abolish sacrifices, but they were severely critical of those who offered them while at the same time oppressing or exploiting their fellow human beings. What disturbed them – what disturbed G-d in whose name they spoke – was that evidently some people thought of sacrifices as a kind of bribe: if we make a generous enough gift to G-d then He may overlook our crimes and misdemeanours. This is an idea radically incompatible with Judaism. Then again, along with monarchy, sacrifices were among the least distinctive features of Judaism in ancient times. Every ancient religion in those days, every cult and sect, had its altars and sacrifices.

Finally, it remains remarkable how simply and smoothly the Sages were able to construct substitutes for sacrifice, three in particular: prayer, study, and *tzedakah*. Prayer, particularly *Shacharit*, *Minchah*, and *Musaf*, took the place of the regular offerings. One who studies the laws of sacrifice is as if he had brought a sacrifice. And one who gives to charity brings, as it were, a financial sacrifice, acknowledging that all we have we owe to G-d.

So, though we pray daily for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of sacrifices, the principle of sacrifice itself remains hard to understand. Many theories have been advanced by anthropologists, psychologists, and Bible scholars

as to what the sacrifices represented, but most are based on the questionable assumption that sacrifice is essentially the same act across cultures. This is poor scholarship. Always seek to understand a practice in terms of the distinctive beliefs of the culture in which it takes place. What could sacrifice possibly mean in a religion in which G-d is the creator and owner of all?

What, then, was sacrifice in Judaism and why does it remain important, at least as an idea, even today? The simplest answer – though it does not explain the details of the different kinds of offering – is this: *We love what we are willing to make sacrifices for*. That is why, when they were a nation of farmers and shepherds, the Israelites demonstrated their love of G-d by bringing Him a symbolic gift of their flocks and herds, their grain and fruit; that is, their livelihood. To love is to thank. To love is to want to bring an offering to the Beloved. To love is to give.<sup>2</sup> Sacrifice is the choreography of love.

This is true in many aspects of life. A happily married couple is constantly making sacrifices for one another. Parents make huge sacrifices for their children. People drawn to a calling – to heal the sick, or care for the poor, or fight for justice for the weak against the strong – often sacrifice remunerative careers for the sake of their ideals. In ages of patriotism, people make sacrifices for their country. In strong communities, people make sacrifices for one another when someone is in distress or needs help. Sacrifice is the superglue of relationship. It bonds us to one another. That is why, in the biblical age, sacrifices were so important – not as they were in other faiths but precisely because at the beating heart of Judaism is love: “You shall love the Lord your G-d

with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” In other faiths the driving motive behind sacrifice was fear: fear of the anger and power of the gods. In Judaism it was love.

We see this in the Hebrew word for sacrifice itself: the noun *korban*, and the verb *lehakriv*, which mean “to come, or bring close.” The name of G-d invariably used in connection with the sacrifices is *Hashem*, G-d in His aspect of love and compassion, never *Elokim*, G-d as justice and distance. The word *Elokim* occurs only five times in the whole book of Leviticus, and always in the context of other nations. The word *Hashem* appears 209 times. And as we saw in the previous *parsha*, the very name of the book, *Vayikra*, means to summon in love. Where there is love, there is sacrifice.

Once we realise this, we begin to understand how deeply relevant the concept of sacrifice is in the twenty-first century. The major institutions of the modern world – the liberal democratic state and the free-market economy – were predicated on the model of the *rational actor*, that is, one who acts to maximise the benefits to their self. Hobbes’ account of the social contract was that it is in the interests of each of us to hand over some of our rights to a central power charged with ensuring the rule of law and the defence of the realm. Adam Smith’s insight into the market economy was that if we each act to maximise our own advantage, the result is the growth of the commonwealth. Modern politics and economics were built on the foundation of the rational pursuit of self-interest.

There was nothing wrong with this. It was done for the highest of motives. It was an attempt to create peace in a Europe that had for centuries been ravaged by war. The democratic state and the

market economy were serious attempts to harness the power of self-interest to combat the destructive passions that led to violence.<sup>3</sup> The fact that politics and economics were based on self-interest did not negate the possibility that families and communities were sustained by altruism. It was a good system, not a bad one.

Now, however, after several centuries, the idea of love as sacrifice has grown thin in many areas of life. We see this specifically in relationships. Throughout the West, fewer people are getting married, those who do are getting married later, and almost half of marriages end in divorce. Throughout Europe, indigenous populations are in decline. To have a stable population, a country must have an average birth-rate of 2.1 children per female. In 2015 the average birth-rate throughout the European Union was 1.55. In Spain it was 1.27. Germany has the lowest birth-rate of any country in the world.<sup>4</sup> That is why the population of Europe is today rendered stable only on the basis of unprecedented rates of immigration. *Lose the concept of sacrifice within a society, and sooner or later marriage falters, parenthood declines, and the society slowly ages and dies.*

My late predecessor, Lord Jakobovits, had a lovely way of putting this. The Talmud says that when a man divorces his first wife, “the altar sheds tears” (Gittin 90b). What is the connection between the altar and a marriage? Both, he said, are about sacrifices. Marriages fail when the partners are unwilling to make sacrifices for one another.

Jews and Judaism survived despite the many sacrifices people had to make for it. In the eleventh century Judah Halevi expressed something close to awe at the fact that Jews stayed Jewish despite the fact that “with a word lightly spoken” they could have converted to the majority faith and lived a life of relative ease.<sup>5</sup> Equally possible though is that Judaism survived because of those sacrifices. Where people make sacrifices for their ideals, the ideals stay strong. Sacrifice is an expression of love.

Not all sacrifice is holy. Suicide bombers sacrifice their lives and those of their victims in a way I have argued is sacrilege.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the very existence of animal sacrifice in the Torah may have been a way of preventing people from offering human sacrifice in the form of violence and war.

But the principle of sacrifice remains. It is the gift we bring to what and whom we love.

#### AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE:

- What or who do you make sacrifices for in your life?
- How does this demonstrate your love for them?
- Now we no longer have sacrificial worship, how can we show our love for G-d through sacrifice?

1. Jeremiah 7:22: “When I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice” – a remarkable statement. See Rashi and Radak ad loc., and especially Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, III:32.
2. The verb “to love,” a-h-v, is related to the verbs h-v-h, h-v-v, and y-h-v, all of which have the sense of giving, bringing, or offering.
3. The classic text is A. O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton University Press, 1977).
4. *The Observer*, August 23, 2015.
5. Judah Halevi, *The Kuzari*, 4:23.
6. See Jonathan Sacks, *Not in G-d's Name: Confronting Religious Violence* (New York: Schocken Books, 2017).

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# Hechsher Keilim



**Rabbi Hershel Schachter**

Rosh Yeshivah, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University

“An earthenware vessel in which it [the *korban*] was cooked shall be broken; but if it was cooked in a copper vessel, that should be purged and rinsed with water.” (Vayikra 6:21)

The Shulchan Aruch notes that in a non-leap year, we always *lein* Parshas Tzav on Shabbos Ha-Gadol. This is appropriate because the parsha discusses *hagalas keilim*, the *kashering* (purging) of vessels in which *korbanos* were cooked. We derive the process of *kashering chametz keilim* before Pesach, which was widely practiced until recent times, from these *halachos* in Parshas Tzav.

Kashering is necessary for *keilim* used for cooking the meat of *kodshim* because these *keilim* absorb flavor, which is subject to the laws of *nosar* (a *korban* that was left over). Even though the *korban* was permissible at the time it was cooked, the *bli'ah* (absorbed flavor) inside the *kli* becomes forbidden as *nosar* when the time for eating the *korban* expires (*alos hashachar* for *kodshei kodshim*, or the second day's *shki'ah* for a *Korban Shelamim*). That *bli'ah* must be removed from the *kli* before its next use, so that it is not transferred to other food cooked in the *kli*.

This is also why we must *kasher* a *chametz kli* before Pesach in order to use it on Pesach. While it is true that one does not transgress the prohibition against possessing *chametz* for owning a *kli* which previously absorbed *chametz*, nevertheless, these *bli'os* may be released into any food subsequently cooked in the *kli* and may cause the food to become prohibited on Pesach.

The Gemara in Avodah Zarah (76a) is troubled by a discrepancy between the methods of *kashering* described in our parsha and those in Parshas Matos. After

the battle with Midyan, the Torah specifies two ways in which the *keilim* taken in the war could be *kashered*. If a *kli* had been used for broiling – such as a spit or grill, in which the food was heated on the fire without using a liquid medium – it must undergo *libun*, purging with fire. However, if it had been used with hot liquids to cook nonkosher food – such as a pot, kettle, or urn – it may be *kashered* through *hagalah*, purging in boiling water. The Gemara asks why the Torah mentions only the method of *hagalah* in our parsha, and not that of *libun*.

Abaye answers with the phrase, יגיד עליו ריעו – “one sheds light on the other” (Iyov 36:33). Rather than being contradictory, the *kashering* described in Matos sheds light on our parsha and teaches that when a *korban* is broiled, *libun* is required to remove the absorbed flavor.

The *psak halachah*, however, is in accordance with Rava's answer, that there is a fundamental difference between the two *parshiyos*. In the case of *klei Midyan*, the *kli* absorbed prohibited flavor – איסורא בלע. Therefore, if the *kli* had come into direct contact with the heated food (without intervening liquid), *libun* is required to remove the non-kosher *bli'ah*. However, in *keilim* used for *korbanos*, the *kli* originally absorbed permitted flavor – היתירא בלע. Since the purpose of *kashering* is only to prevent a permissible *bli'ah* from turning into a forbidden *bli'ah* of *nosar* at a later time, *hagalah* is sufficient, even if the *kli* was used for broiling. This explanation is the subject of a *machlokes* between the Rambam and the Ra'avad.

The Rambam writes that all *keilim* used for cooking *kodshim* require *merikah* and *shtifah* (purging and rinsing) – עקב איכילה – immediately after eating the *korban*. At that point, of course, the *bli'ah* of the

*korban* in the walls of the *kli* is still permissible, before it becomes *nosar*. It seems that according to the Rambam, if the *bli'ah* were allowed to become *nosar* before *kashering* the *kli*, *libun* would be required if the *kli* was used for broiling. This is in line with the distinction that Rava made between איסורא בלע and היתירא בלע.

The Ra'avad, however, argues that since *merikah* and *shtifah* is a *mitzvah*, it is only logical that the Torah instruct us to perform this *mitzvah* on a *kli* that is already prohibited, not on a *kli* which is still kosher. Thus, in his view, the process of *merikah* and *shtifah* must apply after the *bli'ah* in the *kli* becomes *nosar*.

The leniency of relying on *hagalah* in a case of איסורא בלע is based on a well-known explanation of the Ran. Even if *hagalah* is performed on a *kli* that was used for broiling, which would ordinarily have required *libun* to be *kashered*, the fact is that most of the *bli'ah* is extracted from the *kli*. The *bli'ah* of *issur* that remains in the walls of the *kli* is merely a *ta'am kalush* (a weak taste).

If the *ta'am* is already forbidden at the time of its absorption, a case of איסורא בלע, or if we are dealing with the *bli'ah* of a *korban* where the *ta'am* has been allowed to become *nosar*, even though *hagalah* converts the *ta'am* into a *ta'am kalush*, that weak *ta'am* is sufficient to retain an *issur*. The *ta'am kalush* continues to prohibit the use of the *kli*. On the other hand, if, as the Rambam maintains, the *kashering* is performed when the *ta'am* is still permissible, the weak *ta'am* that remains after *hagalah* cannot serve as the vehicle upon which an *issur* of *nosar* is initiated. The *issur nosar* cannot be created on a *ta'am kalush*.

● Adapted from Rav Schachter on the Parsha II.

# Future Generations



**Rabbi Yisroel Reisman**  
Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshiva Torah Vodaas

The Parsha begins with a Rashi that has been discussed many times. Rashi on the word “צו”, for which the parsha is named, says “אין צו אלא לשון זרוז מיד ולדורות”, that the language of “צו” includes a need to treat the Mitzvah with seriousness, both immediately and for future generations. Many thoughts have been said about this Rashi, but we can focus specifically on the explanation of Rav Schwab on the aspect of “לדורות”. What does it mean that the Mitzvah requires זריזות for future generations, and what is the lesson that the Torah is trying to teach by using this language?

Rav Schwab answers this question with a deeper understanding of Korbanot in general. One of the themes in Korbanot is that it requires a person to not forget the main idea and instead focus on the details, to not lose the forest for the trees. Meaning, when you bring a Korban, obviously the main part is not the actual animal per se, but rather the thought and intentions of the person bringing the animal. Hashem does not need the actual animal, but rather the devotion and commitment that is associated with bringing the Korban. Thus, one of the very important aspects in Korbanot is to make sure that the person who brings the Korban does not focus too much on the physical Korban, and instead focuses on the desire to serve and please Hashem with the Korban.

We find many examples throughout history where people erred on exactly this point, and are critiqued for bringing a very nice physical Korban but without the proper mindset. Going back to the Hara'ei, Hashem did not accept the Korban of קין, yet He did accept the Korban of חבל. Relating to this same idea, קין thought the idea of a Korban is to give Hashem the physical animal, and therefore he focused a lot on that aspect. However, he didn't give the Korban while devoting himself to Hashem, and for this reason Hashem did not accept his Korban. Ultimately, Hashem says to his “הלא אִם-תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם-לֹא תִיטִיב לְפָתַח חֲסֹאת רִיבֶךָ”. If the Korban is giving “תיטיב”, to please Hashem, then it will be accepted. However, if the Korban is giving “לא תיטיב”, that it lacks the core value of Korbanot, and therefore won't be accepted. Furthermore, in the Haftarah that we read last week for Parshat Zachor, about the story of עמלק and שאול, we find this idea as well. The Pasuk clearly says that more than the physical עולות and זבחים that a person brings, Hashem desires us to listen to His voice, and follow His commandments.

Yet, Rav Schwab says that all of this was true in the times of the first Beit Hamikdash. In fact, we find that חז"ל would often talk about the meaningless Korbanot that the people brought, clearly lacking the right intentions. However, in the times of the second Beit Hamikdash things were different. Rav Schwab explains that

after the הרע for idolatry went away, and Greek philosophy took hold, the world took a much more philosophical approach, moving away from physical actions and instead focusing on thoughts. Suddenly, the reverse phenomena occurred. People now had a much easier time understanding that the main part of the Korban is the thought and intentions that go with, but now lost a desire to focus on the details completely. In contrast to ישיהו who lived in the first Beit Hamikdash, מלאכי complains that people were now bringing very low quality Korbanot, under the assumption that Hashem cares more about the person's intentions than the physical appearance of the Korban.

Rav Schwab explains that it is this exact tension that we must understand, and this is the meaning of the wording of “צו” being זריזות לדורות, for future generations. Obviously, רחמנא ליבא בעי, Hashem wants our hearts, our devotion, and our desire to please Him. However, we must also understand that Hashem wants and cares about us being precise in our performance of Mitzvot. We need to be told, for all future generations, that on top of our proper intentions, the way we perform the Mitzvah is also very important.

● Edited by Yehuda Kaufold and Josh Harris.

# Each Lady Shall Borrow From Her Neighbour



**Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef zt"l**  
Former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel

**T**he Torah states that prior to the Bnei Yisrael's Exodus they were commanded to borrow from their Gentile neighbours silver and gold items and other valuable things, so that on the Bnei Yisrael's Exodus from Egypt "they will then leave with great wealth" (Bereishit 15:14), as Hashem had promised. As it says: "Every woman shall borrow articles of silver and gold, as well as clothing" (Shemot 3:22).

We may ask, how did the Bnei Yisrael actually obtain these silver and gold items, with an apparent attempt to just borrow them and return them after use, when in reality they were intending to permanently keep them?

Even in the days of Alexander the Great (Alexander III of Macedon, 356-326 BC), he claimed on behalf of the Egyptians, their wealth from Bnei Yisrael. They said, "give us the silver and gold that you took". Geviha ben Pesisa replied to them that, "The silver was only a partial payment for all our work during the 200 year [slavery]," as is explained in Gemara Sanhedrin (90b).

Nevertheless, it is still difficult to understand why they had to be economical with the truth, that they were borrowing the items and not as payment.

How could the Bnei Yisrael lie when they said to Paro that they are only going "for three days", and that afterwards they will return to Egypt. Surely the Bnei Yisrael knew that Hashem Yitbarach's intention was to permanently bring them out to Eretz Yisrael and that they will never return to see Egypt again? If so, how was

it permitted for them to lie to the evil Egyptians?

I would like to quote an answer of HaGaon Rebbeinu Yosef Chaim ztz"l (Ben Ish Chayil 1:37b) which begins with a parable. A person broke the law and the king decreed that he be executed. However, their custom was that before he is executed, he has one last wish, that he may ask the king whatever he wants.

When they brought him before the king, the king asked him, "Request what you would like me to grant before your judgment is executed". The accused took the small glass full of wine which was on the king's table and said to the king, "My wish is to drink all this wine whilst sitting on the roof of the king's palace, whilst observing the beautiful scenery which is visible from there. But I'm afraid of all the king's officers in charge of me, because their swords are drawn, and I won't be able to drink this wine in peace. Therefore, I request from the king that he will swear an oath that he will not kill me until I have drunk all the wine in this cup in my own time."

The king swore as he had requested. The king ordered to take him to the palace roof with the cup in his hand, so that he may drink the wine in peace and tranquility. And so the officers carried out the king's command. They took him to the palace roof and as he was ascending the stairs, he made out as if he had tripped and fell. And so the glass fell to the ground and smashed with all the wine spilling.

They took him back to the king to decide what to do since the wine had been

spilled. They wanted to bring another bottle of wine. However, the accused said, "Bring me the wine that was in the cup and I will drink it." And he further said to the king, "My master the king, now I see that you will have to exonerate me from this decree of death, since you swore that you will not execute me until I drink all the wine in the cup, and now the wine is no longer in existence, how may you keep your oath?" The king issued a pardon and he was freed in peace.

The analogy is that Hashem, who sees until the end of time, saw that the Bnei Yisrael will never return to Egypt to be enslaved, because after their exodus from Egypt Paro and all his army will pursue them and will drown in the Reed Sea, as a punishment for what they had done to Bnei Yisrael. They drowned their children in the Nile, as our Chachamim explain, "in the pot that they cooked they too were stewed" (Gemara Sotah 11a). Since the Egyptians were destroyed from the face of the earth, the Bnei Yisrael had no one to return their silver and gold items to them. Similarly, they had nowhere to return to after their three days in the wilderness, since all of the Egyptians were to perish in the Reed Sea. And this is akin to the smashed glass and spilt wine.

# Don't "Sacrifice" the Beauty and Significance of Korbanot



**Rabbi Shalom Rosner**  
Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh

The beginning of Sefer Vayikra deals with the intricacies of *korbanot*. Parshat Tzav begins with the directive: “*Tzav et Aharon v’et banav le’mor*” – Hashem commands Moshe to direct Aharon and his sons with respect to the *Korban Olah*.

The Chafetz Chaim cites a midrash that deduces from the word “*le’mor*” – that Bnei Yisrael are to engage in reading the chapter of the *Olah*, irrespective of whether they are partaking in the sacrifice of a *Korban Olah*. The Chafetz Chaim on several occasions stressed the importance of understanding the *Korbanot* – so that when the third *Beit Hamikdash* is built we will be able to conduct the services as required.

Today although we are unable to actually sacrifice *korbanot*, we are able to engage in the “*kriya*” – the recitation of the *parshiyot of Korbanot* each morning. Unfortunately, in many shuls davening begins with *Rabbi Yishmael* or *Mizmor Shir*. One should make an effort to recite the *Korbanot* beforehand.

When reviewing these *parshiyot* we can derive inspirational messages, even if it is *al derech drush*. For example, in *Parshat Tzav* we are informed of the *terumat hadeshen* – the act the *kohen* would perform first thing each morning. He would clear the ashes from the previous day’s sacrifices from the Altar. Then, the *kohen*



**Judaism does not only have a present – it is based on the past.**

would perform *hotzaat hadeshen*, removing the ashes from the *Beit HaMikdash*. In essence, the commandment was to “take out the trash.” Wouldn’t it have been more appropriate for someone else to clean off yesterday’s ashes in preparation for the sacrifice the *kohen* would offer today? Isn’t it somewhat demeaning?

Rabbi Shimshon Refael Hirsch explains, the *terumat hadeshen* signifies that every day builds on the preceding day rather than beginning with a totally new slate. A young *kohen* excited to begin his work in the *Beit HaMikdash* may consider doing things differently, improving on how things had been done in the past. His intention may be proper: to try to make the experience even more special. Yet, the very act of having the *kohen* initiate his daily service by removing yesterday’s ashes is to symbolize that today’s *avoda* is connected to yesterday’s. We preserve the tradition and remove the ashes to uncover yesterday’s flame, without igniting a completely new flame. Judaism does not only

have a present – it is based on the past. The Jewish grandchild carries on the very same mission of his first ancestors. Our personal and national past, upon which today is built, is symbolized by the *terumat hadeshen*.

Rav Meir Shapiro offers an alternative explanation. Inside every Jew is a spark of the fire of Godliness that is never extinguished. Like the *Kohen*, it is the task of leaders, teachers, parents, and anyone with a position of influence to ignite that spark, to bring it out every morning, to inspire, and to enlighten. To uncover the spark in each and every individual.

The *terumat hadeshen* is but one example where we can derive insightful thoughts from different aspects of the *avoda*. To connect our history to our future. To uncover the hidden flame within each individual. May we be able to decipher the beautiful gems that are found within the *parshiyot of the Korbanot*.

# The Emergence of Community



**Michal Horowitz**  
Judaic Studies Teacher

**A**t the cusp of our freedom, while still in the land of Egypt, Hashem commanded the Israelites regarding the Korban Pesach. What is the significance of this korban, which represents our freedom as a nation reborn, and through which we were redeemed from slavery?

R' Soloveitchik zt'l writes: "Interestingly, the symbol of redemption in the Torah is the korban Pesach, which is a very strange sacrifice. The concept of chaburah, community, is completely nonexistent in regard to other offerings... Pesach has been linked by the Torah with chaburah to such an extent that one sage is of the opinion that an individual cannot offer the korban Pesach; only a group may do so (Pesachim 91a). The Pesach sacrifice differs from all other sacrifices because it is a symbol of chesed, freedom. The Torah calls the korban Pesach 'a lamb for each parental home, a lamb for each household' because freedom expresses itself in the realm of bayis, of community, of being together. Bayis is a new category which was revealed to the Jews as they gained their freedom."

R' S.R. Hirsch (Shemos 1:1) writes that there would come a time when the nation, oppressed and tortured by Pharaoh, would lie on the ground, seemingly easy prey for the vultures of history. But then, at G-d's call, the nation would rise up again to eternal life. At that time, G-d would begin the up-building of his people not from the "rooftop" - not from the leadership or the highest echelon - but from the rocklike foundation of the home - seh l'bayis avos, seh la'bayis - namely, from family ties, the mutual bonds that unite parents and their children... This is the heart and soul of the family: Each son builds his own home as a branch of his parents' home, and every

father lives on in his children and grandchildren. Parents with their children, and children with their parents, knit together and united forever - this is the root of Israel's eternal flowering. Herein lies the secret of the eternity of the Jewish people.

R' Soloveitchik continues: "The halacha coined the term chaburah with reference to the group gathering together for this ceremonial offering. A new fellowship was formed around the korban Pesach; a new community sprang into existence. Being together, living with each other, sharing something many possess in common was made possible by the ceremony of the korban Pesach.

"The slave suddenly realizes that the little he has saved up for himself, a single lamb, is too much for him. The slave spontaneously does something he would never have believed he was capable of doing: he knocks on the door of his neighbor, whom he had never noticed, inviting him to share the lamb with him and eat together. No wonder our Seder commences with the declaration, Ha lachma anya, this is the bread of poverty.

"The ceremony of the Passover meal, centered around the korban Pesach, aims at the emergence of the new chessed community - for chessed is the characteristic mark of the free man. The bondsman is not spiritually capable of joining the chessed community; he is too much concerned with himself, too insecure, too fearful regarding the morrow, too humiliated to think of someone else, too frightened and too meek. The birth of the chessed community - of a nation within which people unite, give things away, care for each other, share what they possess - is symbolized by the Korban Pesach. G-d did not need the Korban Pesach; He had no interest in the sacrifice. He simply wanted

the people - slaves who had just come out of the house of bondage - to emerge from their isolation and insane self-centeredness into the chessed community, where the little that man has is too much for himself" (Chumash Masores HaRav, Shemos, p.86-87).

As so, as we sit around the Seder table, we place the roasted bone on our Seder plate. While it is a paltry and sad reminder of all that we lost when the Batei Mikdash were destroyed, it is, nevertheless, a glorious reminder of the people that we are, the ideals that we live by, the community we have built and share, and the essence of our existence.

A lamb for each household; a lamb for the father's house; a lamb for each man and his neighbor who is close to his house.

My brother told me the following humorous, true story:

A certain family in New Jersey was making a bar mitzvah and needed homes to put up their guests. Their neighbors would be away that Shabbos, and they offered the ba'al ha'simcha the use of their home. A family was put up in the neighbors home.

On Shabbos, somehow or another, the alarm in the home went off. The police showed up. They inquired of those staying in the home if this was their residence. They answered that it was not. They asked if they knew the pass code for the alarm; they answered that they did not. They asked if they knew the names of the family who lived in this house...they did not! Who are you, and what are you doing in this home, the astonished police officers asked...?!

With the command to offer the Korban Pesach, as we stood poised to march

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# “Da’yenu”



**Rabbi Menachem Leibtag**

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“**D**ayenu” is a very simple, yet beautiful poem - containing fifteen stanzas describing acts of G-d’s kindness - each stanza stating that it would have been ‘enough’ had G-d only helped us in one way.

However, some of those statements appear very strange, for they include that it ‘would have been enough had we not received the Torah’, which simply doesn’t make sense!

In the Haggadah, “dayenu” does not ‘stand alone’. Rather, we recite (or sing) “dayenu” towards the conclusion of Maggid; after we tell the story of the Exodus, but before we sing the Hallel.

Following the guidelines of the Mishna, in Maggid we tell the story of the Exodus by quoting (and then elaborating upon) the psukim of “arami oved avi” (see Devarim 26:5-8). But that very same Mishna also instructs us to begin the story with a derogatory comment, and conclude it with praise.

Taking this Mishna into consideration, we find that “dayenu” is recited in Maggid - precisely when we finish telling the story of the Exodus (with the discussion of the Plagues) - and right at the spot where we are supposed to begin our “shevach” [praise].

Therefore, “dayenu” should be understood as a poem that was written as a form of praise, to conform with the guidelines set by the Mishna. This consideration will allow us to explain its full meaning - in a very simple manner:

Within this context, the refrain of “dayenu” has an implicit suffix. In other words, - “dayenu” should not be translated simply as ‘it would have been

enough’; rather, “dayenu” means **‘it would have been enough - to PRAISE G-d**, i.e. to say Hallel - even if G-d had only taken us out of Egypt, or only if He had split the Sea, etc.

In this manner, the poem poetically summarizes each significant stage of redemption, from the time of the Exodus until Am Yisrael’s conquest of the Land - stating that each single act of G-d’s kindness in that process obligates us to praise Him: e.g.

- Had He only taken us out of Egypt and not punished the Egyptians, **it would have been reason enough** to say Hallel

- Had He split the sea, but not given us the ‘manna’, that alone **would have been reason** enough to say Hallel...

... And so on.

With this background, the next paragraph of that poem makes perfect sense:

“al achat kama vekhama,” - How much more so is it proper to thank G-d for performing ALL these acts of kindness, as He took us out of Egypt, and punished them, and split the sea, and gave us the manna etc.

“Dayenu” relates a total of fifteen acts of divine kindness, each act alone worthy of praise - even more so we must praise G-d, for He had performed all of them!

From this perspective, “dayenu” serves a double purpose. First and foremost, it concludes the story with “shevach” [praise]. and qualifies the Hallel that we are about to sing. However, it could also be understood as a continuation of the story of the Exodus. Let’s explain why and how:

Recall that the last “drasha” [elaboration] on the psukim of “arami oved avi” led into a lengthy discussion of the Ten Plagues. To

fulfill our obligation at the Seder ‘to tell the story’, we could (and do) finish right here. But the poem of “dayenu” actually continues that story, picking up from the Ten Plagues [“asa bahem shfatim” refers to the Plagues], and continuing through all the significant events in the desert until our arrival in the Land of Israel. This is also congruent with the last pasuk of “arami oved avi”, that includes arriving in Israel, which we don’t elaborate upon in our version of Maggid, even though according to the Mishna it appears that we really should!

In this manner, “dayenu” is both “shevach” [praise] and “sippur” [story] - at the same time!

According to our explanation thus far, “dayenu” sets the stage for Hallel, as we will now praise G-d [by singing Hallel] not only in gratitude for taking us out of Egypt, but also in appreciation for each significant stage of the redemptive process. We thank G-d not only for the Exodus, but also for the ‘manna’, for shabbat, for coming close to Har Sinai, for the Torah, for the Land of Israel..., and finally for the building of the Bet HaMikdash.

From a certain perspective, this poem may allude to a very profound ‘hashkafa’ [outlook on life], and a message that is very applicable to our own generation.

Today, there are those who focus at the Seder only on the first stanza of “dayenu,” viewing ‘freedom from slavery’ as the final goal, and hence the ultimate goal of redemption. For them, this first stanza of “dayenu” is ‘enough’ - and to them, that is the entire meaning of Passover - a holiday of Freedom.

Others focus only upon the last stanza, that without the entire land of Israel in our possession, and without the

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# Our Secret Weapon



**Rabbi Eli Mansour**

Edmond J Safra Synagogue, Brooklyn

**T**he Torah in the beginning of Parashat Sav describes the Kohen wearing “Mido Bad” – a fitted linen garment, referring to the special priestly vestments worn by the Kohanim. The Ba’al Haturim (Rabbenu Yaakov Ben Asher, Germany-Spain, 1269-1343) observes that this marks one of only two instances in the entire Tanach where we find the word “Mido.” The other is in a description of the military garb worn by King David’s general, Yoab. This unusual term thus points to a connection of sorts between these two contexts – the priestly vestments worn by the Kohen, and a general’s uniform. The Ba’al Haturim explains that when the Kohen donned his special garments to serve in the Bet Hamikdash, he was as powerful as a mighty general leading his troops to battle.

A classic example of this notion taught by the Ba’al Haturim is the famous story told of Alexander the Great, who led his army toward Jerusalem with the intention of conquering it. Shimon Ha’sadik, the saintly Kohen Gadol at the time, donned his special priestly garments and went outside Jerusalem to greet the mighty general. As soon as Alexander saw Shimon

Ha’sadik, he stopped, dismounted from his horse, and prostrated before the high priest.

The general’s men were astonished. Why, they wondered, did Alexander, the mightiest warrior on the face of the earth, who had set his sights upon capturing Jerusalem, show such awe and deference to the Jewish leader?

Alexander explained to them that every time he waged war, he saw the image of this man – Shimon Ha’sadik – in front of him on the battlefield. Until that day, he never knew who this man was, and why he appeared to him during battle. Now he understood. It was the merit of this great Sadik, Shimon the Kohen Gadol, that had brought him the unprecedented success he enjoyed. He owed everything to Shimon Ha’sadik, the pious Kohen garbed in the special priestly attire serving in the Bet Ha’mikdash.

Indeed, as the Ba’al Haturim commented, the garments of the Kohen Gadol have extraordinary power and are a major weapon in our struggles against our foes.

Our Sages teach us that although we cannot offer sacrifices or perform the other Misvot of the Bet Ha’mikdash, we can nevertheless be considered as having performed this service through our study of the relevant laws. When we study about the Korbanot, for example, we are considered as though we actually offered the sacrifices upon the altar. And thus when we study the Parashiyot of the Book of Vayikra which deal with the sacrifices and other subjects related to the Bet Ha’mikdash, we gain access to their extraordinary power. These topics might seem esoteric, irrelevant and uninspiring, but there are immensely valuable.

During these dangerous times we live in, when the Jewish people face mounting threats on several different fronts, this study is an effective weapon that we must utilize. By delving into the study of the service of the Bet Ha’mikdash, we erect strong defenses against the enemies that threaten us, and help ensure the protection and safety of the Jewish people around the world.

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re-building of the bet-ha’Mikdash, the entire redemptive process is meaningless. In their eyes, Hallel should only be sung when the entire redemption process is complete, and Am Yisrael reaches its final goal.

The beautiful poem of “dayenu” seems to disagree with both approaches. Instead, each significant stage in the process of redemption deserves our recognition and

requires that we praise G-d for it, even though it is ‘not enough’!

“Ge’ulat Yisra’el” – the redemption of Israel – even in our time, is a process which is comprised of many stages. Every significant step in this process, be it simply sovereignty, or partial borders, or victory in battle; or freedom to study Torah, even without complete redemption, requires our gratitude and praise to Hashem.

For each stage in that process, it is incumbent upon Am Yisrael to recognize that stage and thank Hashem accordingly, while at the same time recognizing that many more stages remain yet unfulfilled – and reminding ourselves of how we need act – to be deserving of that next stage.

# The Challenge of Finding our Chometz



**Rabbi Moshe Weinberger**  
Congregation Aish Kodesh, Woodmere

**R**av Moshe Isserles, the Rama, writes (Orach Chaim 432:2) that “it is customary to place pieces of chometz somewhere where the searcher will find them in order that his blessing not be in vain, although if this was not done, it does not prevent him [from making the blessing], because every person’s intention [in making the blessing] is to destroy [the chometz] if he finds any.” In other words, the children should not hide the pieces of chometz so well that the father will be unable to find them. They should place the pieces of chometz in places where their father will be able to find them easily. The Mishna Berura there (also citing the Taz) explains that the Rama is not actually concerned about the issue of making a blessing in vain because the mitzva is to search for the chametz, and it means nothing if he does not find any.

The Shaar Hatziyun there quotes the Pischei Teshuva in the name of the Emek Halacha that “nowadays, when the custom is to clean the house so well before the night of the fourteenth that there is no chance of finding chometz during the search, this custom has the status of an obligation.” In other words, today, we clean our houses so well that the entire house has the status of a place where chometz is never brought, such that one is completely exempt from searching for chometz in his own house and is therefore only permitted to make the blessing if he places the pieces of chometz in the house before searching.

Rav Elyashiv accepts this reasoning and maintains that if one made the

blessing and then conducted the search for chometz without first hiding pieces of chometz, his blessing was in vain. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, however, holds (Halichos Shlomo) that it would not be a blessing in vain because he still had an obligation to perform the search “in order to discern very well whether they truly cleaned every place and whether it did not happen that some chometz was not brought back in, so his blessing was proper.” According to Rav Shlomo Zalman, even where the house was cleaned very well in advance, it was still the search for the chometz that gave the house its status of a searched house.

The practical outcome, *בפקא מינא*, of this dispute is that according to Rav Elyashiv, the search is only performed for the sake of the pieces of chometz one hides in the house, such that after those pieces are found, there is no need to continue searching, as the tzadikim were accustomed to doing over the generations. According to him, the search is not truly an all-out search for the chometz and the blessing one says over the search is really just over the gathering of the ten pieces and their removal from the house. The blessing “על בעור חמץ,” “over the destruction of the chometz,” is really using the word “בעור” to mean “remove,” as in the pasuk (Devarim 26:13) “בערתי הקדש מן הבית,” “I have removed (‘בערתי’) the holy items from the house.” The completion of this process is the burning of the chometz the next morning.

We all know that there is something deeper going on as well with these little pieces of bread. The halachic authorities

all quote the Arizal that there are reasons according to kabbalah to place ten pieces of bread. Wherever the Arizal says that there should be ten of something, we understand that this corresponds to the ten sefiros, the ten types of forces in the world and the ten channels through which everything in this world exists. This means that these ten little pieces of chometz have some connection to all of reality.

According to the Zohar Hakadosh (Teruma), Hashem created the evil inclination within a person to attempt to tempt him (“לפתות”), which has the same root as pieces, “פתיתים”). The Zohar analogizes this to a king who wants to test whether his son truly loves him. He therefore hires someone to tempt his son to do something against his will. The king’s intent in sending this person to tempt his son is that the son should not succumb to the difficult test. Rather, the purpose is to strengthen the love and the connection between him and his son. Therefore, when the son overcomes the test and does not allow himself to transgress his father’s will by giving in when he is tested, this causes his father, the king, to rejoice immensely.

We can now understand the halacha that one is supposed to place the pieces of chometz (the “פתיתים,” which can also mean “temptations,” פתויים) somewhere where the person can easily find them. Hashem places all sorts of “chometz” in our lives, things that make it more difficult to learn Torah, to do mitzvos, and to maintain the holiness of our minds. The obstacles to our service of G-d are not coincidental. They were placed there

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# “Pour Out Your Fury”



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**A**s we open the door to welcome Elijah, we read a passage which at the surface seems difficult to digest:

*“Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know you, and upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name, for they have devoured Jacob [the Jews] and destroyed his home. Pour out Your wrath on them; may Your blazing anger overtake them. Pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under the heavens of the Lord.”*

In truth, it is one of the noblest expressions of the spiritual majesty of the Jewish people and our faith. The passage itself is a combination of three verses from the Bible (Psalms 79:6-7; Psalms 69:25; and Lamentations 3:66). It was compiled and added to the Haggadah during the Middle Ages as a response to the massacres of the Crusades (beginning in 1096), and to the persecution of the Jews during the time of Easter, which usually coincides with Passover. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were slaughtered in the name of religion and “truth.” Yet how did the Jews respond to it? They asked G-d at the night of their freedom that He avenge their innocent blood for them, so that they can immerse themselves in a life of love and compassion, without the need to resort to violence in order to protect innocent life.

While some nations and religions have glorified (and continue to glorify) violence, Judaism recognized the need, at times, for moral violence to combat immoral violence. “If someone comes to kill you,” says the Talmud, “kill him first.” If you see someone beating another person to death it is your responsibility to stop the killer by any means. If you see a person about to launch a rocket at a school of children, the moral thing to do is strike the

monster. Yet, despite all of this, violence has never become part of our identity and mandate. We pray for the day, when G-d will release His wrath and fury, when He will eliminate people who are dedicated to murder and violence, and will allow us to be immersed only in positive pursuits.

This notion is also expressed in the custom that when we recall the ten plagues, we spill wine from our cups into a broken bowl. Why?

Explains Don Yitzchak Abarbenel (in Zevach Pesach), the Finance Minister of Spain who in 1492 left his country together with hundreds of thousands of expelled Jews: Wine symbolizes joy, and pouring some wine out of the cup demonstrates that our rejoicing is imperfect, because other people suffered in the process of our liberation. True, the Egyptians did barbaric things and they deserved to be punished, yet we still are pained by the fact that there is still so much evil in the world that we have to combat. We pray for the day when the inner spark of G-d in every creature will come to the fore and the world will be as one.



We conclude the seder with the final and very strange step of “Nirtzah:” We acknowledge that G-d has accepted our Passover service.

This is enigmatic. All the other 14 steps of the seder connote an action of some sort: Kiddush, washing hands, dipping a vegetable, breaking the matzah, saying the haggadah, etc. What is the significance of this 15th step where we do nothing, but simply believe that G-d was pleased with our seder?

In truth, this is the climax of the seder.

One of our false ego's favorite lines is: “You are not good enough.”

You commit to learning Torah twenty minutes a day, and your false ego comes and says: only twenty minutes? What can you learn already in twenty minutes?

You spend fifteen dollars and buy your wife flowers; your ego says: that's all you spend on your wife?!

You gave someone collecting money for charity ten dollars, afterwards your ego says: you are not good enough, why didn't you give him twenty dollars?

Any project we do, there is that little voice inside that comes and says: “Not good enough.”

Remember this rule: This is the voice of the yetzer hara, of the negative inclination, of the false ego.

Of course we should always improve, and there is always room for improvement. But this isn't the intention of our ego. It has one intention—to make us feel dejected and take the life out of life. For how does it make you feel when you think “not enough”? Does it inspire you or paralyze you? Does it motivate you or crush you? It makes you a smaller person, it makes you think less of yourself; it makes you think that your actions are worthless. It drains you from your vitality and zest. It ultimately causes you to do less, not more.

It has nothing to do with the truth or with G-d; it is a creation of a false ego.

The Jewish way must be different. Once something was done, we say: I have done the best I could have done in the moment. I trust that my sincerity will be seen.

# Shabbos HaGadol: Present Tense



**Rabbi Judah Mischel**

Executive Director, Camp HASC; Mashpia, OU-NCSY

In a small village near the town of Kolbisov there lived a simple Jew who made his living from the *kretchma*, the little inn that he rented from the local poritz. Down on his luck, the Yid was unable to make his monthly payments, and the poritz, a brutal and unforgiving landlord, resorted to violence to extract the debt. Try as he may, the Yid just couldn't come up with the money he owed. After missing the payment deadline, a bunch of goons showed up at his door on Shabbos morning just days before Pesach to 'send a message' to the poor fellow. As the Yid stood at a safe distance, they tore apart the humble building, smashed the modest possessions and dumped all his Shabbos food on the ground. "If you don't pay up by tonight," they hissed, "we'll do the same stuff to you."

The Yid was extremely dismayed and ran to the Beis Medrash, now his only refuge in the world. Exhausted, he squeezed into a back corner as it was packed with congregants listening to the Shabbos haGadol drasha of the Rav of Kolbisov, the *Oheiv Yisrael*, Rebbe Avraham Yehoshua Heschel.

"There are two kinds of brachos addressing the redemption of Am Yisrael," intoned the Rebbe. "One of them we say before the *Amidah*. It is in the past tense, praising the *Ga'al Yisrael*, 'Hashem, Who redeemed Israel'. The other *brachah* is part of the *Amidah* itself, composed in present tense: *Go'el Yisrael*, 'He Who redeems Israel'. The first *bracha* is a reference to the past *geulah* from Mitzrayim. The second *brachah*, however, is in the present tense, because it refers to the redemption that is going on *right now*, right here, in this very moment, for every single one of us.... And even if there's a Yid who can't pay his rent, and the *poritz* is breathing down his neck threatening him, and his house

was torn apart and he has not a kopek to begin paying his debts — *Go'el Yisrael!* The *Ribbono Shel Olam* is redeeming him *right now* from all of his *tzaros!* Even this Yid is going out of exile, *at this very moment!*"

No one present could have recognized the *hashgacha pratis* of the Rebbe's choice of words except our innkeeper, who was certain that this was Hashem speaking through the Rebbe directly to him. This Divine intervention filled him with hope and joy, and he ran out of shul dancing wildly and shouting, "The Rebbe says *Go'el Yisrael*, He Who redeems Israel *right now!* *Go'el Yisrael!* Hashem is saving even me — at this very moment!"

As he was dancing his way down the street toward his home, he bumped right into the *poritz*, who was out for a walk with his wife. "Ugh," he grimaced toward his wife, "this is the dirty Jew we roughed up today, he owes us a ton of money." But as the *poritz* watched him dancing away, laughing and shouting Hebrew phrases, his wife frowned and clucked disapprovingly at him. "No. It looks like the poor guy is having a breakdown. He must have cracked from all your pressure and your little band of low-life thugs. Have mercy on this *zhid*, he is so pitiful...."

"Okay, Okay," demurred the *poritz*, rolling his eyes. "Jew! Come back over here. I have something to tell you." The Yid still couldn't keep his explosive joy completely under wraps but he turned around and came back. The *poritz* thought for a second and said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll speak with my brother who owns the distillery in Kolbisov. They'll give you some whiskey on credit. You could sell it; maybe your luck will change, and with the profit, you can pay off the debt you owe me."

Indeed, within the few days between Shabbos and Erev Pesach, the Yid sold so much whiskey that he was able not only to pay the rent he owed to the *poritz*, but to purchase all his Yom Tov needs and even help some of his struggling neighbors as well.

On Erev Pesach, still with a dance in his step, the Yid went to Reb Avraham Yehoshua to tell him the good news. But before he could speak, the Rebbe smiled and said, "May the *Go'el Yisrael*, One Who is redeeming Israel right now bless you with a joyous *Zeman Ge'ulaseinu*, Season of Our *Ge'ulah!*"

■ ■ ■

כל ברכאן דלעילא ותתא ביומא דשביעאה תליין

"All of the blessings above and below are dependent upon the Seventh Day."

(*Zohar*, *Yisro*)

Pesach draws its sanctity from the Shabbos before Pesach, *Shabbos haGadol*. This day is called "the Great Shabbos" because it contains within it the holiness of Shabbos as well as the sanctity of Pesach. The blessings of Shabbos haGadol and the days preceding Yom Tov give us another chance to believe in Hashem's salvation and to begin again. With *emunah* we can become filled with joy, even if our external circumstances are excruciatingly difficult. For Hashem is certainly the *Go'el Yisrael*, redeeming even us, in the present tense, *at this very moment!*

*Good Shabbos and Chag Kosher v'same'ach!*

# The Power of Matzah

## Mrs. Shira Smiles

International lecturer and curriculum developer

One of the most special moments of the Jewish calendar year is the Pesach seder. A highlight of the seder is the matzah. We know that matzah represents many significant truths and holds deep meaning. What can we think about as we eat it?

Now that we no longer have the Beit Hamikdash, there is one food that we still have a Torah obligation to eat – matzah. Our first and primary thought should be to fulfill the Torah command, “Seven days you shall eat matzot...” (Shemot 12;15) and approach the mitzvah with joy and elation.

The Novominsker Rebbe points out that the symbolism of the matzah shifts during the seder. At the beginning of the seder we refer to the matzah as “lechem oni”, the bread of affliction. At first, we focus on the matzah as the food that Jews ate as slaves in Egypt. We look at the uncovered matzah as a sign of our servitude. As the seder progresses, we read the passage of Rabban Gamliel, at which point we shift our viewpoint, and the matzah becomes the symbol of freedom. This shift reflects how we each become transformed through the evening as we move from slavery to redemption.



**Matzah gives us the capacity to push away our unhealthy desires and be healed from its influences.**

Rav Kluger in Bni Bechori Yisrael explains that when the Jews ate their matzah it tasted like the manna that fell in the desert. This food, which was the first food they ate as a redeemed people, not only nourished them physically, but it also nourished them spiritually. Am Yisrael felt the tremendous love of Hashem enveloping them. This feeling is akin to that of a nursing infant who completely relies on its mother for sustenance and nurturing. When we eat the matzah, we can sense and experience this feeling of love and complete reliance on Hashem.

Rav Meizlish in Sichot B'avodat Hashem notes the three different meanings connected with the word matzah that convey its extraordinary power. The first is the word ‘motzetz’, to suck out. Matzah can extract the negativity found within us and leave us pure. Matzah is also related to the

word ‘metzit’, to peer. Eating the matzah allows us greater insight into the Torah. Hence, the Tiferet Shlomo finds a deeper explanation for the Torah commandment to eat matzah. It enables one to see into the depths of Torah. The third is ‘masa’ in the sense of ‘masa umerivah’, our campaign against the yetzer hara. Matzah gives us the capacity to push away our unhealthy desires and be healed from its influences.

The moments when performing a mitzvah have the capacity to awaken Divine favor and are an opportune time to daven. As we eat matzah - ‘lechem oni’, Rav Meizlish teaches, it is a time that Hashem is ‘oneh’, responds to our tefillot. Quoting the Yismach Yisrael, he explains that all tefillot said throughout the year that did not ascend to the kisei hakavod, ascend in these moments while eating the matzot mitzvah. Thus, matzah provides us with this singular opportunity to propel us higher on this exalted night.

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from slavery to freedom, we were taught what it means to be a free Jew. We live, not only for ourselves, but for our homes, our fathers house, for our neighbors and

friends, for those who live near and those who live far. The truest mark of our freedom is the ability to reach outward, to knock on the door of another, to invite

him to our table, as, finally free, we are able to say: We have too much for ourselves, please join us, let's share.

# 3 Tips to Transform the Pesach Cleaning



**Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi**  
Popular Torah teacher and author

## 1. Make a choice.

As much as we don't like to admit it, we humans keep putting ourselves into boxes all the time. "I'm not the type who likes to clean," "I'm not the type who likes to organize," "That image of the woman with the rag in one hand and detergent in the other is not me."

Well, here's the good news and the bad news: We are what we want to be. Deep down, every woman takes pleasure in making her home sparkle. Every woman loves the smell of a freshly scrubbed down room. In fact, the Gemara tells us that our name in itself, nekeivah, contains the word nekiah, clean. We love bringing out the beauty in everything. Yes, things get in the way. Life is hectic. There's stuff to do. But as women, it's our choice to box ourselves in and say, "It's not me," or to find our feminine essence that says, "Yes! Taking care of this house is my priority!"

## 2. Make it fun.

You know how you talk to your child before you take her for shots and suddenly your kid is looking forward to getting the pinch? We mothers could get really creative when we want to cheer up our kids. Even if you see Pesach cleaning with the fright that your kid sees the syringe, you can be that head counselor for yourself.

No one knows what needs to be done to make your experience fun like you do. Is it music? A new detergent? A countdown? A prize at the end? We especially love getting something new. Our essence, after all, is one of renewal. Every month, we're like a newborn baby, starting the cycle all over again. Even a new pair of shoes is enough for us to feel that newness. Does new cleaning help sound exciting to you? Go for it!

## 3. Dayeinu!

One of my favorite parts of the Haggadah is dayeinu, which talks about the many wonders Hashem performed for our nation. We sing, "If you would have taken us out of Mitzrayim, but you wouldn't split the sea for us... Dayeinu, it would be enough." Seriously? How would leaving Egypt and staying stuck between the sea and a crowd of fuming Egyptians benefit us? Still, it would be enough because the miracle of leaving Mitzrayim was a kindness in its own right, one that deserves its recognition.

When you plan what your home will look like on leil haseder, you have one vision in your head. You see the blinding walls, the perfectly organized closets, the soup bubbling on the stove. But what happens if one of these things don't happen? What happens if you don't get to clean the top shelf in Moishy's room? What happens if you don't get to reorganize the attic? Don't give up on wanting to do, but be kind enough to tell yourself, "Dayeinu! This is enough."

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"שימצאם הבדוק," so that one who tries will be able to find them and get rid of them. Hashem is not trying to trick us or cause us to fail. He knows us and knows exactly what challenges we need in order to bring out our love for Hashem. Just like the children should not hide the chometz so well that the one who is searching should fail

to find it, so too Hashem places chometz in our lives which we can overcome, but which challenges us and makes us work and toil to achieve whatever we accomplish in Yiddishkeit.

May it be Hashem's will that we find the chometz in our lives and destroy it

and that the process of doing so should make Hashem's Torah and mitzvos even sweeter. Then all of the maror will become sweet and may we merit to return לשנה בירושלים, next year in Yerushalayim בגאולה שלמה ואמיתית במהרה בימינו אמן.

# Hebrew Language in the Parsha



**David Curwin**

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In Parashat Tzav, the word מְלוּאִים appears frequently.<sup>1</sup> We also find it at the end of Sefer Shemot.<sup>2</sup> However, its use in describing the construction and service in the mishkan seems very different from its modern meaning – “army reserves.” What, if anything, is the connection?

The word מְלוּאִים is the gerund form of the root מלא, meaning “to fill” or “to be full”, and is only found in the plural. It appears in two separate contexts. In Sefer Shemot it describes the settings of the stones in the ephod and the breastpiece: אֲבָנֵי הַמְּלֵאִים. Daat Mikra, following Rashi (on Shemot 25:7), says that these gems fill the grooves in the gold (or other material), so they are literally “filling stones”. Ramban disagrees, and following Onkelos, focuses on a different sense of the root מלא – “full, complete, perfect”. He writes:

“But the sense of the word מְלוּאִים is that the stones be whole as they were created, and that they should not be hewn stones

which were cut from a large quarry or from anything which has been chipped off...”

The other use of מְלוּאִים in the Torah is for the initiation, inauguration, or consecration of the kohanim as found in our parasha (as well as some of the verses in Sefer Shemot). For example, in Vayikra 8:22 we read about the אֵיל הַמְּלֵאִים – “ram of ordination.” According to some scholars, the “ordination” refers to the filing of the hands, a symbol of taking office.

We see the connection between filling the hands and מְלוּאִים a few verses later:

... עַד יוֹם מְלֵאת יָמֵי מְלֵאִיכֶם כִּי שִׁבַּעַת יָמִים יִמְלֵא אֶת-יְדֵיכֶם:

“... until the day that your period of ordination is completed, for your ordination [literally, he will fill your hands] will require seven days.” (Vayikra 8:33)

The Ben Yehuda dictionary notes that in modern Hebrew, the word מְלוּאִים is used to mean “supplement”, again going back to the root meaning “to fill”, but here with

the sense of “filling in” something. This is a possible origin of the term מְלוּאִים for the army reserves, as they supplement the soldiers in the standing army.

Other scholars disagree, stating that at the period of the founding of the State of Israel, מְלוּאִים was synonymous with the older, Talmudic word מְלֵאִי meaning “merchandise, stock” and was therefore used to mean “reserves” as well. With the founding of the IDF, Ben Gurion called these forces the עֲתוּדוֹת מְלוּאִים (עֲתוּדוֹת “reserves”). But today the two terms have split, with עֲתוּדָה generally referring to an academic program where the soldier studies in a university prior to his military service in the field of his study, and מְלוּאִים applies to the reserve duty citizens do periodically after they’ve completed their compulsory army service.

1. Vayikra 7:37; 8:22,28,29,31,33.  
2. 25:7; 29:22,26,27,31,34; 35:9,27.

## Parsha Riddle



**Reb Leor Broh**

Mizrachi Melbourne

Find 3 words in a row whose last letters spell the word מצה but, in reverse order.

### Answer to the Parsha Riddle

Answer = מַצֵּה בְּרֵאשִׁית וְעֵלֶיךָ  
The Baal HaTurim notes that the end letters spelling Matzah in reverse emphasizes the fact that the Minchah could only be baked as Matzah, no chametz at all. Whilst at first glance it appears that the Baal HaTurim is not adding anything more than what the verse already states, perhaps the chiddush here is that the word מַצֵּה is being used together with the previous two words, to make the word מצה, even though in the literal meaning, the word is to be read with the next few words, as indicated by the trop (musical cantillation). This could allude to the halacha that not only is the portion of the Mincha that gets offered on the Mizbeach, to be Matzah, but also “their portion” i.e. the portion of the Minchah that gets eaten by the Kohanim, to be also eaten only as Matzah. (refer Rashi.) See too the Chasam Sofer on this verse, who explains why the prohibition of chametz extended to the remainder of the Minchah consumed by the Kohanim.



**THIS WEEK in Jewish History**

- Nissan 10, 2487 (1274 BCE):** Miriam the prophetess passed away at age 126, and the mobile well which supplied water to the Jews in the desert in her honor, dried up.
- Nissan 11, 5030 (1270):** Yahrzeit of Rabbi Moshe b. Nachman (RaMBaN), author, philosopher, mystic, physician and the greatest scholar of his generation.
- April 3, 1949:** Israel and Jordan signed an armistice agreement.
- Nissan 13, 2047 (1714 BCE):** Avram, renamed Avraham by G-d, was commanded to circumcise himself, all males in his house and all future descendants at 8 days old.
- Nissan 14, 2448 (1312 BCE):** The first Paschal lambs were sacrificed by the Jews in Egypt to be eaten later that night before the Exodus at the first Passover Seder.
- Nissan 15, 2048 (1712 BCE):** Birth of Yitzchak, the second of the 3 Patriarchs and the only one to live his entire life in Israel.
- April 7, 1933:** “Jews and dissidents” were banned from the Civil Service in Germany, resulting in teachers, professors, judges and other professionals losing their jobs.

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PARSHA WEEKLY

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KOLN  
Jewish Community

### GUATEMALA

Guatemala City Jewish Community

### HOLLAND

AMSTERDAM  
AMOS Amsterdam Modern Orthodox Sjoel

### HONG KONG

Chabad HK  
Jewish Women's Association (JWA)  
Kehilat Zion – Hechal Ezra  
Ohel Leah Synagogue  
The Jewish Community Centre  
United Jewish Congregation (UJC)

### ISRAEL

JERUSALEM  
Amudim Beit Midrash for Women  
Baer Miriam  
Hashiveinu  
Jacques Sueke Foundation  
Michelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim (MMY)  
Midreshet Emunah v'Omanut  
Midreshet Eshel  
Midreshet HaRova  
Midreshet Rachel v'Chaya  
Neve Hagiva'a  
Shapell's/Darche Noam  
Torat Reva Yerushalayim  
Yeshivat Eretz HaTzvi  
Yeshivat Hakotel

Yeshivat Orayta

BEIT SHEMESH  
Tiferet Midrasa  
Kehillat Nofei Hashemesh  
Yeshivat Ashreinu  
Yeshivat Hesder Lev HaTorah

### HERZLIYA

Mizrachi OU-JLIC Herzliya

### MEVASERET ZION

Yeshivat Mevaseret

### RAMAT GAN

Israel XP at Bar Ilan University

### THE NEGEV

Mechinat Ruach HaNegev

### MACEDONIA

SCOPIA  
Jewish Community

### MALTA

Jewish Community

### PORTUGAL

PORTO  
Rabbi Daniel Litvak

### SERBIA

BELGRADE  
Rav Isak Asiel

### SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG  
Mizrachi Glenhazel Shul

### SWEDEN

The Jewish Community of Stockholm  
Kehilat Adat Yeshurun  
Kehiliat Adat Yisrael

### SWITZERLAND

BERN  
Jüdische Gemeinde Bern

### ZURICH

Mizrachi

### UNITED KINGDOM

Mizrachi UK

## UNITED STATES

### NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kol Hatorah Kulah  
National Council of Young Israel  
RZA-Mizrachi USA

### CALIFORNIA

Beth Jacob Congregation  
Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy  
West Coast Torah Center  
Young Israel of North Beverly Hills  
YULA High School  
Young Israel of Century City

### COLORADO

DAT Minyan  
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue  
The Denver Kehillah

### CONNECTICUT

Beth David Synagogue  
Congregation Agudath Sholom  
Young Israel of West Hartford

### FLORIDA

Beth Israel Congregation  
Hebrew Academy RASG  
PlayHard PrayHard  
Congregation Torah Ohr  
Sha'arei Bina Torah Academy for Girls  
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale

### GEORGIA

Congregation Beth Jacob  
Congregation Ohr HaTorah

### HAWAII

Kehilat Olam Ejad Ganim

### ILLINOIS

Mizrachi-Religious Zionists of Chicago

### MARYLAND

Kemp Mill Synagogue  
Pikesville Jewish Congregation  
Bnai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation

### MASSACHUSETTS

Congregation Beth El Atereth Israel  
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe  
Congregation Shaarei Tefillah  
Young Israel of Brookline

### MICHIGAN

Young Israel of Oak Park  
Young Israel of Southfield  
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe

### MINNESOTA

Congregation Darchei Noam

### MISSOURI

Yeshivat Kadimah High School Nusach  
Hari B'nai Zion Congregation  
Young Israel of St. Louis

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hillel at Dartmouth

### NEW JERSEY

Ahavas Achim  
Volunteer Chaplain Middlesex County  
Congregation AABJ&D  
Congregation Adath Israel of the JEC  
National Council of Young Israel  
Congregation Ahavat Achim  
Congregation Ahavath Torah  
Congregation Brothers of Israel  
Congregation Darchei Noam of Fair Lawn  
Congregation Etz Chaim of Livingston  
Congregation Israel of Springfield  
Congregation Ohr Torah  
Congregation Sons of Israel of Cherry Hill  
Kehilat Kesher  
Ma Tov Day Camp  
Ohav Emeth  
Pal Foundation  
Shomrei Torah of Fair Lawn  
Synagogue of the Suburban Torah Center  
Yavneh Academy  
National Council of Young Israel  
Young Israel of Teaneck

### NEW YORK

Beis Community  
Congregation Anshei Shalom  
Congregation B'nai Tzedek  
Congregation Bais Tefillah of Woodmere  
Congregation Beth Sholom  
Ramaz  
Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls  
MTA – Yeshiva University  
High School for Boys  
Young Israel of Merrick  
Congregation Beth Torah  
Congregation Etz Chaim of  
Kew Gardens Hills  
Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun  
Congregation Ohab Zedek  
Great Neck Synagogue  
Iranian Jewish Center/Beth  
Hadassah Synagogue  
Irving Place Minyan  
Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach  
Kehilath Jershurun  
Kingsway Jewish Center  
Lincoln Square Synagogue  
Merkaz Yisrael of Marine Park

North Shore Hebrew Academy  
Young Israel of Merrick  
NYC Department of Correction  
OU-JLIC at Binghamton University  
OU-JLIC at Cornell University  
Queens Jewish Center  
Stars of Israel Academy  
The Jewish Center  
The Riverdale Minyan  
Vaad of Chevra Kadisha  
West Side Institutional Synagogue  
Yeshiva University High School for Girls  
Young Israel of Hillcrest  
Young Israel of Jamaica Estates  
Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst  
Young Israel of New Rochelle  
Young Israel of North Woodmere  
Young Israel of Oceanside  
Young Israel of Scarsdale  
Young Israel of Woodmere

### OHIO

Beachwood Kehilla  
Congregation Sha'arei Torah  
Congregation Torat Emet  
Green Road Synagogue  
Fuchs Mizrachi School  
Heights Jewish Center

### PENNSYLVANIA

Shaare Torah Congregation

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Brith Sholom Beth Israel  
Congregation Dor Tikvah

### TENNESSEE

Baron Hirsch Congregation

### TEXAS

Mayerland Minyan Synagogue  
Robert M. Beren Academy  
United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston

### VIRGINIA

Keneseth Beth Israel

### WASHINGTON

Bikur Cholim-Machzikay Hadath  
Northwest Yeshiva High School  
Sephardic Bikur Holim Congregation

### URUGUAY

Comunidad Yavne Uruguay

### VENEZUELA

### CARACAS

Ashkenazi Kehilla  
Mizrachi Venezuela



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