

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

originally composed by the Baal Haggadah (6).

5) Saying all the details of our exodus and comparing our holy and dignified situation to the low status we were in before the miracles. This is known as, "מרחיל בגנות ומסים בשבח", (7).

Learning the Laws of Pesach. Relevant to our series is the *Mechilta* at the end of *Parshas Bo*, from whence the *Poskim* infer that learning the laws of *Pesach* is also a fulfillment of the *mitzvah* of "סיפור יצי"ם". From this, the **Shulchan Aruch** writes (או"ח תפא"א) that even after the *Seder* is concluded, one should continue to talk about the miracles and learn *Hilchos Pesach*.

Ladies. Jewish women and girls are also obligated in this *mitzvah* (just as they are in the other *mitzvos* of the night: *matza*, *maror* and *Hallel*.) Therefore, they should say the main parts of the *Haggadah*, like the paragraph "עבדים היינו", the *Ten Makkos*, and from "רבן גמליאל היה אומר" till the drinking of the fourth cup.

A Suggestion. Sometimes the children who asked the four questions do not come away knowing how and when they were answered. Perhaps, immediately after the paragraph "עבדים היינו" (which, in short, mentions the slavery and exodus right after the four questions), one should say the following to his small children: "You asked why we eat *maror*? It is because we are remembering the bitter life we had as slaves. You asked why we eat *matza*? It is because we left *Mitzrayim* in haste. You asked why we lean and dip on this night? It is because we became free and dignified people who lean and dip. This is the minimal basic answer and more details are coming."

(1) סדר הערוך איננו (2) שמות יצי"ם (3) עיין ספר המצות קנו (4) שם (5) פסחים קטו (6) מנחת חינוך כא (7) פסחים קטו.

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

The Greatest Mitzvah of All (22) - "תלמוד תורה כנגד כולם" **Haggadah: Talmud Torah.** The *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* is upon us and it is appropriate to discuss the *mitzvah* of יציאת מצרים, which is similar to the *mitzvah* of *Talmud Torah*. It might even be part of *Talmud Torah* and some (1) say that the reason why we don't make a *beracha* on "סיפור" is because the *birchas HaTorah* we said in the morning exempts it. In other words, there is a *mitzvah* of *Talmud Torah* which can be fulfilled the whole year by any topic one learns or teaches, but on this night the *mitzvah* is to learn and teach the topic of יצי"ם.

The Mitzvah of Haggadah and its Details. This *mitzvah* is learned from (2) "והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא" and obligates one to tell his son about יציאת מצרים on *Pesach* night(s). *Chazal* (3) learn from other sources that this *mitzvah* is not only to a son but to anyone else who might be present. Even if one is alone, he must "tell himself" by reciting the *Haggadah*. The *mitzvah* includes:

- 1) Praising *Hashem* and thanking Him for the miracles and the freedom (4), which we fulfill by saying *Hallel*, *Nishmas*, *Hallel Hagadol* etc. towards the end of the *Seder*.
- 2) Having *matza* and *maror* in front of us when we say the story so we can explain the *mitzvos* fulfilled that night.
- 3) Saying it with such feeling as if we are from those who actually left *Mitzrayim* (5). (Indeed, we are beneficiaries of those miracles with the freedom and the *Torah* that we have as a result of those miracles, as explained in the *Haggadah*.)
- 4) Saying the *Haggadah* in a question-answer format as it was

הוא היה אומר

R' Schneur Zalman of Liadi זי"ל (Baal HaTanya) would say:

Why did the Children of Israel rush when they finally left Egypt? Didn't their extreme haste give the mistaken impression that they had to escape quickly? Pharaoh actually wanted them to leave at that point. They could have taken more time to pack and depart at a leisurely pace. However, leaving Egypt was not a mere geographical move for the Jews. It was a step away from the world of spiritual degradation they had become accustomed to in Egypt. When a person desires to sever his connection to evil, it must be done all at once and not gradually. A person must grab the first opportunity that presents itself to escape from a negative influence. However, when *Moshiach* comes and reveals himself, we will not be so hard pressed to leave the exile immediately. Hashem has promised to remove all impurity from the world, so there will be no reason to run away from evil."

R' Shmuel Eidels זי"ל (Chiddushei Aggados Maharsha) would say:

The word for 'exalted' (גאה) is repeated, indicating a double measure of pride and nobility. The ancient Egyptians were a proud people, as it states (*Yeshaya* 30:7): 'Thus I have called ... Egypt ... they are boastfulness.' Similarly, the horse is an arrogant creature, as the *Gemara* relates (*Pesachim* 113): 'Six things are said about the horse: it loves war and its spirit is haughty.' An Egyptian riding upon a horse was arrogance upon arrogance; thus the Jews sang 'כי גאה גאה' - 'the horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea.'"

A Wise Man would say:

"The moment someone tells you you cannot accomplish something is the moment you should stop listening to him."

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Special Mazel Tov to Rabbi & Mrs SruLi Miller on the birth of their son, Yaakov Yehudah ז"ל and to the Taub, Miller and Hoffman grandparents.

כשם שנגזר לגרית פ' יכנס לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים

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טו-כב ניסן תשע"ז – April 11-18, 2017

טיב התבלין

הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינובין שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים ע"ה"ק

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

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

מכאן אותה הארה שבקדושה שהיתה ועדיין משמשת ומסייעת לעמוד מול פנעי הוצ'.

ענין האמונה מכאן מסודרת אבות נרמז גם בברכת אבות שבתפילת שמונה עשרה, בו ממליכים אנו את בוראנו ואומרים לפנינו 'אלקינו' אך עדיין לא יצאנו בזה ידי חובת, כי כל עוד שלא גילינו ממעינו של מי דלינו את האמונה התמימה להכיר שהוא אלקינו, ודאי יתכן שאין זו אמונה המושתתת על יסודות נאמנים, ונמצא ששקד בפנינו. כי איך מעידים אנו שהוא אלקינו בשעה שלאמיתו של דבר אין אנו מאמינים בזה על כן ממשכים תיכף ואומרים 'ואלקי אבותנו', כי מהם קבלנו יסודות האמונה, והם קבלוה מאבותיהם ואבות אבותיהם, ונמשך זה המעין הטהור עד אבות העולם – אברהם יצחק ויעקב, אשר יגעו ומצאו כדי יגיעתם להכיר בחוש במי שאמר והיה העולם. וכיון שממקור קדוש נובעת אמונתנו הטהורה, על כן אכן ראוייה היא לקיום, ונמצא כי אמת בפנינו בזה שממליכים אנו את בוראנו.

תכלית הבריאה ע"י קיום האמונה. אלו הניסים ומסירתם מדור לדור הם הכרח לתכלית הנצח בבריאת העולם. כי הלא תכלית הבריאה היא לגלות כבוד מלכותו יתברך בכח מעשינו, וכדי שיבוא האדם לידי מעשה מוטל עליו להאמין מקודם באמיתת בוראנו. אך מאידך לא רצה הקב"ה להאיר על הארץ באופן תמידי שיכירו כל באי עולם כי הו"ה הוא האלקים רק ע"י ניסים תדירים, כי על ידי זה יתבטל כח הבחירה, שהרי מי פתי אשר יעבור את פי הש"ת בהכירו בחוש כי יש מנהיג לבירה, ונמצא בטלה תכלית הבריאה, כי רק מכח הבחירה ביכולת האדם לקדש שם שמים. ולכן יש הכרח בהנהגה של הסתרה ואמונה. אולם, עבור קיום האמונה היה מן הצורך לעורר אלו הניסים, כדי שיוכל אותו הדור להכיר בו ית' ולהעיד להבאים אחריהם כי יש מנהיג לבירה המסובב הסיבות.

ואפשר כי זה המכון בדברי הרמב"ם (סוף פר' בא) שכתב בזה"ל: ובעבור כי הקב"ה לא יעשה אות ומופת בכל דור לעיני כל רשע או כופר, יצוה אותנו שנעשה תמיד זכרון אות לאשר ראו עינינו, ונעתיק הדבר אל בנינו, ובניהם לבניהם, ובניהם לדור אחרון. עכ"ל. כי אמת הוא, שזה הכופר אילו היה רואה אות ומופת כמו עיניו היה מכיר במציאות הש"ת והיה מונע עצמו מן החטא, אך מניעתו מן החטא על זה האופן אין בה שום תכלית לבריאת העולם, שהרי אין הוא מקדש את שמו הגדול, כי רק באופן של הסתרה שאין ניכר בחוש כי יש מנהיג לבירה ואע"פ כן מתנהגים בתמימות ומבטלים את רצונן החומרי כדי לקיים מצוות הש"ת, בזה נתגלד ונתקדש שם שמים בעולם, אך באם אין הש"ת מכבירו ותהיה מציאותו ניכרת לכל, כי אז מה בצע בעשיית המצוות והמעשים טובים.

לספר גם את הידוע. וכדי לחזק האמונה נצטוונו לספר בזה הלילה את כל הקורות אותנו בזה השעבוד, ואיד שזיכנו הש"ת ונעורר בנו רוח טהרה ממרום

להוציאנו ממ"ט שערי טומאה, והאותות אשר על ידם הכירו הכל כי לו לבדו המלוכה, כ"ז מוטל על האבות למסור לבניהם, ובוה משרישים אור האמונה בהם. ואף אם אלו הדברים כבר ידועים לכל, בכ"ז מצוה לחזור ולספר שוב את כל הקורות, כי כפי מה שמרבים לשנן את הדברים שוב ושוב מושרשים בפנמיות האדם, וכשם שאינו דומה שונה פרקו מאה פעמים, לשונה פרקו מאה פעמים ואחד (חגיגה ט, ב), כך אינו דומה מי שמספר סיפור יציאת מצרים פעם אחת, לזה המספרה הרבה פעמים. וזה מדרייק במה שכתב מצוה עלינו 'לספר' ביציאת מצרים, ולא כתב מצוה 'לשמוע', ואף שיכולים לקיים מצוה זו בשמיעה כבסיפור, בכל זאת בחר לנקוט לשון סיפור, כי ראה לנכון לרמו על צורת קיומה, שיהיה דוקא ע"י סיפור, מפני שאין הדבר תלוי בידיעה אלא בשינון הדברים שוב ושוב.

מדרגות באמונה
ובעומק הענין ההסבר הוא כך. הדנה ידוע מספרים הקדושים שיש שלש מדרגות באמונה, והן: ידיעה, הכרה והרגשה. וכמוכן שכל מדרגה לגבי המדרגה הגבוהה ממנה, היא כרוחק מורח ממערב, שכן יש אחד שיש לו 'ידיעה', ויש אחד שהוא בדרגה יותר גבוהה ממנו ש'מכיר', ומדרגה הגדולה הימנה היא ש'מרגיש'. ואף גם בידיעה הכרה והרגשה, יש בכל אחת ואחת כמה דרגות: איזו ידיעה יש לו, ואיזו הכרה, ואיזו הרגשה. ובאמת במזה האדם נמצאת הידיעה, וכל אחד ידוע בשכלו זאת, אבל הכרה והרגשה הוא בלב, ועבודת האדם היא להוריד הידיעה מהמח אל הלב, שהלב יכיד וידגש בחוש אמונת הש"ת כמו שמרגש את איבריו. וכמו שאמר דוד המלך ע"ה (תהלים טז, ח) 'שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד' - 'תמיד' ממש בלי הפסק - 'כי מימיני בל אמוט', כמו שאני מרגיש יד ימין, כך אני מרגיש האמונה בחש"ת, וזו תכלית העבודה להגיע לביקורת בה.

ובזה פתח מאור עינינו: **הרמ"א מלחן ערוך** (אורח א, א) וז"ל: 'שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד' - הוא כלל גדול בתורה ובמעלות הצדיקים אשר הולכים לפני האלקים וכו', כששים האדם על לבו שהמלך הגדול הקב"ה אשר מלא כל הארץ כבודו עומד עליו ורואה במעשיו וכו', מיד יגיע אליו הדיאה וההכנעה בפחד הש"ת ובשתו ממנו תמיד. ולכן כדי להגיע להכרה והרגשה בלב, צריכים דוקא לספר

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל ברוך הוא
פירש הנרי"א מוילנא זצוק"ל:
"כי העולם היה מחודש ב' פעמים, בכללות ובפרטות. הא', בתחילת בריאת העולם נתחדש העולם בכללות. לכל העולם כולו, (והיינו, שיתנהג עמהם ה' בדרך טבעית [ועל דרך זה פירש ב**הגדת יד מצרים' לרבי יצחק אייזיק חבר זצ"ל** תלמיד תלמיד הגר"א]). ואח"כ במתן תורה נתחדש בפרטות, לישראל, (והיינו, שעממם יתנהג ה' בדרך על טבעית [כנ"ל], ויעיזין גם בהקדמתו להגדה-פיתוח יד', שהאר"ך בעניין זה), ובכל דבר יש נגלה ונעלם, נגלה בשעת המעשה, ונעלם במחשבה קודם המעשה, וזה כוונת מה שאמר בעל ההגדה 'ברוך המקום' הוא על בריאת העולם, שעל זה אנו קונים אותו 'מקום', על שברא מקומו של עולם, וממנו נעשה העולם מקום. בזה שברא אותו כרצונו ומקיים אותו ברצונו, זה סוד מה דאיתא במדרש (בראשית רבה פרשה ס"ח אות ט') ש'הוא מקומו של עולם', כי זולתו לא היה העולם מקום, רק הוא ברצונו עושה את העולם למקום. 'ברוך הוא' על מחשבת הבריאה קודם בריאת העולם, (ועל דרך זה יש לפרש את מה שאומרים בתחילת תפילת 'ברוך שאמר'-'ברוך שאמר והיה העולם [-על בריאת העולם]. ברוך הוא' [-על מחשבת הבריאה קודם בריאת העולם]). 'ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל', הוא על שעת מתן תורה (שבו חידש את העולם 'בפרטות, לישראל'), 'ברוך הוא', על קודם מתן תורה, במחשבתו לזה".

וגם יש לפרש את כוונת בעל ההגדה על דרך זה באופן אחר, וזאת על פי מה שכתב **ה'הזקק דרב'** (פתחיה לחומש שמות), "זה הספר נקרא בפי בעלי המדרש 'ספר שמות', וכדאיתא בבראשית רבה פרשה ג' אות ה'-ז'יה אור, כנגד ספר ואלה שמות, שבו יצאו ישראל מאפילה לאורה, וכן בהרבה מקומות, ו**הדמכ"ן** בסוף הספר קראו 'ספר הגאולה', וזלת רבינו בעל הלכות גדולות בסוף ספרו הקדוש יקראוהו 'ספר שני', דקחשיב המישה חומשי תורה-ספר בראשית, וחומש

הניסים של יציאת מצרים ולחזור ולשנן שוב ושוב, מפני שזה מביא אמונה בהש"ת, שהוא מנהיג העולם, וברצונו עושה ומשנה מה שרוצה כי הכל בידו. ועי"ז מגיע להכרה ודרגשה שלימה באמונה חזקה בחש"ת, שזה תכלית קיום כל התר"ג מצוות, כדאיתא **בחוזה** (ח"ב כב ב) שכל התר"ג מצוות, הם עצות איך להגיע להש"ת.

ליל פסח מסוגל במיוחד לאמונה.
זהה הלילה מסוגל הוא ביותר להשפעת האמונה. שבמצות 'הגדת לבנך' קבעה התורה כח עילאי של השפעת אמונה והתקשרות עם כל הדורות עד דור יוצאי מצרים, והזמן המסוגל ביותר להשפעה זו הוא הזמן שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך'. לכן, בזה שהאב מעביר לבנו את ששמע מאבותיו ומרביתו, אפילו אם אינו מחדש בדבריו שום חידוש לבנו, מכל מקום הוא מקשר אותו בכך לשלשלת האמונה וממשיך ללבו ולנשמתו את אור האמונה הנגלה בליל זה, והשפעתו נמשכת על כל השנה. ויתירה מזו, רואים אנו שבארבעה בנים שהתורה דברה עליהם, מופיע גם הבן הרשע שאינו רוצה לקבל כלום ומתכחש לגמרי ליהדותו. והגם שבמשך כל השנה אין לאב שום השפעה עליו, מכל מקום בליל הסדר מבחינים שגם הבן הזה מגיע לשאול את שאלותיו, אף שבאמת עושה זאת בהתנכרות מוחלטת, ותמזה: 'מה העבודה הזאת לכם', עד שבעל ההגדה מגדירו כאחד שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל. עם כל זאת, אפשר בליל קדוש זה 'להקחות את שינוי', היינו להפחית ולהחליש תוקף וחוזק טענותיו, כך שיצטרך לקבל בעל כרחו משהו מהאמונה והקדושה, כי כאמור טמונה סגולה מיוחדת בליל זה, להעברת האמונה לבנים בכל מצב שהם. לסיכום נמצאנו למדים, כי בליל הסדר מושפעים אורות האמונה המקושרים את הבנים אל הדורות הקודמים עד דור יציאת מצרים שראו את התנגלות השכינה עין בעין, עד שבמעמד 'קריעת ים סוף' וכו להשגה גבוהה והראו באצבע ואמרו: **'זה אלי ואנוהו'** (שמו"ר כג, טז). ובזכות סיפור יציאת מצרים וההתעסקות בקיום מצות חינוך הילדים לתורה וידאת שמים, אנו תפילה שנוכה כולנו במהרה ממש לדאות בקיום ההבטחה (מלאכי ג, כג-כד): 'הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה הנביא וגו', והשיב לב אבות על בנים ולב בנים על אבותם.

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

... (הגדה של פסח) - **ביאור כוונת המילים 'ברוך המקום ברוך הוא'**

שני: וספר כהנים, וחומש הפקודים, ומשנה תורה, ושותא דמרן וצ"ל ניתן ללמדנו בינה, שהרי לא בחינם שינה השם בזה הספר, והיה לרבינו לקרוא לכולם במספר-חומש ראשון שני ושלשי וכו', או שיקראו 'חומש שמות', או על העניין המסוים שבו, כמו יציאת מצרים או מתן תורה, וכמו שקורא לספר במדבר-ספר הפקודים, על שם שבו יש את העניין של פקודי בני ישראל.

אלא שבא ללמדינו, דזה הספר ביחוד הוא שני לספר ראשית הבריאה, כי הוא חלק שני מזה הספר, היינו, שבו נגמר סדר הבריאה, וכמאמרם ז"ל 'בראשית-בשגיל ישראל שנקראו ראשית', פירוש, שתכלית העולם בכלל הוא שיהא אומה אחת 'חלק ה' עמו', וזה לא נשלם עד שיצאו ישראל ממצרים וקיבלו את התורה ובאו לתכליתם שיהיו ראויים להיות לאור גויים להעמידם על ידיעת אלוקי העולם (על ידי שיחיו על פי אמונה בה), וזהו תכלית הבריאה שנברא לכבודו יתברך, וכמו שנאמר 'כל הנקרא בשמי ולכבודי בראתיו וגו', ונמצא, שמתן תורה הוא גמר הבריאה, וכמאמרם ז"ל 'בראשית-בשגיל התורה שנקראת ראשית', והיינו כדאיתא בנמרא (שבת פ"ח) 'מאי דכתבי ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום הששי, ה"א יתירה למה לי, מלמד שהתנה הקדוש ברוך הוא עם מעשה בראשית ואמר להם: אם ישראל מקבלים התורה אתם מתקיימין, ואם לאו אני מחזיר אתכם לתוהו ובוהו', כיון שללא מתן תורה לא תניע הבריאה לתכליתה, וא"כ אין כל צורך בה ואפשר להחזירה לתוהו ובוהו, ונמצא, שספר שמות הוא ספר שני להראשון, כי שבו יצאו בני ישראל ממצרים וקיבלו את התורה וגמרו את בריאת העולם שמוספר עליה בספר הראשון.

ולפ"ז אפשר לפרש את כוונתו, 'ברוך המקום ברוך הוא [על בריאת העולם ועל מחשבת הבריאה קודם בריאת העולם] ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל ברוך הוא' [על שנמד בריאתו והביאה לתכליתה, ועל מחשבת גמרה והבאתה לתכליתו].

and before he had even reached the main point of his story, he was already promised the salvation that everyone else had given up on. R’ Tzadka was very surprised and the following day summoned his driver to take him to Ashdod.

Rabbeinu Meir was elated at the sight of such an important visitor and treated him with great respect and deference. R’ Tzadka came straight to the point. “Yesterday, the *Rav* promised a young man who learns in my *Yeshiva* that he would have children. He has never married because he is unable to have children. The greatest of doctors have studied his case and come to this very sad conclusion. The young man is now in a state of eager anticipation, overcome with euphoria. I suspect that he simply did not have the chance to tell the *Rav* the entire story.”

Before R’ Tzadka could finish, Rabbeinu Meir stopped him. “He will have children,” he said with great determination, leaving no room for doubt. The *Tzaddik* had clearly understood all the details and had drawn down salvation from the heavenly sanctuaries. R’ Tzadka, well aware of Rabbeinu Meir’s prophetic blessings, instructed the young man to rely on this clear blessing and to consider *shidduchim* suggested to him. After a period of time he met his intended bride and married her. A visitor to this man’s home today will meet ten children. In the house there is also the medical file containing all the records of the definite diagnosis that he will never be able to father children.

אמר אייב ארדף אשיג אחלק שלל תמלאמו נפשי אריק חרבי תורישמו ידי וגו' (שירת דים - שמות טו-טז)
The largest *shul* in all of Warsaw, Poland, before the Second World War, was the Tlomacki Shul. Not only was it attended by more than 1500 members, the *shul* also boasted the celebrated Moshe Koussevitzky as their *chazzan*. Among the *shul* members were some of the most respected personalities of the city. It played an important role in the lives of the Warsaw Jewish community and their days were centered around the *shul*. They would *daven* there in the morning and again in the evening, as well as learn there throughout the day.

While there was no difficulty finding a seat during the week, *Shabbos* was different story. It was absolutely packed with nary a seat to spare. However, once the Second World War began and the Germans conquered Warsaw in a few short weeks, everything changed very rapidly. Right away, many people were taken away, mostly the prominent leaders of the community. Nobody knew to where they were taken or what was happening to them, but it was understood that in all probability they were not coming back anytime soon. Jewish stores were vandalized and eventually shuttered. Life became not only uncomfortable for the Jews of Poland, but extremely dangerous.

Since the large and once beautiful Tlomacki Shul was vandalized, people attempting to cling to a semblance of normalcy tried to find somewhere they could gather together and pray. However, since even most of the smaller *shuls* were also shuttered, most people gathered in nearby apartments to *daven* with a *minyan*.

An elderly Holocaust survivor related that when he was a child, he remembered how desperate people were to believe that the atrocities and nightmares they experienced in those early days of the war, were over. One *Shabbos* morning, during *Krias HaTorah*, one of the people standing near the *Sefer Torah* pointed to it, and made a comment. Then, two more people came over to look. Within a few seconds, a crowd had gathered around the *Sefer Torah*, each person gesturing wildly to the other. The survivor continued, “When I turned to my father to ask him what was going on, he responded that a letter was probably not written correctly and they were deciding what the *halacha* is.”

After *davening*, someone explained what had happened. “This *Shabbos*,” said the man, “we were laining the words of ‘Az Yashir’ (it was *Shabbos Shira*) - the song that *Bnei Yisroel* sang to *Hashem* praising and thanking Him for saving them from the hands of the Egyptians who wished to murder them. The bitter truth is, our situation under the Nazis isn’t much better, if not worse, than what the Jews experienced under the rule of the Egyptians. Therefore, during *laining* we earnestly focused on the *posuk*, **‘אמר אייב ארדף אשיג אחלק שלל’** - *‘The enemy declared: I will pursue them, I will overtake them, I will divide the spoils, I will satisfy myself I will unsheathe my sword, my hand will destroy them.’*”

The survivor continued. “The first letters of the first five words of the *posuk* are *aleph* (each word begins with an *aleph*, which equals five *alephs*) which translates into five thousand. The next word begins with a *shin* (ש), which equals three hundred in *gematria*. The next word begins with a *tav* (ט), which equals four hundred. Together, they add up to the number 5 and 700 - which according to the gentile calendar corresponds to the year 1940.

The survivor reflected. “We were so desperate to find some sort of hint from our holy *Torah* as to when the bitter oppression would end that we looked at this formation of words and letters as a sign that *Hashem* will rescue us from the accursed Nazis just as *Hashem* rescued our ancestors from *Mitzrayim*. We also found comfort knowing that *Hashem* will punish the accursed Nazis measure for measure just as He punished the Egyptians measure for measure.” It took a bit more time but in the end, the enemies of Israel got what they had coming to them. (**Portraits of Prayer by Rabbi E. Abish**)

steadfastly at all times? Well, if we were to name one, it would be: “One is *Hashem* in the Heaven and the Earth.” Are more principles needed once we have said this? Obviously, just as the answer of the Chief was all encompassing, so too is this one principle. Yet, just as other factors contributed to the loss of the battle, even though the stated reason was by far the most relevant, so too, are there other priorities and principles - like the five *sifrei Chumash*, the six *sedarim* of *Mishna*, *Shabbos* is the seventh day of the week, *Bris Milah* is on the eighth day - that would be on our list, even though “One is *Hashem*” is by far the overarching focal point of our belief.

It is that list that we sing on the night of the *Seder*. Indeed, we thank the Almighty for redeeming us from slavery, and allowing us to enter His service. On the night that we express our happiness about the close relationship we have as a Nation with *Hashem*, we affirm those precepts that are essential to that relationship by singing His praises with this song. (**Rabbi Yehudah Z. Prero**)

if one feels that he has something in common with him. Yaakov was deeply concerned that if Lavan could find something in his character that made him feel close to Yaakov, then perhaps they did in fact share certain characteristics. This worried Yaakov to the point that he began to engage in serious soul-searching. ‘Despite my beard and *payos*,’ thought Yaakov, ‘and my involvement in a life of *Torah*, Lavan still sees something in me that makes him feel that we are essentially alike. He really believes that I am one of his people. How am I like him? What sin have I committed?’ asked Yaakov.

“I, too,” cried R’ Meisels, “have a similar problem like Yaakov. If the Polish senators are friendly with me, they must see something that I have in common with them. There must be something in my character that causes them to equate me with themselves. Therefore, I weep and pray that *Hashem* will remove any such blemishes.”

נַמְשֵׁל: There are many interpretations to understand the words of the *Haggadah*, “לֹבֵן בִּיקֵשׁ לַעֲקוֹר אֶת הַכֹּל” - how Lavan tried to destroy us. The simplest is the one the *Torah* records when Lavan declares to Yaakov, “*I have the power to destroy you and I would do so were it not that Hashem, your Father, warned me not to.*” (*Bereishis* 31:29) But when Lavan chased after Yaakov, he revealed a desire in his heart to destroy *Klal Yisroel*. He was, after all, the grandfather of Yaakov’s children. He attempted to sow the seeds of his evil character into his grandchildren, the future nation, in order to transmit his outlook of life onto them. He attempted to destroy the uniqueness and blemish the purity of *Klal Yisroel* from within.

Army to explain what had occurred and for what reason had they lost the battle. The Chief responded that there were many reasons why the troops were defeated. The Prime Minister asked the Chief to elaborate. The Chief responded that the troops had run out of ammunition and gunpowder during the battle, and could not refresh the supply. The Prime Minister was taken aback. He asked, “If you have a reason like this, why do you need any others!”

Chacham Mani explains that every person has his or her own priorities in life. Every person has priorities in both the realms of *Ruchniyos* (spiritual) and *Gashmiyus* (physical). Not always do these priorities match what our priorities should truly be, nor do they reflect the priorities that *Hashem* wants us to keep at the top of the list. When we come to take inventory of our priorities in life, we have to recall those principles that must remain unwavering and solid, as they are the foundation of our faith, and without them, our *avodas Hashem* is flawed. What are these principles that we must remember constantly and adhere to

משל למה הדבר דומה

צא ולמד מה בקש לבן הארמי לעשות ליעקב אבינו שפרעה לא נזר אלא על הזכרים ולבן בקש לעקור את הכל (הנהג של פסח)

משל: One of the leading *Rabbanim* in all of Poland, who maintained his position as Chief Rabbi of Lodz for many years, was the eminent *Gaon* and *Tzaddik*, **R’ Eliyahu Chaim Meisels ז”ל**. He was also a representative for the entire Polish Jewish community, in the Sejm, the Polish Senate. He was quite popular among his fellow senators, all of whom were non-Jews, and he was greatly beloved and respected by them all. R’ Meisels had a strange practice; each time he returned to Lodz from a meeting of the Sejm, he would rush to his inner chamber, lock himself in his room, and remain there for a day or two. One could hear him wailing and crying from behind the closed doors. Once he was asked the reason for this odd behavior.

He replied, “We find in the *Torah* that when *Yaakov Avinu* left the house of Lavan with his entire family, Lavan chased after him. When he finally caught up with Yaakov, Lavan berated his son-in-law for leaving secretly, in the middle of the night, without affording Lavan the chance to give him and his wives a proper sendoff. ‘I would have arranged a farewell dinner for you, accorded you honor, and showered you with gifts,’ insisted Lavan.

“Yaakov’s reply seems a bit puzzling. He responded, ‘*What sin have I committed? What have I done wrong?*’ What kind of response is this? It looks as though Lavan wanted to be friendly and he even seems to be humbling himself. So why did Yaakov answer in such a manner?”

“The answer is that *Yaakov Avinu* knew,” explained the *Rav*, “that it is part of human nature to love a person only

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ”י פרשיות השבוע

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

אמר אייב ארדוף אשני אחלק שלל (שירת הים לשביעי של פסח) - נם משיכת מצרים אל הים שנקרע

אחר, שכתב "אמר אויב לעמו, כשפיתם בדברים, ארדפם ואשיגם ואחלק שלל עם שרי ועבדי, לשון רש"י, וראיתי במדרש חזית כך, תני רבי ישמעאל, 'אמר אויב ארדוף אשני' היה ראוי להיות תחילת השירה, ולמה לא נכתב שם, אלא שאין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, ולכן תיגרם **דהוה אמר** שנאה, על תחילת מחשבתו ברדפו אחריהם.

ולדעתי בדרך הפשט, הוא סדור בפסוק הראשון ממנו, כי מתחילה (בפסוק ד') אמר שטבעו בים וירדו במצולות, והיה זה כאשר שבו המים ויכסו את הרכב ואת הפרשים (בפסוק ה'), ואח"כ (בפסוקים ח-י') שב לומר איך נעשה זה, כי ברוח אפך, היא רוח קדים עזו, נערמו מים מתחילה, וקפאו התהומות, **ומפני זה חשב האויב שידרוף וישגם בים**, וחלק שללם ותמלא נפשו מהם, ונשפת עליהם ברוחך, וכסמו הים". ומבואר, שמדובר אודות אנשי מצרים אויבי בני".

ומוסיף וכותב, "והוכיז זה, כי גם במחשבתו זאת, סיבה ופלא מאת השם, שחזיק ליבם וסיכל עצתם לבוא בים, כאשר פידשת לימלעה (שמות י"ד ד'-ז'למטה [פסוק י']) אמר פעם אחרת 'הנני מחזק את לב מצרים, ויבאו אחריהם', כי בראותם שנקרע הים לפני בני ישראל, ורם הולכים ביבשה בתוכו, איך ימלאם ליבם לבוא אחריהם להרע להם, ואין בכל המופתים כפלא הוזה, וזה באמת שיגעון להם, אבל סיכל עצתם וחזיק את ליבם להיכנס בים", על כן אמר אחריו 'מי כמוכה באלים ה' וגו', עושה פלא".

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV

הים ראה וינס הירדן תסב לאחור ... (תהלים קד)

The *Medrash Raba* asks: What did the Sea (*Yam*) see that caused it to flee? The *Medrash* answers that it saw the *Aron* (coffin) containing the bones of *Yosef HaTzaddik*. The sea fled in the merit of Yosef, the one who fled rather than sin, as it says, "וַיֵּנָס וַיֵּצֵא חֲרוּצָה". Just as Yosef fled and caused a *Kiddush Hashem*, the waters “fled” (וַיֵּנָס) in his *zechus*.

There is a different *Medrash* - that the *Yam Suf* split because of the *mesiras nefesh* of *Nachshon ben Aminadav*, the *Nasi* of *Shevet Yehuda*, who risked his life by plunging into the sea and causing it to split. Our Sages tell us that in his *zechus* the *Yam Suf* split and *Bnei Yisrael* were saved. Well, which is it? Why did *Chazal* have to tell us that the Sea saw Yosef’s *Aron* and as a result, it decided to split? Wouldn’t it seem that the *mesiras nefesh* and tremendous *Kiddush Hashem* of *Nachshon ben Aminadav* was an even greater *zechus* than the fact that Yosef ran away and withstood the temptation that faced him?

My *machshava* here is that there are two types of *Kiddush Hashem*. One type is dying with *mesiras nefesh*, while the other is living a life with *mesiras nefesh*. True, Nachshon was willing to give up his life, but once a person dies by being *Moser Nefesh al Kiddush Hashem*, his *nisayon* is over and he is destined to receive a great reward in *Olam Haba*. However, living *al Kiddush Hashem* is a much more difficult proposition. We see this from Yosef himself, who ran away from his master’s wife and wound up thrown mercilessly into an Egyptian dungeon, from

כָּתַב רַש"י, "אמר אויב, לעמו, כשפיתם בדברים, ארדוף, ואשיגם, ואחלק שלל עם שרי ועבדי", ומבואר, שמדובר אודות פרעה אויב עם ישראל. ובדבריו על הכתוב "ואת עמו לקח עמו" (שמות י"ד ו'), ביאר יותר, "ואת עמו לקח עמו-משכם בדברים (-כיון שלקחת אדם היא ע"י דברים), לקינו ונטלו ממויניו ושלחננם, בואו עמי, ואני לא אתנהג עמכם כאשר מלכים, דרך שאר מלכים עבדיו קודמים לו במלחמה, ואני אקדים לפניכם, שנאמר 'זפרעה הקריב'-/הקריב עצמו ומיהר לפני חיילותיו/, דרך שאר מלכים ליטול ביהו בראש כמו שיבחר, אני אשווה עמכם בחלק, שנאמר 'אחלק שלל'", וכן פירש את הכתוב "זפרעה הקריב" (שם י'). "זפרעה הקריב-היה לו לכתוב 'זפרעה קרב', מהו 'הקריב', הקריב עצמו, ונתאמץ לקדם לפניהם, כמו שהתנה עמהם".

ולפ"י ש לבאר את המשך הכתוב, "זפרעה הקריב"-עצמו, ונתאמץ לקדם לפני עמו, **וישאו בני ישראל את עיניהם, והנה מצרים נוסע**- לשון יחיד, והכוונה היא אל פרעה (-היחיד) הנוסע לפני עמו **אחריהם, וידאו מאוד**- "כיון שראו בכך מסירותו אל הדרך, שתגרום לו להצליח בו, שהרי 'בדרך' שאדם רוצה לילך, מוליכים אותו" (מכות י') **וגו'**.

ועפ"י- "שהכתוב 'אמר אויב' מדבר אודות פרעה", יש לפרש ככוונת המילים "ארדוף, אשיג", שהיא לאמירתו שינהל את הרדיפה וההשגה, וכנתבאר.

אבל **הרמב"ן** הביא פירוש זה במילים 'אמר אויב', ונחלק עליו ופידש באופן

FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

where presumably, there was no parole system and he would have languished there for the rest of his life. *Yosef HaTzaddik* was prepared to give up everything - his freedom - and continue living *al Kiddush Hashem*.

The **Rambam** (הל' יסודי התורה) writes that the person who was מקדש שם שמים more than anyone else was Yosef. And what about Rabbi Akiva and all the other *Tanaaim* who died *al Kiddush Hashem* while saying *Shema Yisrael*? **Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik ז”ל** suggests that the greatest *Kiddush Hashem* is not dying for Him, but living for Him. Dying for a cause is easier than living for a cause. Dying takes a few moments and leaves over a glorious memory. Living for *Hashem* is a 24/7 responsibility, a daily commitment that cannot be forgotten even for one second.

Every year, at my parents’ *yahrzeit*, I tell over what **R’ Mordechai Gifter ז”ל** once told me. He said that people who came to America in the 1920’s and remained *Shomer Shabbos*, built *Yeshivos* and brought up their children to be *Bnei Torah*, did a greater *Kiddush Hashem* than the millions of Jews who died in the *churbonos* in Europe.

The nature of water is always to flow together. Therefore, in the *zechus* of *Yosef Hatzaddik* who overruled his natural inclinations, *Chazal* tell us that the water - the *Yam Suf* - fled in the *zechus* of Yosef, who also fled.

May the *zechusim* of all our ancestors who lived *al Kiddush Hashem* as well as those that were destined to die *al Kiddush Hashem*, be a merit for *yeshuos, refuos, shidduchim, arichas yamim* and a *chag kosher v’sameach*.

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא ... כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה: אחד חכם, ואחד רשע, ואחד תם, ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול ... (הגדה של פסח)

I've always wondered why the introduction to the portion of the four sons mentioned in the *Haggadah* begins with the words "ברוך המקום". They seem to indicate a consolation of sorts, as we generally use the term "המקום ירחם אתכם" when we console a mourner. Additionally, why is each of the four sons prefaced by the word "אחד" (one)? The *Baal Haggadah* could easily have written, "*The Torah speaks of four different children: wise, wicked, simple and unable to ask.*" And finally, why is the letter "vav" added to each word of "אחד"? What is the significance of this letter?

My *machshava* here is that on the night of *Pesach* when we sit by the *Seder* and look at our children around the table, we might wonder why certain children are smarter than others; why some have greater intelligence than others; why these are more talented than those? Why can't they all be the proverbial "*Chacham*" from the *Mah Nishtana*? The answer is, we must realize that every child is special and unique, each one is an "*Echad*" - a *beracha* and a gift from the *Ribono shel Olam*, no matter his or her long or shortcomings. Thus, we "console" ourselves with this knowledge by introducing the four children with the words "ברוך המקום" - as if to say, thank You, *Hashem*, for the wonderful children You have given us. The "vav" attached to each child is the "*vav hachibur*" (connecting *vav*), which reminds us that we must always stay connected to our children and they should always strive to be connected to each other. This will help us realize that each child is truly a gift from the One Above to enjoy and cherish.

This reminds me of a story of two brothers. One lived in *Eretz Yisroel* and was blessed with twelve children, but was extremely poor. The other lived in America, had no children, but was a multi-millionaire. One day, the brother in America called his brother in Israel and made him an offer, saying, "You, my dear brother, have twelve children! I have none. You have no money and I have millions. I am willing to give you a million dollars if you will give me one of your children and this way, you will have means to support your family and I will have a child."

Although this was a tough decision to make, under the burden of financial duress, they agreed to the deal. A legal contract was drawn up and signed. The night before the transfer was to take place, the brother in Israel and his wife had the painstaking task of choosing which child they were going to part with. The entire night, while the children were sleeping in their beds, they walked around gazing at each beautiful face. When the sun rose the next morning, he called his brother in America and told him that the deal is off. "But we have a legal contract!" said the American brother.

The brother in Israel didn't hesitate with his response, "I realize that, my brother, but the contract is based on the false assumption that my wife and I have twelve children. In reality, last night we realized that we only have ONE child. ONE Chani, ONE Rochel, ONE Shimi, ONE Chaim ... etc. Each one is a ONE!"

The entire *Seder* is based on the *posuk*, "הגדת לבנך ביום ההוא", - "*You shall tell your child on that day.*" It does not say, "You shall tell your children," but your "child" in the singular. We must reach out and devote ourselves to each child individually. The *Pesach Seder* is the best time to be reminded that each child is a unique gift given to us from the *Ribono shel Olam* and we should all be blessed with much *nachas* from our children and *eineklach*.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

אני הבצלת השרון שושנת העמקים. כשושנה בין ההוחים כן רעייתי בין הבנות (שיר השירים ב-אב)

There is a fascinating *Medrash* in *Shir HaShirim* (*Shir HaShirim Raba* 2:1 [8]) that tells us: when Moshe told the Jewish people that their redemption from *Mitzrayim* was imminent, they did not believe him! The *Medrash* states: "*When Moshe told Israel, 'You will be redeemed in this month (Nisan),' they said to him: 'Moshe Rabbeinu, how can we be redeemed? After all, we have no good deeds to our merit!' He responded to them: 'Since He (Hashem) delights in your redemption, He does not look at your bad deeds. At whom does He look? At the Tzaddikim among you and at their deeds, such as Amram and his household.'*"

The *Medrash* goes on to say that *Hashem* told Moshe, "If I will analyze their wicked deeds, the Jewish people will never be redeemed. Instead, I will redeem them in the merit of Amram's dedication and role in leading the people and

all those who heed his advice, because whoever follows the advice of the great *Torah* Sages will not stumble!"

R' Avraham Pam ז"ל cites this *Medrash* and learns out something amazing and extremely applicable for our generation. We are living in the generation known as "עיקבתא דמשיחא" - the days immediately preceding *Moshiach*. And yet, we all ask the same question: Why would *Hashem* bring the *Geula* now, when our generation is so low, so far removed from spirituality? The generations before us were so much greater, on so much of higher level, and *Moshiach* didn't come. Why would he come now? The answer, says Rav Pam, is found in this *Medrash* and in the analysis of the entire *Geulas Mitzrayim*. It is not on account of us - it is on account of the *Gedolim* and righteous *Torah* Sages.

escape the endless passages in the *Hagaddah*. No guests chewing up our parents' attention. That night, locked inside a small, enclosed room, we were truly free. Free to share stories with each other. Free to sing songs. Free to tell jokes. Free to talk about the story of *Pesach*. Free to laugh at our situation. It was a true "*Zman Cheirusainu*"!

My father didn't preach faith that night in the *Mikvah*. He showed us faith. Faith that everything happens for a reason. Faith to know that there will always be light no matter the dark situation we are in. Faith in ourselves to find freedom within.

My brother Levi eventually found us and went to the home of the individual who worked in the *Shul* to get the keys. We went home to find a very concerned mother and starving guests. That's when we began the traditional *seder*.

Funny, I don't remember a thing about that one.

This *Pesach*, don't forget what it's all about. That's the only way for your kids not to forget either. (COLlive.com)

מרור זה שאנו אוכלים על שום מה? על שום שמררו המצרים את חי אבותינו במצרים ... (הגדה של פסח)

There was once a *Dinover chasid* who suffered from a mortal lung disease and traveled to the capital city of Vienna, Austria, for medical advice. After many tests and evaluations, the doctors told him that his disease could not be cured, because the lung was not in its normal position. It was pushed to the side and filled with phlegm which could not be drained and would cause decay. Any sharp or spicy food he would eat could be fatal. They suggested that he hurry home, lest he die among strangers.

The man started on his journey homeward with a broken heart. His way passed through the village of Sanz and he thought to himself, "The **Divrei Chaim (R' Chaim Halberstam ז"ל, Sanzer Rav)** is renowned as a great *Torah* scholar and authority on Jewish Law. I shall ask him what to do about eating maror, the bitter vegetable, in the forthcoming *Seder* on *Pesach* night. I am unable to eat the required amount (a *kzayis* - the volume of an olive), but am I still required to eat a lesser portion and should I pronounce a blessing over it?"

He went to the *Rebbe* who listened patiently to his query. "It is written in the *Zohar*," replied the *Sanzer Rav*, "that *maror* is considered a 'healing food.' You should be able to eat the full prescribed amount and be healed."

This *chasid* was an accomplished *Torah* scholar in his own right. After he left the *Rebbe's* presence, he searched for the *Zohar* but found that it does not say that *maror* is a healing food, but rather, *matza* is the food that heals. It is referred to in the text as "מיכלא דאסוותא". The *Divrei Chaim* had obviously made an error in his ruling, thought the *chasid*, and with that, he dismissed the incident from his mind.

On the night of the *Seder* when the moment for eating *maror* arrived, the sick man took the tiniest portion of bitter herbs. He never received an answer to his query so he ruled on his own that it was better to be stringent in this *mitzvah*. The instant he swallowed the *maror*, though, he immediately began to cough strenuously, weakening him greatly.

In a fit of righteous zeal, he cried out to his family, "If this is my end, let me at least fulfill the *mitzvah* of *maror* in its entirety!" He reached out and grabbed a full portion of the strong horseradish root and forced it into his mouth. As soon as he swallowed the whole mouthful, his eyes bulged and his face turned an awful shade of crimson. His coughing fit grew considerably worse and his whole body shook dreadfully.

His family jumped out of their seats and tried to help him. There wasn't anything they could do. Anyone who has ever swallowed a large portion of the bitter herb on the night of *Pesach* and began coughing, can attest that the feeling is anything but pleasant. For this *chasid*, it was absolutely painstaking. His wife and children were terrified as the man seemed to be out of control. Quickly, someone ran to fetch a local doctor. But the doctor was himself conducting a *Seder* and did not hasten to come. Meanwhile, the *chasid* and his coughing became progressively worse.

When the doctor finally did arrive, he found the patient unconscious. He was told that the man had become so exhausted from his coughing and twitching that he fainted. They had put him into his bed where he seemed to be sleeping, his breathing rising and falling laboriously. The doctor said that the rest was good for him and that he should not be awakened under any circumstances.

The *chasid* slept until a late hour the following day and when the doctor came again to examine him, he was amazed. The patient was breathing fine, he was calm and did not even feel any pain from his damaged lungs. It seemed that the force of the coughing and the shuddering of his body had jarred the lung and it had returned back to its normal position. Additionally, the fluid that had built up inside of him seemed to have drained out.

Now, the man understood the *teshuva* (responsa) of the *Divrei Chaim*. Of course, the *matza* is the "food of healing" but in his specific situation, the *Rebbe* had seen that the *maror* - not the *matza* - would be the charm needed for his cure.

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surroundings. That was the *Brezhaner Rav*’s study, where a candle always burned. He never published a responsum without reviewing it at least three or four times, to make it more understandable, more convincing, and more precise. A visitor related that in the eight days that he stayed with the *Maharsham*, over one hundred letters arrived and were answered.

When it came to answering *sheilos*, the **Maharsham** would become a hard-working public servant, always on the alert, always ready to serve, whether in the small hours of the night, early in the morning or late afternoon. Even Friday morning and Friday night, just as he lifted his cup to make *Kiddush*, or to make the blessing for *HaMotzi*, the *Rav* would stop what he was doing to answer a query.

His son, **R’ Yitzchok Hakohen Shwadron זי”ל** tells a story of his father, the *Brezhaner Rav*, who sat ready to start the *Pesach Seder*, when somebody came to ask a serious *sheilah* concerning an item that he believed had become *chametz*. Although the entire Schwadron family was sitting there and anxious to begin, R’ Sholom Mordechai left the table, took off his *kittel*, and began to pore over numerous seforim in an effort to find the right answer.

After an hour, he sent a message to his grandson-in-law, R’ Moshe Yisroel, who served as the *Rosh Av Beis Din* of Brezhan, asking him to join him. The *Ra’avad (Rosh Av Beis Din)* left his own *Seder* table and proceeded to his wife’s grandfather’s home. The two great men sat down and discussed the subject for a long time but could not come up with the proper *teshuvah*.

The *Maharsham* had an idea. “Let us go through the *seforim*, as well as those we recall by heart, and count the number of *poskim* who rule stringently and compare it to the number of those who are lenient. We will *pasken* (rule) according to the majority of opinions.”

They counted the number of opinions but lo and behold, the *poskim* were equally divided. “All right,” said the *Maharsham* suddenly, “I am joining those who ruled leniently, and now we have a majority of those who rule ‘kosher!’”

The case was closed, the outcome positive, and R’ Sholom Mordechai dismissed his granddaughter’s husband, donned his *kittel* again, and resumed his *Seder*.

לא את אבותינו בלבד גאל הקדוש ברוך הוא אלא אף אותנו גאל עמדם שנאמר ואותנו הוציא משם (הגדה של פסח)

Chag HaPesach celebrates the birth of our nation, and it may offer us the key to its continued survival. The *korban Pesach*, the first sacrifice offered as a nation, underscores the need to create and nurture close familial relationships. Faith exists in the intellectual realm, but it comes alive in community, when families unite around common causes. Perhaps that is why one of the most important things families can do on *Pesach* night, both when the actual *korban Pesach* was offered as well as in our contemporary model of *Pesach seder*, is come together.

Mendy Pellin is a well-known Jewish personality. He is *chasid* of *Chabad* and he is a humorist, who blends *Chassidishe* spirituality with out-of-the-box humor. On one occasion, someone asked him what was his most memorable and favorite *seder*. Mendy replied by recounting a true story that happened to him and his family in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, when he was just 8 years-old. He relates as follows:

As was often the case, my father was running late to *shul* the first night of *Pesach*. On the way to *shul*, we made a stop at the Union Street *Mikvah* for a quick pre-holiday dip. Actually, in my family there was no such thing as quick.

One of my brothers wanted to break his record and immerse 101 times in the holy water. I took forever to get dressed after my dip. My oldest brother didn’t have time to wait and went ahead to 770 to be on time (relatively) for *davening*. By the time the rest of us were ready to go, we were the last ones in the *Mikvah*.

That’s when we realized that we were locked inside the *Mikvah*! The management must have thought it was empty and locked it from the outside as they were leaving. We heard people walking outside. Some were already walking home from *Shul* to their *Pesach Sedarim* and we started banging on the door. Unfortunately for us, no one heard.

My brother, Yaakov, decided to try out his karate aspirations on the *Mikvah* door. He ran up, did a jump kick and flew backward - hitting the light switch on the wall opposite the door. Even his great karate kick was no match for a New York deadbolt *Mikvah* door. The problem was that now, not only were we stranded inside a hot and sweaty bathhouse - we were also in the pitch dark!

My father didn’t panic. He figured my brother Levi would eventually connect the dots and realize that we had never made it out of the *Mikvah*. Then, he would come check on us, and we would be - like the ancient Jews in Egypt - redeemed!

Well, it didn’t happen quite like that. A few hours passed. Most people on the outside were unlocking their doors for *Eliyahu HaNavi*. But we were sitting in a dark, chlorine-filled, dressing room having ... the best *seder* of my life.

It was as though nothing in the world existed but us. We had no distractions. No comfortable couches yelling for us to

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Nowadays, we see such a terrible rise in intermarriage, immorality, stress on materialism and a weak connection to real *Torah* Judaism, ו”ר; and yet we are constantly told that *Moshiach* is imminent, “*Moshiach* is coming NOW!” It is surely in the merit of our *Gedolim* and those who are scrupulous in heeding their words. Rav Pam points out that there are those who look down on *Bnei Torah* and *Kollel yungerleit* and consider them “*bank kvetchers*” (bench warmers) and “*batlanim*” (idlers) who “waste their time” learning *Torah*. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is actually in the merit of these wonderful individuals that

the world exists - and continues to survive! And it is in the merit of these true *Bnei Torah* who dedicate their entire lives to fulfilling *Hashem*’s will and listening carefully to uphold the words of our *Gedolim* that the Final Redemption will come.

By the original *Geula*, the Nation was led by Moshe and Aharon and the elders. The people looked to them and heeded their call. Let us emulate them. We must not look down and condemn those whom we feel are pushing away the *Geula*. Rather, let us act as true servants of *Hashem* in whose merit *Moshiach* will come.

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

השתא הכא לשנה הבאה בארץא דישראל. השתא עבדי לשנה הבאה בני חורין ... (סדר הא לחמא עניינא)

A noted psychologist in Jerusalem relates a wonderful story that took place quite a few years ago. One year, on the morning of *Erev Pesach*, during the time he was burning the *chametz*, a few friends approached him.

“To what do you owe the distinction?” they asked him. “We saw you had a very distinguished visitor in your courtyard last night, none other than *HaGaon R’ Eliezer Menachem Shach זי”ל*, the *Ponevezer Rosh Yeshiva* from *Bnei Brak*. Why was he just milling about in your courtyard? Why didn’t you at least invite him in?”

The doctor was shocked. R’ Shach was in his courtyard? He could not imagine that R’ Shach came to his house. But the doctor quickly realized what had happened and was dismayed, feeling guilty that it was he who had made the great *Rosh Yeshivah shlep* all the way to his house.

On the first day of *Chol HaMoed*, the doctor traveled from Jerusalem to *Bnei Brak* to ask the *Rosh Yeshivah*’s forgiveness. “Forgiveness from me?” exclaimed R’ Shach. “If anything, I should ask forgiveness from you!”

The *Gaon* later explained what had happened. “It was the night of *bedikas chametz*, the evening before the *Pesach Seder*. A *talmid* had come to me with a number of specific issues that I felt only this particular psychologist in Jerusalem would be able to help him with.”

R’ Shach called the doctor, who immediately offered to drive to *Bnei Brak* and speak to the young man.

“*Rebbi!* It is *erev Pesach!* It is a busy time!” exclaimed the doctor. “The *Rosh Yeshivah* does not need to leave his house. I will go to meet the student in *Bnei Brak*.”

But R’ Shach refused. “No, I will go with the student to your home in *Yerushalayim*.”

The doctor insisted that R’ Shach stay home and after a degree of haggling, he agreed that R’ Shach should send the young man alone to Jerusalem. Little did he know that R’ Shach decided at the last moment that due to the young man’s condition, he would need to be accompanied to Jerusalem. However, R’ Shach did not want to upset the doctor, so he decided to wait downstairs in the courtyard until the session was over. It was for this reason that the great *Ponovezher Rosh Yeshivah* was spotted milling in the courtyard of the renowned psychologist on the evening before *Yom Tov*.

When the doctor arrived on *Chol HaMoed* to ask forgiveness, R’ Shach was completely confused.

“I am an old man, who lives alone. I have no great needs on the evening before *Pesach*. I don’t have much to clean or inspect for *chametz* and so it was not a big deal for me to go with my *talmid*. I did not want to go upstairs and cause your family to halt their *Pesach* preparations, so I strolled in the courtyard, inhaling the crisp air of Jerusalem as I thought about *Torah* topics.” R’ Shach smiled at the psychologist and concluded, “It was indeed a pleasure!” (**Parsha Parables**)

ואפילו כלנו חכמים כלנו נבונים כלנו זקנים כלנו יודעים את התורה ... (הגדה של פסח)

As a leader and *posek* of his generation, the **Maharsham, R’ Sholom Mordechai Hakohen Schwadron זי”ל**, had a strong sense of public responsibility, and was always vigilant, never allowing himself a moment’s relaxation. The *Maharsham*’s responsa are replete with phrases such as, “Because of my poor health and the stream of letters sent to me, I will not be able to elaborate on the subject,” and “I am burdened by a myriad of chores, which do not permit me to be more prolific, for there is a heap of letters in front of me.” That heavy yoke prevented the *Maharsham* from resting. His nights were turned into days as he edited his responsa and wrote hundreds of new ones. During the long winter nights, when all of Brezhan was clad in snow and darkness covered the town, one window always illuminated its immediate