

**Making the Seder  
More Meaningful!**

# **Haggadah**

## **FOR CHACHAMIM**

**A Reference  
for the  
Rest of Us!**

**A Seder Companion  
featuring Divrei Torah  
from ASHAR's  
Boys Division,  
Grades 4-8**



**Haggadah**  
FOR  
**CHACHAMIM**



Nissan 5783

Jewish tradition generally values modesty and understatement, except when it comes to thanking Hashem and singing His praises.

In the time of the Beis Hamikdash, the Korban Todah, a sacrificial offering proffered in thanksgiving (not dissimilar to the Hagomel *beracha* recited today), was accompanied by an unparalleled forty *lachmei todah* loaves. And yet, notes the Netziv in his commentary to the Torah, the timeframe for consuming the *korban* and all of its loaves was only a day and a night, unlike other *korbanos shelamim* that were eaten for two days and a night. The meat and extra loaves that had to be consumed in a truncated period forced the grateful Jew to invite friends to partake in his *korban*, and thus inevitably share his gratitude towards Hashem with a substantial audience.

This is why, when King David declared his intention in the Hallel to extol Hashem through such a *korban*, "לך אזבח זבח תודה ובשם ה' אקרא," he insisted on doing so very publicly: "נגדה נא לכל עמו."

When we sit down at our Sedarim this year, perhaps take the opportunity to convey personal experiences of Hashem's kindness and largesse to our children and grandchildren, and encourage them to share the same. After all, the obligation to view one's self at the Seder as leaving Egypt- "כאילו הוא יצא מצרים," is obviously not limited to the actual Exodus, but rather speaks to inculcating a greater sensitivity towards an appreciation of constant Divine Providence in all of its manifestations: "על ניסך שבכל יום עמנו." May we continue to always prove worthy of constant and sustained *beracha* and *hashgacha*.

Please enjoy this Haggadah Companion, featuring *divrei Torah* by ASHAR's fourth through eighth grade boys and their Rebbeim. Thank you Rebbeim and teachers for working with the boys, Mrs. Mindy Reifer and Mrs. Jennah Schuh for their editorial assistance, Mrs. Karen Rosenthal for proofreading and Mrs. Miriam Goldman for her typically beautiful design of this publication. We look forward to much continued *nachas* from our budding *talmidei chachamim*, and future *nissim v'niflaos* "כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים!"

*Chag kasher v'sameach!*

Rabbi Ari Jacobson

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# Chapter **1**

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## **Divrei Torah from ASHAR's 4-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Rebbeim**

## DIVREI TORAH FROM ASHAR'S 4-8<sup>th</sup> GRADE REBBEIM

### "להודות ולהלל"

Rabbi Don Braunfeld

Hallel is a focal point of two parts of the Seder, towards the end of Maggid and again at Hallel. The simple understanding is that the paragraphs of Hallel that we say in מגיד talk about miracles that occurred at Yetzias Mitzrayim; therefore, we recite them when we speak of Yetzias Mitzrayim, while the second part of Hallel includes praises for a later time, including Mashiach.

The Novominsker Rebbe zt"l adds another dimension to beginning the Hallel in Maggid and then concluding later.

The Gemara discusses one of the the *pesukim* of הלל,

"הללו את ד' כל־גוים שבחיהו כל־האמים: כי גבר עלינו חסדו ונאמתי: 'לעולם הללוה':"

The Gemara asks: Why do the nations of the world have to praise Hashem for Him having mercy on us? We should be the ones praising him!

The Gemara answers that there are two forms of praise being addressed: The nations of the world are to praise Hashem for the amazing wonders of the world and how He is running it, regardless of whether or not they are beneficiaries of His largesse. We, on the other hand, are to both praise Hashem for His wonders, and express *hakaras hatov*, appreciation, for all that we receive.

In Maggid, we praise Hashem with the beginning of Hallel as part of our discussion of the miracles and wonders performed at the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim, as well as His omnipotence conclusively demonstrated at that time. In the Hallel portion of the Seder, we reflect on our understanding of the extent to which these events benefited the Jewish People, and the heights to which our *emunah* has been raised, by instinctively breaking into a song of gratitude!

### Growth Mindset

Rabbi Sholom Hoffman

The Yerushalmi in Pesachim tells us that the reason we drink the four cups of wine at the Seder is that they represent the four terms of salvation that Hashem used when informing Moshe of the impending Exodus.

The Yerushalmi then offers a second explanation, suggesting that these four cups represent the four times the word "כוס" is used in the discussion between Yosef and Pharaoh's butler and baker. Yosef interpreted the dreams to mean that the butler would be reinstated to his position, while the baker would be put to death. At first glance the dreams and the Seder's four cups seem unrelated. What in fact is the connection?

Rabbi Frand, Shlita, explains in his Haggadah that when the butler explained his dream to Yosef, he was actively and passionately involved in serving Pharaoh. The baker, on the other hand, had a flat, passive dream, in which the bread was in a basket on his head and birds came and ate it. When Yosef heard that the butler had such a passion for his work, he realized he would be a person that would be restored to his position.

We are like the butler in that we are all servants of Hashem. In the past, we had a Beis Hamikdash where we could actively show our devotion to Hashem. Unfortunately, we don't have a Beis Hamikdash or have the ability to bring the Korban Pesach. If we want Hashem to end this Galus,

we have to show Hashem, as the butler did, that we want to be reinstated. We have to show our passion and devotion to serve Hashem with dedication.

Wine symbolizes the growth mindset of a Torah-observant Jew. When one eats an apple, the beracha is "בורא פרי העץ." If one turns the apple into juice, the beracha is "lowered" to the more general "שהכל." The Maharal explains that the transformation of grapes to wine is the only instance in which a beracha on food is elevated through processing. One makes "העץ" on grapes, but a "הגפן" on wine. Wine thus symbolizes a Jew's constant desire to actively grow and improve.

## And Nothing But the Truth!

Rabbi Sholom Hoffman

In the Haggadah, we praise Hashem for keeping His promise to take us out of Mitzrayim:

"ברוך שומר הבטחתו ישראֵל." Chazal teach that the essence of Hashem is truth; His "seal" is emmes.

This idea is alluded to in the first pasuk of the Torah. The Torah opens with "בראשית ברא אֱלֹהִים," the last letters of these three words ("סופי תיבות") spelling out "אמת" when rearranged. Rabbeinu Bechaya notes that all of the vowels may be found in this first pasuk, with the exception of the shuruk, due to the fact that it can be rearranged to spell שֶׁקֶר. The message from the beginning of the Torah is clear: Hashem seeks emmes and despises sheker. We have a mitzvah to emulate Hashem, and strive constantly in our way to be honest and truthful in word and deed.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn illustrates this principle in his Haggadah with a powerful story. Many years ago, the Newman family was on vacation in Monticello, New York. Mrs. Newman unexpectedly gave birth to a

premature boy weighing a little more than two pounds. The newborn was rushed to the hospital, where he was placed in the neonatal care unit. His heart was weak, and he needed blood transfusions. One morning, his father, Rabbi Moshe Newman, asked the doctor if he and his older son, Dovid, could donate blood to his newborn. The doctor responded, "Yes, as long as you have the same blood type." Their blood type was in fact the same, and Rabbi Newman went along with his sixteen year old son to donate blood.

When they came into the room to donate blood, Rabbi Newman saw a sign that read, "Only those between the ages of 17 and 65 may donate blood." He turned to Dovid and said, "You won't be able to donate blood since you are not seventeen." "I will be seventeen in two weeks," Dovid protested. Rabbi Newman answered his son, "Right now you are only sixteen." Dovid persisted and told his father, "But I am in my seventeenth year?" Rabbi Newman answered, "It's not the truth to say you are seventeen." Dovid wanted to ask a shaila, but his father wouldn't allow him to do so, since it would appear that he was looking for loopholes in the area of emmes and sheker. Dovid finally relented, and stopped pleading his case.

Several days later, Dovid was in a car that had a serious accident. He lost so much blood that the doctors had to give him concentrated blood to keep him alive. When the doctor heard that Dovid wanted to donate blood a few days before, he told Rabbi Newman, "Had he given blood that day, he might not have survived the accident as the body wouldn't have had time to replace the blood."

Mrs. Newman, who told Rabbi Krohn the story said, "If not for my husband's honesty, my son Dovid might not be alive today. When one speaks the truth, they are emulating Hashem, and living in a way that Hashem wants us to live!



## Chag HaMatzos

Rabbi Ephraim Weiss

Without a doubt, *matzah* is the most quintessential symbol of the Yom Tov of Pesach. Just ask any Jew, regardless of their age, country or level of affiliation what image the Yom Tov of Pesach brings to mind, and the answer will be *matzah*. Some might think of round hand-made *matzah*, and others of square machine *matzah* packaged in pink Streit's boxes, but by all accounts *matzah* is the universal sign of Pesach. While one might be tempted to think that our association of Pesach with *matzah* is a result of our *galus* existence, and that in the times of the Beis Hamikdash it was the *Korban Pesach* that defined the *chag*, a perusal of the *pesukim*, as well as the text of our Yom Tov *davening* would indicate otherwise.

Throughout, the *chag* is referred to as *חג המצות*, the holiday of *matzah*. While the *Korban Pesach* is certainly a crucial element of the *chag*, it is *matzah* that defines the name of the Yom Tov in our *davening*. Given the centrality of *matzah* to the Yom Tov of Pesach, we must analyze the *mitzvah* of *matzah* and what it represents if we are to properly understand the Yom Tov of Pesach.

The Haggadah itself discusses the *matzah* and what it represents in two places. Maggid begins with raising the *matzah*, and the declaration of *הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים*, 'This is the bread of suffering that our ancestors ate in Mitzrayim'. The description of *matzah* as the bread of suffering is based on the *pasuk* in *Parshas Reah* (דברים ט"ז, ג'), which describes *matzah* as *לחם עוני*. While working as slaves, the Jews were fed *matzah*, as was the common practice in those times. *Matzah* is easy and inexpensive to make, and is very filling due to its dense nature, as opposed to bread. As such, it was the natural choice with which to sustain slave laborers. The Ibn Ezra recounts that upon being imprisoned in a foreign country, he found that *matzah* was the food that was fed to the prisoners for the same reason.

There are *halachos* that are derived from the Torah's description of *matzah* as *לחם עוני* as well. *Matzah* that has been kneaded with eggs, oil or fruit juice cannot be used for the *mitzvah*, and in fact is referred to in *halacha* as *מצה עשירה*, rich man's *matzah*. *Matzah* being kneaded exclusively with water is a fundamental aspect of its nature as *לחם עוני*. If the *matzah* does not reflect the suffering of Klal Yisroel in Mitzrayim it is not *matzah* at all.

However, towards the end of the Haggadah we find a second, and quite disparate, understanding of what the *matzah* represents. Rabban Gamliel teaches that the *mitzvos* of the *Seder* are not complete if we do not discuss the *Korban Pesach*, the *matzah* and the *marror*, and what they represent. In explaining the *matzah*, the Haggadah invokes an entirely different explanation. The *matzah* is eaten to remember the speed in which we were redeemed from Mitzrayim. After years of suffering, Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim so quickly that we did not even have time to wait for our dough to rise, and we baked it into *matzah*, so that it would be ready in time for our departure. At this point in the Haggadah, the *matzah* no longer reminds us of the affliction and suffering of Klal Yisroel, but rather of the unbelievable speed of the *geulah*. The *matzah* is no longer *לחם עוני*, bread of suffering, but *לחם הגאולה*, the bread of redemption. In fact, this understanding of *matzah* is found in the very same *pasuk* that describes *matzah* as *לחם עוני*. The *pasuk* states:

"שבעת ימים תאכל עליו מצות לחם עוני כי בחפזון יצאת מארץ מצרים"

'You should eat *matzah*, the bread of suffering to commemorate the haste in which you left Mitzrayim.'

This dual understanding of what *matzah* represents belies a fundamental understanding of the *geulah* of Pesach, and an invaluable lesson for us as well, three millennia later. For years Klal Yisroel suffered through unimaginable suffering in Mitzrayim. They were broken in both body and spirit from the oppressive slavery. They were forced to subsist on *matzah*, and cried bitter tears with every bite. And then it was over. The slavery was over, the suffering had ended, and Klal Yisroel was ready to leave Mitzrayim forever, and to march on to their glorious destiny as the Chosen Nation of Hashem. The *geulah* was sudden, and it was complete. Klal Yisroel was leaving Mitzrayim now. There was no time to waste, no time to prepare. Klal Yisroel baked one last round of *matzah*, the very same



*matzah*, but at the same time a completely different *matzah*. For this final *matzah* was not baked with cries of anguish, but with joyful recitation of Hallel, as Klal Yisroel prepared for their immediate departure from Mitzrayim. This *matzah* was not eaten with the bitter tears of slavery, but with tears of happiness and amazement at the speed of their rescue. The *matzah* itself was no longer a symbol of suffering, but a symbol of redemption and freedom.

This is the power of Hashem's *geulah*. Although the *galus* can be extremely bitter, the *yeshuah* that follows can transform even the most bitter reminders of suffering into objects of sweet celebration. Let us hope that this Chag HaMatzos ushers in the era of our final *geulah*, the coming of Moshiach, and that all of the memories of our individual and communal suffering throughout this long and difficult *galus* are likewise transformed into an everlasting celebration of Hashem's *geulah*.

## The Mitzvah of a Lifetime

Rabbi Boruch Zheutlin

**R**av Shimshon Pincus זצ"ל relates how Bedikas Chametz ignited major change in his life.

Once, as a bachur learning in Eretz Yisrael, Rav Pincus realized that the apartment he shared with other bachurim had not been cleaned for Pesach. His roommates had already left for Yom Tov, and Bedikas Chametz was that night. Realizing that the mitzvah was left to him, he began meticulously working his way through the apartment, carefully checking every corner, and ridding the dirah of any trace of chametz.

After many hours of work, הצות הלילה was approaching, and Rav Pincus was about to recite the "כל חמירא" when he realized that no one had checked the roof, as required by Shulchan Aruch (when the roof is used by the apartment residents.) He was now faced with an internal battle: "Who

says it is my job to check the roof; after all, the dirah is shared by others. And I've already done much more than my share!" But he quickly brushed away that thought, and off he went to survey the roof, only to discover that it had layers upon layers of rubble and dust to be removed.

Without allowing the yetzer hara to halt him, he persevered, fetching bucket upon bucket of water, mopping away with much will power. After many hours of toil he finally reached the roof surface. With עלות השחר quickly approaching, Rav Pincus finally finished Bedikas Chametz, including the roof, and recited "כל חמירא." This is how the night of בדיקת חמץ was spent.

Now he had to catch up on his sleep, but was unable to do so on the busy Erev Pesach day. As the Seder approached, he hoped that he could make it through without falling asleep.

When the Seder finally arrived, contrary to his expectation, a sudden ray of light, an inner energy, was infused within him. He had absolutely no desire to sleep, and enjoyed every moment of the Seder like never before. Every word of the Haggadah suddenly had new meaning, each word sweeter than the next. When the Seder ended, he could not possibly think of going to sleep, so as not to miss these most precious feelings. He continued with סיפור יציאת מצרים, up until Shacharis. This was his second night without sleep, but this time he felt wide awake.

During the first day of Yom Tov he continued feeling a new light, and new energy to learn. This continued throughout the rest of Yom Tov, as the entire Chol Hamoed was spent learning Gemara with a whole new טעם!

When Yom Tov ended, he was really upset, as he wanted to carry on feeling this closeness to Hashem, so he davened to Him, asking that this newfound קרבת אלוקים continue.

This was indeed the case, as Rav Pincus carried his new spiritual feelings into the Shabbos that immediately followed, and from there to the ensuing days and years. And all because of a proper Bedikas Chametz!

## The Best Lesson Plan

Rabbi Leible Chaitovsky

There is a מנהג to conclude the Seder by singing two popular songs, "אחד מי יודע" and "חד גדיא." What both songs have in common is that whenever they introduce new information, they review all of the information that had been previously mentioned. We also notice that the אחד מי יודע is teaching many of the fundamental concepts of Yiddishkeit, and it does so in a very organized manner.

The חד גדיא is a very exciting story, where every action seems to have a consequence, and everything ends with the will of Hashem.

The Haggadah tells us that we should devote a lot of time into the סיפור יציאת מצרים. The Haggadah only tells a small part of the story. There is still so much to talk about, such as the details of the מכות, the story of the early years of slavery, and the entire lifetime of Moshe. The Haggadah even suggests that it would be a wonderful thing if we would spend the entire evening talking about יציאת מצרים.

Not everyone is an expert in how to relate such a story. Perhaps the final songs of the Seder are a guide as to how one should tell the story. One needs to present a very organized lesson, as is depicted by the numbers of the אחד מי יודע. One must make it exciting, as is depicted from the song of חד גדיא. One needs to always review the information after teaching it in order that it should not be forgotten. This חזרה is depicted in both אחד מי יודע וחד גדיא. And finally, the purpose of the story is to end up with the belief and trust in Hashem that He has orchestrated all that has happened, and will continue to take care of His chosen people עד ביאת גואל!

# Chapter 2

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## Bedikas Chametz

## בדיקת חמץ BEDIKAS CHAMETZ

### Even a tiny crumb...

The *aveirah* of *chametz* on Pesach is more severe than any other *aveirah* in the Torah. Chazal forbade *chametz* even "*bemashehu*," which means that even the tiniest speck of *chametz* is forbidden. Other prohibitions specify a minimum size or measure, and a person is not held accountable for amounts smaller than the specified measure. Why is *chametz* different?

On Pesach, we perform various *mitzvos* in order to thank Hashem for *yetzias Mitzrayim*. The Torah compares the *halachos* of *chametz* to the way that the *geulah* from Mitzrayim took place: when Am Yisrael left Mitzrayim they were given very little time - one final moment that their very fate hinged upon. Chazal says that if Hashem had not quickly swept them out of Mitzrayim, they would have been completely lost in the depths of impurity of Mitzrayim, and it would have been impossible to redeem them. Bnei Yisrael were redeemed on the brink of that final moment. That is why, when it comes to the prohibition against *chametz*, the Torah is *machmir* and prohibits even the smallest crumb. This commemorates the fraction of a moment in which we hastened to leave Mitzrayim, thus being saved from the abyss of impurity.

-Eliyahu Machlis 7B

*Chametz* is a prohibition that is related to eating, yet it is different from all other prohibitions related to eating in the Torah. With regard to prohibitions such as eating milk and meat together, there are measurements such as "*bitul berov*" (the forbidden food is nullified in a majority), "*bitul beshishim*" (the forbidden food is nullified if it comprises less than 1/60 of kosher food), etc. *Chametz*, however, has no size or measurement, and even the tiniest crumb must be burned and completely eliminated.

What is the reason for this difference? *Chametz* represents the *yetzer hara* which is also called שאור שבעיסה – the leaven in the dough. This *halachah* teaches us that just as the *chametz* must be searched after and completely destroyed, so too we must search in all the crevices of our hearts for any trace of the *yetzer hara* and then destroy it completely.

-Naor Dahan 7B

### Chametz and Matzah

If we calculate the *gematria* of these words, we will see something interesting:

Chametz is 138	Matzah is 135
8 - ח	40 - מ
40 - מ	90 - צ
90 - ק	5 - ה
138 - 135 = 3	

The difference between the *gematria* of these two words is three. What does this hint at?

According to the *Mishna* in *Pirkei Avos*, there are three things that are so terrible that they completely destroy a person and take him out of the world: 1. *Kinah* - jealousy; 2. *Ta'avah* - lust; and 3. *Kavod* - pursuit of honor. These three things are the three extra “ingredients” that go into *chametz*, which Chazal compares to the *yetzer hara*- the שאור שבעיסה - and “lift” a person right out of this world!

*-Moshe Klein 7B*

### Ten Pieces of Chametz for Ten Really Bad Guys

**B**efore *bedikas chametz* we hide ten pieces of *chametz* around the house for the person doing the *bedikas chametz* to find. According to the *seforim hakedoshim*, one of the reasons for this custom is to commemorate the story that took place many years ago, when the wicked Haman attempted to kill all the Jews. On the thirteenth of Nissan, Haman had “books” (messages) written, to be sent to all the countries in the world, instructing them to kill all the Jews.

Who were the scribes who wrote these books? They were Haman's ten sons. In order to bring down these wicked people and to annul the decree, the Jews did a symbolic act: They took ten pieces of *chametz*, representing the ten sons of Haman, and they burned them the next day - the fourteenth of Nissan. Indeed, that year Haman and his sons had their downfall. The decree was annulled, and they were all hanged on the tree that they had prepared for Mordechai.

*-Benny Fine 7B*

## Chapter 3

# *Minhagei HaSeder: Customs of the Seder*

## מנהגי הסדר

# CUSTOMS OF THE SEDER

### The קערה: Seder Plate

On the קערה there are six foods, the *beitzah*, *maror*, *charoses*, *karpas*, *chazeres*, and *zeroah*. However, two of these foods seem to be the same, the *maror* and the *chazeres*, so how can this be? The answer is that back when we used to make a Korban Pesach, the *maror* was a *mitzvah d'oraisa*, but now that we don't have the Bais Hamikdash it's a *mitzvah d'rabbanan*. The *maror* on the top of the plate is to represent the *maror* that was eaten with the Korban Pesach, while the *chazeres* on the bottom of the plate is to represent the *maror* that we eat today. (Migdal Eider Haggadah)

-Ezra Markowitz 8B

Why do we place a ביצה, an egg, and זרוע, a shankbone, on the Seder plate?

Although both the Pesach sacrifice and the Chagigah were meat offerings, the Chagigah is commemorated by an egg, a symbol of mourning. We are mourning because we do not have a בית המקדש.

We prepare a roasted bone in memory of the Korban Pesach when we would roast a lamb and make it into a sandwich with מרור and charoses. The word 'זרוע' hints at זרוע נטויה, which means outstretched arm.

-Daniel Lazarus, Daniel Beilin and Dovi Samet 5B

### Kittel

Why do many have the *minhag* to wear a *kittel* at the Seder? Some explain that the reason is to make us look like *malachim*. Others say that since a *kittel* is worn by one who is no longer alive, it reminds us not to get drunk and carried away at the festive Seder.

-Moshe Leib Hayman 6B

### Why is the *minhag* for someone else to pour your cup of wine?

Because on Pesach night at the Seder, we do things to remember our time in Mitzrayim and finally leaving. We do things for the bad things that happened and the good things that happened, most importantly, being freed. We were free, like a king. And a king doesn't pour his own wine, he has it poured for him.

-Chaimy Glanz and Shloimy Kempler 6B

### Covering and Uncovering the Matzos

Why do we cover the *matzos* or remove the קערה, the Seder tray, from the table) and pour more wine before reading the מה נשתנה?

The Gemara instructs us to move the entire table away from where we are sitting before beginning to read the Haggadah. This is done in order to prompt the children to question the things we do differently on this night.

This is also why we pour the wine for the second of the requi now, even though we will not be drinking this wine until at

reading the Haggadah. The child, it is hoped, will wonder why, only a few moments after making Kiddush and before partaking of the meal, we remove the table and prepare to drink again as if we have finished.

All agree, however, that the practice now is not to remove the table. Rashbam explains that this is because our tables are much larger than those used at the time of the Talmud, and moving them would involve much more inconvenience. We do, however, remove the קערה, the tray, with the *matzos* and other Seder foods. The Magen Avraham and Shulchan Aruch Harav are of the opinion that we do not even remove the קערה. The Aruch Hashulchan establishes that the custom is simply to cover the *matzos*.

*-Mikey Richland 4B*

# Chapter 4

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## Kadesh



## קדש KADESH

### ארבע כוסות

**W**hy do we drink four cups of wine during the סדר? Many reasons are given:

Wine is considered a royal drink, one that symbolizes freedom. When promising to deliver the Jews from Egyptian slavery, Hashem used four terms to describe the redemption: "והוצאתי," "I shall take you out;" "והצילתי," "I shall rescue you;" "וגאלתי," "I shall redeem you;" and "ולקחתי," "I shall take you to be my nation." That is why we drink four cups of wine.

**-Mordechai Schwartz 4B**

**T**he most common reason is the four גאולות של גאולה.

The Vilna Gaon has a different answer. He says that the first cup represents עולם הזה. The second cup represents ימות המשיח, which includes the precedent of being taken out of מצרים. The third cup represents תחיית המתים, and the fourth הבא עולם.

The first cup is used to praise Hashem during the Kiddush. The second cup is said after we leave Egypt and think about the wonders of Moshiach. The third cup after the meal makes us think about תחיית המתים and the fourth cup after Hallel praises Hashem about the next world.

**-Benjy Guy 8B**

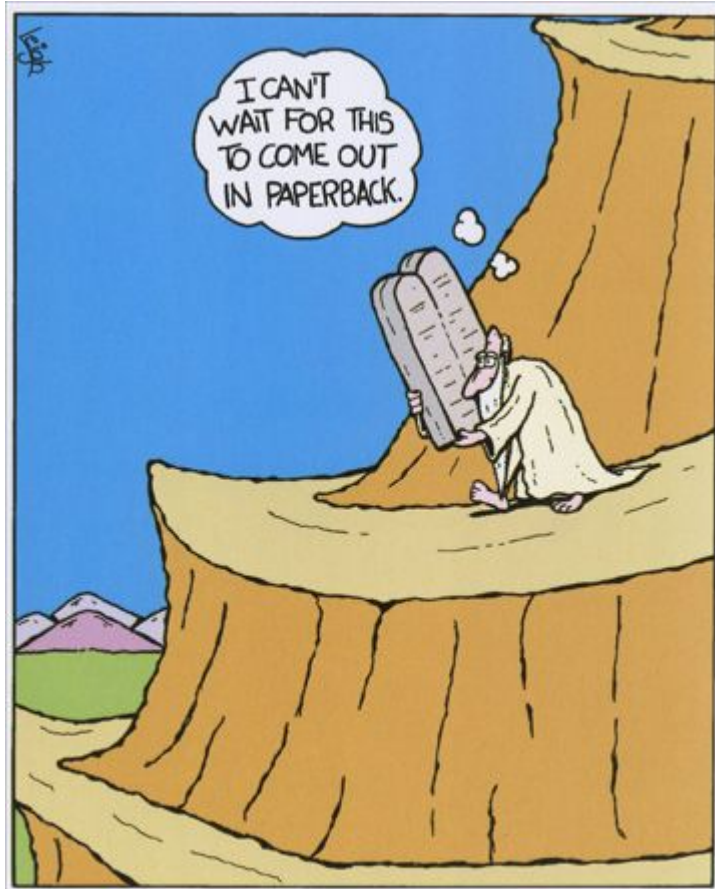
### Why isn't there a ברכת המצוה on the ארבע כוסות?

**W**hy didn't Chazal institute a special *beracha* on the *mitzvah* of drinking the four cups, "אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לשתות ארבע כוסות." The way we say similar *berachos* over the *mitzvos* of *matzah* and *maror*, for example? There are two possible answers:

1. The first cup is the Kiddush that we make. On all the other *yamim tovim*, we do not make a special "*asher kidshanu*" on the *mitzvah* of Kiddush, so Chazal did not add this *beracha* on the Seder night, either. To make another *beracha* "*asher kidshanu*" only from the second cup on was not something that Chazal wanted to do either. After all, the *mitzvah* is about all four cups, including the first one of the Kiddush, not just the other three.

2. Chazal felt that there should not be a *beracha* on a *mitzvah* that is performed over an extended period of time. Too much time elapses between the drinking of each cup.

**-Yanky Landau 7B**



# Chapter 5

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## Urchatz

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## ורחץ URCHATZ

Why don't most people make a *beracha* when washing ורחץ?

As we know, we wash with a *beracha* before eating bread. But in the case of Urchatz, we are washing because we are about to dip a vegetable in salt water. This type of washing is a *machlokes*: some say you have to wash on a דבר שטיבולו במשקה, before dipping a fruit or vegetable in a liquid, while others say you only had to do that in the time of the Beis Hamikdash when people were *tahor*, but not now. Since it is a *machlokes*, the rule is to wash, but not to make a *beracha*, because maybe you're not really required to wash and it would be a *beracha l'vatala*.

-Liran Kenig and Phillip Akerman 6B

# Chapter 6

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## Karpas

## כרפס KARPAS

### Why Karpas?

What is the purpose of *karpas*? By dipping the greens in salt water or vinegar, one remembers the time when we were humbled while in Egypt, and that Hashem took us out of slavery so that we could reach this new level of freedom. The dipping of *karpas* alludes to two opposing ideas, subjugation and freedom. First, it symbolizes subjugation when our lives were like the vinegar or the salt water, and in the end it symbolizes the merit of dipping the *אזוב*, hyssop, when we fulfilled the commandment of placing the blood on the doorpost of our homes, so that B'nei Yisrael were saved from the death of the first born, and afterwards they went forth to freedom.

-Yonatan Mytelka 4B

What is the purpose of *כרפס*? The purpose of *כרפס* is to remember what started the whole story:

We sold our brother Yosef and dipped his coat in blood. After all, it was that event that brought the entire family of Yaakov Avinu down to Mitzrayim in the first place. Many years later, right before we left Mitzrayim, we were commanded to dip again. This time we dipped our hyssop branches into the blood of the lamb used for the Korban Pesach and put it on our doorposts. Later in the Seder, we will dip the maror in *charoses* to symbolize this second dip which ended the slavery in Mitzrayim.

-Eli El Assir 4B

In Parshas Vayeishev we learn about the *kesones passim* that Yaakov made for Yosef. Rashi explains there that the word *passim* is similar to the word *karpas* in Megillas Esther. So perhaps *karpas* is meant to remind us of the *kesones passim* that was dipped in blood to remember the sin that started Galus Mitzrayim.

-Davidi Balouka, Chaim Greenstein and Yonah Markowitz 6B

### Why do many people use parsley for *כרפס*?

Parsley symbolizes the initial thriving of the Jewish people and the bowl of salt water shows our tears when we were enslaved.

-Akiva Benovitz 5B

### Wake up!

When the Shinever Rebbe's grandson was three years old, he saw his Zaidy running to shul in his *kittel* to blow shofar on Rosh Hashanah. He said, "Look, Mommy, Zaidy is going to shul to eat *כרפס*!" They thought it was cute, until the Shinever heard. He said, "It's true. *כרפס* and Shofar do the same thing." We eat *כרפס* to make us wonder and to ask questions. In other words- to wake us up. We blow Shofar, as well, to inspire us and to wake us up.

Rav Moshe Wolfson, Shlita, says this is what we mean when we say to hit out the tooth of the Rasha: "הקה את שניו." He says "*shein*" (tooth) is the same word as "*sheina*" which means to sleep. We need to knock the sleepiness out of the Rasha. We need to wake ourselves up and be inspired.

So if *כרפס* is supposed to make us ask questions, why don't we answer the question? Rabbi Yechiel Spero says the answer is that we don't always get the answer right away. And we should always have *emunah* and *bitachon* in Hashem. This is the main idea of the Seder: to strengthen our *bitachon* in Hashem.

-Yissie Au:



# Chapter **7**

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## Yachatz

## יחץ YACHATZ

### Why do we break the *matzah* in half?

**M**atzah is referred to in the Torah as “the bread of suffering,” for obvious reasons. This term may also be understood as “bread of poverty.” Since a poor person is often lacking a complete loaf of bread, we break the *matzah* in two in order to indicate that without Hashem, we are like an extremely poor wanderer. Hashem originally had sent us, the descendants of Avraham Aveinu, to exile in a foreign land for 400 years, but He shortened the Galus to 210 years, cutting the time roughly in half. Therefore, we break the *matzah*, which symbolizes our suffering, roughly in half.

*-Shmuel Samuels 4B*

### Why do we use the bigger piece of the broken middle *matzah* for the Afikomen?

**T**he reason we take the bigger piece for the אפיקומן is because the מצה of the אפיקומן is alluding to the hidden rewards we will get one day in Olam Haba. It is our goal as Torah Jews to strive to serve Hashem and keep His Mitzvos, and one day receive the benefits of the rewards from Hashem.

*-Aryeh Lichtenstein 5B*

**T**he Taz explains that the reason we have the larger of the broken pieces is that it holds that the commandment to eat מצה is primarily fulfilled in the eating of the אפיקומן. Therefore, the מצה used for the אפיקומן must be a larger size for everyone to have the proper shiur, which is the size of the two olives.

*-Menachem Herman 5B*

**B**ecause a poor person always saves the bigger piece for later. This is because he knows that now he may be hungry, but later he will be even hungrier. Therefore, we save the bigger piece for later, because when the בני ישראל left מצרים they were also poor. This may raise the question: The Jews weren't poor when they left מצרים. They took all the Mitzriyim's clothes and money! It is even said that when the Jews built the משכן, each Jew had enough to build his own משכן! How do we explain this? Although they had money, all the food they had was מצה, and מצה is considered poor man's food. Therefore, we keep the bigger מצה for later.

*-Eliezer Hamburger 5B*



## Dry Bones



FROM THE DRY BONES HAGGADAH

# Chapter 8

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## Maggid

## מגיד MAGGID

### How is the *mitzvah* of יציאת מצרים on Pesach night different from the daily obligation to remember the Exodus?

What is special about the *mitzvah* of סיפור יציאת מצרים at the Seder? Isn't there a *mitzvah* to remember Yetzias Mitzrayim every day that we fulfill by saying Parshas Vayomer in the Shema? The answer is that the whole year we *remember* leaving Mitzrayim, but on the night of Pesach, which is the anniversary of when we actually left, we have a *mitzvah* to try to *feel* it, which is accomplished by telling the story in great detail and reenacting Yetzias Mitzrayim with the *mitzvos* of the night.

*-Dovi Bernstein and Yosef Dov Abraham 6B*

### With Privilege Comes Responsibility

The Haggadah is not just a retelling of an event in history, but a call to action that challenges us to reflect on the meaning and purpose of our lives. One of the most powerful messages of the Haggadah is the idea of freedom. Freedom is not just the absence of physical coercion, but the ability to make choices and pursue a meaningful life. The Haggadah reminds us that true freedom requires us to take responsibility for our actions and to be mindful of the impact we have on others. It calls us to reflect on how we can use our freedom to make a positive difference in the world and to bring about a more just and equitable society. Ultimately, the Haggadah teaches us that freedom is not just a right, but a responsibility, and that we must use our freedom to serve a higher purpose and to make the world a better place for all. (Source: My father)

*-Noah Levine 8B*

## Loud and Proud

The Arizal writes that the Haggadah should be recited with a loud voice and great joy. Why?

The Gemara explains that the reason the Torah refers to matzah as “לחם עוני” — “bread of affliction” — is that it is “לחם שעונין עליו דברים הרבה” — “bread upon which we declare many things.” Rashi explains this to mean that one recites the Haggadah and the Hallel while the matzos are on the table.

The word “עוני” has a numerical value of 136, as does the word “קול” — “voice.” The name of the festival is “פסח” — which can be read as two words “פה” and “סח” — “the mouth that talks and relates.” As slaves the Jews were unable to open their mouths to pray to Hashem, and when they were freed they were able to speak freely. Thus, when the matzah is on the table, we demonstrate our freedom by opening our mouths to speak loudly and joyously about the miraculous Exodus that Hashem brought about.

Through ח”ס — talking — about the Exodus, we will merit ה”ס — mercy: Hashem with His great mercy will send the redeemer — Mashiach. (של”ה, פרי עץ חיים)

*-Maor Goldberg 8B*

### Why don't we make a *beracha* on the *mitzvah* of סיפור יציאת מצרים?

The Rosh explains that no *beracha* is recited upon Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim because the other *mitzvos* of the night unequivocally proclaim our mindset to engage in the *mitzvah* of recounting the Exodus. Because we are eating *matzah* and *maror*, no declaration of intent (in the form of a *beracha*) is necessary for the *sippur* itself.

*-Yakov Werth and Daniel Mordechai*

The Ritva on Maseches Pesachim asks this question. The answer he gives is that the reason people make *berachos* on *mitzvos* is to show their belief in the Ribbono shel Olam. By talking about Yetzias Mitzrayim at the Seder, we are already showing our belief, so a *beracha* is no longer necessary.

**-Daniel Sorotzkin 7B**

When the Sfas Emes was a young boy, someone asked him, "Why don't we make a *beracha* before fulfilling the *mitzvah* of talking about Yetzias Mitzrayim?" The young boy wisely answered, "Why don't we make a *beracha* before fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'em*? Imagine if my father would ask me for a cup of water, and I would stand there reciting the bracha of 'אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על כיבוד אב' How insulting! My father would think, if not for the *mitzvah*, you wouldn't have gotten me this cup of water? Don't you have any *hakaras hatov* to me as your father? You need to have a special commandment forcing you to honor me?!"

The same is true for our retelling of the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim. After Hashem performed such great miracles and wonders for us when he took us out of Mitzrayim, we should feel the desire to tell the story. If we were to make a bracha over doing so, 'לספר ביציאת מצריים' it would sound as though we are only relating the story because we are commanded to rather than as an act of *hakaras hatov* to Hashem for all that he has done for us.

**-Yisroel Kaller 7B**

The Rosh and Ritva give famous answers to this question. There is also another reason:

The reason for making a *beracha* on a *mitzvah* is to show we are doing the *mitzvah* just because Hashem told us to. But סיפור יציאת מצרים is an exception.

When we eat *matzah*, we make a *bracha* to show that we are eating *matzah* not because we're hungry, but rather to say, "I'm eating this because Hashem commanded us to do so." סיפור יציאת מצרים is an exception, because when we remember the Jewish People leaving Mitzrayim, we should not say that we are telling the story because Hashem told us, but rather because we on our own want to say, "Thank you, Hashem."

**-Avi Smolarcik 7B**

Why is there no ברכה on the הנדה? The Chasam Sofer notes that the whole point of the Seder is to see oneself as if he left Egypt:

בכל-דור ודור חוב אדם לראות את-עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים

The *halacha* is that a convert to Judaism doesn't make a ברכה when going into the *mikvah* until after coming out of the water. The reason that they do this is because before going into the water, they are not Jewish yet, so they can not say the ברכה on the *mikvah*. It is the same thing on Pesach. As we experience leaving מצרים, we are all like converts coming closer to Hashem for the first time, and that's why we too do not say a ברכה on the הנדה.

**-Chaim Schuh and Daniel Sanik 7B**

The reason that we do not make a *beracha* on the *mitzvah* of telling the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim is because it is a *mitzvah* that we must try to continue doing for as long as we can and as much as we can: "כל המרבה לספר" כל שיעור or measure - there is no specific timeframe in which this *mitzvah* is to take place or end. We can and should continue doing it endlessly. We do not make a *beracha* on this kind of *mitzvah*.

*Davening* is another example of such a *mitzvah*. We do not make a *beracha* on *davening*, before beginning to daven, because it too has no quantifiable measure. As Chazal teach: "ולואי שיתפלל האדם כל היום כולו" "If only a person would daven the entire day."

**-Ze**

In general, we make *berachos* on *mitzvos* that involve speaking or an action. We don't make a *beracha* on a *mitzvah* that is done just by thinking. *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*, according to some opinions, can be done just by thinking and remembering leaving *Mitzrayim*. Therefore, there is no *beracha*.

*-Eliezer Adams 7B*

## "הא לחמא עניא"

### Why is *הא לחמא עניא* written in Aramaic and not Hebrew?

The Maasei Nissim and Maasei Hashem state that this was done to make clear that it is not part of the original Haggadah text, but rather something added after the destruction of Yerushalayim.

*-Isaac Yisroel Yitzchak Greenstein 4B*

A number of commentaries echo the basic theme that the phrasing of the paragraphs in the native tongue, Aramaic, was in order to involve the children and unlearned people right at the start of the service, so that they would pay attention to and question the various elements of the Haggadah and Seder, in order to elicit a response. This conforms to the requirement laid down in the *pasuk*: "והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמור".

*-Zevi Waldman 4B*

Maamar Mordechai suggests that the sages in Israel authored the entire Haggadah in Hebrew, while those in Babylonia added this paragraph

and Chad Gadya (an allegorical song at the end of the Haggadah) in Aramaic — the language commonly spoken — so that people should question and debate their meaning, and, as a result, increase the discussion of the Exodus.

*-Yosef Shragaie 4B*

The answer is that when a Jew davens, there are angels in heaven who become his representatives to bring his prayers before Hashem. The Gemara in Shabbos (י"ב:) says that angels do not understand Aramaic, and therefore a person should not use it to request his needs. However, when he is ill, he may pray in Aramaic because the Shechinah — Divine Presence — is over his bed. Thus, he can talk directly to Hashem without the angels' assistance.

The Zohar (שמות מ:) says that Hashem comes personally on Pesach night to listen to His children relating the story of the Exodus. Thus, by making our opening statement in Aramaic, we are proclaiming that tonight Hashem is personally with us, and we will speak directly to Him and not through any angels. (הגש"פ חזון עובדיה בשם אמת ליעקב).

Alternatively, this paragraph was composed when the Jews sojourned in Babylon and at that time all spoke Aramaic. In order that everybody, including the common folk, should understand, it was said in Aramaic.

The phrase, "Next year we will be free" is in Hebrew, so that the Babylonians would not understand it and suspect the Jews of plotting against the government. This is not inconsistent with the fact that the rest of the Haggadah — even the Mah Nishtanah, the questions asked by the children — is in Hebrew; for those other parts of the Haggadah had been in use already in the time of the Beit Hamikdash (when everybody spoke Hebrew), as mentioned in the Mishnah. (כל בו, הגש"פ עם לקוטי טעמים ומנהגים).

*-Ezi*

## Why is מצה called "לחם עוני"?

In the Gemara, the גמרא says that the מצרים didn't let the Jews bake their bread long enough, so it was flat like מצה. Poor people can't bake their bread, so it is called poor man's bread.

The רמב"ן says that מצה doesn't have that many ingredients, so it is considered good for the poor, since they can't afford extra ingredients.

The רמב"ן also says that the Jews were poor in מצרים with a little bit of food and drink, so they were considered poor.

*-Noam Genut and Yaakov Abboudi 5B*

מצה is a food that stays in one's stomach for a long time, so poor people would eat it to help not be so hungry all the time. Also, the מצה shows someone to be humble, not like regular bread, which is high.

*-Akiva Benovitz 5B*

Why is מצה called לחם עניא?

- 1) In the Gemara, Shmuel describes מצה as the bread upon which the Haggadah is recited.
- 2) The מצרים never gave the Jews enough time to bake their dough into bread.
- 3) The resulting מצה is thus a reminder of their suffering. It is eaten in the manner of a poor person.
- 4) Just as a poor person rarely partakes of whole foods, so too we perform the mitzvah with a broken piece of מצה.

*-Binyamin Gruenebaum 5B*

Why do we refer to מצה as לחם עניא at the Seder? The Ramban gives two explanations:

- 1) מצה is made in an inexpensive way with only two ingredients.
- 2) It represents how the Jews in Egypt had a very poor amount of food.

However, Abarbanel does not like these two answers and offers two others:

- 3) מצה does not rise and remains poor in texture unlike bread which rises and becomes rich.
- 4) מצה is hard to digest and stays in the digestive tract longer than many foods. It is, therefore, a good food for a poor person since a little bit stays for a long time, and it is what the Jews' task masters fed them in Egypt. The Maharal explains it is only called poor bread because it is relatable to a poor person. Just as a poor person only has his body and no money or possessions, מצה consists of only basic dough. There is no enhancement in the dough, which would mean an extra ingredient added to the mixture of the מצה.

*-Naftali Cohen 5B*

In the Torah *matzah* is called "לחם עוני." Why? According to the Gemara, the word "עוני" is phonetically related to the word "עונה," which means to answer or declare, as in "לחם שעונין עליו דברים הרבה," the *matzah* upon which we tell the whole story of leaving Mitzrayim.

*-Gabi Sabol 8B*

## Priorities

Everyone starts Maggid with "הא לחמא עניא," but why is there no mention of Hashem, Moshe, or even Jews?

The answer is that before we start talking about Hashem's miracles, we have to talk about the problems that people face even today. Also, it is our responsibility to help those who need it. The Vilna Gaon says that "הא לחמא עניא" mentions all the different levels of poverty, and it is our job to help these people out. This is such an important job that we mention it before we talk about anything else in Maggid.

*-Chanan Seltzer 8B*

## "כל דכפין ייתי וייכול"

In the beginning of Maggid, we say the paragraph of *הא לחמא עניא* in which we state that any poor Jew who needs a place to eat we welcome and invite to our Seder. Many Meforshim ask why we invite the poor person after the Seder has started and our door has been closed? If we wanted to sincerely invite a poor person, it should have been done several weeks before Pesach.

Rav Moshe Meir Weiss explained that when we state that anyone who needs a meal is welcome to join us we are not inviting poor people to our Seder. Rather, we are sending a message to the children of the Seder that it is important to invite guests to join us, but the reality is that the most important *chessed* begins at home. Each child sitting at the Seder had a share in doing *chessed* in getting the house ready for a beautiful Yom Tov and should make a commitment to be dedicated to do what they can in the future to be a consistent help at home in the future.

*-Yechiel Appel and Avi Klein 5B*

## "כל דכפין ייתי וייכול....לשנה הבאה בני חורין"

The text of the *הא לחמא עניא* seems to indicate that the *גאולה* will come after we invite everyone to the Seder. What is the connection between the meal and the redemption?

According to the Gemara in Gittin (נ"ה:), the destruction of Jerusalem came about through a meal, as detailed in the incident of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza.

A certain man had a friend named Kamtza and an enemy named Bar Kamtza. He once threw a party and said to his servant, "Go and bring Kamtza." The man went and brought Bar Kamtza. When the host saw him he said, "What are you doing here? Get out." Trying to avoid the humiliation of being told to leave, Bar Kamtza said, "Since I am here, let me stay, and I will pay you for whatever I eat and drink." The host would not allow this. "Then let me give you half the cost of the party," he asked. "No," said the host. "Then let me pay for the whole party," he pleaded. The man still said, "No," and he took him by the hand and put him out. Bar Kamtza then said, "Since the Rabbis were sitting there and did not stop him, this shows that they agreed with him. I will go and falsely inform the Roman government that the Jews are planning to rebel against them." The ultimate outcome was the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash and exile.

Thus, we are saying, "Unlike that meal which brought about the exile, tonight everybody is graciously invited, and hopefully in the merit of our brotherly love, we will be redeemed."

*-Shney Hecht 8B*

## "השתא הכא....לשנה הבאה בני חורין"

What is the purpose of mentioning our own *galus*?

One of the things the Gemara tells us is that after 120 years Hashem will ask us: "Did you await the coming of Mashiach?" Perhaps we



of Mitzrayim to strengthen our *emunah*, that just like the Bnei Yisrael were redeemed from their *galus*, we too will also be redeemed from our *galus*.

**-Davidi Balouka, Yitzky Jacobson and Ari Herschmann 6B**

**W**hy do we celebrate Pesach if we are still in גלות?

The הגדה answers this by saying לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל. Despite the fact that we feel the pain of גלות, we hope that in the merit of this pain, we will be זוכה to לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל. (Sruli Guttentag)

**-Yonatan Jacobson 8B**

### "לשנה הבאה בני חורין"

"חורין" literally means "Children of *Chorin*;" who then are the "בני חורין"?

In addition to being enslaved in Egypt, the Jewish people suffered persecution and subjugation under four kingdoms: Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece and Rome. They were redeemed from Egypt through Moshe, from Babylon through Ezra HaSofer, from Media-Persia through Mordechai, and from Greece through Matisyahu Kohen, and we will speedily be redeemed from Rome through *Mashiach*.

The last letters of the names of the redeemers- משיח, משה רבינו, עזרא הסופר, - spell the word חורין — "free." We are expressing the wish that by next year we will be "*b'nei chorin*" — a people reclaimed by our redeemers — i.e., entirely free from all exiles. (Chabad.org)

**-Boruch Yoseph Kushner 8B**

## "מה נשתנה"

On Shabbos and on Yom Tov we usually only drink one cup of wine (i.e. for Kiddush). On Pesach we drink four. Why doesn't the child ask about this as well during the Mah Nishtanah?

**T**he answer is that the child asks about the unusual things that he sees. On the table he sees *matzah*, *maror*, salt water, *charoses*, and on the chairs he sees pillows for reclining. His inquisitive mind thus immediately prompts him to ask about those items. On the other hand, though he sees wine on the table initially, he only sees the drinking of four cups over the course of the Seder. (ברכת חיים על מועדים מר' חיים יעקב ז"ל צוקרמן)

**-Ezi Rudner 8B**

## "עבדים היינו"

How does "עבדים היינו" answer the "מה נשתנה" questions?

**T**he Avudraham says that all we mean to address here are the two main issues raised in the מה נשתנה - the eating of מצה and מרור. T' simply that our forefathers were slaves in מצרים, and anniversary of their redemption, we commemorate the מצה

קָרֹר, (in other words, bitter life), that they escaped. This is best achieved by eating in the manner of royalty. As for the other questions, they are the focus later on in the הַגָּדָה when we quote Rabban Gamliel's declaration.

Abarbanel, however, sees this paragraph as addressing all four questions: In accordance with the theme he presented previously, it looks to explain why we do certain things on this night that seem to indicate a state of freedom, while at the same time practicing other, seemingly contradictory, customs that indicate slavery. We explain that we look to recall and relive our birth as a nation, and that experience involves contradictory elements "We were slaves" and "Hashem our God took us out" - slavery and liberty.

*-Moshe Simon 5B*

The עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ answers the questions because it shows that we were slaves and now we are free. For example, one of the questions is why do we sit straight during the rest of the year, but on Pesach we sit lying to the side? It answers that by saying we were in Mitzrayim, which is represented by sitting straight, and we were freed like kings, which is why we sit lying like a king. Therefore, it answers the questions by saying that we were slaves and now we are free.

*-Yossi loukhvets 6B*

עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ is an overall introduction to the story of the Galus of Mitzrayim. We will further elaborate and answer each of the questions later on as the Maggid continues.

*-Chaim Greenstein and Yonah Markowitz 6B*

## "עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לַפַּרְעֹה בְּמִצְרַיִם"

Why do we emphasize that we were slaves to **Pharaoh**? Isn't it enough to just mention that we were slaves in Egypt?

The answer, according to Rav Chaim Kanievsky z"l, is to highlight the importance of seeing the good in everything, even when the situation is very bad.

If it would have just said "עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם," then one would perhaps assume that the Yidden were treated horribly by the Mitzrim, without even getting enough food or sleep, and having terrible accommodations. By emphasizing that we were slaves to the king, לַפַּרְעֹה, we are reminded that as bad as it was, it was not the absolute worst possible. Since Pharaoh himself was responsible for the slaves, he made sure that the slaves were properly fed and taken care of, if only to allow them to work better the next day. Even though it was still bad, we try to find the good in everything!

*-Moshe Yosef Bernstein 8B*

## "וַאִילּוּ לֹא הוּצִיא הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, הָרִי אֲנוּ וּבְנֵינוּ וּבְנֵי בְנֵינוּ מִשְׁעֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לַפַּרְעֹה בְּמִצְרַיִם"

The הַגָּדָה says that if Hashem had not taken us out of Mitzrayim we would still be slaves in Egypt today. How can that be? Wouldn't we have somehow left in the past 3700 years?

The Abarbanel focuses on three possible scenarios through which we may have been able to leave Egypt: By Hashem, through rebellion or through הַפָּרֶעָה's willingness to do so.

The הַגָּדָה is trying to tell us that yes, unless Hashem freed us, we would never have left. The fact that we were born into slavery made us weak and loyal, so we would not think of rebellion, and הַפָּרֶעָה stubbornly refused to let us go. Hashem was therefore our only option!

*-Akiva B*

In the we declare that אילו לא הוציא הקב"ה את אבותינו ממצרים הרי אנו if Hashem hadn't taken us out we would still be enslaved to Pharaoh in Mitzrayim. Really? 3700 years later we still would be there?! No empire has ever lasted so long, and no one was ever a slave for so long!

If Hashem wanted, the Egyptian empire would still be around, and we would still be enslaved. If it were Hashem's will, the Egyptians would be dancing around like chickens. The Makkos prove that Hashem can do anything. Ice balls with ice inside?! That's crazy! Hashem is also merciful. He stopped after each Makkah, instead of having multiple ones at once, and every time he gave Pharaoh a chance to repent and let the Jews go. Hashem made many miracles, like the splitting of the sea, the water coming from the rock, the water turning bitter to sweet, and these are just a few. This shows that Hashem truly controls everything in the world and nothing would exist without Him.

*-Shua Shtrambrand 6B*

"ואפילו כולנו חכמים כולנו נבונים..מצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים"

Why do we have a mitzvah to say over Yetzias Mitzrayim even if we already know it well and are big *chachamim*?

The answer is that even if you know it, the more you review it, the more you feel it. Another answer is that on this night it is like we are back in Egypt and therefore have a special mitzvah to remember the miracles Hashem did for us, which we do by going over the story, even if we already know it very well.

*-Yoel Schreiber 6B*

## "מעשה ברבי אליעזר...."

למה מוזכר שאמרו להם תלמידיהם שהגיע זמן ק"ש? זה לא נחוץ לאגדה?

נאמרו ב' תירוצים:

א. להראות לנו כמה היו שקועים בסיפור יציאת מצרים, עד שלא שמו לב שהגיע זמן ק"ש.

ב. כדי להראות לנו שיהיה שקועים כל הלילה ממש, וזה לא הגזמה.

(הרב וולף, הר"מ שלי בכיתה ז')

*- אהרן ביילין 8B*

## "אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה"

What did Rabbi Eliezer mean when he said, "I am like a 70-year-old man?"

The Abarbanel explains that in honor of the leadership role to which he was appointed, Hashem filled R. Eliezer with a complete knowledge of Torah, as though he were an experienced sage. The Rambam's view is that the long-term effect of his diligent Torah studies taxed his physical strengths to their limits, and caused him to age beyond his years.

The Maharal suggests that although the Gemara seems to imply that he was only eighteen at the time (Gem. Berachos כ"ה), it should not be understood literally. What it means is that when he was eight had already begun turning white, so that by the time he turned seventy appeared to be a man of seventy.

The Malbim and Shibbolei HaLeket, however, understood that he was indeed only 18, but on the day he was elected Nasi, leader of the people, he miraculously aged so that he appeared to be 70 years old.

**-Nash Follman 4B**

In what way was Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah like a 70 year-old man?

According to the Gemara in Berachos (כ"ז), there was once a dispute over a halachic issue between Rabbi Yehoshua and the Nasi, Rabban Gamliel. The Rabbis were upset with the way Rabban Gamliel handled matters and decided to demote him and appoint Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah as Nasi. Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah was hesitant to accept the position because he was only 18 years old, and his beard was black. Overnight, a miracle occurred and his beard became filled with 18 streaks of white hair. Thus, he said, "I am like a 70-year-old man."

**-Ezi Rudner 8B**

## "כנגד ארבעה בנים דיברה התורה"

"אחד חכם...."

Why does the word "אחד" appear next to each type of son

(*"אחד חכם, אחד רשע"* etc.)?

Hashir V'Hashevach explains that it means that whether or not the child is a *chacham* or a *rasha*, a parent has to try to be *mechanech* him and answer his questions.

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz gives a different answer, focusing on the child rather than the parents. The Haggadah is saying that every individual has the potential to be any one of the four sons.

The Marbeh Lesaper Haggadah suggests that the word "אחד" doesn't just mean 'whether,' but rather refers to the "oneness" of Hashem, that each son grasps on his own level. Or, the Haggadah is advising parents that they should treat each child as if he is an only child.

**-Avi Itzkowitz 7B**

**"רשע מה הוא אומר, מה העבודה הזאת לכם"**

Why is it that the רשע, when he says "לכם," "to you," he implies that he is separating himself from the group, but when the חכם uses the language of "אשר צוה ה' אלוהינו אתכם," "commanded you," it doesn't imply that he is separating from the group?

The answer is that the חכם includes Hashem: "אשר צוה ה' אלוהינו אתכם," "that Hashem our G-d has commanded you to tell over the story of Pesach." However, the רשע says "מה העבודה הזאת לכם," "what is this service to you," without mentioning Hashem at all, thus separating himself from the group.

**-Gavi Lerer 8B**

The Haggadah quotes the Rasha's words, "What is this service to you?"

And notes, "If he had been there [in Mitzrayim], he would not have been redeemed!" Why not?

The Rasha is making fun of the *mitzvos* by saying, "What is this service to you?" He claims that it is enough to think of the *mitzvos* and c in one's heart; there is no need to also perform them, *chas v's* why "if he had been [in Mitzrayim], he would not have been re

B'nei Yisrael's homes were recognized by the blood on the doorposts. The Rasha, however, would have decided that it was not necessary to actually smear the blood on the doorpost. He would not have bothered doing it, and his home would have therefore not been distinguished as a Jewish home, and he would not have been saved along with his Jewish brothers.

*-Motty Berger 7B*

"ואף אתה הקהה את שניו"

**W**hy do we knock out the teeth of the רשע?

There are all types of children out there. Some have challenges and some are good. Under the surface of the layers of rudeness, there lies a soul that's innocent. Even the children that are not knowledgeable in Torah and *mitzvos* are also truly good. The good can be buried under the layers of hurt and pain that are most often the product of physical desires, but the soul itself is good. We knock out the רשע's teeth to hint to him to clear himself of all of his physical desires, represented by the teeth that are used to eat, and thus more directly connect to his pure soul.

*-Isaac Zelcer 5B*

**W**e knock out the teeth of the רשע because the רשע does not care about *mitzvos*. He only cares about what he needs/wants and physical things. Teeth are used to eat and bite and other physical things, so we knock out the teeth so the רשע does fewer physical things.

*-Eli Sorotzkin and Gabe Salamon 5B*

"מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו"

**Why do we mention that our ancestors used to worship Avodah Zarah?**

**T**he reason we mention that our ancestors used to worship Avodah Zarah is to remember that Hashem can forgive and forget all of our sins if we try to do *teshuvah*. You can see this by looking at our forefathers.

*-Yoely Bando 6B*

"תרה אבי אברהם"

**I**n the beginning of Maggid, we tell over some of the history where we as a nation came from. We begin to explain that we come from Avaraham whose father was Terach, who preached to the world about serving Avodah Zara. Our Chazal explain that this is to demonstrate the concept of מתחיל בגנות ומסיום בשבח, which means we begin with the negative and conclude with the praise of Hashem- how we were taken out of Mitzrayim.

Many Meforshim ask why would we even mention the negative about how we came from people who served Avodah Zara on such a festive and celebratory night ?

One answer that is given is that when we think and consider that we came from people who served Avoda Zara, who didn't believe in Hashem, that demonstrates that a person can work and grow to overcome the *yetzer hara*. A Jew can never give up on himself or sell himself short on what they can accomplish. Avarham fought off the notion of believing in Avodah Zara, and he is our role model to believe that Hashem runs the world and to do our best to fight the desires of the *yetzer hara*.

*-Sholon*

## "ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל"

### "ועבדום וענו אותם ארבע מאות שנה"

Hashem promised that the children of Avraham Aveinu would be slaves and oppressed. Why then were Pharaoh and the Egyptians punished, if all they did is what Hashem promised would happen?

The Egyptians did more than what Hashem intended, more than what was required based on the promise to Avraham Aveinu!

*-Chaimy Glanz 6B*

It was because they did way more than they had to. They made the Jews suffer and work for years for no reason. For example, the Egyptians made the Jews build in swampy cities so when they finished building, the structure would get destroyed and not last. Then, they would make the Jews build all over again. Even though Hashem said that the Jews would be enslaved, it doesn't mean they would have to be tortured. Also, when Hashem sent Moshe to tell Pharaoh to let the Jews out of Mitzrayim, Pharaoh said "No." Even after nine *makkos*, he still didn't let the Jews out, until after the tenth *makkah*.

*-Yonatan Judkin 6B*

Why was it decreed that "וענו אתם," generally translated as "they will oppress them," in addition to being enslaved?

The Previous Rebbe answers that the words "וענו אתם" can be understood to mean poverty, rather than oppression. "They will impoverish them" refers not to the the Egyptians' oppression of us, but rather to Hashem promising

Avraham that when the Jews leave Egypt, they would make the Egyptians, poor by removing their material possessions, the "רכוש גדול".

On a deeper level, the removal of Egypt's material wealth was a fulfillment of the purpose of Galus Mitzrayim: The primary purpose of the Egyptian exile was to enable the Jews to elevate the *ניצוצות* — sparks of G-dliness — enclothed in the material substance of the Egyptians. At the departure, the Jews "took out" (elevated) all of these spiritual sparks. On the *pasuk* "וינצלו" — "they emptied Egypt" (*Shemot* 12:36), the Gemara in Berachos (ט:) teaches that they transformed Egypt into the equivalent of a [bird] trap containing no grain and the depth of the sea without any fish, an allusion to the removal of these holy sparks. (אדמו"ר מוהרי"ק)

*-Gavi Weinstein 8B*

## "צא ולמד מה בקש לבן הארמי לעשות ליעקב אבינו"

Who is the **ארמי** in the **אבי אובד** and where does it say he wanted to kill us?

The **ארמי** is **לבן**. Lavan wanted to uproot everyone, "לעקור את הכל", and this is what the Torah means when it says "ארמי אובד אבי". By killing Yaakov, he would uproot everyone. Although the Torah in Bereishis doesn't explicitly say that Lavan actually wanted to kill Yaakov, the fact that Hashem commands us to thank Him each year by reciting the Parsha of "ארמי אובד" when bringing Bikkurim shows that Hashem knew that Lavan wanted to kill Yaakov, even if Yaakov never realized this.

*-Arye*



The Haggadah says: "ארמי אובד אבי וירד מצרימה," "An Arami destroyed my father, and he descended to Mitzrayim." "Arami" refers to Lavan. How does the story of Yaakov and Lavan help us understand the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim?

The Vilna Gaon explains this based on the principle of "מעשה אבות סימן לבנים," meaning that every detail mentioned in Bereishis regarding the Avos hints at what will happen to their descendents. The story of Yaakov and Lavan foretold the story of B'nei Yisrael in Mitzrayim. For example, Yaakov worked incredibly hard for Lavan, and when he left Lavan's house, he left with a lot of money. So too B'nei Yisrael worked very hard in Mitzrayim and left with a lot of money. So understanding the story of Yaakov and Lavan gives us an understanding of the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

**-Shlomi Schwartz 7B**

**"במתי מעט, ויהי שם לגוי גדול"**

In establishing that Yaakov descended to Egypt "במתי מעט," "with few people," why does the Haggadah not use the *pasuk* in Bereishis, which describes the actual descent, rather than the one from Devarim, which is retelling the story of Yaakov's journey to Egypt?

Maasei Hashem explains that the Haggadah wishes to make clear that "with few people" is not an objective statement, for a family of seventy souls is not considered "few people." It is only that relative to their future size they were small in number when they traveled to Egypt, and through the kindness of Hashem they increased and multiplied to the point where they could be referred to as being "כוכבי השמים," "as the stars of heaven." Thus the Haggadah quotes the *pasuk* in the Devarim, which communicates this relativity, rather than the verse in Bereshis, which merely states that they went down to Egypt with seventy people.

**-Yisrael Bruk 6B**

## עשר מכות

**"דם ואש ותימרות עשן"**

This *pasuk* is quoted from Yoel. Where did דם ואש ותימרות עשן - blood, fire and pillars of smoke- come together in Mitzrayim?

The Ritva explains that during the first plague, מכת דם, the blood of the Nile boiled like fire, and pillars of smoke rose from it. Another explanation points out that at יציאת מצרים, there was blood, fire and a cloud pillar when Hashem led the Jews to Yam Suf. (Artscroll Haggadah, by Rabbi Joseph Elias)

**-Gavi Weinstein 8B**

**Why do we pour out drops of wine or dip our finger into the wine when reciting the עשר מכות and דם ואש ותימרות עשן?**



We pour out the wine to represent the blood that was spilled from when the Jews were enslaved by the מצריים. (source: My Father)

**-Coby Goldman and Michael Fi**

## Sixteen Drops

**W**e pour three drops when we say דם ואש ותימרות עשן.

Ten drops when we say the עשר מכות.

And three drops when you say דצ"ך עד"ש באה"ב.

So we pour out sixteen drops in all.

The reason we pour sixteen drops, according to the Ba'alei Hatosfos, is because Hashem's sword has sixteen blades! Another explanation is that, according to some sources, the Makkos of חושך, כינים, and שחין took place together, three times, for a total of nine. Adding these nine Makkos to the remaining seven gives a total of sixteen.

*-Coby Goldman and Michael Frommer 5B*

## מכת כינים

**T**he plague of כינים, lice, was the third plague and it happened in the month of Elul. The lice were everywhere – even in their eyes. Bathing did not help relieve the effects of the plague in any way. There were at least fourteen types of lice; some commentators say there were twenty four! The smallest were the size of a chicken egg.

The Egyptians were punished with lice for two reasons:

One reason was because they forced the Jews to sweep their streets and paths. Therefore, all the dust on the ground turned into lice. Even when they dug the ground, lice would emerge. This plague gave the Jews respite from this type of toil.

Another reason given was to punish the Egyptians for not letting the Jews bathe when they became dirty from all their labor. (Me'am Lo'ez)

*-Moshe Abboudi 8B*

## דצ"ך עד"ש באה"ב

**W**hy did Rabbi Yehudah give the simanim of דצ"ך עד"ש באה"ב for the Ten Makkos?

Maasei Hashem points out that in each group of three plagues, the first two were somewhat removed from the people physically, while the last one actually touched their bodies. In the first set of three plagues, the blood was in the water. The frogs came closer to the people but did not actually affect their bodies, but the lice infected their bodies.

In the second group the wild beasts were not attached to the Egyptians' bodies, though the lice had been. So Pharaoh began to think that the plagues were lessening in intensity.

The next plague, pestilence, took place in the fields far away from the people, but then came the boils which affected their bodies even more than the lice had. The hail fell in the fields, once again leading Pharaoh into a false sense of security. The locust swarms darkened the skies, and thus affected the people a bit more directly, while the plague of darkness intensified this phenomenon even more.

The plague of the firstborn went back to directly affecting the human body. The point of this division into three sets of plagues, each set with varying degrees of personal danger, was a realization of G-d's desire to "make a mockery out of Egypt" (שמות י, ב), for they "played" with Pharaoh's feelings and convictions. Just as Pharaoh was led to believe that he was about to experience some reprieve, he was reminded of the outstretched arm that G-d wielded against him.

*-Judah Davis 4B*

**Y**a'avetz quotes Riva as saying that the third plagues of each of the three groups were connected. Kinim, Sh'chin, and Choshech came at the same time. Ya'avetz proves that they are related by writing the three Makkos one on top of the other so they could be read both horizontally. This is why R' Yehudah put them in these groups.

*-Yonatan M*

**S**hibbolei Haleket suggests that it is the letters themselves that are significant. These ten letters add up to a numerical value of 501, which is the total of the numbers of plagues suffered by the Egyptians at the Red Sea - according to R. Yose 50, R. Eliezer 200 and R. Akiva 250 combined.

*-Tani Smolarcik 4B*

**T**he Baruch She'amar notes that it is Rabbi Yehudah who says in the Sifrei (Parashas Haazinu) that a person should always organize the words of the Torah into categories, for if he remembers them as individual facts it would be difficult to remember them. Therefore, it is possible that R. Yehudah established this mnemonic to assist easier memorization of the names of the Ten Makkos.

*-Chovav Goldberg 4B*

## "רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר"

**Why do we care how many *makkos* Hashem brings upon Mitzrayim?**

**H**ashem said that whatever *makkos* he brings upon Mitzrayim, he won't bring upon us: "כל המחלה אשר שמתי במצרים לא אשים עליך." So the more he brings upon them, the more we don't get!

*-Eliyahu Zupnik 6B*

## "כמה מעלות טובות למקום עלינו"

**"אילו קרע לנו את הים ולא העבירנו בתוכו דיינו"**

**W**hy do we say in Dayenu that if Hashem would have split the sea but not brought us across, it would have been enough?

The answer is that the meaning of Dayenu is not that it would've been enough to split the sea and not take us across. What it means is even if Hashem split the sea but didn't bring us across, it still would have been enough to thank Him.

*-Dovi Hecht 6B*

**A**nother answer is that Hashem made the Egyptians chase after B'nei Yisrael so that B'nei Yisrael can get all of the Egyptians' money and expensive decorations with which they decorated their chariots. Dayenu is saying that it would have been enough for them to escape and cross the Yam Suf even without becoming rich.

*-Moshe Steinberger 6B*

**"אילו קרבנו לפני הר סיני ולא נתן לנו את התורה דיינו"**

**W**hat would have been the point of bringing us before Har Sinai without giving us the Torah? How can we say that this would have sufficed?

Rashbam, Kol Bo Avudraham and Alshich cite the Gemara in Shabbos (קמ"ו.) which says that when the Jews arrived at Har Sinai, they were freed of the spiritual impurity which affected all of mankind since Adam and Chava's sin. This spiritual purification in and of itself would have been enough for us, even if Hashem had not given us the Torah.

*-Ari Ros*

**S**hibbolei Haleket explains that included in the phrase “He brought us before Har Sinai” is the giving of the Ten Commandments. What the Haggadah means, then, is that if Hashem had given us the Ten Commandments and not the other 603 mitzvos, we would still be grateful to Him.

*-Uriel Hamerman 4B*

**T**he Aruch Hashulchan offers the following explanation: In Bava Metzia (כ”ט:) the Gemara tells us that after the giving of the Torah at Har Sinai, heavenly intervention- such as visions, *nevuah* revelations, and the like- do not affect the standard *halachic* process: “לא בשמים היא.”

This, says the Aruch Hashulchan, is what the Haggadah is saying. Had Hashem brought us to Har Sinai and told us the laws of the Torah, but not given it as a gift to *us*, without the ongoing involvement as it were, of Heaven, it still would have been enough for us.

*-Calev Moscovitz 4B*

**W**e are taught in the Gemara in Shabbos (פ”ה.) that Hashem “forced” the Jews into accepting the Torah at Har Sinai by suspending the mountain above them: “כפה עליהם הר כגיגית,” On the other hand, the Torah emphasizes the enthusiasm with which the Torah was voluntarily accepted by the Jews, by recording their famous words “נעשה ונשמע.” The Midrash Tanchuma resolves this contradiction by explaining that while the *Torah shebichsav* was anxiously accepted by the people, the *Torah sheb’aal peh* had to be forced upon them.

The Haggadah’s statement can therefore be interpreted as follows: Had He brought us **to**, but not “**under**,” Har Sinai, and thus given us only the *Torah shebichsav*, it would have been enough for us, but He went beyond that and “gave us the [entire] Torah,” including the *Torah sheb’aal peh*.

*-Kehos Weiss 4B*

# Chapter 9

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## Second Cup

## כוס שני SECOND CUP

"אשר גאלנו וגאל את אבותינו"

Our forefathers' *yetzios* preceded our own *yetziah*. Why then does the *beracha* start with "אשר גאלנו," "You redeemed us" and then say "וגאל את" "You redeemed our ancestors"? It should mention our ancestors before us.

The answer is based on the fact that this *beracha* continues the preceding theme of *B'Chol Dor Va'Dor*. Not only were our forefathers redeemed, but we were also redeemed with them.

In fact, the **main** reason for *Yetzias Mitzrayim* was for us, in order to make sure that the Egyptian *tumah* does not have an effect on future generations. Because of the *yetziah*, we are not impure like the Egyptians. And when we thank Hashem, we first speak about ourselves and only afterwards our ancestors, since we were the main reason for the *yetziah*.

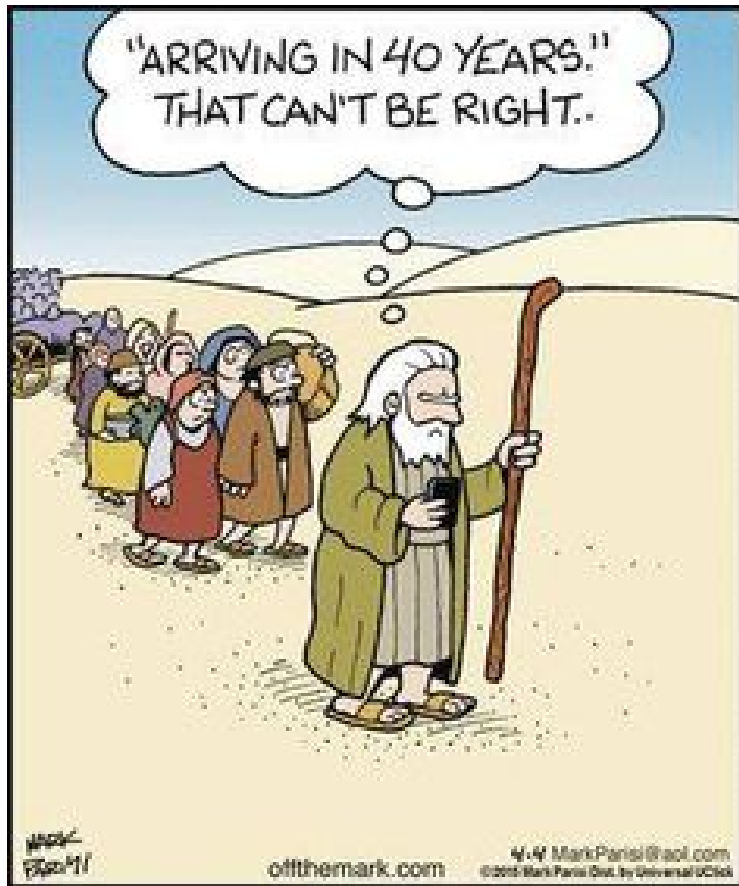
-Shlomo Reifer 8B

"ונאכל שם מן הזבחים ומן הפסחים"

The *seforim* tell us that if a person dies without doing *teshuva*, Hashem retrieves his soul and brings him back to this world in the form of a kosher animal. When the animal is then slaughtered through a kosher *shechita*, this finally allows his soul to be atoned for.

The Chasam Sofer, Rav Mosher Sofer zt"l, writes something amazing. During the ninth *מכה* of *חשך*, Chazal tells us that four fifths of the Jewish population in Egypt died due to their lack of *אמונה* in the imminent *ישועה* that Hashem promised to provide. Those souls were displaced within the bodies of the animals that Bnei Yisrael took out with them when they left Egypt. Later, in the desert, the Jews were begging for meat. Moshe Rabeinu, who only saw the good in people and would always give the benefit of the doubt, truly thought that what they wanted to do was to *shecht* the animals and to thus liberate and free the tortured souls who had perished in Egypt right before *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

-Aharon Yaniv 8B



# Chapter **10**

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## **Motzi-Matzah**

## מוציא-מצה MOTZI-MATZAH

### Why do we use three *matzos* at the Seder table instead of the usual two that we have on Shabbos and Yom Tov?

Each of the three *matzos* stand for the one of the three groups of the B'nei Yisrael: Kohein, Levi and Yisrael.

Others explain that each of three *matzos* represents one of the three Avos: Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. They are Hashem's representatives from the beginning of earth's creation and are therefore considered to be royalty. Eating three *matzos* instead of the regular two helps remind us that we are the children of royalty, even though we were slaves.

-Noam Grossman 4B

We have three *matzos* because when we break the middle *matzah*, we are still left with two whole *matzos* to make Hamotzi on.

Some also say that the three *matzos* are a reminder of the three measures of flour that Avraham Aveinu asked Sarah to bake when the angels came to visit. The Torah seems to hint at this connection when Avraham says to Sarah to "Be Quick," "מהר," which reminds us of the Jews leaving Mitzrayim in a hurry. This story in the Torah is said to have happened on Erev Pesach.

-Tzvi Fuerst 4B

We use three *matzos* because they remind us of Avraham asking Sarah to bake with flour. When Avraham was sick, three *malachim* visited him, and Sarah used three measurements of flour to bake for them. This happened on Pesach.

Another reason is that they remind us of when the three *matzos* were given to the Kohanim from the Korban Todah, which included the three different types of *matzos*.

-Shlomo Lebovits 4B

### Why do we break the middle *matzah*?

On the holidays we are commanded to celebrate the special, bountiful nature of the day with a festive meal. Lest we come to indulge in the meal for the food's sake alone, we are told that half of our attention should be focused on ourselves- *הציו לכם*, and half for G-d- *הציו לה'*, meaning for spiritual pursuits. The splitting of the *matzah* on Pesach reminds us that, despite the resplendent holiday meal, we must simultaneously maintain our focus on the spiritual essence of the day.

A second reason is to reinforce our belief in the final redemption. When two beloved friends temporarily depart from one another with the intention of re-uniting, they split a precious object - like two halves of a pendant- which they each guard until they reunite.

Despite the continued exile we split the *matzah* as a sign of the covenant with Hashem that during the separation we will faithfully follow His ways and observe His commandments, as He will faithfully fulfill His promise to bring about the complete and final redemption.

-Shmuel





# Chapter **11**

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## **Maror**

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## מרור MAROR

### Why do we dip the מרור into the Charoses ?

Our Sages tell us that the מרור represents the bitter slavery in מצרים. The *Charoses* is made up of wine and cut up apples, which are sweet. When we take the bitter מרור and dip it into the sweet *Charoses*, it reminds us that all that happens in life is good and comes from Hashem. This is something we express every day in Shema. We begin the *tefillah* by saying Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokeyniu Hashem Echad. The word Hashem represents Hashem's characteristic of compassion, and Elokeinu represents Hashem's characteristic of Hashem's strict judgment. We conclude this *pasuk* that these two characteristics are Echad, all from Hashem.

-JJ Zoldan 5B

# Chapter 12

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## Korech

## כורך KORECH

### What is the purpose of כורך?

- 1) They used to eat the מצה and מרור together like a sandwich in the Beis Hamikdash to show that Hashem is behind all of that which seems good and difficult in our lives. The מצה represents the good in our lives as it is a symbol of freedom and the מרור represents the difficulty in life as it is bitter.
- 2) Another reason we eat the sandwich is to remind us about what Hillel did in the Beis Hamikdash, as he ate מצה and מרור in a sandwich. By doing this we are expressing our hope for the Bais Hamikdash to be rebuilt.

-Gavriel Zimmerman 5B

### Why did Hillel sandwich the Korban Pesach, matzah and maror together?

The K'sav Sofer explains that Hillel is teaching us that with a "not as important" *mitzvah*, someone should be just as careful as with one that is more important. The *mitzvah* of eating the Korban Pesach is a *mitzvas aseï d'oraisa*, and if one does not eat it he is *chayav kareis*. On the other hand, the *matzah* and *maror* commandments do not have associated punishments. Even in the time of the Beis Hamikdash, when both were *d'oraisa*, there was no punishment for missing *matzah* and *maror*. And today *maror* is 'only' *d'rabbanan*. When a person eats these three all together, he shows that all

the mitzvos are equally important, and we should be as careful as possible with all of them, no matter if it's a *d'oraisa* or *d'rabbanan*, or whether there is a punishment.

-Shlomo Reifer 8B

### "על מצות ומרורים יאכלוהו"

Why do we quote the *pasuk* from Parshas Beha'aloscha, which is found concerning Pesach Sheini, rather than a similar *pasuk* from Parshas Bo that speaks about the regular Pesach Rishon?

The Haggadah Kol Yehuda quotes an explanation from the Belzer Rebbe that we were unfortunately not worthy of bringing Pesach Rishon this year. By quoting the Pesach Sheni *pasuk*, we pray that we should at least merit bringing Pesach Sheni this year!

-Chaim Kleinberger 8B



# Chapter **13**

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## **Divrei Torah for Shulchan Oreich**

# שולחן עורך

## DIVREI TORAH

### FOR SHULCHAN ORECH

#### Name of the Yom Tov: “אני לדודי ודודי לי”

The Torah calls this *chag* “Chag HaMatzos,” but we call it “Pesach.” Why?

In our *tefillin*, it says Shema, which praises Hashem. In Hashem's *tefillin*, it says “*Mi ke'amcha Yisrael*,” which praises us. Pesach, which means to “pass over,” is praising Hashem for passing over Jewish homes and saving us during *מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת*. Chag HaMatzos, what Hashem calls Pesach, praises us for leaving Egypt immediately, not even waiting for our dough to rise, and following Him into an unknown desert. (Kedushas Levi)

-Yishai Moscovitz 8B

#### Why did Hashem first appear to Moshe in the *סִנֵּה*, the burning bush?

The bush was meant to represent Moshe, and to remove any fear that he might have about going to Pharaoh. Just like Moshe saw that the bush didn't burn, so too Moshe would not be burned by the fire of Pharaoh's wrath. Additionally, when Moshe saw the burning bush and Hashem told him to take off his shoes, it showed Moshe that he would not need any more earthly protection. (Abarbanel, “*Haggadah Zevach Pesach*”)

-Ezra Markowitz 8B

#### Perspective

The Ohev Yisrael of Apta was famous for many *chumros* he enacted when baking *matzah* for Pesach. He would be extremely careful and add many *hiddurim* to his *matzah* baking and then only eat from his own *matzah* on Pesach.

One year, something terrible happened. The Rebbetzin inadvertently exchanged the Rebbe's special *matzos* for a simple batch! As soon as she realized what happened, the horrified Rebbetzin thought to herself, “These *chumros* in baking the *matzos* are so critical in my husband's eyes. He will probably be angry when he finds out that he is only left with *matzos* that have none of his *hiddurim*!” Instead of being angry, however, the Rebbe calmly reassured her, “Our fear of even a crumb of *chametz* is indeed great, yet for a Jew, a ‘crumb’ of anger is far worse than that!” The Rebbetzin calmed down.

The Rebbe's response clearly demonstrates just how terrible the *middah* of anger is!

-Moshe Maxx Sontag 7B

#### Why don't we make the *beracha* of “שַׁעֲשֵׂה נִסִּים” at the Seder?

Eating *matzah* and *maror* are a commemoration of Yetzias Mitzrayim. If so, why don't we recite the *beracha* of “שַׁעֲשֵׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ” on these *mitzvos* of Pesach just as we do on the *mitzvos* of Chanukah and Purim?

The difference lies in the fact that the *mitzvos* of Chanukah and Purim are *mitzvos d'rabbanan*, from the *Chachamim*, while the *mitzvos* of the Seder are *de'oraisa*, explicitly written in the Torah. The reason that we *mitzvos* of the Seder night is not because they commemorate rather because Hashem commanded us to do so. Chanukah :

the other hand, are *mitzvos d'rabbanan* established by Chazal, and the reason we perform them is because they commemorate the miracles. That is why we recite the *beracha* of "שעשה ניסים" on those days.

-Yitzi Safier 7B

## "ושמרתם את המצות"

The word *ha'matzos* can also be read using different *nekudos*, as *ha'mitzvos*. When we read the words in this way, the *pasuk* is teaching us about our obligation to keep all 613 *mitzvos* in the Torah. Why does the Torah teach us this specifically in the middle of discussing the Korban Pesach?

The answer is that Yetzias Mitzrayim is the very foundation of the entire Torah and all of its 613 *mitzvos*. It is therefore only logical that discussing Yetzias Mitzrayim is the most appropriate opportunity for discussing the need to observe all 613 *mitzvos*.

The word פס"ה teaches us about this concept, too. Let us take a look at the *gematria* of each of the letters comprising this word, when completely spelled out:

פס"ה	
ה"פ - 80+5	=85
ך"סמ - 60+40+20	=120
ת"ה - 8+400	=408
85 + 120 + 408 = 613	

This all totals 613, which equals the 613 *mitzvos*. Wow!!!

-Netanel Spaeth 7B

# Chapter 14

## Tzafun

## צפון TZAFUN

### Why do we hide the Afikoman?

On a basic level, we hide the Afikoman so that we don't mix it up with the other *matzos* on the table. We will need to eat this piece of matzah towards the end of the Seder. We also hide the Afikoman to get the kids at the table to play a game and be involved in the Seder.

On a deeper level, we hide the Afikoman to remind us of the good things in the world that may be hidden from us, most importantly Moshiach.

Moshiach is here, but hidden. We are waiting for Moshiach to be revealed to us!

*-Yonah Weitzman 4B*

Reb Chaim Brisker explains that since the אפיקומן is eaten at the end of the Seder to remember the Korban Pesach that was eaten at the end of the meal, we treat this piece of *matzah* as a *korban*. Any *korban* that is not eaten immediately must be hidden away or carefully guarded so that it won't become טמא. We do (or try to do) the same with the אפיקומן.

*-Ari Yaniv 4B*

The Vilna Gaon writes that we hide the piece of *matzah* that will be used for אפיקומן and remove it from the table until after the meal for the same reason that we cover challah when we say Kiddush. We want to prevent the “embarrassment” of the challah, which is being passed over in favor of the wine. Similarly, when we later make the *brachos* on different pieces of *matzah*, we make sure to cover and remove the אפיקומן from the table, to prevent it from embarrassment as it is being looked over and not eaten until the end of the meal.

*-Daniel Itzkowitz 4B*

### Why do we eat the Afikoman after the meal?

Eating the Afikoman commemorates eating the Korban Pesach, which was also eaten all the way at the end of the meal on a full stomach. One reason this was done was in order that people not rush to eat the Korban when they are hungry and accidentally break a bone of the Korban, which the Torah prohibits. Since you are already full, you're not going to rush and maybe break one of the bones.

We also eat the Afikomen at the end in order to keep the taste of *matzah* in our mouths for the whole night after finishing the Seder.

*-Akiva Malool and Yitzy Jacobson 6B*



## The 15 Emojis of Seder Night!



# Chapter 15

## *Kos shel Eliyahu*

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## כוס של אליהו

### *KOS SHEL ELIYAHU*

One of the Chasidim of R' Yisrael of Ruzhin was fabulously rich, and he had a *minhag* to beautify the Cup of Eliyahu every year with precious stones. However, one year he lost all his wealth. Pesach was arriving, and he had not even a penny. When Pesach was close to approaching, he said to his wife, "Perhaps, we should sell Eliyahu's cup." His wife then disputed this and said, "Better that we suffer starvation rather than sell the cup which we fashioned to honor Eliyahu."

It was Erev Pesach and the house was empty of food. The man went to shul hours before Pesach to daven for food, and while he was gone a man arrived at his home. This man asked the Chasid's wife if he could be a guest for the meal because he was a stranger in this town. When she told him they had no food for the meal, the man said not to worry and gave her money to buy all the food they needed. When the man came home, he was surprised to see his house filled with food. His wife told him everything that happened.

Before the Chasid made Kiddush, the guest came and blessed them that they should be wealthy. After Pesach the family traveled to the Rebbe of Ruzhin, where he told them that they had been visited by Eliyahu HaNavi. Because they did not sell the cup, they had been judged worthy to see him, and he had appeared twice to the woman because she was the one who insisted on not selling the cup. (Haggadah of Chassidic Masters by Rabbi Shalom Meir Wallach)

*-Yakov Baitz 8B*

# Chapter 16

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## Hallel

# הלל HALLEL

## Why is there no *beracha* on Hallel at the Seder?

Why does Hallel not have a bracha at the seder? Normally we say a bracha on Hallel.

The Ri MiGash offers a surprising answer, that Hallel on the Seder is only being happy that we left Mitzrayim, so it is not a *mitzvah*.

The Tur answers that the Seder meal would also interrupt Hallel. You aren't allowed to make a *beracha* unless you're doing the full *mitzvah* without interruption.

- *Rephael Fleischer 7B*

## Why do we split Hallel into two parts at the Pesach Seder?

The Abarbanel answers this question by first asking another question.

Why do we say Hallel on days of redemption of the Jews? And why were the specific *perakim* of *Tehillim* chosen (ק'ג-ק"ה) to praise Hashem? The Gemara says that Hallel mentions topics of redemption including יציאת מצרים, קריעת ים סוף, מתן תורה, תחיית המתים, and the times of pain before Moshiach. The Gemara then talks about where in Hallel these topics are mentioned, and whether they are mentioned straight out or are hinted at. יציאת מצרים, קריעת ים סוף, and מתן תורה are mentioned in the first two *perakim* of Hallel. At the Seder after saying these *perakim*, we say the *beracha* of אשר

גאלנו, and then we eat *matzah*. Both of these remind us of the miracles and redemption of the past.

The rest of Hallel talks about the miracles of the future, when Mashiach comes, which is a topic worthy of speaking separately. These *perakim* are said towards the end of the Seder when we greet Eliyahu Hanavi, who will foreshadow Mashiach.

-*Yisroel Levin 7B*

The Arizal says that the way we say Hallel on Pesach is like the way we eat our *matzos*. At night in shul we say a whole Hallel, but at the Seder we say two half Hallels, and then in the morning we say a full Hallel again. That is just like our *matzos*. We have a whole *matzah* on top, a half in the middle after Korech, and then a whole *matzah* on the bottom.

-*Tzvi Erenthal 6B*

## "בכל דרכיך דעהו"

One of the unique aspects of the Seder is that we interrupt the saying of the Hallel with a meal. Why is that? The Netziv explains as follows: The purpose of going out of Egypt was to receive the Torah. With the Torah we gain the ability to serve Hashem not only through spiritual means, such as Torah study and prayer, but through physical *mitzvos* as well, such as marriage, enjoying Shabbos, eating *matzah*, *maror*, and the Pesach offering. We eat in the middle of Hallel in order to praise Hashem for sanctifying and elevating our physical existence. Even "mundane" things like eating are elevated when we do them in the service of Hashem. (Rabbi Mordechai Perlmán)

-*Gedalia Siklos and Al Korn 8B*

## Why do we sit for Hallel at the Seder?

Another difference between the way the usual Hallel is said and the way that Hallel is said at the Seder is that we sit during Hallel at the Seder, when otherwise we would stand. So why do we say it sitting? The Shibbolei Leket answers that sitting during Hallel at the Seder signifies us being free people.

*-Rephael Fleischner 7B*



