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הגה"צ רבי גמליאל חכם רבינוביץ שליט"א ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים ע"ה

טיב התבלין

רעינות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת הש"ת והתחזקות באמונת ובטחון מאת

פסח על שום מה? על שום שפסח ... (פרד מהגדה של פסח) - פסח "פה סח" ואיתא בשם מין ה'בעל שם טוב' וי"ע (פר' נח), שאם האדם מקדש דיבורו ורדאשן, ומוכר מחשבתו הראשונה בקומו משנתו שאו הוא נעשה בריה חרשה, אזי אחר כך שהולך להתפלל וזכה שתפילתו נענית. והיינו כי עכשיו בהיותו בריה חרשה עדיין לא פגם בדיבורו, ולכן מיד כשמקדשו בדיבור של קדושה, וזכה לסייעתא דשמיא ותפילתו שגורה בפיו, ומתקבלת לרצון, אך כשמחללו בדיבורים של מה בכך, שוב אין זה אותו פה קדוש ומפסיד כוח עצום זה.

וכן נוכל לפרש מאמרו של דוד המלך ע"ה (תהלים לו, ד) דברי פיו און ומרמה חדל להשכיל להטיב, שכשארם מדבר בפיו דיבורים אסורים שהם און ומרמה, אז 'חדל להשכיל להטיב', נבצר מאתו לעסוק בתורה בפיו, ולהשכיל בתורה הנקראת טו"ב. כי ההצלחה בדיבורי קדושה תלויה בקדושת הפה. וע"כ צריך כל אדם להמליך את הש"ת על פיו, וכל דיבור שהוא בכלל איסור לשה"ד ורכילות או שקר וכיו"ב יתרחק מהם כמטחוי קשת, וענין זה גם גן נרמ באלי ב' תיבות 'פה סח' כי שם אדנ"י בגימטריא ס"ה, ועם ארבע אותיות הם ס"ט, כמנין ס"ח עם הכולל, היינו שתמליך שם אדנ"י על הפה, אז יזיה סח' ויכל דיבורי דיבורי קדושה. וראה בדברי ההדרכה של **הרה"ק רבי אלימלך מליזענסק וי"ע** (צעטלי קטן אות ח) עד כמה ראוי לו לאדם להיות זהיר בדיבור, וז"ל: ירגיל את עצמו שלא יתחיל לדבר לשום אדם זולת לצורך גדול ההכרח לו, ואף ההכרח ידבר בדברים קצרים מאד, מנופה ב"ג נפות, שלא יחא בדיבורו שום שקר ח", ושום הלבנת פנים ולא שום הראות מעשיו לבני אדם. וירגיל את עצמו בכלל שאמרו חכמינו ז"ל: 'למוד לשונך לומר איני יודע'. וכשמדברים אליו בני אדם אשר אין נזהרים מלדבר דברים בטלים, יעמיט את עצמו מהם בכל כוחו ובכל מיני תחבולות, וכשלא אפשר לו להישמט מהם בשום אופן, עכ"פ יקצר מאד בזה שמזכר להשיב להם, עכ"ל.

ולאור האמור מוכח כי כל מהותו של האדם תלוי בדיבור, וכשידיבורו בטורה את הוא שיש לו קשר עם הש"ת בתורה ותפילה, אך כשידיבורו אינו כהגון את הוא שגור נפרד לגמרי מהש"ת ותורתו ותפילתו לא תהיה כלל.

וכן ידוע בשם **מין ה'בעל שם טוב הקדוש וי"ע**, כי האדם מה שהוא. כך הוא מוציא מפיו. וכעובדא דהוי, באדם אחד אשר בגלוי התנהג בחסידות, אך יצאו עליו עוררין, והורה הבעש"ט לעקוב אחר דיבורו. ואכן בדקו אחריו ושמעו אותו מתבטא אודות כוס שלא טבלוה, כי לא חסרין הוא הדבר להשתמש במה שלא טבלוה ואכן לימים נודע, כי איש זה ממולד בעניני קדושה וטהרה.

ודבר זה מונע מאוד מלדבר דיבורי קדושה, ואף כשנאמרים אינם נאמרים אלא בהכרח כמצות אנשים מלומדה, וידוע מאמרו של רשב"י (ירושלמי ברכות א, א) שאלו היה עומד על הר סיני בשעת מתן תורה היה מבקש מהקב"ה שיברא לאנשים שתי פיות אחד ללימוד התורה ואחד שידבר בהם כל צרכי, כי פה המדבר בעניני חול קשה לדובבו אודר כל לעניני קדושה, וסבר רשב"י שראוי שיהיה פה מיוחד לעניני קדושה, כי אז יהיה ביכולת האדם לפתוח פיו לעניני קדושה, ויהיו נאמרים בחיות ובהתלהבות, אך לבסוף חזר ואמר טוב שברא ה' רק פה אחד לאדם, כי אולי יקלקל האדם ע"י ביותר, כי אם כשיש לו פה אחד אין העולם יכול להתקיים מרוב דיבורי לשון הרע שלו. כל שכן אם היו לו שתי פיות על אותה כמה וכמה, אבל זה נשאר גם לפי המסקנא, כי פה המודגל בדיבורי

אך כדי ליכות להארה והשפעה זו, צריכים אנו לאתערותא דלתתא, כי הארת כל המועדים תלויים באתערותא דלתתא, ועל כן מוטל עלינו להתחזק באלו הנקודות המסוגלים לענין זה, ואחד הדברים המסוגלים לענין זה הוא השמירה מדיבורים בטלים, וכל שכן מדיבורים אסורים, כי ידוע מה שכתב האור החיים הק' (במדבר כו, כג): ומצאתי לחסידי ישראל שכתבו, כי פה של לומדי תורה דינו ככלי שרת אשר ישרתו במ בקודש, כי אין קדושה כקדושת התורה, ולזה אסור לדבר בו אפילו דברי חול, הגם שאין בהם דברים האסורים. עכ"ל. הרי שהפה המיועד לעניני קדושה הוא ככלי שרת ממש, והמשתמש בהם לעניני חול הוא ממש פוגם בה.

A SERIES IN HALACHA למעשה הלכה

LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Forgotten and Little Known Halachos and Customs (78) Tzitzis Strings. We will now conclude this topic with the final and most relevant section of the strings, where many of the questions arise. This is the section known as "פתיל" - the eight strings that hang down loose, after the section of the five double knots. To understand the *halachos* regarding this section, we must go back and explain how the *Tzitzis* strings are tied on.

Attaching the Strings. The way *Tzitzis* are made is as follows: Four long strings (one is longer than the rest in order to wind it around the others) are inserted into each corner hole of the garment, until half their length, creating eight (half) strings hanging down. The winds are then wound on: one string around the other seven, and the double knots are tied with four strings over four strings. It is preferable (in cases of strings that snap) that each time one ties the knots, he keeps the same two groups of four strings together. This is done by immediately after tying the first double knot, make a bow or knot at the end of one group of four half strings, which will keep them together till the end of the entire winding process, after which the bow or knot is then undone. If one purchased ready-made *Tzitzis*, he may assume that they were made in this way.

Length of Tzitzis. When they are initially tied, each of the eight half strings with the winds and knotted גדיל that they hang from, should be about eleven and a half inches long, or at least nine and a half inches as per the *shiur* of **R' Avraham Chaim Naeh ZT"L**. This is measured from the beginning of the first double knot till the end of the hanging string.

The Shiur of בני עינבה **מיסי**. There is a הלכה למשה **מיסי** that once the

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

Tzitzis are put in with the above length, and then some of the hanging part snaps off, as long as there is left over the length of enough to make a slipknot (about two inches) - it is still kosher. There are two opinions when to apply this ruling.

- The **Rosh** holds, even if all four of the original long strings were snapped down to two inches, the garment is still kosher.
- Rabbeinu Tam** holds that two of the original four strings must be complete, and we may be lenient only on the remaining two strings if they snap down to two inches. We try to satisfy the opinion of Rabbeinu Tam if one has another garment, but if he does not, one can use the garment as per the opinion of the Rosh and according to the **Mishna Berura** (1) he can even make a *beracha*. Others argue this point (2). **Therefore....** as per the above:
- If one of the eight strings snap, even all the way up to the last knot, the *Tzitzis* are kosher because the other half that is still there is two or more inches long.
- If two on the same side (group of four) snapped, it is also kosher as above.
- If three or four of the same side snapped, it is kosher according to the above Rosh, because the other half of each string is at least two inches long, but not according to Rabbeinu Tam since we do not have two of the original four strings complete.
- If two snapped, one on each side, they might be from the same string and if there are not two inches left, it is invalid. The same holds true if one is not careful to keep the same four in one group, and two snapped even on the same side.

הזא היה צמר ...

Chacham Avraham Dayan ZT"L (Aram Sova) would say:

"The *Chacham* and the *Rasha* (wise son and wicked son) in the *Haggadah* are both asking legitimate questions; why is one smart and the other evil? This may be compared to two young men from a small village who wish to go out and make it in the world. They decided to ask the village elder for some advice and he tells them all about the difficult life he has lived. One boy is discouraged and goes home, not even bothering to try; the other boy leaves the village, works hard and finds success in his life. Similarly, based on their questions, it is clear that the wicked son has predetermined that Judaism is '*Avoda*' - hard work, while the wise son is optimistic and positive, and will succeed."

R' Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov ZT"L (Bnei Yissaschar) would say:

"Why do we stop asking for '*Geshem*' (rain) which signifies wealth and sustenance, on the first day of Pesach? Shouldn't we continue asking for this all year round? The answer is that the *matza* we eat on the night of *Pesach* is 'לחם עני' which the *seforim hakedoshim* tell us is a *segulah* for *parnassa*. By fulfilling the *mitzvah* on the night of *Pesach* properly, we sustain ourselves for the rest of the year. Indeed, *למצה לחם עני*, is the *gematria* of 'גשם' (343)."

A Wise Man would say:

"Liberty is the right to choose. Freedom is the result of the right choice."

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Special Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Tzvi Turner on the Engagement of their Daughter Rikky to Ari Kahan of Passaic. May they be Boneh a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel.

ודבר זה ראינו אצל יוסף הצדיק, כשמכרוהו לפוטופר נאמר (בראשית ל"ט, ג) וידא אריוני כי ה' אתו וכל אשר הוא עושה ה' מצליח בידו, ופרש"י: כי ה' אתו שם שמם שגור בפיו. והיינו מאחר שראה שש"ש שורה על פיו, דע שהש"ת אתו, והוא דבוק בו כראוי, כי לא יתכן שיהיה שם ה' שגור בפיו של האדם כל היום והוא

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים (סדר מניח בהגדה של פסח) - **בעניין 'לחם שעונים עליו דברים הרבה'** ותחילת 'מגיד' של 'סדר ליל פסח', לפני שמתחילים לספר ביציאת מצרים, ואומרים 'עבדים היינו וכו', ומתחילים בגנות ומסיימים בשבח' (ע' פסחים קט"ז)-'ושמואל אמר וכו'), מקרימים ואומרים 'הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים וכו', ויש להבין טעם הדבר. (וע' בהגדה של פסח-מבית לוי, שביאר בשם **הגר"ו מברסק**, "הא דאומרים נוסח זה קודם קריאת ההגדה, יש לבאר על פי מה דאיתא בגמרא (ברכות ל"ט): "הכל מודים בפסח שמניח פרוסה בתוך שלימה ובוצע, מאי טעמא, 'לחם עוני' כתיב", ופירש רש"י, "ודרכו של עני בפרוסה, לפיכך צריך שיראה כבוצע מן הפרוסה", ודחי, דהא דחוצין המצה הוא מטעם דהוי 'לחם עוני', ועל כן הוקבע לומר 'הא לחמא עניא' כאן, מפני ששייך ל'יחץ', ובסדר הלילה, דרי 'יחץ' הוא בסמוך ל'מגיד'").

ויש להסביר, בהקדם דברי הגמרא (פסחים ל"ו), "אמר שמואל, לחם עוני-לחם שעונים עליו דברים הרבה", ופירש רש"י, "שעונים עליו דברים-שגומרים עליו את ההלל, ואומרים עליו הגדה", ולכן כתב הב"י (שו"ע אר"ח ס' תע"ג סיף ז'), "וכשמתחיל 'עבדים היינו לפרעה', מחזיר הקערה שבה המצות לפניו, וקורא כל ההגדה וכו'", והוסיף הרמ"א (שם), "ויהיה הפת מגולה בשעה שאומר ההגדה וכו'", וביאר ב'משנה ברורה' (שם ס"ק ע"ו), "דלכן נקרא המצה 'לחם עוני', מפני שעונים עליו דברים".

ולפ"י יש לבאר מדוע מקדימים ואומרים 'הא לחמא עניא וכו', שזאת כדי לרמו שההגדה נאמרת על המצה. (ועד"ז כתב **הב"ח** [טור אר"ח ס' תע"ג אות י"ב ד"ה ומה שכתב ומחזיר הקערה וכו']-כ"כ גם הסמ"ק, שמחזירין הקערה כשיאמר 'עבדים היינו', והיינו משום ד'לחם עוני' כתיב, שעונים עליו דברים הרבה, וכדאיתא בגמרא וכו', ואין מכאן ראיה, ד'עליו' אין פירושו עליו ממש, אלא הכי פירושו, על ענין הלחם עונין דברים הרבה, שעיקר ההגדה הוא בעניין מצות מצה שרומזת לחירות, ולכן מתחילין 'הא לחמא עניא', ועליו נמשך עניין ההגדה וכו') וכן אומרים בהמשך ההגדה, "יכול מראש חדש, תלמוד לומר 'ביום ההוא', אי 'ביום ההוא' יכול מבעוד יום, תלמוד לומר 'בעבוד זה', 'עבעוד זה' לא אמרתי אלא בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך", והיינו, שעל ההגדה להיאמר על המצה.

ולפי פשוטו זאת משום, ש'עיקר ההגדה הוא בעניין מצות מצה שרומזת לחירות' (עיי' ב"ח הג"ל, וכמו שאומרים בהמשך ההגדה, 'מצה זו שאנו אוכלים על שום מה, על שום שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמיץ, עד שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא וגאלם, שנאמר ו'זיאפו את הבצק אשר הוציאו ממצרים עוגות מצות כי לא חמץ, כי גורשו ממצרים ולא יכלו להתתהמה").

אולם, גם יש להסביר עניין זה לפי עומקו, וזאת בהקדם מה שכתב בהגדה של פסח-ליל שימורים' (**מהנ"ש בדעוודא וצ"ל**, פרקים כ"ב וכ"ג), לגבי עניין 'סיפור יציאת מצרים', (והנה לעיל (פרק י"ד) הבאנו מדברי הוזה"ק בפרשת בא, על גודל שמחתם של בני ישראל בכל שנה ושנה בליל פסח כשמספרים ביצי"מ, ועל גודל שמחתו של הקב"ה בסיפור זה, ועל רוב התפעלותם של מלאכי השרת בשמעם מפיהם של ישראל סיפור יצי"מ, ושאו מודים המלאכים לקב"ה על עם קדוש שיש לו בארץ השמחים בשמחת גאולת אדונם, ושאלנו, מה היא גודל התפעלותם של מלאכי השרת על זה שישראל מספרים ביצי"מ, ומדוע חוזר הוזה"ק כמה פעמים על ענין שמחתם של ישראל בסיפור זה, ועוד יש להבין, מה היא כוונת הלשון 'עם קדוש שיש לו בארץ'").

איננו דבוק בבורא, כי כאמור מורה סגנון הדיבור על מהותו של אדם, ואפילו גוי כפוטופר הכיד בדבר זה. ובוכות שנקבל קבלה גמורה שלא לדבר שום דיבור שאינו לרצון הש"ת נזכה לגאולת הנפש ע"י הארת החג הק' הזה, ונזכה לחיות ועדבות בדיבורי קדושה, תורה ותפילה, ולהתעלות מעלה מעלה במעלות העבודה.

מאנץ הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
מגיד משרים בק"ס בית שמש

ומיישב, "הלא כתבנו לעיל (פרק י"ח), שבזמן שהגוף וכוחותיו מתגברים באדם, אין הוא מכיר שום טובה בעולם. (כי הגוף הגשמי עם גאוותו, אשר כל מחשבתו היא שחיבים לו כל העולם כולו, וכמאמרם ז"ל 'שלי שלי ושלך שלי', אינו מרגיש שום טובה בעולם כלל וכלל, ואדרבה, כל ימי חייו מלא תלונות ותערומות שעדיין לא נתנו לו כל מה שחיבים לו, ולעולם לא יודה ולא ישבח על שום טובה שעשו אתו וכו' [שם]), וא"כ לפי טבעו הגשמי של האדם הוא כפוי טובה, וכדי להיות מכיר טובה באמת ויכלל שלם, צריכה נשמתו להכניע את גופו להתגבר עליו ולנצחו.

והנה, קדושה היא פרישות האדם מגשמייות הטבעית והתגברות רוחניותו, ועל זה מתפעלים מלאכי השרת בליל פסח 'על עמא קרישא וכו', פירוש, על עם ישראל הנמצאים בארעא - 'בארץ הגשמי', ולכל אחד ואחד ממנו יש גוף גשמי, שלפי טבעו אינו יכול להכיר טובה, ומי"מ כל אור"א משראל בליל פסח מרבה לספר ביצי"מ, שהיא גאולה שגאלה הקב"ה בכבודו ובעצמו. הוא יתברך, ולא מלאך ולא שליח וכו', ולפי טבעו האדם מצטער מאד בהעלותו על דעתו שיציאתו מעבדות לחירות ומשיעבוד לגאולה נעשה הכל בלעדו, כי הגאווה הגופנית אינה סובלת עלבון כזה, ומי"מ ישראל בליל פסח, לא רק שמספרים שרק הקב"ה גאל אותם, אלא גם מרבים לספר גודל גבורותיו ונפלאותיו וישועותיו יתברך שמו, ולא זו אף זו, ששמחים מאד בתכלית השמחה להרבות לספר שרק הוא ית"ש עשה לנו את כל הטובות והנפלאות האלו, ושאלו חייבים להכיר טובותיו ית', להודות ולשבח ולפאר וכו', ובהיות שטבע הגוף להצטער מאד על מחשבה זו, ולכפור בכל הטובה כמש"כ לעיל, וישראל שמחים מאד להכיר טובתו ית' בכל לשון של שבח והודאה, ולהרבות לספר נפלאותיו כפי צחות לשונם, אין זו אלא התגברות נשמותיהם על טבע גופם, ולכן נקראים קדושים-ע"מ קדישא, שוכו לפרוש מהגשמייות, הגם שנמצאים 'בארעא-בע"מ העולם הגשמי, וזה שלמות האדם', והיינו, שרק האדם שאינו נמשך אחר החומריות, ביכולתו לספר ביציאת מצרים כראוי.

וגם יש להקדים את מש"כ ה**מאור ושמש'** (הפסרת יום א' של פסח, בד"ה עוד על פסוק הנ"ל ויאכלו וכו'-ד"ה ויראה לומר), אודות 'מצות אכילת מצה', כ"י הנה ידוע, שמצה מרמזת על היצר טוב וחמץ על היצר הרע, והעניין הוא, שהמצה היא בלא טעם, שאינו אלא מקמח ומים, ומצוותה רומזת להודות לאדם לבל ידירוף אחר הבמותיות ומטעמים, רק יגביר השכל על החומר, ולא יאכל כי אם לשובע נפשו, אבל לא כדי להשביע תאוותו, ולכן מצות אפיקומן לאכלו על השובע, כדי לרמוז, שכמו שהאפיקומן אינו נאכל לתאוה והמדה, רק לקיום המצוה, כמו כן תהיה אכילתו של כל השנה בלי תאוה מתאוות החומריות. וזהו שאמרו חז"ל בהגדה של פסח, 'שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמיץ עד שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים הקב"ה וגאלם', שרומן, שכל כך זיכנו את עצמן, ולא היתה באכילתם שום תערובת שאור שבעיסה שהוא היצר הרע, עד שהגיעו להתפשטות הגשמייות, והתגלות אלוקותו יתברך שמו, וזהו 'שלא הספיק בצקם להחמיץ', דהיינו, שלא היתה במחשבתם שום חימוץ ותאוה מה'שאור שבעיסה' שהוא היצר הרע, עד שנגלה עליהם וכו', שרומן, שנודככו כל כך, עד שזכו על ידי הודככות החומריות, שיתגלה עליהם אלוקותו יתברך שמו". ולפ"ו, עניין 'לחם שעונים עליו דברים הרבה' מוסבר היטב, שרק מי שהוא בבחינת 'לחם עוני', ואינו נמשך אחר החומריות, ביכולתו לספר ביציאת מצרים כראוי-עונים עליו דברים הרבה'.



this occasion, as his great father elaborated on the mystifying words of Rashi, young Shimon, the future chief rabbi of Krakow and author of “*Nichtav Sofer*” was listening intently, concentrating on understanding his father’s question.

Suddenly, and with youthful enthusiasm, the boy jumped off his father’s lap and said, “*Tatte, Tatte*, I think I know the answer!” The men sitting around enjoyed the youth’s exuberance and knew him to be a budding genius. They urged the boy to say his piece and even R’ Moshe nodded, indicating that Shimon should present his answer.

Without the slightest bit of bashfulness, young Shimon Sofer stood before the assembled scholars and said, “I will explain it with a *marshal*. If a person writes a private letter to his friend and sends it with a servant to deliver, if the servant is not intelligent and does not know how to read, the letter does not need to be sealed in an envelope since the servant cannot understand what the writing is talking about anyway. But if he sends the same letter with a smart person, one who knows how to read and write, in that case, he must seal the letter carefully so that the contents remain private and the messenger cannot look at it and understand it. For this reason, *Chazal* said 'ראתה' - the maidservant was able to see what great *Nevi'im* could not - but she certainly could not understand what she saw!”

The men sat in awe at the brilliant response of this young child. They praised his great mind and his promising future. Only the Chasam Sofer himself sat with a stony expression. He was concerned that all the praise would go to the child’s head. In one version of the story, he slapped his son lightly on the cheek to ward off any *Ayin Hara*, and in another version, he said, “What sort of nonsense are you saying?” and then took his hood and covered over his son’s face!

Throughout the entire eight days of *Yom Tov*, the saintly **Rebbe of Kossov, R’ Chaim Hager ZT”L** (author of *Toras Chaim* and father of the first *Vizhnitzer Rebbe*) maintained some of the most stringent customs one can imagine. Of course, he was careful not to eat *gebrokst* and his house was scrubbed clean of any trace of *chametz* - but that was just the tip of the iceberg. When he would bake *matzos*, he would warn the gentiles that chopped the wood to wipe themselves and the wood they brought clean of any possible outside traces. He would even buy them new clothes each year when they did their work chopping and loading the firewood into the oven, just to be sure that there was no *chametz* on them. On top of that, R’ Chaim built a wooden contraption consisting of two wooden stakes, upon which he would place any *matza* he would put into his mouth. He placed this contraption on his *Seder* table and he refused to allow any *matza* to rest on the table or even remain in a box together with other *matzos*. He would personally handle each *matza* and place it carefully on the wooden poles (which were also scrubbed clean) so that nothing could come close to touching it.

Many such stringencies were commonplace in the Kossover Rebbe’s home and he was constantly on edge throughout *Yom Tov* ensuring that these stringent customs were properly enforced and maintained. In fact, he would worry so much that he would make himself sick - so sick that on one occasion, his family feared for his life. They begged him to lighten up just a bit on his restrictions and only many years later, when R’ Chaim was much older did he actually ease up on certain strictures - but only on the eighth and final day of *Pesach*.

How this came about was revealed by R’ Chaim himself. One year, he added even more constraints to his usual harsh *Pesach* regimen, which caused him to become so sick that he could barely lift himself out of bed. His weakness, due to the fact that he barely put more than a morsel of food in his mouth over the first seven days of the holiday, progressed to the point that his family believed he was about to pass away. They even opened up all the windows in his bedroom as is customary when a *neshama* is about to leave this world.

But then, R’ Chaim opened his eyes and asked for *negel vasser* - water to wash his hands after sleeping. His astonished family watched as he stood up and announced, “*Boruch Hashem*, the worst has passed and I will be okay.”

He went on to relate an amazing story. While in his semi-conscious state, he saw himself being summoned to a *Din Torah* by the angel that oversees the Land of Israel. Just as every nation and country has a ministering angel to advocate on its behalf in Heaven, the Land of Israel has an angel who does the same. This angel called R’ Chaim to a court case in Heaven and accused him of carrying out unusually harsh restrictions on *Acharon shel Pesach*, the eighth and final day of *Yom Tov*, while in *Eretz Yisroel*, the residents are already eating *chametz*. How is it possible, he argued before the Heavenly Tribunal, that a person in *Chutz La’aretz* (outside of Israel) can consider himself greater and holier than all the residents of the Holy Land? Is this not an affront to the Land itself, worthy of punishment by death to the offender?

When he heard the accusation and realized its dire consequences, R’ Chaim agreed to accept upon himself that on the last day of *Yom Tov*, he would lighten up on some of the restrictions that he kept the first seven days, and the *Beis Din shel Maalah* accepted his plea. Thus, when he woke up, he knew that the worst of his illness had passed and he would survive.

From that year and on, R’ Chaim would ease some of his restrictions on *Acharon shel Pesach* - albeit marginally and with great trepidation. In fact, whenever he would do something less stringent than he had been doing before, he would ask his sons, “Do you think I have fulfilled my obligation to be *maikil* (lighten up)?”

זכר המרבה לספר ... הרי זה משזבח

בעשר לחדש הזה ויקחו להם איש שה לבית אבות ... (שמות יב-ג)

Events that are commemorated by the observance of a special day are usually celebrated on the actual anniversary of those events. *Purim*, *Lag B’omer* and *Tisha B’av* are prime examples of this. A blatant exception, however, is the commemoration of the miracle of the slaughtering of the *Korban Pesach* in Egypt, which took place on *Shabbos*, the tenth of *Nisan*. Rather than commemorate this event on the tenth of *Nisan* each year, we recall this event on *Shabbos HaGadol*, the *Shabbos* before *Pesach*.

The **Meshech Chochmah**, **R’ Meir Simcha HaKohen ZT”L** (*Parshas Vaeschanan*) draws a distinction between the first set of *Luchos* (tablets) that *Hashem* gave to *Klal Yisroel* on *Har Sinai*, and the second set of *Luchos* that Moshe Rabbeinu brought down from the mountain 120 days later. In the first *Luchos*, there is an emphasis on the fact that *Shabbos* is “זכר למעשה בראשית” - “*a remembrance of the Creation*,” whereas in the second *Luchos*, the purpose of *Shabbos* is to remind us how *Hashem* took *Bnei Yisroel* out of Egypt - “זכר ליציאת מצרים”.

Based on this, **R’ Yissachar Dov Loriner ZT”L** quotes **R’ Laibish Becker Shlit’a**, grandson of the late **Ozherover Rebbe ZT”L** and explains that the day of *Shabbos* conveys to the world that *Hashem* is the One and only Creator of the world. This was clearly demonstrated during *Yetzias Mitzrayim* when *Hashem* displayed that He is the sole Ruler, the Controller of nature, Who changes it when and for whom He sees fit. This, too, indicates that the world was created for the Jewish people and that we were - and still are - are the focus of the entire universe.

On the other hand, the first celebration of the *geulah*, the remembrance of when our nation prepared the *Korban Pesach* in Egypt must be celebrated only on the day of *Shabbos* in order to indicate that *Yetzias Mitzrayim* completed the demonstration that the world was created for *Klal Yisroel*. This is why we do not commemorate the anniversary date but rather on *Shabbos HaGadol*.

ושמרתם את המצות כי בעצם היום הזה הוצאתי את

צבאותיכם מארץ מצרים וכו’ (שמות יב-י)

Chazal tell us that “*Chametz*” is a reference to arrogance (just as bread rises, arrogance causes a person’s head to swell) and “*Matza*” reflects humility. For the most part, a Jew must remain humble in all his ways, however, with respect to the nations of the world, many who wish to subjugate *Klal Yisroel* and remove them from *Avodas Hashem*, often it is important for a Jew to show his pride and act with decisiveness to stymie anti-semitism.

The **Skverer Rebbe**, **R’ Duvid Twersky Shlit’a**,

explains that when the Jewish people left Egypt, they were anxious to leave their masters behind and play the part of “run-away slaves” who escaped from the bigger, stronger and more powerful Egyptian nation. However, *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* did not want them to go out with such a mindset. This is false humility and He wanted *Bnei Yisroel* to recognize that in truth, THEY are the greatest nation in the world, hand-picked and chosen by the Almighty Himself. This is what the *Baal Haggadah* means when he writes, “*the dough of our forefathers did not have time to rise*” - the people did not feel the need to “rise to the occasion” - to raise their heads up high and declare their freedom, to be recognized as a wonder unto all the nations, for they still believed themselves to be inferior to the Egyptians; “*until the King of all Kings, Hakadosh Boruch Hu revealed Himself to them and redeemed them*” - by revealing that the Jewish people are the “*Am Hashem*,” the nation of the Lord, He made it clear that we are not inferior to anyone; on the contrary, we are the greatest people in the world, and all the other nations must look up to us and revere us for our respected role in society.

Thus, the *Torah* tells us: (שמות יב-י): “*Guard the matzos.*” Humility (*Matza*) is an admirable trait but a Jew must be careful that he does not display false humility, or a sense of humbleness when it is not called for or when it can undermine a person’s ability to serve *Hashem* properly. “כי בעצם היום הזה הוצאתי את צבאותיכם” - “*For in the midst of that day, Hashem took out your legions from the Land of Egypt.*” There was no messenger, no angel or guardian to whom *Hashem* entrusted the task of redeeming His people from slavery; rather, *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* in all His glory, took it upon Himself to do this great act, thereby demonstrating to us the exalted quality of His nation, and how we must perceive ourselves in relation to the other nations of the world.

השתא עבדי לשנה הבאה בני חורין (סדר מגיד בהגדה של פסח)

We begin the *Seder* on *Pesach* night with the wistful aspiration, “*Although now we are slaves, next year we hope to be free men.*” What aspect of “בני חורין” are we hoping for? What sense of freedom are we currently missing? Most Jews find themselves with great religious freedom, both in Israel and America. And the wealth and leisure time of the Western world enables thousands of dedicated Torah scholars to sit and learn day and night in our *batei medrashim*. In *Eretz Yisroel*, tens of thousands of scholars spend their lives dedicated to *Torah* in safety and security, a state of affairs unprecedented since the times of the second Temple. What aspect of “חירות” - religious freedom, are we missing?

בן בנו של ק”ז דמסייע לדבר מצוה שמקבל שכר כעושה המצוה. ולמדו מכך, שהנשים המסייעות לבעליהן ולבניהן בלימוד התורה, מקבלות את אותו השכר השמור ללומדי התורה. לכן בוודאי שמחו הנשים בגילוי זה, וטוב עשו כאשר בחרו לשורר דוקא משפט זה.

הש”ת יעזור, שנתבונן בכל אלו הנקודות, ונתעורר על ידם לעבוד את הש”ת, ואור האמונה ימשך עלינו, כמובא בווה”ק (ח”ב קפג, ב) שהיא מיכלא דמדימנותא. ונזכה במהרה לקיים מצות על מצות ומדורים ויכלוהו בבית המקדש השלישי בקרוב במהרה בימינו אכ”ר.

יום ליבשה נתפכו מצולים שירת חדשה שבתו גאולים

In the weeks leading up to the holiday of *Pesach*, the rabbinate of Tel Aviv-Jaffa under the auspices of its chief rabbi, **R’ Isser Yehuda Unterman ZT”L**, published large posters with a summary of the laws and customs of *Pesach*, and would make them readily available for all the city’s residents. From the moment, R’ Unterman was elected as chief rabbi in 1946, he worked hard to reach out to secular Israelis, especially creating an understanding between the religious and the secular populations. These posters were quite helpful in allowing many Jews who were not familiar with the complex *halachos* of the *chag* to clean their homes and maintain a kosher standard as per *halacha*.

R’ Unterman remained in his post for over twenty years, until he was elected to be the chief rabbi of Israel. His replacement was **Chacham Ovadia Yosef ZT”L**, who took over the position in 1968, a position which he held until his election as Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel in 1973.

The first year after Chacham Ovadia began to serve as the chief rabbi of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. Rabbi Truchash, the head of the rabbinate’s *kashrus* department, brought the text of the *Pesach* poster to the *Rav’s* office for his approval before publication. Chacham Ovadia looked over the text of the announcement and informed him that he would not sign it because it contained an incorrect ruling. Rabbi Truchash was shocked, and slightly dismayed. An incorrect ruling? Why, this same poster, with these same rulings, had been posted for many years and the previous chief rabbi never had a complaint. Was the new chief rabbi insinuating that the former one had made a mistake all this time?

Not wishing to be disrespectful, Rabbi Truchash asked, “Might His Honor kindly tell me where there is an incorrect ruling? These *halachos* were reviewed many times over and no one had ever found anything wrong with them.”

Chacham Ovadia smiled and read the announcement out loud: “‘**Rice and legumes are forbidden on Pesach, but the Sephardic custom is to permit them.**’” The *Rav* looked at the man and declared, “This is not true. If you will look in the *Gemara Pesachim* (לה.) and *Shulchan Aruch* (תנ”ג), you will write the announcement as follows: ‘**Rice and legumes are permitted on Pesach, but the Ashkenazic custom is to forbid them.**’”

The head of the *kashrus* department nodded but he really didn’t see the difference. Once again, he tried to get the *Chacham* to sign without any changes but he was unwilling to do so. In frustration, he went to R’ Unterman, who was then the chief rabbi of Israel, and complained that the new rabbi refused to sign the poster over what Rabbi Truchash believed to be a technicality. R’ Unterman looked at the paper and smiled. Then, he nodded his head and said, “Do what Rav Ovadia says because, indeed, he is correct.” The changes were made and Chacham Ovadia signed the announcement.

זה א-לי ואנהו אלקי אבי וארוממנהו (שמות מו-ב) - פרש”י ראתה שפחה על הים מה שלא ראו נביאים עב”ל.

The following story was told over by the **Mattersdorfer Rav**, **R’ Shmuel Ehrenfeld ZT”L**, in the name of his holy grandfather. One year, on the seventh day of *Pesach*, the holy **Chasam Sofer**, **R’ Moshe Sofer ZT”L**, the *Rav* and *Rosh Av Beis Din* of Pressburg, was delivering a *shiur* (lecture) in the large central synagogue on various topics pertaining to *Krias Yam Suf* and the *Shiras HaYam*. The Chasam Sofer quoted the famous words that Rashi brings in the name of the Talmud: “*(Even) a maidservant saw what the greatest of prophets could not see.*”

“How can it be,” thundered the Chasam Sofer as he gazed out over the assemblage, “that a lowly servant was able to see miracles of such a caliber that even the greatest prophets in the history of *Klal Yisroel* could not see? Our Sages tell us that the *Navi Yechezkel ben Buzi*, who prophesied about the size and dimensions of the future *Bais HaMikdash*, and other concepts and circumstances that are way beyond human comprehension, could not even reach the level of prophecy that the lowest maidservant was able to attain at the splitting of the sea. How can we understand such a statement of our sages? What is the lesson we are meant to internalize from this incredible statement of *Chazal*?”

Very often, when the Chasam Sofer would deliver a *shiur* or learn in his private study, his young son Shimon would sit on his father’s lap and drink in the hallowed atmosphere, as well as imbibe the sights and sounds of *Torah* learning. This kept him in good stead as he progressed in his studies and became a towering *Talmid Chacham* in his own right. On

לאותו שכר של לומדי התורה בעצמם, או שזוכות לשכר כלשהו אך לא כשכרם של לומדי התורה עצמם.

והנה בקריעת ים סוף ראתה מדים הנביאה וראו כל הנשים, ש”סוס ודוכבו רמה בים”. ולכאורה הרי הסוס אינו אשם בזה שדרך אחרי ישראל, שהרי היה מונגה בידי הרוכב המצרי; ורק סייע לו להגיע לישראל, ובכל זאת נענש הסוס בדיוק כמו הרוכב. נמצא, שהמסייע לדבר עבירה נענש כעושה עבירה עצמה.

ולפי”ז אם כן, עשו הנשים חשבון לעצמן, שהרי מדה טובה מרובה ממדת פורענות (סוטה יא, א), ואם המסייע לדבר עבירה נענש כעושה עבירה, קל וחומר

which are not our own but which have been foisted upon us from without, which control our every decision, so subtly that we are not even aware of their being foreign. Until man constructs his own self, he can be controlled so profoundly and thoroughly that he cannot even see his own shackles. He believes it is his own decision to stay locked in one place, uncreative and oblivious. Our prayer on *Pesach* night is that we all attain true freedom and become “*free men*” - “בני חורין” by making contact with our inner core selves, and taking control of our lives. The requirement of “*Sippur*” even when we are already “wise men” (חכמים ונבנים) may be because of the new creative aspects, the *chiddushim* and novel ideas we hope to find on each *seder* night. (**Rav: Thinking Aloud**)

חייב אדם לדאות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים (סדר מגיד)
It makes sense for children to celebrate the anniversary of their parents’ wedding. After all, if their parents had not wed, they would not have come into this world. It is, thus, an important event not just for the parents but for the children as well. But is it also important for the children to review the menu that was served at the wedding? Is it necessary for them to know whether fish or poultry was served? Of course not. The important thing is that their parents are married. Likewise with regard to the events that took place during the exodus from Egypt. We are grateful that we left that horrible place of slavery. But why are we commanded so strongly to tell over - at such great length - every last detail?

We learn from this, writes **R’ Simcha Wasserman ZT”L**, that this is not only a series of events that happened in that generation, but that they also have an effect on our lives today. The **Ramban** in *Parshas Bo* says that *Yetzias Mitzrayim* demonstrated at that time the fundamentals of *emunah* and belief in *Hashem*. First of all, the existence of *Hashem* and His power were visibly and powerfully demonstrated. It was also clear that the world does not function like a machine that was created to run by itself. *Hashgacha* - that He has a concern with what is going on - was demonstrated, as was prophecy. When *Moshe Rabbeinu* said something, it happened exactly the way he said it would.

The Ramban says that these fundamentals are essential and they demonstrated so dramatically at the time of our formation as a nation so that we should always remember them. We should learn the lessons of *emunah* from the miracles and wonders that accompanied our leaving Egypt.

Thus, we say: “*In every generation, a person is obligated to see himself as if he went out of Egypt*” - as if he had personally experienced the entire process of the exodus in its entirety. We should be grateful for it. It is not enough to know that there was a wedding. We must also learn lessons from it. In order to learn a lesson, we must know what actually happened at the wedding.

Psychologists have argued for years about what aspects of man are the results of his “nature” (tendencies rooted in his genetic code), and what aspects are the results of his “nurture” (input from his environment and others around him). Yet all agree to the implicit premise that man’s intellect and genius is the product of some external force; they only quibble over what form that force has assumed: biology or society. The problem, says **Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik ZT”L**, is that if either group of psychologists are correct, then there is no room for true creativity. According to them, all we do is collect ideas, combine them according to the dictates of our nature and/or nurture, and spit it all back out in a slightly different form. We cannot create anything new, but just recycle and regurgitate the existing world in different guises and permutations. One can thus predict, not with mathematical certainty but within a range of probability, the nature of an individual person’s reactions. One’s personality is determined by the sum of the person’s previous experiences, life history, and/or genetics.

Rabbi Soloveitchik was friends with Dr. Gromer, an assistant to the famous Professor Albert Einstein. He often said that Einstein, as a technical mathematician, was far from the best. What was his brilliance based upon? He used the German term “*Anschauung*” - creative intuition, i.e. suddenly seeing the solution. Often, the light comes on after years of searching, when man is completely concentrated and it has become the central theme of the person. It predominates his thought, but still he feels that he is not making headway. In one moment the light is switched on, and something mysterious, otherworldly, transcendent, and beyond human comprehension has suddenly united within him. Every man is creative, if only he can find himself.

The **Rambam** writes that during the ten plagues in Egypt, Pharaoh lost his *bechirah* - his free will, and was incapable of allowing the Jews to leave their bondage even if he had wanted to. When Pharaoh lost his freedom, he was no longer rooted in his transcendent self. He became a surface personality, his reactions emanating from the external world which was imposed upon him, not which he had chosen. Such a person has no value judgments, is constantly shifting from one to another, and always wants to be associated with famous people whose glory they can reflect. They have no characteristic bent to their personality, for it flows from without, not from within. Freedom is not something given, but something we must work for, which also means that it can never be fully attained. It is the ideal of self-fashioning and being rooted in one’s self and inner core.

“*Today we are slaves,*” expresses the notion that we are controlled, not physically or politically, but in our very minds. By being products of the world around us, we will only have beliefs, emotions, and goals

He began to study French in earnest and he picked it up in a reasonably short time. He walked around speaking in French to his fellow passengers and indeed, when the ship landed in France, he was quite pleased with his new-found linguistic ability. He was able to communicate with the local citizenry and he even helped out his fellow mates who did not understand the language. He enjoyed himself immensely over the course of those two weeks, wining and dining himself and thoroughly enjoying his stay. Finally, he got back on to his ship and set sail for America.

Now, he opened the book on English and began to study, however, he found that he was having difficulty picking up the new language. As easy and smooth learning French had been for him, this was how hard and unyielding his comprehension of English was. He tried and tried but he just could not get the hang of it. From the moment he landed on American soil, he had difficulty communicating with people; he could not read the signs properly and he could make himself understood when he tried to transact. All in all, he was miserable in New York, and for the rest of his days, he never did quite capture the “American Dream” that he was so looking forward to.

And why? Because he wasted his time learning French for the two weeks of pleasure he enjoyed in France, at the expense of living a good life in New York, since he did not

understand or speak English while living in the United States! **צַמְשֵׁל**: *Chazal* teach us (ברכות י.) “*A favorite saying of Rav was: The future world is not like this world. In the future world there is no eating, no drinking, no propagation, no business, no jealousy, no hatred, no competition, but the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads feasting on the brightness of the Divine Presence, as it says, ‘They had a vision of the Divine, and they ate and drank.’”* **R’ Yosef Leib Bloch ZT”L (Maharil)** is critical of typical human behavior. He writes: “A person must realize that he comes down to this world for a limited period of time - seventy years, maybe more - but his ultimate existence is in the next world, in *Olam Haba*! There, he won’t have food and drink, he won’t partake of the temporal pleasures of this world. He won’t need to learn French!

What then, will a person need to maintain a successful afterlife? He will be required to learn the language that is spoken in Heaven, the language that *Tzaddikim* understand, which allows them to sit with joy and pleasure, feasting on the glow of the *Shechina*, connecting to the spiritual nature of the future world. Our job here - and especially on the night of *Pesach* - is to learn the language of the angels, and then practice it during our temporary stay on this world, so that we may be fluent for the rest of time, and successful in our future lives in *Olam Haba*!

רעיונות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת הש"ת ותהלתו, באמונת ובסתות מאת

לשביעי ואחרון של פסח: בקריעת ים סוף, מי הבקיע את הים?

בהוראת השי"ת למשה לקראת בקיעת הים נאמר (שמות יד, טז): “ואתה הרים את מטה נטתה את ירך על הים ובקעתו”. הנה יש כאן ציווי מיוחד מאת השי"ת אל משה, שהוא בעצמו יבקע את הים ואז יבואו בני ישראל בתוך הים ביבשה. ואולם, כמה פסוקים אחר כך (פסוק כ"א), בעת תיאור גוף המעשה, לא משאיר לנו הכתוב שום ספק באשר לזהות הבוקע, וכך כתיב שם: “ויט משה את ידו על הים ויולך ה' את הים ברוח קדים עזה כל הלילה וגו' ויבקעו המים” הרי לנו, שהשי"ת כביכול בכבודו ובעצמו הבקיע את הים. וכך אנו אומרים מדי לילה בתפלת ערבית: “מלכותך ראו בניך בוקע ים לפני משה”.

אם כן, זו לנו הוראה, כי על כל יהודי להתייחס לכל פעולה הנעשית דרכו או באמצעות זולתו, שהכל מאתו ית' שמו, וכמו שנאמר (תהילים קלז, ד): “לעושה נפלאות גדולות לברד”, דהיינו שהקב"ה בעצמו עשה, ועושה, ויעשה לכל המעשים, ומה שאנו מסוגלים לעשות, הרי זה רק מכח הציור. וזהו יסוד האמונה, שמצד אחד צריך האדם להתאמץ לעשות רצון הבורא בשלימות, ומאידך עליו לדעת כי בסופו של דבר הוא לא עשה מאומה, והכל מאתו יתברך שמו.

והו שמצינו כאן, הדגם שמשה נטה ידו על הים במצות השי"ת, מ"מ אילולי מאמר ה' לא היה נבקע הים, גם אם היה משאיר ידו מוטה כל היום. ולכן מתייחסת פעולת הבקיעה אל השי"ת למרות שמשה נטה ידו על הים במצות הבורא שציורו “נטה את ירך על הים ובקעתו”.

אמונה צריכה חיזוק בכל עת

כתיב: “וירא ישראל את ה' הגדולה אשר עשה ה' אשר עשה ה' במצרים ויירא העם את ה' ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו”. (יד, לא) הפסוק מתחיל: “וירא ישראל”, היינו, שראו את הניסים בעיניהם והגיעו למצב של יראת שמים

תגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

כהמשך הקרא “וייראו העם את ה'”, ו למא א"כ, היו צריכים להגיע גם ל"ויאמינו בה"? איזה צורך יש באמונה כשוראים דבר בחוש, הלא אמונה פירושה שאינו רואה אבל מאמין שזה קיים?

אמנם למדנו מכאן יסוד גדול. כי כ"ז שאדם חי עדיין בעולם השפל, השטן אורב לו בכל מצב להכשילו ולצנן את אמונתו, עד כדי כך שהוא מסוגל גם במצב של ראייה חושית, לצנן את הדבר בעיניו כאילו שכך הוא סדר העולם. שפעם בכך וכך שנים נבקע הים, וב'מקרה' עמדו בני ישראל לידו ברגע הנכון ו'הספיקו' לעבור בו עד ששבו כל מימיו חזרה, אבל המצריים הגיעו ב'מקרה' ברגע הלא נכון והם טבעו.

לכן, כדי להשאר איתן באמונתו, לא יכול אדם לסמוך על ראייה אפילו החושית ביותר, אלא מוכרח הוא להתחזק באמונה בכל רגע ובכל מצב. כיון שבעולם הזה אין שום אפשרות של הוכחה מוחלטת. ומשום כך התחזקו ישראל באמונה תיכף ומיד אחרי קריעת ים סוף, כמו שכתוב: “ויאמינו בה”’. למדנו מכאן, עד כמה חייב אדם להתחזק באמונה בכל עת, ולא להרפות מכך אפילו לרגע, כדי שלא יפתח תנח לשטן לצנן את אמונתו בהבלים של מקרי הטבע.

ותומכיה מאושר

”ותקח מרים הנביאה אחות אהרן את התוף בידה וגו' ותען להם מרים שירו לה' כי גאה גאה סוס ורוכבו רמה בים” (טו, כ-כא). וצריך להבין, מדוע שוררו הנשים דוקא את הפסוק הזה מתוך כל פסוקי השירה?

ושמעתי פעם ביאור נחמד בזה, על פי מה שאמרו חז"ל (ברכות יז, א): נשים במאי זכיין? ובאקרויין בנייהו לבי כנישתא, ובאתגוי' לגבריהו בי רבנן, ונטרין לגבריהו עד דאתו מבי רבנן. זכותן של הנשים היא משום שעוזרות לבעליהן ולבניהן בלימוד התורה. ואולם, אין מפורש כאן מהות שכן, האם הן זוכות

מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח (פסחים קמז.)

Why do we have a holiday to thank *Hashem* for taking us out of *Mitzrayim* if He was the one who put us there in the first place? Imagine that you are walking down the street minding your own business, when suddenly someone comes up behind you and hits you in the legs with an iron rod, breaking both your knees. As you lay on the floor writhing in pain, the man bends down and says, “Don’t worry, I am an orthopedic surgeon. I will be happy to reset your bones and cast them. I will fix you up as good as new!” Would you feel a tremendous debt of gratitude for this doctor for healing you? Absolutely not! You would be quite upset and angry that he put you through so much agony! So why are we so thankful to *Hashem* for taking us out of Egypt, if He was the one who put us through so much torture?

Rabbi Zev Leff Shlit'a explains that this analogy is far from accurate! He gives a different *mashal*: Imagine there was a terrible disease of the legs that developed over a period of ten years inside the body. It is impossible to detect until the final stages of the disease when the bones are almost entirely damaged. Unless it is caught immediately and operated on, the disease will cause a person to lose the ability to use his legs forever. Now, if this person is walking down the street and an orthopedic surgeon is walking behind him and the doctor suddenly realizes that this man is going to lose his legs! If the bones are not broken and reset within the next few minutes, they will completely disintegrate! So, the doctor takes a rod and breaks both his legs. As the man is laying on the floor in pain, the surgeon bends down and says, "Don't worry, I will reset and cast your legs, and fix you up as good as new! *Boruch Hashem*, I caught this in time. Another few minutes and you might never have walked again!" After understanding the situation, not only would you be grateful for the surgery and the cast that the doctor provides, but you would be equally as thankful for the fact that this surgeon broke your legs and put you through all the pain in the first place!

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

Every year, in the days leading up to the holiday of *Pesach*, **R' Eizel Charif of Slonim ZT"l** received a multitude of queries concerning the intricate laws of the holiday. R' Eizel possessed a brilliant mind and was well-known for his sharpness and insight. But he also had a big heart and knew how to use his sharp mind to perform acts of kindness.

One year, he received a distressed looking woman on the morning of *Erev Pesach*, asking for an audience with the Rabbi. The woman was none other than the wife of Nota Hirsch, a successful businessman and an active member of the Jewish community. He was one of the biggest philanthropists in the entire region.

“Rabbi,” she began, “I am at my wits end. My husband has suffered severe business setbacks that have wiped him out. He has no money left - not even one cent.”

"I am so sorry to hear this," responded R' Eizel, "I didn't know a thing about it."

“That’s just it,” she explained, “nobody knows. He is too humiliated to let anyone know. For years, we have always had the pleasure of contributing generously to the *mitzvah* of *Maos Chittim* (*Pesach* food for the needy), and now I do not even

I think you see where I'm going with this. Not only do we have a holiday to commemorate the great miracles that *Hashem* did for us when He took us out of Egypt, but we must also realize to thank Him for putting us there and making us suffer! Yes, even the suffering itself is something to be thankful for, for had we not undergone 210 years of suffering, we would have never become the great nation of *Am Yisroel*. For this reason we begin the story in the *Haggadah* with "גַּמְלָא" - the negative and even embarrassing parts of our history. "*In the beginning our forefathers were idol-worshippers*" We don't leave out the bad and only discuss what we see as positive in our eyes. *Chag HaPesach* is a time to reflect upon our lives and thank *Hashem* for everything, even the misfortune, difficulties and pain in our lives. Although they are not pleasant, they are very often the BEST things that could have happened to us!

The word "נס", which means miracle, is comprised of two letters, a "נ" and a "ס". The "נ" stands for "נפילה" - falling down, and the "ס" stands for "סמיכה" - the support that *Hashem* extends to those of us that fall, as we say, "סומך ה' - לכל הנופלים" - "*Hashem supports the fallen ones.*" But the "נפילה" is also part of the miracle. We must realize that had we not fallen, *Hashem* would not have needed to support us and supply us with His kindness and miracles.

On *Pesach* everyone is meant to see himself as if he personally walked out of Egypt. This means that whatever one is enslaved to - whether it is his fears, anxieties, anger, haughtiness, difficult relationships etc. - one must attempt to change his mindset and remove himself from any negative situation. Part of the salvation is thanking *Hashem* for the misfortune itself, because it is an impetus for tremendous growth! And in essence, that is what we are all here for. We are here to free ourselves from the shackles of the “Pharaoh” in our lives, and become true servants of *Hashem*.

May this be a beautiful *Yom Tov* for all of *Am Yisroel* and may we all achieve true freedom and gratitude to *Hashem* for EVERYTHING He gives us in His infinite mercy.

halacha dictates. For three days, they worked clandestinely at their oven, from morning until night, and managed to produce twenty-nine kilograms (sixty-four pounds) of *matza*!

On the night of the *Seder*, the Grlitzer Rebbe, R' Elisha Halberstam, sat at the head of the long table with a glowing expression on his face. He looked other-worldly and it wasn't long before the people at the table found out why. One of his sons came to him to wish him a *Gut Yom Tov*, and he answered them strangely, "Yes, eternal happiness."

The *Rebbe* conducted the *Seder* with deliberate actions. He drank the four cups of raisin wine, recited the *Haggadah*, and ate *maror*, all according to the *halacha*. He ate no *matzah*, however. The participants tried to figure out why. They told him that the flour had been properly guarded from fermentation until baking, but R' Elisha only said, "*Es shmekt nisht*, it doesn't smell right," and he would not eat. R' Chaim recalls that they never found out what the *Rebbe's* worry was.

It was nearing midnight and the *Seder* was concluding with the final *Nirtzah* recitals. Suddenly, R' Elisha looked up from his *Haggadah* and pointed silently to the words that appear in one of the songs that many people sing at the end of the *Haggadah*: "וַיְהִי בַחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה" - "*And it happened at midnight.*" A few minutes later, exactly as the clock struck midnight, the Gornitzer Rebbe closed his eyes and his pure soul left his body for eternal life.

משל למא, הדבר דזמא

אלו עשר מכות שהביא הקב"ה על המצרים ... דם צפרדע כנים ערוב (סדר מגיד בהגדה של פסח)

משנה: A rich man was planning to marry off his only son and he wished to do so in grand style. To this end, he ordered a full week of celebratory parties to be conducted every day before the actual wedding and specific guests to be invited to each party. For example, on the first day, only paupers and the indigent were permitted to attend the feast. On the second day, only *Torah* scholars and judges could come. On the third day, only relatives and distant cousins. On the fourth day, *yeshivah* students, and so on and so forth. To ensure that each party retains its unique flavor based on the invited guests, he hired guards to keep watch and make sure that nobody tries to sneak in and attend a party that he had already previously been to.

As it turned out, on the third day of parties, one of the guards thought he noticed a man sitting there who had been there just the day before. He alerted other security guards and they confronted the elderly gentleman as he was enjoying a fine feast and intoxicating drink.

“Excuse me sir,” said the guard, “I believe you were just here yesterday, attending the feast. If so, you cannot come back and partake again today. The master does not allow repeat guests.” The man looked up from his plate and smiled. “When did you say I was here?” he asked.

“Yesterday,” replied the guard. “And who were the

הרחמן הוא ינחלנו ליום שכולו טוב ... יום שצדיקים יושבים ועמרותיהם בראשיהם ונהנים מזיו השכינה ... (ברכת המזון ליל הסדר)

זמן: In times gone by, the dream of striking it rich in the “Goldene Medina” of America, lit up the eyes and inflamed the minds of many struggling Jews - both young and old - back in the old country. One young man was determined to leave the pain and hardship of the *shtetl* behind and make it on his own on these golden shores. Using all of his life’s savings, he booked passage on a steamliner that would take him from Eastern Europe to New York city, with a two-week stop-over in France.

invited guests who attended yesterday?" asked the man.

The guard paused to think for a moment. “Yesterday, only scholars were permitted to attend. Today, only relatives are permitted to attend.”

The elderly man took another sip from his drink and spoke to the guard. "So what exactly is the problem? Yesterday I attended as a scholar who spends my days learning in the various Houses of Study throughout the city. Today, though, as a cousin to the rich man who is hosting this party, I come as a relative. *L'Chaim!*"

מַכָּה: In the order of the Ten Plagues, every small child knows that *Kinim* (lice) was the third *makka*, whereas *Arov* (wild beasts) was the fourth *makka*. Yet in *Tehillim* (קה-לא), it states, "אמר ויבאו ערוב, כינים בכל גבולם" - "*He spoke and wild beasts arrived; there was lice in all their borders.*" This seems to indicate that *Arov* came before *Kinim*. However, writes the **Sefer Kehillas Yitzchok**, in truth, the lice came first and carried out their own mission to torture and plague the Egyptians, as commanded by *Hashem*. But, as the *Medrash* tells us, this was not all they did. Even when the wild beasts arrived, the lice came back in different forms of annoying insects, such as mosquitoes, wasps and hornets, to intensify the pain and suffering of the Egyptians. This was what **Dovid HaMelech** was referring to in the *posuk*.

The young man was smart and industrious and he wished to take advantage of his time spent traveling on the high seas to learn the language of the lands he would be visiting. He bought two books. One on the English language and one on the French language. Not sure which one he should read first, he decided that since he would be stopping over in France for a two-week period before continuing on to America, he might as well begin with French. There'll be time for English later, he reasoned.

a sad or downward tune be used? Why does the *Torah* employ such a happy tune to describe such a sad occurrence?”

A slight smile of victory curled up on the sides of the president’s mouth, while the people in the audience scratched their heads in bewilderment at the random equivocation of the question. But worst of all, the young man at the podium, who had previously been riding a wave of confidence and optimism, now felt the pinch of uncertainty threaten to overtake his entire performance. If he could not come up with a satisfactory reply to the *Rosh Hakahal*, how can he expect to get the job? He looked around at the audience but they all knew better than to take a side opposite their rich and powerful president. R’ Avraham Yehoshua became tongue-tied and there was a long stretch of uneasy silence in the large synagogue.

Suddenly, the young man’s face brightened and he straightened his posture. *Hashem* had come to his rescue and gave him a brilliant response. “That is a fine question indeed,” he began, his voice rising with his renewed confidence. “Perhaps we may understand it based on a concern that our sages have previously voiced. When *Hashem* spoke to Avraham Avinu, he forewarned him that his descendants will be ‘*a wandering nation in a land not their own; they will be enslaved and made to suffer for four hundred years.*’ (בראשית טו-יט) However, as we all know, *Bnei Yisroel* only slaved in bondage for 210 years. What happened to the other 190 years? Well, *Chazal* tell us that the harshness of the servitude was such that the pain and suffering of 400 years was rolled into 210 years. The embitterment of those years and watching their babies being thrown into the Nile was so terrible that *Hashem* counted it as if they had actually served the full 400 years.”

The *Rosh Hakahal* was taken aback at the young man’s miraculous rebound and he sat there spellbound as the spoken words were directed at him. R’ Avraham Yehoshua’s countenance was shining with a G-dly aura. “Now we can understand the ‘*Kadma V’azla*’ that you so astutely pointed out,” he said with a smile. “It was through ‘ימררו את חייהם’ - the deep sense of pain and bitterness, that *Hashem* hurried up and preempted the redemption by 190 years. Thus, we say ‘*Kadma V’azla*’ which means to hurry up and go forth, since the word ‘*Kadma*’ has the *gematria* of 145 (קדמא), and ‘*V’azla*’ is 45 (ואזלא). Together, they equal the numerical content of 190, which is exactly how many years *Hashem* hurried up the *geulah*! Is this not cause for a happy, celebratory sound?” Needless to say - he got the job!

תאריך כאור יום חשבת לילה וידי בהצ'י הלילה (סדר נרצה בהגדה של פסח)

In August 1939, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany entered into an agreement committing that neither country would ally with, or aid an enemy of the other country. In addition, the two world powers arranged a secret protocol that divided territories of Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland into Nazi and Soviet “spheres of influence.” Thereafter, Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939 and a little more than two weeks later, the Soviet Union began its own invasion of Poland on September 17, taking control of the entire eastern portion of Poland. This was in fulfillment of the terms of the infamous Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression pact, which insidiously divided the conquered country of Poland in half; Germany would control the Western sector and Russia would receive the eastern sector. The city of Gorlitz was in the east and was subject to the full authority of the Red Army of Russia.

The Soviets offered citizenship to the Jews of Gorlitz but most refused, not realizing that in the grand scheme of things, being a Soviet citizen was far more favorable to their survival than being under Nazi Germany. The Russians did not take kindly to this refusal and many of the city’s Jews were deported to the Siberian forest of Yekutza, including the *Rav* and *Rosh Av Beis Din*, **R’ Elisha Halberstam ZT”L**, a grandson of the holy **Divrei Chaim** of Sanz. On *Shabbos*, June 29, 1940 (23rd of Sivan 5700), he was transported to Siberia in a boxcar crammed with sixty other Jews, whom he continuously encouraged and comforted during the ninety-two-day journey. In the frozen tundras of Siberia, the Gorlitzer Rebbe kept the *mitzvos* at great personal sacrifice, including building and sitting in a *sukkah* despite freezing temperatures. People said that during the winter months in the remote forests of Yekutza and Uskudt, the temperatures could reach as low as fifty-three below zero. That was enough to freeze a man’s blood in his veins.

It took quite some time for the winter to thaw. Long before the holiday of *Pesach* arrived, many of the Jews wrote letters to relatives and friends everywhere, asking them to send *matza* and other holiday staples, if possible. One of the Jews, **R’ Chaim Friedman Z”L** writes in his memoir (שמחנו כימות ענינתו) that he received a package from his son in Lemberg before *Pesach* in 1941. The precious package contained raisins, from which they were able to make wine for the Four Cups. True, they had already made a sort of substitute for wine, an infusion of the wild plums that grew in that part of the world. But now they could make real raisin wine, and they did.

Although the custom is not to eat beans on *Pesach*, that year they did, because that was all they had to eat. They would have made do with potatoes, but the only ones they found were frozen solid, as hard as stone and almost totally inedible.

Somehow, they collected flour and managed to bake *matza* in their cell block, in an oven they had fashioned out of a steel barrel. The Gorlitzer Rebbe cracked the ice and drew water from a nearby well and let it rest overnight, as the

have the ability to provide for our own *Yom Tov* needs - and the first *Seder* is tonight. I do not know what to do. I cannot ask anyone for help - my husband’s pride would be devastated. I didn’t even tell him that I was coming here.”

The *Rav* mulled over the problem for a few moments and came up with an idea, “Tell your husband that tonight in *shul*, when he greets me after davening like usual, he should whisper some words in my ear.”

She nodded in a confused manner. “What should he say?” she asked.

“Whatever you want,” said the *Rav*. “Make something up. Trust me and do as I say. Make sure he whispers in my ear.”

That night, the synagogue was packed with people all dressed in their *Yom Tov* finery. Everyone was radiant with joy and a festive holiday spirit, looking forward to the first *Seder* with their families that evening. As was customary, at the conclusion of davening, each person went up to the front to personally greet the *Rav* and wish him “*Gut Yom Tov.*”

When Nota Hirsch went up to greet the Rabbi, he followed his wife’s instructions (though he had no idea why), and whispered into the Rabbi’s ear, “I don’t know why, but my wife said I should whisper ‘*Gut Yom Tov*’ in your ear.”

Upon hearing this, R’ Eizel jumped up and called out in a loud voice, “*Oy vey!* This is terrible! It is all *chametz* - the whole thing! All your food, all your *matzos* - everything! You cannot use any of it over *Yom Tov!*”

The *rav* had screamed so loud that everyone in the *shul* heard his words and assumed that Nota Hirsch was describing some accidental occurrence that took place in their *Pesach* kitchen. What a shame, they all thought, that his food was ruined for *Yom Tov*. Immediately one of the onlookers said, “Don’t worry Reb Nota, if you need, I have extra *matza* in my house. I will bring you over some so that at least you will have *matza* for the *seder.*”

Another piped up, “Sure. We have extra wine. I will bring some over so you can drink the Four Cups.” Another man chimed in, “My wife made plenty of extra chicken soup; we will bring you over some for the meal.”

Word of the “kashrus accident” spread throughout the little town of Slonim and everyone wanted to pitch in and help the man who had helped so many people in the past. There was literally a line of people streaming in and out of the Hirsch home throughout the night, each bringing a dish or two, from fish to salad to soup to honey cake. By the time the night was over, Nota and his family had enough food for a week. Thanks to R’ Eizel’s wisdom and sensitivity, no one knew or even suspected anything about the family’s severe financial straits.

Boruch Hashem, in the coming months, things turned around completely for Nota Hirsch. By the next *Pesach*, he was restored to his original wealth - only now he was even more grateful to *Hashem* and more philanthropic than ever.

מרור זו שאנו אוכלים על שום שמררו המצריים את חי' אבותינו שנא' 'וימררו את חייהם בעבודה קשה (סדר מגיד בהגדה של פסח)

As a scion of two renowned and prestigious rabbinic families, both on his father and mother’s side, **R’ Avraham Yehoshua Heschel ZT”L**, later to become famous as the **Ohev Yisroel** (both for the title of his *sefer* and due to his deep love for every fellow Jew), showed great promise even at an early age. Acquiring fame as a talmudic scholar, he studied under two great *Tzaddikim*, **R’ Elimelech of Lizhensk ZT”L** and **R’ Yechiel Michel of Zlotchov ZT”L**. Early on his rabbinical career, R’ Avraham Yehoshua was offered a position in the Polish town of Kolbuszowa where he arrived as a candidate a few weeks before *Pesach* for a “*Proba*” (audition), hoping to impress the townspeople and secure the position.

As was the custom, on *Shabbos* morning, R’ Avraham Yehoshua walked up to the podium and delivered an address on *Torah* topics for the benefit of the entire congregation. His masterful discourse was appreciated by scholar and layman alike for its clear and prescient content, the easy manner in which it was delivered, and the powerful lasting effect it had on its listeners. As the young rabbi was speaking, many in the audience were smiling and nodding to one another, agreeing that this candidate was surely a perfect match for the job. R’ Avraham Yehoshua saw their expressions and understood that he was on solid footing, and this gave him confidence.

Of course, all it takes is the comment of one incendiary individual, or ignoramus for that matter, to bring the young man’s tower of confidence crashing down in disaster. The *Rosh Hakahal*, the acting president of the *kehilla*, was a rich man who believed that his large bank account and prestigious appointment entitled him to speak at will. He even fancied himself a *Torah* scholar on par with the leading scholars and rabbis in the *Beis Medrash*. Thus, it came as no surprise to many in the audience when the president loudly cleared his throat midway through R’ Avraham Yehoshua’s lecture and asked a question.

“Rabbi, if you don’t mind, I have a question on a *posuk* from a previous *parsha*. When describing the plight of the Jewish people in Egypt and the terrible hardship of their slavery, the *Torah* uses the words ‘ימררו את חייהם’ (*and they embittered their lives*). What I find unusual is that when I was doing שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום (reviewing the *posukim* twice and the *Targum*/translation once), I realized that the musical cantillation notes (טעמי המקרא) on these two words are ‘*Kadma V’azla*’ which is an uplifting and even happy tune. Since these words reflect the Jews’ pain and suffering, shouldn’t