

מאת מוה"ר ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
ראש כולל עשרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

contain many sub-categories that branch off of them. Many of these arguments are just to determine which *mitzvah* is the “main” *mitzvah* and which are the sub-category *mitzvos* that emanate from the main. In reality, says the GR’A, every phrase of the *Torah*, including the narratives that we find throughout, all bring out different aspects of *Hashem’s* will with regard to how a person must conduct himself. Every single one of these desirable conducts is a *Torah*-based *mitzvah* (מצוה דאורייתא).

No End to the Amount of Mitzvos. The GR’A adds that every detail that a person can infer from the *posukim* in the *Torah*, which include all of the *Divrei Torah* that we speak about and discuss week after week, are really *mitzvos* and *hanhagos* that truly have no end. A person can always gain new insights in every word of the *Torah*, which then become *mitzvos* and thus, desirable conducts for him or her to fulfill. He bases this on a *posuk* in *Tehillim* (119:96): “לכל תכלה ראיתי קץ רחבה מצותך מאד:” - “*Of every finite thing I have seen the end but Your mitzvos are very broad.*” He explains this to mean that *Dovid HaMelech* saw the “end” of every thing in the world, however, the amount of *mitzvos* that a person can “pull out” of the *Torah*, through studying learning and being *mechadesh* new insights, have no end. The GR’A continues, that in this way, a person can make every single thing that he does, says or thinks, into an actual *mitzvah*, which sanctifies him and earns him merit and reward.

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

The Greatest Mitzvah of All (71) - "תלמוד תורה כנגד כולם"
Learning Taryag Mitzvos (cont.). Last week we began a discussion about learning *Taryag Mitzvos*, the 613 commandments of the *Torah*, and the different ways (and *seforim*) about how to do them. It is important to add the *sefer* of the **Chofetz Chaim ז"ל, Sefer Mitzvos Hakatzer**. In this *sefer*, he selects from the *Taryag mitzvos*, all the *mitzvos* that we are still able to do even though we are not in *Eretz Yisroel* and without our *Bais HaMikdash*. By becoming fluent in this *sefer*, one can attain the proper *Kavana* (concentration) in the many acts he does daily which fall into the category of the *Taryag Mitzvos*. Having intent to fulfill the *mitzvah* is very important because we *pasken* in **Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 60-4)**, that “מצות צריכת כוונה” - the fulfillment of a *mitzvah* requires proper intent of the doer to fulfill that *mitzvah*.

Only 613? In the beginning of **sefer Ma'alos HaTorah**, the brother of the **Vilna Gaon, R' Avraham ז"ל**, quotes from his brother the following concept: *The Gemara* at the end of *Makkos* tells us that there are 613 *mitzvos*. The *Rishonim* argue on precisely which *mitzvos* make up this list of 613. The **Rambam, Ramban, BH"G**, and others, all maintain different methods to make this calculation. The **GR'A** feels that in truth, there is no real argument here between the various opinions, because the number 613 refers to general, basic *mitzvos*, which

הוא היה אומר

Aleksander Rebbe, R' Shmuel Tzvi Danziger ז"ל (Tiferes Shmuel) would say:

“Why is ‘*Kadesh*’ before ‘*Urchatz*’? Shouldn’t one wash and cleanse himself before he is worthy of *Kedusha*? The answer is that under normal circumstances, a person cannot enter a king’s palace unless he is invited. At that time, he prepares himself accordingly and enters in clean clothes and looks the part of a royal guest. Unless he is being chased by bandits who wish to kill him, at which time, he rushes into the palace, as a safe haven, to protect him and save his life, no matter how he looks or is dressed. On the night of *Pesach*, the Jewish people were ‘בחפזו’ - rushing to leave Egypt in great haste, fearful of falling into the 49th level of impurity. They had no choice but to jump into *kedusha* into the service of *Hashem* even before they were cleansed. We, too, rush into ‘*Kadesh*’ even before we are ready for ‘*Urchatz*.’”

Chacham Ovadia Yosef ז"ל (Chazon Ovadia, Hilchos Pesach 247-249) would say:

“Of course, not only do we speak of the wondrous miracles during the Exodus at the *Seder*, but even the rest of the *Chag*, we should continue to mention them and discuss them with our families. However, on the second day of *Pesach*, the 16th of *Nisan*, there is an added component. It is the day on which the wicked Haman was killed during the *Purim* story. This, too, was a great and wondrous miracle and it is therefore proper to make some commemoration of this event during one’s meal on this day, a practice often referred to as ‘*Seudas Esther*.’ At this meal one should speak words of *Torah* relevant to Queen Esther and how *Hashem* rescued the Jewish people during the time of the *Purim* story, to commemorate the miraculous salvation that took place on the 16th of *Nisan*.”

A Wise Man would say:

“Never believe that a few caring individuals cannot change the world. For, indeed, they are all who ever have.”

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טיב התבלין

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

רעיונות ופירושים לעורך את האדם לעבודת
הש"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובטחון מאת

ליל שמרים הוא לה' להוציאם מארץ מצרים הוא הלילה הזה לה' שמרים לכל בני ישראל לדרתם וגו' (שמות יב-כב)

ברחילו ורחימו לערוך שוב את שולחנו לעריכת הסדר השני בקדושה ובטהרה, אולם מדוב עייפות מעמל הלילה הקודמת בקש להתנמנם מעט כדי שיהיה לו כוחות רעננים לקראת עריכת הסדר.

אפס כי עייפותו הכריעה את אשמורות עיניו, ואיך שהתעורר הבחין לחדרתו שהזמן הוא כבר סמוך ונראה לחצות, הוא לא השתהה, אלא מיד התיישב לערוך את הסדר חש מהר בחפזה ובמרוצה בכדי שיספיק לאכול האפיקומן קודם חצות, את האפיקומן אמנם הספיק לאכול, אבל את גודל שברון לבו לא יכול היה לשאת, שהרי לא זו בלבד שהסדר השני היה בדרגה נחותה לאין ערוך מן הסדר הראשון, אלא אפילו היהודי הפשוט ביותר כבר עורך סדר נאה הימנו, וכך היה ימים מרבה להתעצב אל לבו ולא היה מסוגל להשלים עם אותו מקרה, כל אימת שנוכר בכך התמלא בצער ובעגמת נפש. תקופה לאור מכן כאשר השיש פעמיו לובלינה להסתופף בצל רבו הגדול, הרה"ק האספקלארי המאירה החווה מלובלין זי"ע. גילה לו **רבינו החוזה זי"ע** ברוח קדשו, שידע נאמנה כי הסדר הראשון שערך בשנה זו היה אמנם חשוב מאד, אבל אינו מתקרב כהוא זה לדרגת ומעלת הסדר שערך בליל השני, שהיה בוקע רקיעים ממש, עד אין חקר.

הרי לך כדברינו ממש, שלא ההרגיש או ההשגות קובעים את מעלת וטיב העבודה, שם בשמים מודדים במדה אחרת, לא כשל מדת בשר ודם השופט כפי מראית העין, אלא השי"ת היודע כליות ולב וחופש כל חדרי בטן, הוא רואה בשברון לבו של האדם ואת רצונו הכבד לעבדו בלבב שלם, ולמרות שלא זכה כעת למוחין גדגדלות ובכל זאת מתגבר הוא וממלא את רצון ה', הרי שחשובה עבודתו ומקובלת ומרובה לפני הקב"ה כאשר ריח ניחות.

לך יום אף לך לילה. אבל תדע לך נאמנה כי סוף הכבוד לבא, וקרוב היום בו תזכה להתענג על ה' ולהיות מזוי שכניתו, כי כל המקיימה מעוני סופה לקיימה מעושה, וכאשר תתאמץ לקיים רצון ה' בכל עוז ובכל תוקף לבסוף יגיה ה' חשך ויאיר נר, וראוי לילה זו ליל הסדר – כדי להפך חשובא לנחורא, דכאשר תתבונן תחזה שכל עניין ליל הסדר הוא בכדי להאיר את זמני החשכות, שהרי כל המצוות של פסח מצוותן בלילה בלבד, פסח מצוה ומרור וסיפור יציאת מצרים וכו', ובאים לרמו לנו על גודל מעלת העבודה במאמנים שהם כמו לילה, שמסוגלים המה להאיר מתוך החשיכה, וממש אשר לילה כיום יאיר.

אך זאת ייזכר מאד שלא ירא מפחד לילה ואל יתייאש כלל וכלל כי קרובה ישועות לבא ויהל נרו על ראשו, וכדמספרי אינשי על ב' קבצנים, אחד מזרע ישראל והשני ערל, שקבעו ביניהם לסבב יחד בין העיירות ולבקש רחמים מן הבריות שיחוסו עליהם ויתנו להם כדי חיותם, ויהי היום והגיעו שניהם לעיר אחת

והיה זה בערב הפסח, אמר היהודי לחבירו, היום יהיה לי סעודה דשנה כי היום בערב חל תג הפסח ובוודאי אחד מאחי בני ישראל יארחני בביתו לעריכת הסדר ושם אוכה למעדני מלכים, אבל שמע לי ואעזץ לך עצה הגונה וחיייתה אף נפשר בגלגלי. הלכש גם אתה מלבושי ישראל ובא עמי לבית הכנסת ולאחר התפלה יבא שמש בית המדרש ויסדר אף לך להתארח על שולחן אחד מן הבעלי בתים בעיר ותוכה אף אתה להתענג בסעודה כיד המלך.

החך הגוי ברעתו וגמר אומר שעצת ידידו טובה היא ומוצאת חן בעיניו, וממחשבה למעשה השיג לעצמו בוגדים של ישראל וכך הלך לבית הכנסת להשתתף בתפלה, לאחר התפלה הופיע אכן השמש ובקש מן אחד הבעלי בתים שיצרף את האורה על שולחנו לעריכת הסדר, שמח וטוב לב התלווה הגוי למארחו ובקוצר רוח המתין לבואם הביתה שם יזכה לסעוד כפי שלא זכה זה ימים רבים, עם הגיעם הבית ועדיין לא הספיק להתפעל מן ההוד וההדר בהם נערכה השולחן, ועד מהרה התאספו כולם מסביב לשולחן והחל ראש המסובים לקדש על כוסו. האורה, בכדי שלא יגלו את תרמיתו, עקב על מה שכולם עושים ועשה ממש כמורה, והנה הוא רואה שרוחצים ידיהם, הבין שוודאי יגישם כעת לאכול את הסעודה ושמה בלבו, וכשחילקו את הכרפס חשב שזה וודאי כדי לפתוח את התיאבון ועוד קט מתחילים לקרב אל השולחן את כל המעדנים והתבשילים, אך מה מאד נחל מפח נפש בראותו כי כולם פותחים את ההגדות ובעל הבית החל לקרא משם משך שעה ארוכה, תוך שהזמן עובר וחולף לו ואין מביאים אל השולחן אפילו מאכל אחד לרפואה, בני מעזי מתהפכים מרעב ווכר לסעודה איננו. עד שלבסוף כששם לב שהולכים שוב ליטול ידיים, הסיק שזוהו זה ועתה לכל הרעות מתחילים להסתור, אולם לתימהונו כי רב, מוציאים הם

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ' פרשיות השבוע

וְהַגְדַּת לִבְנֵךְ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לְאֹמֶר בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' (שמות יג-ה) - **ביאור כוונת הכתוב 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה וגו' בנסיים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים, בליל חמשה עשר בניסן, שנאמר 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה וגו' בעבור זה' לא אמרתי אלא בשעה בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך" (בבלי ט"ז בניסן).** וב**ד"ך פקודי' (לבעל ה'בני יששכר'**, מצוה כ"א-מצות סיפור 'ציאת מצרים, חלק הדיבור אות ג') כתב, "המשכיל על דבר המצוה (של 'והגדת לבנך' שנסרתה היא להחדיד בלב הבן עניין 'ציאת מצרים' שמלמד על אמונה בה' ובטחון השלם בו), כששואל לו הבן או אחר מה נשתנה, יבין דלא סגיאל ליה באמידת ההגדה אח"כ, רק צריך להשיב לו ולספר לו המעשה בלשון שמבין הבן, ולהאריך עמו עד שיכנס הדבר בלבו, וכן נשמע מלשון הציווי 'והגדת לבנך וגו', ש'הגדה' היא מלשון המשכה (ב'ארמית', וכמו שמצינו שמשכר' מתרגמין' 'ע' תרגום אונקלוס שמות י"ב כ"א) באורך", (הג"ה, ויש להוסיף ש'גד' הוא מלשון הצלחה ומול, כמו 'בא גד-בא מול טוב' [רש"י בראשית ל' י"א, וכן הוא בגמרא [שבת ס"ז:] 'גד גדי [-יתמזל מזול] וסינוק לא' [ולא יתעייף]. ולפי זה יש לפרש כוונת 'והגדת לבנך', והיינו, שתצליח את בנך בזה הסיפור, רצה לומר, שלא סגי בסיפור בעלמא שלא יקבע הדבר בלבו, אלא שיתריח את עצמו עמו להטעימיהו העניינים על נכון, עד שיכנס הדבר בלבו, וזוהו הצלחתו-תלמיד שרואה סימן יפה במשנתו'. וממשיך (שם אות ד'), "ומצוה מן המבורח הוא להטריח עמו בסיפור עד שיראה שכל כך נקשר הענין בהבנתו עד שהוא יכול לספרו לאחרים, וזה נשמע מדקאמר קרא 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר וגו', דלכאורה מילת 'לאמר' אינה מובנת, אולם לפי הנתבאר כוונתה היא, שיאריך עמו בסיפור להביניהו על כך עד שהוא יהיה יכול לאמר לאחרים סיפור המעשה", (הג"ה, ויש להוסיף, שבזה תבאר לשון 'והגדת', וזה על פי מה דאיתא בגמרא [שבת ק"ד] 'גימל דלת, גומל דלים, והיינו, שאות ג' יכונה למשפיע, ואות ד' יכונה למקבל, ואם כן כוונת 'והגדת לבנך' היא, שתספר לבנך באופן שיהיה גם הוא בבחינת 'גד', והיינו, שיהיה יכול להשפיע לאחרים- 'לאמר', וכנתבאר).

על דרך זה פירש ב'**פנים יפות'** על הכתוב את מילת 'לאמר' 'ולגבי מה שאמר

מצקלונם רקיקי מצות קשים וזה הוא מאכלם, חשב שכנראה מיד אחר כן יביאו את המאכלים, והנה מגשים לפניו מידק המרור, אך קירבו לתוך פיו והרגיש את טעם הריפותו קלט כי חבירו היהודי טמן לו פח יקוש ואין היום שום סעודה מלבד אי אלו מיני מאכל שאינם ראויים לאכילה, מיד התרומם בחמתו מן השולחן וברח מן הבית כל עוד נשמתו בו תוך שהוא מבטיח לעצמו שכבר ימצא את הדרך לנקום בחברו היהודי שחמד ממנו לצון.

למחרת בבוקר משפגש בידידו היהודי נגש אליו בחמת ועם תוך שהוא מטיח בו דברים קשים על שרימה אותו והפכו ללעג וקלס ולשנינה, היהודי לא הבין כלל בשל מה כל הרעש, הן הוא הסב אתמול אצל אחד הבעלי בתים ושם זכה לסעוד מעדני מלכים ממש, ומדוע זה לא הגישו סעודה כדת היום בבית השני בו הסב ידידו הערל, לאחר הבירור נודע לו כי אכן הגישו שם בשר ודגים וכל מטעמים, אלא שאותו ערל ברח לו מיד אחר המרור ורגע כמימרא טרם השולחן עורך.

ממשל ושנינה זה ניקח לעבוד את ה', והמוסר ההשכל העולה מזה, שפעמים נראה לו לאדם שהוא כמגשש באפילה וכסומא בארובה, משתדל הוא בכל כוחו לעבוד את השי"ת אך אינו מוצא אור, חש הוא כי אין עמלו נושא פרי ואינו מרגיש כמחויב לעץ החיים, אולם יש לו לידע נאמנה כי לא רחוק היום ויזכה לאור עולם בו יאיר כאור יום חשכת לילה, ובלבד שלא ימלט אחד המרור קודם השולחן עורך. **השפעת ליל הסדר בגשמיות וברוחניות**, וכה הם דבריו של ה'**ה"ח' הבית אהרן' מקארלין יו"צ** שכתב: "מי שהוא עובר ה' באמת, יכול ליקח מלילות הללו של סדרים הרבה ורבה הן בגשמיות והן ברוחניות". וחור ואמר, "לאו דווקא אנשים גדולים יקרי' הערך, אלא אף האנשים הגסים והעבים פחותי הערך, יכול כל אחד ואחד ליקח כפי ערכו", ודבר שפתים אך למחזור.

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א מגיד משירים בק"ק בית שמש

'והגדת לבנך...לאמר', שלכאורה מילת 'לאמר' היא מזותרת, יש לומר בהקדם מה שאמר הכתוב 'ולמען תספר באוזני בנך וכן בנך', שיש להבין, הלא זאת מצות הבן לספר לבנו-ב'ן בנך', ולא מצות הסבא לספר לבן בנו, וא"כ הכיזך נאמר 'ולמען תספר באוזני...בן בנך', אלא בעל כרחך שהכוונה היא ש'תספר לבנך את סיפור 'ציאת מצרים', וגם תאמר לו שעליו לספר עליו לבן שיוולד לו בעתיד, בן בנך', ולפ"ז כוונת מילת 'לאמר' היא 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא את סיפור 'ציאת מצרים' וגם תאמר לו שעליו 'לאמר' סיפור זה לבן שיוולד לו בעתיד, וזוהו שתקנו בתשובת האב לבנו 'עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים... ואפילו כולנו חכמים כולנו נבונים כולנו זקנים כולנו יודעים את התורה מצוה עלינו (גם עליך, בני) לספר (גם לבנך) ביציאת מצרים, וכל המרבה לספר (גם לבנו) ביציאת מצרים ודי זה משובח, ואף שאין לזה כל שייכות לתשובה על שאלת בנו 'מה נשתנה, כיון שעלוי גם לומר לבנו שעליו לספר ב'ציאת מצרים' לבן שיוולד לו בעתיד, וכנתבאר". וממשיך ומבאר גם באופן אחד, "עוד י"ל בכוונת מילת 'לאמר', על פי מה שאומרים ב'הגדה של פסח' 'שאינו יודע לשאול את פתח לו', שכוונת המילים 'את פתח לו' היא, שאף שהבן אינו יודע לשאול' מעצמו, אולם, כשפותחים ומתחילים לו במקצת, נותנים בו דעת ויכול לשאול מעצמו, וזוהו שאמר 'את פתח לו', ר"ל, פתיחה בלבד, וממילא, הבן יגמור לשאול מעצמו, וזה מה שממשיכים ואומרים שם 'שאינו יודע לשאול את פתח לו, שנאמר 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא (פתיחה בלבד), וממילא הבן יגמור לשאול מעצמו), 'לאמר (הבן מעצמו) וכו'".

אולם **ב'אור החיים הק'** פירש כוונת מילת 'לאמר' בדרכים אחרות, 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר, צריך לדעת למה לא אמר 'זאמרת', כי תיבת הגדה מצינו לרז"ל שאמרו (שבת פ"ג), שיתכווין בה ל'דברים קשים כנגידים', עוד צריך לדעת אמרו 'לאמר', והלא כבר אמר 'והגדת', ונראה לומר, כי כיווץ על דרך אומנם ז"ל (פסחים קט"ז), 'שמתחיל בגנות (של אבותיהם של אבותינו הקדושים, שאומר 'מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו [היינו, אבות אבותינו הקדושים, 'תרח אבי אברהם ושלפנאי]...תרח אבי אברהם ואבי נחור ויעברו אלוהים אחרים' [הגדה של פסח]...ושל בני ישראל ש'עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים

יום ליבשה נהפכו מצולים שירה חדשה שבתו גאולים

אל תשטפני שבלת מים ואל תבלעני מצולה ואל תאמר עלי באר פיה וגו' (תהילים סט-סז)

the - שביעי של פסח What is the lesson we must take away from *Krias Yam Suf*? What must a Jew contemplate on the Seventh Day of *Pesach*, to fully understand the greatness of the day? **Rabbeinu Eliyahu de Vidas זי"ל**, in his classic work, **Reishis Chochma**, writes that the "לימוד לדורות" - the lesson for all generations is *Mesiras Nefesh* that leads to wondrous salvation. Just as *Nachshon ben Aminadav* hurled himself into the sea until the water was up to his neck, before the water split and the Nation was rescued, any Jew who needs a *yeshua* and places his trust in *Hashem* for a miracle, first must be willing to sacrifice his life, to give up his very existence, in order to cause the miracle to occur. When a person breaks his natural urge to live, *Hashem* will go above the natural and grant him his wish.

An amazing story is told about a certain *Rav* in Pozony, who was asked to convert a *Ger* privately. The family of the *Ger* and the local authorities could not find out about the conversion, as this would cause myriad problems and untold trouble for the local Jewish community. In order to be a *mohel* in Hungary, one was required to be certified by the state and only those who passed the requirements were permitted. Unfortunately, the *Rav* was not certified, nor was he as adept as he thought in performing *Bris Milah*, and the erstwhile convert began to bleed badly from the cut. He could not take him to the hospital, where it would be reported to the authorities, and he did not know what to do to stop the bleeding. The *Ger* was in agonizing pain and losing consciousness quickly.

The terrified *Rav* ran to his *rebbe*, the holy **Chasam Sofer, R’ Moshe Sofer זי"ל**, and begged him for advice. He explained the situation and how he tried to do the *Milah* himself, but it did not go well and the *Ger’s* life was in danger. Needless to say, the stakes were much higher for if it was found out that a local rabbi cut and killed the son of a gentile family while performing some religious ritual, this could put the *Rav’s* life in jeopardy, and worse still, the entire community’s existence would be fraught with danger. Time was short and a decision needed to be made right away.

The *Chasam Sofer* listened to the man and in a split second rendered his decision: Immediately, the *Pozony Rav*, as well as the bleeding convert, must run to the nearby riverbank in Pressburg, and throw themselves into the water!

“There is no other option at this point,” said the *Chasam Sofer*, to the shocked *Rav*. “If you are caught, you and the community - and who knows who else - will suffer. But if you and the *Ger* drown yourselves in the river, that will be the end of the story and no one else will have to suffer!”

Ashen-faced, the *Pozony Rav* accepted the decision and hurried to bring the *Ger* with him down to the Danube River. The *Ger* had lost so much blood that he could hardly walk and the *Rav* practically carried him down to the banks of the river, where they mentally prepared themselves to carry out the *mitzvah* of giving up their lives, *Al Kiddush Hashem*, in order to save the Jewish people. Tears were mixed with prayers as they advanced toward the water.

Just then, an elderly man happened by and saw two people who appeared to be committing suicide. He called to them to stop and spoke to the *Pozony Rav* asking him what was going on. The *Rav* was in no mood to chat and tried to wave him off but the elderly man stood his ground. “I see your friend here is bleeding heavily. Why don’t you stop the bleed?”

“I can’t,” answered the *Rav*, with an exasperated cry, “and that is why we are here.”

The man quickly pulled out a jar containing some ointment. “Here, use this. It works great and will stop any bleed. Your friend may die if you don’t help him.” Together, the elderly man and the *Pozony Rav* administered the precious ointment to the *Ger’s* wound, and within seconds, the bleeding stopped. The *Ger* was unconscious at this point, but he was breathing, and it looked like he would live. It was truly a miracle.

The *Pozony Rav* heaved a sigh of relief and the two conscious men helped the unconscious man into a wagon where he would be transported back to his lodgings in Pozony. The minute he turned around to thank the elderly gentleman for saving his life and who knows how many others, the man was gone!

The *Ger* was strong and survived the ordeal, but the *Pozony Rav* was beside himself. He came back to his *rebbe* and asked him the question that was on his mind: If the *Chasam Sofer* had the power to summon *Eliyahu HaNavi, Malach HaBris* (Angel of Circumcision), in order to save the *Ger*, why had he first rendered a decision that literally was meant to kill him? Why was it necessary for them to drown themselves before they could be saved - why couldn’t they be saved without all the pain and drama?

The *Chasam Sofer* looked at his *talmid* sternly and asked, “You think it is easy to witness *Eliyahu HaTishbi*? Eliyahu does not come for nothing! It was only when you agreed to be *moser nefesh*, and give up your life to save others - when you were truly prepared to die *Al Kiddush Hashem* - that you were worthy of being saved by him. Real, true *Mesiras Nefesh* is the only way to merit being amongst those about whom it is said, - *‘Praised is the one who sees his face.’*”

בגלל אבות תושיע בנים ותביא גאולה לבני בניהם

אז ישיר משה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת לה' ... (שמות מו-א)

Upon witnessing the incredible miracles of *Krias Yam Suf*, *Moshe Rabbeinu* led *Clal Yisroel* in a song of *Shira* to *Hashem*. The *Medrash* asks, in which *zechus* did *Clal Yisroel* merit to sing *Shira*? What rendered them worthy of expressing themselves in such an exalted manner? The *Medrash* answers that it was in the merit of *Avraham Avinu* who imbued in his children and all future descendants, the clarity of *Emunah* in *Hashem*. Despite the Jewish people witnessing numerous open miracles in an unprecedented display of *Hashem's* existence, they were nevertheless worthy of *Shira* only through the merit of *Avraham Avinu*.

We must understand these words of *Chazal*. The implication here is that *Emunah*, true belief in the Almighty, is a prerequisite to sing *Shira*. It does not matter whether the belief was attained by Avraham or the people; there is clearly a fundamental relationship between *Emunah* and *Shira*. If so, why was the Nation's *Emunah* not enough? The splitting of the *Yam Suf* was perhaps the greatest revelation of *Hashem's* glory; could there be a more befitting setting for *Shira*? At this point, the Nation truly believed; was *Clal Yisroel* still lacking in their *Emunah*?

In response, **R' Chaim Mordechai Katz זי"ל** points to the words of the **Seforno** who writes: הסכים - "אז ישיר משה - In other words, *Moshe Rabbeinu* agreed to allow *Clal Yisroel* to sing *Shira*. To be "*Maskim*" - to agree, explained R' Mottel, as he was known, requires thought

החפזי הצור אנם מים חלמיש למעיני מים ... (סדר הלל)

Many commentators interpret this *posuk* to refer to the *Be'er Miriam*, the Well of Miriam, the rock from which *Hashem* provided the Jews with water in the desert. The *Mishnah* states (*Avos* 5:6) that when *Hashem* brought water from the rock that was the Well of Miriam, it was not a new miracle. *Hashem* had provided for this a long time in advance; the spring that flowed from this rock had been created during the Six Days of Creation. Thus, the *posuk* says that the well flowed "למעני" - "*with its fountain*" - not just any fountain, but the fountain that had been prepared in it during the Six Days of Creation.

The question here is since the rest of the chapter in *Tehillim* focuses on the miracles that occurred at *Krias Yam Suf*, why is the Well of Miriam mentioned here at all? **R' Chaim Kanievsky שליט"א** explains that the *posuk* "*Who transforms the rock into a pond of water, the flint into a fountain of water,* " can also be explained to refer to *Krias Yam Suf*. The *Medrash* (*Avos D'Rebbi Nosson* 33) says that when the sea split, the water piled up like walls of stone, and fresh drinking water flowed from the walls.

[שם] ומסיים בשבח' ו'מעלה', ש'ועכשיו קרבנו המקום לעבודתו' [שם].ו'ש'יוציאנו ה' אלוקינו משם ביד חזקה ובורעו נטויה' [שם]. והוא אומר, 'והגדת', שתתחיל ב'גנות' שהוא מה'דברים הקשים כגידים' שלב לאדם נעקש מהם (מתעקס מהם, וכמו 'דוד עיקש-עקום ומעוקל' [רש"י דברים ל"ב ה.], כלומר, שאין הלב חפץ לקבל את הדברים ביושר כפי שהם), ואחר כך תסיים בשבח, והוא אומרו 'לאמר' (אמידה רכה 'ע' רש"י במדבר י"ב א' ד"ה ו'תדרב' ו'נעימה', והיינו, שתסיים ב'שבח' שנעים לאדם לשומעו והוא משמח את הלב ומסעדר', ו'על דרך זה פירש האור החיים הק' את הכתוב (שמות י"ב ג') 'דברו אל בני ישראל לאמר, ויקחו להם שה לבית אבות שה לבית', 'הנה', במצות לקחת השה ש' ב' בחינות, א', 'למעלה' וכבוד, כי בה נשאו ראש וראו אותם אייבים [המצריים] עושים באלוהיהם [-שוררי הם עבדו לשה], והב', לצד המצות, כי מצות המלך היא לעשות כן, והעובר עליה ענוש יענש, ולזה אמר 'דברו...לאמר', ש'דברו' שהוא מלשון 'קוש' [ע' רש"י במדבר י"ב א' ד"ה ו'תדרב'] הוא כנגד מה ש'גזירת המלך לעשות כן, והעובר עליה ענוש ייענש, ו'לאמר'-אמידה רכה ו'נעימה', הוא כנגד ה'מעלה' וכבוד אשר תשיגם על ידי זה הדבר, שנעים להם לשמוע עליהן). וממשיך ומבאר בדרך אודת, 'עוד ידצה באומרו לאמר', 'להיות שאמר 'והגדת לבנך', ו'תנח אם יש לו בן, אם אין לו בן יהיה פטור, תלמוד לומר 'לאמר', שעל כל פנים צריך להגיד אפילו בינו לבין עצמו', וכן איתא בגמרא (פסחים קט"ו.), 'תנו רבנן, חכם בנו, שואלו, ואם אינו חכם, אשתו שואלתו, ואם לאו, הוא שואל לעצמו', (אולם, במכילתא דרשב"י [לעיל פסוק ג.], למד חיוב זה מפסוק אחד- 'והגדת לבנך-אין לי אלא בזמן שיש לו בן, בינו לבין עצמו מנין, ת"ל 'זכור [בפה ביום הציאה ממצרים וכמ"ש לגבי שבת, 'זכור [בפה

וכל המרבה לספר ... הרי זה משובח

explained, as he continued to scrub. “Tonight, *Chassidim* will come with new clothes *L'kavod Yom Tov* (for the honor of the holiday). It would be a pity if they get ruined!”

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים (סדר הנדה)

The opening words of *Maggid*, "הא לחמא עניא", are said in Aramaic. The *Gemara* tells us that when Rav Elazar would visit a sick person, he would *daven* in their room in Aramaic, as opposed to *Lashon Hakodesh*. When the *talmidim* asked him how the *malachim* (angels) will bring his *tefillos* to the *Ribono shel Olam* if they cannot understand Aramaic (angels only understand Aramaic), he replied that it is unnecessary for the angels to bring his *tefillos* up, since the *Shechina* of *Hashem* is present in the sick person's room and He can hear him directly.

R' Chaim Yosef Kofman שליט"א (he should have a *refuah shleima*) extrapolates from this *Gemara* that when the *Baal Haggadah* writes these opening words in Aramaic, it is to teach us that *Shechina* of *Hashem* is here with us at our *seder* table (as the **Zohar** writes). As we sit at here on *Pesach* night, we must remember that this is a tremendous "עת רצון" (favorable time) and we can *daven* directly to *Hashem*, who is right here beside us, for the personal *yeshuos* we need and for the *Geulah Shleima* that we anxiously await. - just as the *Geulah* will come "פתאום" - suddenly, and without warning, we must place our trust in *Hashem* and pray with all our hearts for *refuos*, *yeshuos*, *b'suros tovos* and Divine assistance - and He will surely answer us - וישועת ה' כהרף עין -

ביום השבת] את יום השבת לקדשו' [ע' ב'ספר המצוות לדרמב"ם מצוה קנ"ז,³ שפירש כך את דברי המכילתא]] את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים"). וב'שפתי כחך' על הכתוב הסביר, 'והגדת...לאמר-אמידה אחד אמירה', והיינו, שמצוה מן המובחר לדרבנות בסיפור יציאת מצרים, וכמו שאומרים ב'הגדה של פסח'-זכל המובחר לספר ב'ציאת מצרים הרי זה משובח' (כיון שקיים מצוה זו בדרך מובהרת, ואילו ב'**באלשך הק'** ביאר, "אמר הוא יתברך, הנה אתה אשר יצאת ממצרים, הלא בעיניך ראית את כל הנוראות שעשיתי במצרים, והתבטלת אלי, ואינך הולך אחר יצרך הרע ואתה מקים את רצוני כראוי, אך צריך שגם את בנך תעמיד על האמת, והגדת לבנך את כל הנוראות אשר נעשו במצרים, כדי להיות הכנה לאמר לו ענין 'סילוק יצר הרע' ו'ה'דביקות בה' ו'רצונו', והו' 'והגדת לבנך', שהוא הגדת ו'סיפור יציאת מצרים בכל מפלאות תמים הרעים אשר עשה, והו' 'לאמר', כלומר, כדי להיות הכנה 'לאמר' לו על ידי כן 'בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים', כלומר, 'בעבור' השבתת שאור זה' המוכרת בכתוב הקודם-ז'לא ידאה לך חמץ ולא ידאה לך שאור בכל גבולך', שהיא ביטול כוחו של 'יצר הרע', עשה ה' לי (נוראות) בצאתי ממצרים', כדי שאתבטל אליו, ולא אלק אחר יציר הרע ואקיים רצונו כראוי, ועל זה נאמר 'זלמנן תספר באוני בנך וכן בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים ואת אותותי אשר שמתי בם, וידעתי כי אני ה', ותתבשלו אלי, ולא תלכו אחר יצרכם הרע ותקיים את רצוני כראוי'.

ויהי רצון מלפני אבינו שבשמים, שנוכה לקיים מצוות סיפור יציאת מצרים בדרך מובהרת, ונדע 'כי אני ה', ולא נלך אחר יצרנו הרע ונקיים את רצון ה' כראוי, ונתרום, ונהיה ראויים ליגאל במחר!!

Thirty days before *Chag HaPesach*, on the joyous holiday of *Purim*, we returned to *Hashem* and reaccepted the *Torah* through love - "קמו מה שקבלו כבר" - We are drawn back to *Hashem*, and our purification process continues, drawing us back to Him, until *Pesach* when the process is complete, and we are freed from the challenges that hold us back from becoming full servants of *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*. These are the "שלושים יום קודם החג" - thirty days before the holiday, to help us prepare our minds and our hearts for a full redemption, as *Hashem* each night removes one-thirtieth of the contamination to help us in the purification process. Preparing for the special holiday of *Pesach* must include spiritual cleansing and preparation as well as physical cleansing of our homes. We must work to elevate our *middos* (ethical qualities) and cleanse ourselves of negative attributes.

People from all walks of life were attracted to the *Rebbe*, **R' Mordechai Shlomo Friedman of Boyan זי"ל**, even those who had absolutely no contact with *chassidus*. Through his exemplary *middos* and tremendous humility, many people were influenced to change their ways, and many became staunch *Boyaner Chassidim*.

One year on *Erev Pesach* a *Yungerman* entered the *Beis Hamedrash* and found, to his utmost shock, the *Boyaner Rebbe* busy scrubbing the empty benches and rinsing them clean. “Why does the *Rebbe* have to clean the benches? There are *gabbaim* who will see to it,” he exclaimed.

“The *gabbaim* are also busy getting ready for *Pesach*, and they might forget to clean the benches,” the *Rebbe*

smiled and asked him, “See, but what I don’t understand is what did the *shochet* do wrong? Everyone else got what was coming to him - the cat ate the goat, the stick hit the dog - but the *shochet* simply slaughtered the ox because that is what a *shochet* does! So why did he deserve to die at the hand of the Angel of Death?”

The *shochet* was following along jovially and fully agreed with the rabbi’s question. “The answer, though, is simple,” said R’ Yaakov. “What the *shochet* did wrong is that at this time of night, after drinking the *Arba Kosos* (four cups of wine), he has no business slaughtering. You know why? Because a *shochet* is forbidden to *shecht* when he is drunk!”

Everyone laughed and even the *shochet* took these words of criticism in stride. He learned that the rabbi was none other than the famous “*Nesivos*” - the chief rabbi of Lissa, and he apologized for his earlier words and his brazen attitude. He vowed that he would be much more careful in the future and never *shecht* after he had imbibed any alcohol.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים (שמות יג-ה)

While your chewing on your *matzah* this *Pesach*, chew on this for a while: Do you know what your goal is this *Pesach*? Do you know what *Hashem* really wants from you?

It is not to make sure that your entire house is *chametz* free! It is not to cook and eat for eight days straight! It is not even to find the most exciting place to go on *Chol HaMoed*! Do you want to know what your ultimate goal is this *Yom Tov* of *Pesach*? It is to leave *Mitzrayim*!

Well, that is really what happened at this time so many years ago. But that was just the beginning! *Hashem* took us out of Egypt physically, so that we would be able to extricate ourselves from the enslavements of all the future exiles! Throughout our history, the Jewish Nation has been tested again and again with so many difficulties that attempt to rob us of our freedom. On a collective level and in every individual’s life, we are set up by *Hashem* to break out of the challenges that pull us away from Him and move forward in our freedom to truly serve Him.

Pesach is called the holiday of EMUNAH, because it is ONLY with faith and trust in *Hashem* - that He is the Boss, He knows what He is doing, there are no mistakes and that everything He does is for the good - can we truly go free and leave the shackles of Egypt behind!

This is the greatest gift that we have! EMUNAH! It is our oxygen, it is our lifeblood! Without it we are totally and completely lost. THIS is what we are meant to PASS-OVER to our children during the holiday of *Pesach*. This is the goal! Of course we can only “pass-over” to others what we ourselves possess! Therefore we need to fill ourselves up on this exquisite delicacy, this potent and rapturous elixir known as EMUNAH!

Matzah is called “נחמא דהימנותא” - “Bread of Faith.” It is literally a food that causes one to believe in *Hashem*! So make sure to eat a lot of *matzah* on *Pesach*! It’s really good for you! R’ Gamliel Rabinovitch *shlit’a* says that when you eat *matzah* on *Pesach*, you are putting *Emunah* into your blood. It literally enters your bloodstream and affects your body. Don’t worry about the calories!

And for those who don’t want to wash because then they will have to *bentch* (a Jewish phobia for generations!), just remember all the good *matzah* can do for you. You have so much more to gain by eating *matzah*! You are gaining EMUNAH, which is, after all, the ultimate goal!

On *Pesach* we have a *mitzvah*, “והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא” - “*And you shall tell it over to your children on that day.*” This is the essence of *Yom Tov*. This is what “Passing Over” is all about! But lest you think this requirement is for your family and descendants only, remember that this *mitzvah* is speaking to YOU as well! You must tell over the story to the child within YOU! You must keep talking, relating the story of the exodus, the miracles that took place in Egypt and the *Yam*, the miracles of your life, the miracles of anyone’s life that you know! Keep speaking about all the good *Hashem* does, because that is the way to passover EMUNAH - to yourself, as well as to others!

In *Tehillim*, Dovid HaMelech tells us, “האמנתי כי אדבר” - “*I believe because I speak of it!*” This is exactly what we are saying - keep talking about how much you love *Hashem* - and then you will truly believe! Talk about it until it becomes you! At the long *Yom Tov seudos*, don’t talk about politics, sports or other nonsense. Talk about *Hashem*! Let everyone at the table share a “*Hashem* loves me” story! You’d be surprised at how people see *Hashem* in their lives in so many ways. Let the conversation be about how grateful we are for all that *Hashem* does for us.

“צדיק באמונתו יחיה” - This is what it means to truly live *Yiddishkeit*! If you want to be a *Tzaddik* then you have to LIVE EMUNAH! This is what *Pesach* is for. Enjoy your clean house, your new clothes and your great *Chol HaMoed* trip, but don’t make them the focus of your *Yom Tov*. Those are the side dishes! The main course is EMUNAH! Make it your “life course” and the goal of the entire holiday! You will enjoy the results of being truly free of any worries, anxieties and other enslavements. You will be the Jew who truly left Egypt and is free to live a joyous life of oneness with *Hashem*. *Chag Kosher V’sameach*!

וירעו אתנו המצרים ויענונו ויתנו עלינו עבודה קשה ... (פסר הגדה)

The *Baal Haggadah* teaches us that the proof of “וירעו אתנו המצרים” - “*The Egyptians did evil to us,*” is from the *posuk*, “... והבה נתחכמה לו פן ירבה” - **Rashi** in *Parshas Shemos* quotes from the *Medrash* that when Pharaoh told his nation, “*Let us be wiser than them, lest they multiply and join with our enemies in a war against us,*” he used the expression “פן ירבה” (lest they multiply), whereas the *Torah*, a few *posukim* later, informs us “כן ירבה” (they did multiply). This was *Ruach Hakodesh* (Holy Spirit) speaking. “*You (Pharaoh) say, Lest they multiply, but I say, So will they multiply.*” What is the understanding of this *Medrash* and these words of *Ruach HaKodesh*?

The **Zaida, R’ Peretz Steinberg *shlit’a* (Pri Eitz Chaim)** writes a phenomenal explanation. The Egyptians did not just intend to enslave the bodies of the Jewish people, but to control their minds as well. Human nature dictates that when a person grows up under trying circumstances, with poverty and deprivation the norm, and lives his life with constant pressure, stress and despair, he becomes a negative person who only views life through a prism of small-minded distress and inequality. Such a person

אילו הנחילנו את הכן ולא נתן לנו את השבת דיינו (פסר הגדה)

The *piyut* (song) of *Dayeinu* is a progression of miracles and wondrous acts that *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* performed for *Klal Yisroel* during *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, and we thank *Hashem* for each and every one by saying, “It would have been enough had *Hashem* just done this.”

R’ Avraham Yehoshua Soloveitchik *shlit’a* asks: One of the stanzas in the song seem to be out of place. “*If He (Hashem) had bestowed the Mann upon us, but not given us the day of Shabbos, it would have been enough.*” First of all, why is *Shabbos* singled out from all the other *mitzvos*? Second, the *mitzvah* of *Shabbos* was given earlier than the *Mann*. *Shabbos* was commanded to the Jewish people in *Mara*, and they even rested on *Shabbos* in Egypt. If so, the stanza seems to be out of order: why does the *Baal Haggadah* state that if *Hashem* had given us the *Mann* first but not given us *Shabbos* afterwards, it would have been enough? *Shabbos* came before the *Mann*!

The **Brisker Rav, R’ Yitzchok Zev Halevi Soloveitchik *zr”l*** elucidates in a uniquely *Brisker* fashion. There are two *dinim* here, says the *Brisker Rav*. *Shabbos* is not only a *mitzvah* - *Shabbos* is also a gift, a *Matana*, that

cannot think beyond the four walls of his hovel and has no ambitions to grow and break out of his chains of embitterment. This is the expression “פן” - an expression of negativity, which the Egyptians attempted to impose upon the multitude of Jewish slaves, which would negate the need to watch them carefully since they would never think to leave their slave mentality and escape their bondage.

Hashem decreed otherwise. The *Torah* states: “כן ירבה” - the Jewish people definitely DID multiply, they were imbued with a positive outlook and looked forward with shining countenances to the day they would be redeemed and free to serve the Master of the World. They never gave up hope. They lived under hostile conditions but they kept the flame of redemption alive and raised their children to be loving, kind, warm and inspired. The Egyptians could enslave their bodies but had no control over their minds.

This is the meaning of the *Medrash*: “*Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) said this, ‘You (Pharaoh) say, Lest they multiply, but I say, So will they multiply.’*” Pharaoh tried to control them with the negativity of “פן” but in the end, *Hashem* had the final word, as the Nation lived with “כן” and this positive attitude saw them through the *Geulah*.

was gifted to the Jewish people, as it says in the *Gemara* (שבת פ): “*Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu, ‘I have a wonderful gift in my treasured archives and it is called Shabbos. I wish to give it to the Children of Israel. Go and inform them about it.’*” Although the commandment of *Shabbos* took place in *Mara*, as the nation was leaving Egypt, even before they reached the *Yam Suf*, the *Matana* of *Shabbos* was only given in the desert, soon after the *Mann* began to fall. Indeed, the *posuk* in *Parshas HaMann* tells us: “ראו כי נתן לכם את השבר” - “*Look, Hashem gave you the Shabbos.*” The word “נתן” is appropriate for a gift, whereas “צוה” would be said for a command.

In our *Shabbos davening* we say, “אלקינו לגוי” - “*Hashem, our G-d, did not give (Shabbos) to the nations of the land for only to Klal Yisroel did He give it with love.*” This refers to the *Matana* that *Hashem* “gifted” to Israel, and since *Shabbos* is the only *mitzvah* that has this added reality, therefore *Chazal* teach us, “גוי ששבת חייב מיתה” - “*A gentile who keeps Shabbos is fit for death.*” *Shabbos* is not just a *mitzvah* - it is a present that belongs to the Jewish people and if a gentile attempts to appropriate this gift, he is worthy of death.

משל למה הדבר דומה

רשע מה הוא אומר מה העבודה הזאת לכם לכם ולא לו ולפי שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל כפר בעיקר ואף אתה הקדה את שנינו ... **משל**: In one of the old European cities, there was a Jewish butcher who sold non-kosher meat, רח”ל. It didn’t bother him that he could *daven*, put on *Tefillin* and keep *Shabbos*, while at the very same time, sell meat to his ultra-religious Jewish patrons who were completely non-kosher. However, business was bad and people knew that he could not be

trusted, so they stayed away from his shop. What should he do? He thought of a great idea. He went to the local rabbi and asked for a certificate of *kashrus*. The *Rav* was infuriated. “How can I possibly give you a *hechsher* telling people that your meat is kosher when it is blatantly obvious to all that you sell *chazer treif*?”

“That’s just it,” replied the butcher. “I did not intend that the *Rav* write me a letter stating my meat is kosher. Rather, I want the *Rav* to write the letter and say that the meat in this shop is 100% not kosher!”

The *Rav* was unsure if he had heard correctly, but the butcher reiterated his words: he wanted a letter, signed and sealed by the *Rav*, stating that his meat is guaranteed to be *treif*!

To this request, the *Rav* was only too happy to comply. This butcher had been a thorn in the community’s side for a while and this letter would make it clear that the Jewish patrons should not buy from him.

How mistaken he was! The butcher took the letter, with the Rabbi’s signature and rabbinical seal, and put it in a frame. Then, he placed it high up on the wall behind him, so that when people would come in, all they would see is a letter from the Rabbi, with his signature and seal. Everyone assumed it was a *hechsher*. No one ever bothered to read the small print

נמשל: When the wicked son asks his question: “*What is this service to you?*” the *Baal Haggadah* tells us to physically knock out his teeth. We don’t talk to him. We don’t engage him in conversation. We punch him in the mouth for his insubordination and we throw him out. Why? Why don’t we talk to him and persuade him to give up his evil thoughts and deeds? Why don’t we try to turn him into a *Baal Teshuvah*? What would be so terrible if we tried to explain it to him?

The *Ponovezher Rosh Yeshivah*, **R’ Elazar Menachem Mann Shach זט”ל** explains: If the wicked son’s father attempts to rationalize the boy’s words and explain to him the error of his ways, all this will do is “justify” the boy in his own mind and make it appear as if his father accepts his negative words. His other brothers might not hear the actual thread of the conversation, but when they see that their father is talking to their wicked brother, they will follow suit and eventually come to be influenced by his bad ways. The other sons don’t “read the fine print” - they just accept him since they see their father accepting him. As a result, says R’ Shach, we don’t take chances with this boy. Smack him in the mouth, knock out his teeth, and let everyone know that he is wrong and his words are not to be reckoned with at all!

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV

מחשבת הלב

FROM R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

מצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים וכל המרבנה לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משבח ... (הגדה של פסח)

Pesach night is a time of great spirituality. Every Jew becomes a giant in *ruchniyus* at his or her *Seder* table. My question is, when we say in the *Haggadah*, “הרי זה משובר” - “*And all who speak a lot about Yetzias Mitzrayim, this is praiseworthy,*” what is the word “זה” doing here? It should have said “הרי הוא משובר” - “*he (or she) is praiseworthy.*”

I heard a *pshat* recently that the word “זה” is referring to the action itself. When someone talks about something a great deal, it shows that he likes that thing and speaks about it often. Similarly, when we talk about the miracles that *Hashem* did for us and our forefathers, and we tell it over and over, more and more, this reflects how much it means to us and also shows our immense אהבת ה'. It is important that we discuss these things, for the more we talk about the *chasadim* and the good that we receive from *Hashem* - and continue to receive - it will in turn lead us to notice them more. It will help us focus on what *Hashem* does for us which will then cause us to thank Him even more. And when the *Ribono shel Olam* sees that we are noticing Him and thanking Him, this will, in turn, cause Him to send us more *beracha* for us to enjoy.

In the same vein, one of the highlights of the *Pesach Seder* is the joyous singing of *Dayeinu*. Families wait for one another to all sing this together. It is a song of hope and joy, in which we enumerate the great many “מעלות טיבות” and miracles that *Hashem* did for the Jewish nation. By listing them each on their own, we come to realize and appreciate the great kindness He bestows upon us each and every day. It is our obligation to thank *Hashem* for all the good He does on a constant basis.

The *Medrash (Shemos Raba)* states: “*If I will analyze their wicked deeds the Jewish people will never be redeemed, but I will redeem them in the merit of the few righteous amongst them.*” We see from this *Medrash* that *Hashem* will bring the *Geulah*, the ultimate redemption, in the merit of a few *Tzadikim*. **R’ Avraham Pam זט”ל** explains that this *Medrash* is a great consolation to our generation when we see how low we have fallen. *Hashem* promises to bring the *Geulah* in the merit of even a few righteous people. It is in the merit of the relatively small number of *Torah* Jews, especially *Bnei Torah*, that He will hasten the *Geulah*. What protects the world from *Hashem* wanting to destroy it, like Sodom? It is the *shemirah* (protection) of those who learn *Torah* and perform the *mitzvos*. It is they who assure the world’s continued survival. This shows the importance of every single Jew to do his or her part to uphold the world.

May we all be *zoche* to notice the *chasadim* of *Hashem*, both big and small and take the time to thank the *Ribono shel Olam*. May the action of noticing the good and thanking *Hashem* be a *zechus* for us all to see the coming of *Moshiach* and enjoy the *Korban Pesach* in *Yerushalayim Habnuya*. May we see the *Geulah Shleima* speedily in our days!

attempt, she dropped the stones and her anger flared up. She began to utter a string of curses, mostly directed at her herself, but her language was foul and at that moment, I was able to take control of her body.”

R’ Chaim continued to inquire. “Just because she got angry one time, you were able to inhabit her body? Is this the punishment for anger? There must be something more.”

At this, the woman’s head began to nod and the *Dybbuk* continued to speak through her voice. “Yes, there is more. The reason why she is subject to all this is because she is a fraud. She fakes her *Emunah* for others to see. On the night of *Pesach*, as her husband and entire family stay up for hours retelling the story of the Exodus and how the Jewish people were taken out of Egypt with the strong Hand of *Hashem*, amidst wondrous miracles, she does not believe in any of it. She goes along with it but deep down, she does not believe. As a result, *Hashem* felt that she should be punished.”

Suddenly, a transformation overcame the woman and now she burst into tears, her whole body convulsing with each sob. Apparently, the frightened woman had returned and the *Dybbuk* was pushed back. “I do believe,”she cried out, “I really do believe!” She wept openly in front of R’ Chaim, all the while insisting that she has done *Teshuvah* and her earlier thoughts of *Apikorsis* (heresy) were behind her. She begged the *Chacham* to help her complete the *Teshuvah* process and she vowed to never let such heretical thoughts enter her mind again.

R’ Chaim stood firm and looked right into her eyes. “Tell me right now,” he ordered in a loud commanding voice, “do you believe in the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*? Do you believe that *Hashem* performed all those wondrous miracles in Egypt and at the *Yam Suf*? Do you have full *Emunah* in *Hashem*?”

The woman screamed that she did believe and she will always believe - and instantly the *Dybbuk* was gone!

ואתם השוחט ושחט לתורא דשתה למיא דכבה לנורא דשרף לחומרא דחבה לכלבא דנשך לשונא דאכלה לגדיא ... (סדר נרצה)

The winter in Poland is usually grey and wet. Temperatures drop rapidly, the days become shorter and there are frequent intervals of snow. Although Polish winters last from December to March, high up in the mountains, snow stays well into May. The coldest months of the season are January and February where temperatures often drop to -20 C degrees.

One cold winter’s day, the *Rav* of Lissa, **R’ Yaakov Loiberboim זט”ל**, also known as the “*Nesivos HaMishpat*” after the famous *sefer* he wrote with that name, found himself traveling to a neighboring town on an important matter. He arrived at an inn owned by a Jewish patron, and settled himself near the fire to warm up a bit.

A few minutes later, the door opened and a large Jewish man lumbered into the lobby of the inn. He was carrying a large sheath and he cut quite an imposing figure. He was the local *shochet*, and he had arrived on this cold winter’s day to slaughter a number of animals for the inn’s benefit in the back yard. The proprietor greeted him warmly and offered him a cup of warm milk and a comfortable seat near the fire. But the *shochet* wasn’t interested in warm milk. He wanted a tall shot of the innkeeper’s best whiskey. “This is what I need right now to warm up my bones,” he chuckled good-naturedly. The innkeeper brought him a glass and he downed it in one swallow. “I could use another,” said the *shochet*, and he was given another glass of fire-water. This happened a few more times, and finally, after consuming quite a bit of alcohol, the man stood up and announced, “Okay, now I am warm enough to start *shechting*!”

He picked up the sheath containing his *chalif* knife, and began to walk towards the yard. The *Nesivos* quickly stood up and shouted, “Stop! You cannot *shecht* now! A drunk (שיכור) is forbidden to *shecht*!”

The big man stopped in mid-step and turned to look at the rabbi who had called him a drunk.

“Excuse me,” said the *shochet*. “Did you call me a drunk?”

R’ Yaakov was the chief rabbi of a large city and was not afraid of this confrontation. He again stated that after drinking so many cups of whiskey, he was not permitted to slaughter animals. The *shochet* became angry and began to scream at the rabbi, and the two men got into a heated exchange. But the *Nesivos* was smarter and he managed to calm the man down and assuage his feelings. When he felt he was open to listening to *mussar*, R’ Yaakov told him the following:

“Look, I can prove it to you. On *Pesach* night, all the way at the end of the *Seder*, we sing a song known as ‘*Chad Gadya*.’ This colorful ballad features a kid (a baby goat) purchased by ‘my father’ for the price of two *zuz*, an ancient coin. No sooner does he buy the kid, it is eaten by a cat, which is in turn bitten by a dog, which is beaten by a stick. The stick is then burned by the fire, which get doused by water, which is summarily lapped up by an ox. The ox is slaughtered by the *shochet*, who himself is put to death by the Angel of Death. And in case you thought that this mean angel of the netherworld was invincible - he is ultimately vanquished by the Holy One, Blessed be He.”

The *shochet’s* face had mellowed from anger to amusement at the rabbi’s neat description of this classic. R’ Yaakov

his lecture, and everything he said was directed at his own difficult situation. He was greatly encouraged by what R’ Sholom had said and decided at once to add an hour of learning to his regular schedule - one extra hour every day. He didn’t wait for Sunday, or even for *Shabbos* morning. Immediately after the *shmuess* ended, he went into the *Beis Medrash* and learned for an hour. He believed with a powerful faith in the words of *Chazal*, “*Whoever takes upon himself the burden of Torah ...*” All his worries immediately fell away.

On Sunday, he told his partner at the printing press that he had some news for him, and a request. The news was that he had received a draft notice for the month of *Nisan*. The request was that the shop should close one hour early each day, so that he would be able to use it for the study of *Torah*. The partner was a fine individual himself and he readily agreed.

A week passed, then two. One morning, the man’s partner walked in with his own startling announcement. “R’ Yaakov, I’ve received a notice for reserve duty in the month of *Nisan*!” The army rule is that two business partners do not have to serve at the same time. In such a case, one of them is released from duty.

“The two of us took all our papers and went down to the army office,” R’ Yaakov relates. “A few days later, the letter came: I was released! I would be home for *Pesach* with my family! Unfortunately, to my distress, my partner was still required to serve his time. I felt terrible for him. On the day my partner left for his reserve duty, I parted painfully from him. No one knew better than I what he must be feeling at such a time.”

The next morning, R’ Yaakov walked to his printing shop as usual, and placed his key in the lock. To his surprise, the door wasn’t locked! Slowly he twisted the knob and opened the door, then stepped inside, hesitant and afraid. A few steps into the room, he saw something amazing. There was his partner, working busily away!

“Good morning!” R’ Yaakov greeted him in open astonishment. “What happened? Have you gone AWOL?”

His partner smiled. “I arrived at the base yesterday,” he said, “and an hour later, they sent me right back home! The supervisor came over and told me, ‘There’s been a mistake, some sort of misunderstanding. Your draft notice was for two months from now, and was sent to your address by accident.’ I was dumbfounded. Such a thing had never happened to me before. But the supervisor apologized and sent me home, saying, ‘Sorry about this mistake. You are released!’”

When he had finished telling his story, the partner stood up and cried out emotionally, “We have just seen, with our own eyes, the amazing results of the words of *Chazal*, ‘*Whoever takes upon himself the burden of Torah is exempt from the burden of derech eretz.*’ In order for you to be released from your duty, I had to receive a draft notice two months early by mistake!” (**Adapted from “Voice of Truth, The Life of R’ Sholom Schwadron” Artscroll Publications**)

מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו ועבשיו קרבנו המקום לעבודתו (תנדה של פסח)

The **Chasam Sofer זי”ל** writes: “*Just as a person is required to view himself as if he went out of Egypt (on the night of Pesach), so too, a person is required to view himself as if he was serving Avodah Zara (idol worship) in the beginning* (”מתחילה עובדי עו”ז”), *and now is drawing closer to Hashem* (”קרבנו המקום לעבדתו”).” The lesson to be learned is from the *Karpas*, a simple vegetable, which spent most of its existence buried in the ground, and now, on the night of *Pesach*, we take it out and elevate it to the status of a "חפצא של מצוה" - a glorious object imbued with holiness, with which we perform an important *mitzvah* with. Similarly, every Jew has the potential to elevate him or herself from the lowest point of *tumah* and physicality, to the highest level of *kedusha* and supreme spirituality.

In relation to this, every year at his *Pesach Seder* table, the great **Chacham, Rabbeinu Chayim Yosef Dovid Azulai זי”ל (Chid’a)** would recount the following story. Many years ago, in the holy city of *Tzefas*, the body of a Jewish woman was inhabited by a *Dybbuk*, a wayward soul that enters a human body, and literally takes over that person’s mind and conscience. For her part, the woman suffered terribly, not only from the pain of a foreign being inside of her, but even more so the psychological strain of a thinking, speaking and acting *neshama* overtaking and controlling her mind and actions.

Her family was terrified and immediately brought her to the **Ariza’l, Rabbeinu Yitzchok Luria זי”ל**, to do something to remove the *Dybbuk*. The *Ariza”l* called his closest disciple, **Rabbeinu Chaim Vital זי”ל** and instructed him to talk to the *Dybbuk* and convince it to leave.

R’ Chaim Vital prepared himself accordingly. Then, he approached the woman, whose face began to contort into a painful grimace, and she turned away, unable to look at the face of the *Tzaddik*.

R’ Chaim spoke in strong and even terms. “Why are you here and how did you manage to enter this woman?”

The *Dybbuk*, speaking through the mouth of the hapless woman, replied, “One day, she was striking two stones together in an attempt to create a spark and build a fire. It was not working and she became frustrated. After another

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

אתה בחרתנו מכל העמים אהבת אותנו ורצית בנו ורוממתנו מכל הלשונות ... (תפילה לשלש רגלים)

A number of days before *Yom Tov*, a group of American visitors traveled to Israel and arrived in *Bnei Brak*. They were scheduled to meet with the *Gaon*, **R’ Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz זי”ל**, to speak to him, seek his guidance and receive *berachos*. One of the local directors of an important Israeli organization was appointed to oversee the group and make any and all introductions before R’ Michel Yehudah for those who didn’t speak *Yiddish* or Hebrew. The planned visit was a success and the Americans spent quite a bit of quality time with the *Tzaddik*, enjoying his company and benefiting from his glowing countenance and insightful wisdom.

As the group was getting up to leave, the director approached, R’ Michel Yehudah and quietly mentioned to him that one of the members of the group has a son who is suffering from the dreaded disease and needs a *refuah shleima*. R’ Michel Yehuda’s face took on a pained look and he inquired about certain details of the young boy’s illness.

The sad news seemed to effect him deeply and he sat back down in his chair. He asked that a *Tehillim* be brought to him at once. All those present also began to say *Tehillim* together with the *Tzaddik*, as tears rolled down his cheeks - so much so did he feel the pain of the sick child.

After a few minutes, R’ Michel Yehudah closed his *Tehillim* and began to speak softly in *Yiddish*. “On *Yom Tov*, during *davening*, we say to the *Ribono shel Olam*, ‘אהבת אותנו ורצית בנו’, - ‘*You chose us from among all the nations, you loved us and wanted us.*’ It is clear that the reason why You chose us was to serve You and fulfill your *Torah* and *mitzvos*. Because of this, You love us and want us to be Your nation....”

Suddenly, R’ Michel Yehudah raised his voice and cried out, “*Avinu Shebashamayim* - Father in Heaven! You have here a young *Yiddishe* boy who wants to live in order to serve You and keep Your *mitzvos*! Please, please, I beg of You - send him a *refuah shleima* for all of his 248 limbs and 365 tendons (רמ”ח איברים ושס”ה גידים) so that he may get better” R’ Michel Yehudah’s cries mingled with those of the people.

הנה זה עומד אחר בתלנו משגיח מן החלונות מצוין מן החרכים ... (שיר נשרים ב-ט)

A Jerusalem resident owned a printing press. Every morning, after *davening Shacharis k’vasikin* and learning *daf yomi*, he went to his shop to earn a livelihood for his family. After his workday he would return to the *Beis Medrash* for a few more hours of learning and prayer. Once a year, this man was called upon for reserve military duty in the Israeli Defense Forces. He never tried to shirk his duty when called upon and he always showed up. His army job was that of watchman, which allowed him to spend many hours in learning.

One day he found a notice in his mailbox: reserve duty for three weeks. The service would fall out in the month of *Nisan*. Making a rapid calculation, the man realized that he would be gone from home on the night of the *Pesach Seder*, as well as all the remaining days of the holiday. At the prospect, a shadow fell across his face.

That night was *Shabbos* and he ate his *Shabbos seudah* with his family sunk in gloomy thought. He pictured his family’s *Seder* table, his wife and children, without his presence. Who would be there to answer his sons’ *Mah Nishtana*? And what would he himself eat during all the days of *Pesach*?

On Friday night, the printer would usually walk to the *Zichron Moshe Shul* where he attended the renowned *shmuessin* of **R’ Sholom Schwadron זי”ל**. On this gray night, however, he decided to diverge from his normal routine and take a walk instead. After a long stroll in the company of his melancholy thoughts, his legs carried him, as though by habit, to *Zichron Moshe*. He hesitated at the door, then went in and stood in the *seforim*-lined foyer, listening to R’ Sholom’s clear voice roll out to his ears: “I just remembered a story,” R’ Sholom could be heard saying. “The story has nothing to do with our topic, but let me tell it anyway ...”

R’ Sholom embarked on his tale: When *yeshivah* students would visit the **Chofetz Chaim זי”ל** to discuss the problem of the Polish military draft, he would return a variety of answers. If the *Chofetz Chaim* placed a copy of his *sefer Machane Yisroel* in the student’s hand, this meant nothing would avail him; he would most assuredly be drafted and he must use the sefer to help him conquer the obstacles of military life. But if the *Chofetz Chaim’s* response was to say: “*Whoever accepts the burden of Torah is released from the burden of the government and derech eretz,*” then the young man knew he must not spare any exertion in *Torah* - and his freedom from the draft would be assured.

“Whoever accepts the burden of *Torah*!” R’ Sholom’s voice rang out. “Whoever accepts it - whatever happens!”

The printer’s entire body began to shake. He had never before felt such a personal *hashgachah pratis*. R’ Sholom remembered the story at the very instant that his feet crossed the *shul’s* threshold even though it had nothing to do with

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