

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלטר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה

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תורה תבלין

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

טיב התבלין

רעיונות ופרושים לעורר את האדם לעבודת השל"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובטחון מאת

יכול מראש חודש תלמוד לומר ביום ההוא אי ביום ההוא יכול מבעוד יום ת"ל בעבור זה ... (הגדה של פסח) - חג פסח, חג החירות

השפלות, וראה הקב"ה כי באם עוד ישתהו בני ישראל במצרים שוב לא יחפצו להתעלות מערות הארץ, ולכן ראה לנכון להחיש ישועתם וגאולתם ע"י המשכת מוחץ עילאין, וכמו שרואים אנו בשעת קריעת ים סוף היו קטרוג גדול על ישראל באותה שעה טען שריו של מצרים הללו והללו עובדי עבודה זרה, הרי שישאל מצד עצמם לא היו ראויין לאותה קדושה, כי היו שקועין במ"ט שערי טומאה, ועבדו את אלילי מצרים כהמצרים, וישועתם לא היתה כי אם מצד התעוררות רצון העליון, כדי שלא ימעדו עוד לתוך שלולית טומאת מצרים, ולא יהיה ביכולתם לצאת משם **ביטול ההסתר כשאין ביכולת האדם להתמודד בה**, למדים אנו מכאן דבר נפלא מאוד, שכל עוד שיש ביכולת האדם לעשות דבר מה בכדי להתגבר על יצרו מכוחות עצמו, אזי באותה שעה השל"ת מסתיר פניו ממנו, ואינו מאיר לו פנים, בכדי שאכן יתגבר על קשייו מכוח עצמו, אך באותה שעה שרואה הקב"ה ששוב אין האדם מסוגל להתעורר מכוח עצמו, כי אז מפיה הקב"ה רוח טהרה בלבבו, ומעוררו מלעילא, והיינו כי על אף שאין זה ממלכתי המלוכה העליונה להעלות את האדם ולפטרו ממלחמת היצר, זהו דוקא כשהדבר בידי האדם, אך באותה שעה שהקב"ה הבוחן כליות ולב יודע שאם לא יקרב לא האדם שוב לא יחזור למחצבתו, אז מסיר הקב"ה כל ההסתרים ומאיר פניו לזה האדם.

ביטול המסכים כדי להעלות את ישראל ממצרים, בחינה זו היתה כאמור בעת שנגאלו אבותינו ממצרים, שאז היו ישראל שקועים במ"ט שערי טומאה, ומאותה סיבה נגאלו, כי כל עוד שראה הקב"ה שעוד שייך שיתעלו מכוח עצמם לא היה מסיד כל הכוחות והכשפים של מצרים, כדי שינסה האדם לעשות את מה שבכוהו, אך אחר שראה הקב"ה ששוב אין הדבר תלוי במעשים, כי שקועים היו כבר בתוך טומאת מצרים מאוד, עד שלא העלו על דעתם שיש מציאות של התעלות מכוח עצמם, לכך ביטל מעליהם את כל המחיצות, וחכו ע"ז להכיר באמיתות הבורא.

תכלית העבודה היא המלחמה, כעת עלינו להבין המטרה שבדרך, על מה עשה ה' ככה, הרי התכלית הנדרש מן האדם הוא שיעבוד את בוראו ע"י עצם מלחמתו ביצרו, ואם כן מה תועלת יש בדבר שמקודם הכניסו את ישראל למצב שבו שוב לא ראו תקוה, ואז הסירו מעליהם כל המחיצות המבדילים בינם לבוראם, מן הראוי היה שלא יבוראו לידיו מצב כזה שאין בה תכלית הנדרש, ותמיד יהיה ביכולתם להלחם ביצרים ויהיה ביכולתם לעבוד ע"י זה את בוראם.

היכולת להתעלות בכל מצב אך התשובה לזה, כי רצה הקב"ה להראות את ישראל שאין מציאות שאי אפשר להתעלות, בכל מצב שהם לרבות מצב שנדרמה להם שאין הדבר ביכולתם יידעו שהדבר כן ביכולתם, ולכן דוקא באותה שעה שהיו בדיוטא התחתונה, וראה להם הקב"ה את כוהו הגדול, איך שהוא מרים

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A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

הלכה למעשה

Chag HaPesach: Relevant Halachos for Yom Tov (2) Krias HaTorah. In Eretz Yisroel, where only seven days of Yom Tov are celebrated, the final Shabbos - which for Bnei chutz l'aretz (those who live outside Israel) is the last day of Pesach - is a regular Shabbos. They will read Parshas Acharei Mos, while in chutz l'aretz, we will read the Kriah of Acharon shel Pesach. As a result, in Eretz Yisroel they will be one week ahead in the order of the parshiyos until the end of Tammuz, when Parshos Matos and Masei will be read together, allowing chutz l'aretz to catch up to Eretz Yisroel, who will only read Parshas Masei that Shabbos. Guests from Eretz Yisroel and talmidim, students and all those who are going back after Pesach will be missing the kriah of one Parsha, Parshas Acharei Mos. To get around this problem, many shuls in many cities do the following: On the last day of Pesach by Mincha, when the regular Krias Hatorah is the first part of Acharei Mos (till shaini), two aliyos are given as usual and the third aliyah does not end at shaini but continues until the end of the Sedrah. Of course, ten people who are willing to stay the whole time are needed, and such a minyan must be scheduled early enough to read the entire parsha and daven Mincha in its proper time.

A Nagging Question. Why must we, in chutz l'aretz, have to lag behind and have this discrepancy of parshiyos for so many weeks? Why do we wait and incur many shailos for those who travel during this time-period to Eretz Yisroel, both regarding Krias Hatorah as well as the mitzvah obligation of Acharei Mos, while in Israel they can just read Parshas Kedoshim? The answer is (1)

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

that even though many Sedros can and do go together, it is only because they have a common content. For example Tazria and Metzora go together because they both speak about the laws of a leper. Similarly, Acharei Mos and Kedoshim both discuss the issurim and consequences of forbidden marriages. Therefore, whenever the Sages picked two parshiyos to join together, they generally chose two that have a common content. Obviously, Parshas Matos and Masei, which both discuss the conclusion of Bnei Yisroel's sojourn in the desert and their imminent entry into Eretz Yisroel, are deemed to be more "content-connected" than any of the other parshiyos during this period.

שנים מקרא ואחד תרגום When is the earliest time period that one can fulfill this obligation? Usually we fulfill this obligation by "saying it with the Tzibbur" (2) which means from the time the Tzibbur (public) begins laining the new parsha on Shabbos afternoon. (According to some Rishonim this means actually from after one hears the Kriah by Mincha; others hold that it means the beginning of the next halachic day, which is Motzei Shabbos. Both opinions are brought in Darkei Moshe (3) and the Mishna Berura (4) rules leniently that one can start after Mincha, while others feel that the simple wording of the Shulchan Aruch indicates that Motzei Shabbos is the earliest time.) This year, when the first day of Pesach is Shabbos but we do not read Acharei Mos, and outside of Eretz Yisroel we don't even read this parsha on the second Shabbos, can we still start from the Shabbos Mincha of the week before? Contemporary Poskim argue about this. Knei Bosem (5) is strict, while Shevet Halevi (6) is lenient. It is better to fulfill all opinions by waiting till after Yom Tov ends to do "שנים מקרא" but if one is lenient and starts this mitzvah earlier (on Yom Tov), he has upon whom to rely.

הוא היה אומר

Reb Yosef Peretz Halevi Biller shlit'a would say:

"The ultimate goal of the Leil HaSeder is to elevate a Jew and bring him up to the highest level he can be. This is alluded to in the various mitzvos we do at the Seder. Man is a microcosm of the world. The world is composed of four states of matter: דומם (inanimate object), צומח (plant), חי (living-animal) and מדבר (speech-human). After Kiddush, we begin the Seder by dipping a potato (דומם) into saltwater. Then, we eat Matza and Maror (צומח), followed by the shank bone and the Afikoman, to commemorate the Korbon Pesach (חי). Now that we have risen through the various stages of the world, we are ready to say Hallel - for we have completed our task and reached the highest level of the world."

Rabbi Moshe Hellman shlit'a DOES say:

Now we are inviting people? Now its too late! Why didn't the Gabbai announce this at the end of davening? Furthermore, even if we have guests, how can they say these words and invite other people to our table? Don't our Sages teach us: 'A guest may not invite another guest'? The pshat is that in truth, we really are very happy to have guests and we would even welcome more if we could. To prove it, we tell our guests to invite others to our table, as if to say, 'Not only am I happy that you're here, invite others as well!'

A Wise Man would say: "If a window of opportunity presents itself, do not pull down the shade!"

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only *Hashem* Himself Who released us forever from the bondage and slavery of Egypt, that it was only *Hashem* Himself Who punished the Egyptians and that it was only *Hashem* Himself Who took us out of Egypt.”

“Therefore,” concluded R’ Eliyahu to his disciple, “*Moshe Rabbeinu’s* name is not prominently mentioned in the *Haggadah*. However, it is mentioned just this one time: ‘וַיֵּאמְרוּ בְּה’ וּבַמֶּשֶׁה עַבְדְּךָ’ - ‘*And they believed in Hashem and in Moshe His servant.*’ The one and only time *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* name is mentioned in the entire *Haggadah* is to tell us that he is a true servant of *Hashem*, an ‘עַבְד נֶאֱמָן’, and not one who has any power of his own.” (**Portraits of Prayer**)

הביאני אל בית היין ודגלנו עלי אהבה (שיר השירים ב-ד)

The **Ben Ish Chai, Chacham Rabbeinu Yosef Chayim of Baghdad** **zt”l** relates a story that took place in his city. There was a simple man, unlearned and poor, who would arrive every morning in the *Beit Haknesset* and daven in his usual place at the back of the synagogue. He was very attentive to hear the words that other people were praying and although he did not comprehend the Hebrew words that were being spoken, and he had trouble enunciating them himself, he did appreciate the sound of the words being uttered and he was most respectful.

He would especially listen to the words of one man who sat in the front of the synagogue. This man was well-respected, a scholar of note, and a pillar of the community. Every morning, when he would recite the portion of dealing with the *Korbonos*, the sacrifices that were brought in the Temple, he would sing out in a loud and pleasant voice, “*אלו ואלו נשרפין בבית הדשן*” (“*These and these were burnt in the room of ashes.*”). These words, which were sung with such exuberance by the man in the front, made an impression on the simple man in the back. Day after day, he would hear them, and convinced that they must be words of great import, he committed them to memory.

When his children were born, the simple Jew took up the practice of blessing his children before the *Shabbat* meal, on Friday night. He would lovingly take each child in his arms and place his palms on their tiny heads. Then, with an air of great solemnity, he would squeeze his eyes shut and intone his words of blessings: “אלו ואלו נשרפין בבית הדשן”. He was absolutely convinced that *Hashem* would hear his words of blessing and allow his family to grow and prosper.

On one occasion, the simple man had a guest had his table for the Friday night meal. The guest was a *Talmid Chacham* from another city who was visiting. When the scholarly guest heard the words coming out of his host’s mouth as he blessed his children, he jumped out of his chair and began to yell, “What are you saying? How can you say such words? Do you wish to curse your children, rather than bless them, by burning them into a pile of ashes?”

The simple man had nothing to say. Indeed, his guest’s words frightened him and he was left speechless.

That very night, when the *Talmid Chacham* went to sleep, he heard a Heavenly voice in his dream, telling him that he was wrong for stopping the simple man from blessing his children. The man had been so sincere and meant every word as a blessing - not a curse - so who was he to say otherwise? In fact, the voice continued, whenever the father would recite these words, *Hashem* Himself would take these five words and rearrange them into actual words of blessing. He would negate the real meaning of the words, and transform them into gifts of benediction.

When Chacham Yosef Chayim heard this story, he explained it based on the words of the *Medrash in Shir HaShirim*: “*The Holy One blessed be He said, “ידילוגו עלי אהבה” - even if you skip “ידילוגו עלי אהבה” or read the words of Torah incorrectly, I will still love you.*”” *Hashem* will accept our words, even if we skip a few here and there, or forget to say a letter. Even if it alters the entire meaning of the word, *Hashem* will change it into its proper meaning, for He loves us and only wants to hear the correct words - no matter how we say it.

We see from here, says the *Ben Ish Chai*, that there are times when *Hashem* will take an evil decree and turn it into a blessing. Even if we do not ask for it correctly, *Hashem* will ensure that it is not a negative effect, but rather a positive outcome. It all depends on the intentions of the person; if one is worthy, *Hashem* will transform his words from bad to good!

Once, during the customary dancing by the *Neilas HaChag* in Bobov, the *Rebbe, R’ Benzion Halberstam zt”l*, joined in the long human chain and danced with the *bochurim*. The hour was late and the *Beis Medrash* was thrown into total darkness, but the joyous singing and dancing continued for hours. At one point, when it was well after nightfall, someone kindled a kerosene lamp and light illuminated the big room. Suddenly, everyone saw the **Kedushas Zion** with his arms outstretched on a young *bochur* in front of him. Nobody, not even the *bochur*, had realized that the *Rebbe* was dancing behind him and everyone was shocked. What was even more shocking was that this particular boy was not from the brightest students in the *Yeshivah*, and while everyone was singing, “בבקעך ים סוף” (“*When You split the Red Sea*”), he misunderstood the words and was singing “בראק אריץ אין ים סוף” (“*Dip into the Red Sea*”). In his small mind, he sincerely believed it was reference to the leniency of eating *Gebruks* (dipped *matza*) on the eighth and final day of *Pesach*. The shocking part was that the *Rebbe* - not wishing to embarrass the boy - was singing the same words with him!

אלא שעם הזמן התחילו לעבוד את האמצעים בלבד, ואח”כ עברו גם לתבנית ותמונה של הכוכבים ומזלות, עד שהגיעו למצב שעברו לכל פסל ותמונה.

לפצו של הקב"ה באדם יותר מן המלאכים
אבל היתה זו טעות יסודית, והאמת היא שהקב"ה ברא את האדם והטיל דוקא עליו את החובה לעבוד. ואף שיש לו כתות כתות של מלאכים ושרפים לאלפים ולרבבות, הפץ הקב"ה בעבודת האדם השפל בדוקא ומשגיח עליו בפרטיות, ועוד ומסייע לו להגיע למדרגות הגבוהות ביותר. כמו שאנו אומרים בחזרת הש"ץ במוסף יו"כ (בפיזט אשר אימתך באראלי אומן וכז): 'זאביתא תהילה מגלומי גוש', היינו שהקב"ה הפץ דוקא בתהלתם של בשר ודם 'גלומי גוש' וקרוצי חומר, אפילו שיש לו למעלה מלאכים לרוב.

נִימוּקוּ שֶׁל פֶּרֶעָה בַּסִּדּוּר
הַנִּצְיָאָת הַנּוֹעֲרִים מַמְצִרִם
גם פרעה טען את אותה טענה אם כי באופן אחר. כשמשנה רבינו אמר לו שישלח את כלל ישראל מארצו, הוא אמר (שמות י ; יא): לא כן לכו נא הגברים ועברו את ה', אבל את הסף פקד פרעה להותיד במצרים. וכונתו העמוקה היתה, כי רק המבוגרים צדיכים לעבוד את ה', אבל לצעירים זה מדי גבות אך משה רבינו לעומתו דרש (שם פסוק טז): ננערינו ובוקננו נלך, כולם חייבים ויכולים להגיע למדרגות גבוהות בעבודת ה'. וזה מה שרצה הקב"ה להראות, שאין מצב שבו אדם אינו יכול להגיע לדרגות גבוהות, ממילא לא שייך תירוצן שעבודת ה' היא גבוהה מהשגותי, וכמו שכותב הרמב"ם (תשובה ה' ב) שכל אדם מישראל יכול להגיע לדרגת משה רבינו.

הַחֲזִיקוּ מִשּׁוּרשׁ הָאֲבוֹת מוֹל הַיֵּצֶר הַמַּפִּיל לֵאשׁוּ.
על ענין זה כיוון גם בעל ההגדה בבואו לפתוח בסיפור יציאת מצרים, ופתח את דבריו בתיספור 'מתחילה עובדי ע"ז היו אבותינו' וכז'. תיבות אלו הלא אינם מענין סיפור השתבוח ואעפ"כ ראה בעל ההגדה לנכון להוכיח ענין זה עם תחילת הסיפור. כי באלו התיבות ניתן לנו דרך וחזיוק גדול בדבר ההקרבות אל הש"ת, שהרי על כל אדם עובדים כמה וכמה קשיים וירידות, ובפרט המגיעה מצד היצר העומל קשות להביאו לידי יאוש ח"ו, תוך שהוא לוחש לו בכל עת, כי הוא גרוע מאד ולשם מה עלי להתייגע כל כך, הרי עבודתו בין כה אינה נרצית למעלה, ומבשרו יחוזה זאת, שהרי הוא מתעלה ונופל שוב ושוב, ולכן מאיר בעל ההגדה את עינינו, כי אל לנו להתייאש מן הנפילות הללו, שררי מצינו לפניהם, דמתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו, ולבסוף יצא מהם האבות הקדושים וכל ההשתלשלות של כל עם ישראל, וזה חזיוק גדול. הש"ת יהיה בעזרינו, שנוכה להתעלות באלו הימים מתוך גאולה פרטית וכללית ע"י ביאת גואל צדק, ונוכה עוד לאכול בהאי שתא מן הובחים ומן הפסחים.

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

בנוגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה
(הגדה של פסח) - **הבדל בין שאילת ה'תם' לה'רשע'**

העבודה הזאת לכם, "האמנם, במה שנאמר בפרשה זוהיה כי יאמרו אליכם בניכם מה העבודה הזאת לכם", ראה המגיד שהמאמר הזה היה מאויב חרף ה' וכו', והנה הביאו לחשוב רשע ופשע במאמר הזה וכו', מה שלא אמר הכתוב בזה לשון שאילה, כמו שאמר במאמר החכם 'כי ישאלך בנך מחר' ובי'תם-'כ'י ישאלך בנך מחר', אבל המאמר הזה לא קראו הכתוב שאילה כי אם אמירה-זוהיה כי יאמרו אליכם בניכם, ורצה לומר, כאשר בניכם שהיה ראוי שישאלו וילמדו מאבותיהם ליראה את ה', יהיו בנים סודרים, ולא ידברו בדרך שאילה אלא בדרך כפירה וערעור, ויאמרו אליכם 'מה העבודה הזאת לכם', וכבר נשתמש הכתוב בזה הלשון במאמרים המגונים, וכמו שאמרו בני גד ובני ראובן אודות המזבח אשר בנו בעבר הירדן, 'מדאגה מדבר עשינו את זאת, לאמור, מחר יאמרו בניכם לבנינו, מה לכם ולה' אלוקי ישראל' וכו', כי תמיד יבוא הלשון הזה על דרך הקנטור והמאמר המגונה, לא על דרך השאילה בכוונה טובה, ולכן בראות המגיד שאמרו תורה זוהיה כי יאמרו השאילה בניכם, ולא זכרו בלשון שאילה כשבאר הבנים, גור אומר בנוגד זה סדר ומורה'.

ולפ"ז מיושב, מה ראה המגיד לייחס שאלת 'מה זאת' לתום לבבו ולנקיזן כפיו של השואל, שזאת משום שראה שה' בתורתו לא הוכיז אצלה ל' 'אמירה' המורה על כפירה וערעור וקנטור, כמו שהוכיז אצל אמירת 'מה העבודה הזאת לכם'.

אותם מתחתית המדרגות עד פסגת המדרגות, כי מכוח הארת יציאת מצרים נתעלו ישראל כל כך עד שיצאו מכל המ"ט שערי טומאה.

נִסְיוֹנוֹ שֶׁל הַיֵּצֶר לְהַרְפוֹת יְדֵי הָאָדָם.
רצונו של הקב"ה היה בזה ללמד את האדם אורחות חיים, לבל יתפתה לעצת יצרנו, המפתהו ואומר לו חזל לך מלהתאמן בעבודה, הרי אין הדבר לפי כוחך וטבעך, וממילא לא תזכה לבטל את הרגלך, וכה ישיב לו האדם, אני את המוטל עלי אעשה, ולא עלי מוטלת העבודה להתעלות כי אם לעבוד, ואם תהיה התעלותי לרצון הש"ת יעשה הוא את שלו כדי שאתעלה, ובוה יסתום את פי היצר המניעו מלעבוד את בוראו.

גִּדּוּל הַנִּסְיוֹן כְּשֶׁהַיֵּצֶר מַפִּיל לֵאשׁוּ.
ועל כן רצה הקב"ה שענין זה יחזור על עצמו כל שנה מחדש, כי ענין זה נחוץ מאוד לדורות, מאחר שזה הנסיון קשה מכולם, כי כל עוד שהאדם שואף להתעלות, ויודע הוא שמכוח העבודות לבוראו יזכה בכך, עוד יהיה ביכולתו להתגבר על כל מכשול שהיצר יעמיד לרגליו, מאחר ששואף הוא לתכלית חייו וכל אשר בכוחו יעשה כדי להשיגו, אך כשהיצר מבטל ממנו שאיפה זו, או מצליח היצר להרפות ידיו מגיעתו, בחשבו כי מה בצע ביגיעתי מאחר שבסופו של דבר לא אשיג את מבוקשתי ח"ו.

לְאֹרֶת יִצְיָאָת מִצְרִים כִּדִּי לְהַפֵּר עֲצַת הַיֵּצֶר.
ועל כן רצה הקב"ה שידעו ישראל לדורותיהם, כי כל זה הוא טענת שוא, ביכולת היצר לנפח כל דבר, ולגרום לאדם שיטעה בכך שאין בכוחו להעפיל ולהתעלות במעלות העבודה, אך לאמתיו של דבר שקר בפיו, אין מציאות שבו אין האדם מסוגל להתעלות, ואם רק יעשה את המוטל עליו ויעבוד את בוראו, יווכח בכך.

בִּיכּוּלֹת הָאָדָם לְהוֹשִׁיג מִדְּרֹגַת הָאֲבוֹת הַקְּדוּשִׁים
ולא בכדי אמרו חז"ל (תנא רבי אליהו רבה פירק כ"ג) שצריך האדם לומר מתי יגיעו למעשי אבותי אברהם יצחק ויעקב, כי ידעו בברור שאם יהיה לאדם שאיפה להתעלות יהיה ביכולתו להתעלות ולהשיג אפילו בחינת האבות הקדושים, ואילו לא היה הדבר ביכולת האדם לא היו מורים לאדם לשאוף לכך. ואחר שיווכח האדם מכוח אלו האורות המתעוררים באלו הימים שביכולת הש"ת להרימו ממצבו השפל, שוב לא תהיה ביכולת היצר להביאו לידי ייאוש,ולעכב בעדו מלעבוד את בוראו מכוח טענה זו.

לְהַתְּרַדְרוּתוֹם שֶׁל דּוֹר אָנוּשׁ מִכּוּחַ טַעֲוֹת.
טענה זו היתה בעצם בסיס טענות של אנשי דור אנוש שהתחילו לעבוד עבודה זרה, כמבואר בארוכה ב**נִפְשֵׁ** החיים' (ש"ג פ"ט), כי הם טענו שהקב"ה הוא מדאי גבוה, כדי שאנשים קרצי חומר יוכלו לעברו עבודה תמה, ולכן פנו לחצוב להם בורות בורות נשברים וביקשו לעצמם דרך עקלתון, והוחלו לעבוד את הבורא ע"י סגידה לכוכבים ומזלות.

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות

נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

בנוגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה

תב ה'כלי יקר' (שמות י"ג י"ד), 'וזהיה כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמור מה זאת וגו' - בעל ההגדה אמר שפסוק זה מדבר בבן תם, והקשה **מרנו הרב יצחק אברבנאל זצ"ל בספרו 'זבח פסח'** על 'הגדה של פסח' (שאלות על ההגדה, שעד ל"א), 'מה ראה המגיד לייחס שאלת 'מה זאת' לתום לבבו ולנקיזן כפיו של השואל, ואולי שכיוון למה שכיוון הרשע באומרו דרך לעג 'מה העבודה הזאת לכם', כי כוח שני המאמרים אחר, אחרי שכבר ביארתי שלא הוכיח רשעתו ממילת 'לכם' אשר יכולה להתפרש 'ולא לי', כי אם מעצם השאלה, (שהרי גם החכם אמר מילת 'אתכם' אשר יכולה להתפרש 'ולא אותי'), ואם שניים דברים אחרים דיברו, למה ייחס המאמר האחד לרשע והשני לתם'.

ויישב (סוף הפירוש על פיסקת 'תם מה הוא אומר וכו'), 'זהנה הוכיח ה' בתורתו שהיה זה בתום לבבו, ולא לרוח מינות (-שאינו מאמין בה', או ב'תורה מן השמים') ולכן מתנגד לקיום מצוותיו) או טינה שבו (-שמתנגד לזה מחמת רצונו בחופש), לפי שאמר עליו 'זהיה לאות על ידך להטוטפת בין עיניך וגו', אשר לא יכול המאמר הזה כי אם על התאבד לקיום מצוות האלוקים, ולא נמנע (קיום מצוות אלה ברצון) ממנו כי אם לתמימתו וקוצר הבנתו'.

(ויש ליישב באופן אחר, בהקדם מה שבהגדת '**זבח פסח'** [פירוש על פיסקת 'רשע מה הוא אומר וכו'] ביאר כוונת הכתוב 'וזהיה כי יאמרו אליכם בניכם מה

no reward is called for in this case, and no gratitude is owed. **נמשל**: This man is so wrong! Gratitude is not exclusively, or even primarily, about the recipient. It is about the type of grateful person we want to be and the type of life we want to lead. Moshe showed gratitude to the Nile River when he was saved by the water as a tiny infant. The water didn't "intend" to save Moshe, nor did it have "feelings" that were "hurt" by the plague of blood; yet the *Torah* teaches us that it was owed an element of gratitude.

Appreciation comes from a heightened sensitivity to all that we have in our lives, the miracles, both hidden and open, that we experience daily. We wake up in the morning and the first thing we say is “*Modeh Ani*” - thank you, *Hashem*, for giving us another day. And as the day goes on, we make blessings on the water we drink and the flowers we smells, on the gift of sight and the ability to walk, for a clap of thunder or a bolt of lightning.

It is this gratitude that overwhelms us on *Pesach*, and fills us with a yearning to be better, to enhance our *avodas Hashem*, performance of *mitzvos* and study of *Torah*. It should encourage us to say with great feeling and sincerity, “*Therefore we are obligated to thank and praise Hashem for all the miracles done to our ancestors and to us; He took us from slavery to freedom, from agony to joy, from darkness to a great light.*” No matter whether it is the water or the dishwasher, let us experience those feelings of gratitude. Let us express our appreciation to our spouses and parents, our loyal friends and dedicated teachers? And most importantly, truly feel the love of *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, Who created us to enjoy that satisfaction and contentment.

Seconds after his desperate offer, a shabbily dressed man, tall and athletic-looking, walks into the train station. Knowing nothing of what happened or of the man's offer, he sees someone stuck on the tracks. He jumps down, lifts the man back onto the platform with one hand, and jumps up himself. Moments later, the train whizzes into the station.

Pandemonium breaks loose, but our inadvertent hero wants no part of the excitement. He walks onto the waiting train, takes his seat, and like he does every day, promptly dozes off. A reporter who witnessed the entire episode follows the hero onto the train and tries to get his story. He's a hero, he saved a life, doesn't he want some glory, some reward, at least to meet the guy he saved?

“Leave me alone,” the hero replies. “I don't know anything about saving a life. All I know is that I am a dishwasher at a large midtown restaurant. Last night there was a major party, but I left work early because my friend had seats to the Yankees game. If I don't get those dishes washed before my boss shows up this morning, I'll lose my job. My luck, I rush to the train and there is a guy on the rails. I know if he gets run over we will have a major delay. I was able to get to him before the train did. Now leave me alone and let me get my daily nap.”

Meanwhile, the would-be victim, recovering from shock, feels guilty - not only did he not give the guy a reward, he didn't even get to thank him. A few days later, he picks up a newspaper and finds the reporter's account of the shocking rescue. So the so-called “hero” didn't risk his life to save a human being, after all! He risked it for some dirty dishes! What a relief! Now he can sleep calmly, he tells himself, as

יונים ליבשה נהפכו מצולים שירה חדשה שבחו גאולים וייראו העם את ה' ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו וגו' (קריאה לשביעי של פסח)

R’ Yaakov of Mishklov zt”l once asked his holy *rebbe*, the **Gaon of Vilna zt”l**, why *Moshe Rabbeinu* is not mentioned at all in the *Haggadah*. After all, he is the most central figure in the episode of *Bnei Yisroel* leaving *Mitzrayim*. The Vilna Gaon replied that *Moshe Rabbeinu's* name is in fact mentioned in the *Haggadah* - once. He quoted the *posuk*: “*And they believed in Hashem and in Moshe His servant.*”

“I still don't understand,” R’ Yaakov persisted. “Since Moshe played such a pivotal role in *Bnei Yisroel* going out of *Mitzrayim*, his name should be sprinkled all throughout the *Haggadah*. It is mentioned one time, quoting the *posuk* by *Krias Yam Suf*, but otherwise it is totally omitted. It almost seems as if the omission is deliberate.”

The *Gaon* answered, “Your point is exactly correct. It is a deliberate omission. The *Haggadah* is teaching us that while *Moshe Rabbeinu's* role in leading *Bnei Yisroel* out of *Mitzrayim* was a very important one, nevertheless, Moshe himself was incidental to the Exodus. In other words, *Bnei Yisroel* did not leave *Mitzrayim* because *Moshe Rabbeinu* took them out. *Hashem* took *Bnei Yisroel* out of *Mitzrayim* and *Hashem* utilized *Moshe Rabbeinu* to accomplish it. (This is one of the reasons why Moshe had a speech impediment; so people should not claim that Moshe used his persuasive and articulate tongue to convince Pharaoh to release *Bnei Yisroel*, or to convince the Jews to submit themselves to him.) If, for whatever reason, Moshe had not led the Jewish people out of Egypt, someone else would have done it.”

“*Moshe Rabbeinu's* role is downplayed,” continued the *Gaon*, “in order for us to properly understand that, in actuality, no single individual played a role in our exodus other than *Hashem* Himself. The *posukim* in the *Torah* that discuss *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and the miracles that were done (in *Parshas Vaera*) teach us to clearly comprehend that it was

אולם עדיין יש להבין, שאף שלפני ה' גלוי דעתו, מ"מ, לפנינו מי גלוי, ובמה נדע מה בלב השואל 'מה זאת'. ודקדוב אלי לומר בזה, שקשה לבעל ההגדה למה הזכיר בשני בנים לשון מחר, א', בפסוק זה- 'וזהו כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמור מה זאת', ב', בפרשת ואתחנן- 'כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמור מה העדות והחוקים והמשפטים וגו', ובשני בנים לא הזכיר לשון מחר, ואדרבה אמר 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא' ממש, והוא הפך ה'מחר', וקשה, למה לא הזכיר בכולם לשון מחר, או בכולם ביום ההוא, ועוד קשה, למה זכרה התורה שאילת 'מה זאת' אצל פדיון הבכורים, ולמה לא זכרה שאלה זו על 'פסח מצה ומרור', כמו שזכרה בבן הרשע ובשאינו יודע לשואל. ומהכרח קושיות אלו ראה בעל ההגדה לומר, שפסוק זה מדרב בתם, ובשפרשת ואתחנן מדרב בחכם, ו'מחר' הנאמר בשניהם אינו 'מחר שלאחר זמן' אלא 'מחר ממש', כי ה'תם', כ"ז שאביו נתן לו פסח ומצה ומרור אינו שואל כלום, כי ודאי אינו מלעיג על העבודה ומצות ה', וטעם על המצה ג"כ אינו מבקש (אפילו 'מחר ממש'), כי אומר בלבו: הלוואי שיאכילוני כל היום פטומות, צלי אש ומצות מסולת נקיה על מדורים שורדכן לאכול כדי לסבב תאוות המאכל, ולמה 'יבקש התם' טעם לכל אלו, כי אינו חסר לנפשו מאומה, אבל בפדיון הבן, שאין נותנים לו כלום, אלא מבקשים ממנו שיתן דמי פדיון, אז הוא שואל 'מה זאת', כי אפילו תם ופתי גמור דרי הוא חכם לענין זה להחזיק ממון, שלא ליתן ממון לשום אדם כלום בחנם, אמנם מן מילת 'מחר' אנו למדין שזהו תם וישר ואינו מלעיג על הנתינה, כי באותו יום שמבקשים ממנו דמי פדיון אינו אומר כלום, ונותן דמיו ואינו מבקש לידע טעם הדבר לומר על מה זה, כדי שלא יחשדוהו שאינו נותן מרצון טוב, ויאמרו שהוא קורא תגר על מצות ה' לאמר למה זה אתן דמי בחנם, ועל כן הוא שותק ביום הנתינה ונותן דמיו כדי לקיים מצות ה', אבל מ"מ, ביום המחרת הוא שואל 'מה זאת', כי הוא חפץ לידע מדוע צוה לנו ה' ליתן דמי פדיון הבכור.

וסימן זה מסרה לנו התורה, שאם ישאלך מחר 'מה זאת', למחרת יום הנתינה, וביום הנתינה אינו שואל כלום, אז ודאי בתום לבבו ובנקיון כפיו הוא שואל 'מה

וכל המרבה לספר

they live an easy and non-restricting lifestyle. This, however, is far from true freedom. *Cheirus* (Freedom) from the perspective of the *Torah* is one's ability to allow his *neshama*, his inner soul, to dictate and remain uninfluenced from all exterior forces. *Cheirus* means that a person is able to rule over his surroundings rather than be ensnared in the many obstacles the world presents.

Rabbi Shlomo Price shlit'a recalls how he once personally witnessed the “freedom” that the world preaches, where one is so free that he becomes addicted to his own freedom and he can't stop even when he wants to.

A certain fellow who strayed off the path of *Torah* wished to return. The fellow was invited to *Yeshivat Neveh Zion* for *Shabbos*. He arrived Friday afternoon with his car. However, when *Shabbos* morning came his car was gone, and the fellow was nowhere to be seen.

One of the *Rebbeim* gave a *sicha* about “freedom” and explained what happened. Friday night, the fellow went into his room to sleep. He couldn't sleep and began pacing the floor. The rabbi who lived next door heard him and came in to speak with the fellow. The fellow said that he didn't want to desecrate *Shabbos*, but he had such a terrible urge to do so. He couldn't remember the last time that he didn't go for his “Shabbos ride.” The rabbi spoke to him and thought he

3 זאת', שאילו היה מלעיג או קורא תגר על מצות ה', אז היה אומר דבריו ביום הנתינה כדי לבטל את הנתינה, ומאחר ששתק ביום הנתינה ושואל ליום המחרת, ודאי תם וישר הוא ושואל כהוגן, ועל כן תשיב לו כהוגן 'כי בחוקי די הוציאנו ה' מצרים, ויהרגו ה' כל בכור וגו', או אם הבן רואה את אביו שנותן פדיון פטר חמור, ואינו שואל לו כלום ביום הנתינה שלא יחשדוהו פן רצונו למנוע את אביו מן המצוה, ושואל לו ביום המחרת, גם הוא תם יחשב, ולפי ששואל בקצה 'מה זאת', ואין בו דעת לפרט כל העניינים, מזה שפט שהוא תם ואינו דריך לדקדק בפרטי העניין, אבל אם היה שואל לשון זה ביום הנתינה יכול להיות שאינו תם.

וכן בפסוק 'כי ישאלך בנך מחר', הנאמר בפרשת ואתחנן, הנדרש על שאילת בן החכם, נקט גם כן 'מחר' למחרת יום העבודה, כי החכם מתיירא לשאול ביום עשיית המצוה פן יחשדוהו השומע לומר שהוא מלעיג על המצוות בשעת עשייתם, כדי להשבית העם ממלאכת עבודת השם יתברך, כי בלאו הכי רבים מקשים מה בין דברי הרשע לדברי החכם, ולא רבים יחכמו להביא מתוך דקדוקי הלשון לחלק ביניהם, ואולי יחשדוהו כמלעיג, ולצאת מידי חשד זה הוא שואל גם כן ביום המחרת לעשייה, אבל הרשע שכל עיקר כוונתו הוא להשבית העם ממלאכת עבודת השם יתברך, אומר דבריו בשעת עשיית המצוה, ומלעיג עליהם לאמור: במה אתם עסוקים, וזקנים כמותכם יתעסקו בדברים בטלים הללו, ועל כן לא הזכיר לשון 'מחר' בדבריו, ועל כן אמרה התורה 'והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא', שכשם שהוא אומר דבריו ביום ההוא של העשייה, כך תגיד לו גם אתה דברך תיכף ומיד, כי כבר אמרנו שבפסוק זה יש הגדה לשני בנים, ואם לכן הרשע, שפיטא שצריך אתה להשיב לו תיכף ומיד, פן יהיה חכם בעיניו לומר שאין מענה בפיך, ועל כן דחית אותו בקש לאמור לך ושוב מחר ואתן לך תשובה, ועל כן ענה כסיל כאולתו תיכף ביום ההוא, ואם לבן שאינו יודע לשאול, למה תאמר לו דברך למחר, והלא יותר נכון שתגיד לו דברך בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך, כדי להמשיך לבו לעבודת ה'.”

... הרי זה משובח

החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים ראשון הוא לכם (סדר קרבן פסח)
The many *mitzvos* which comprise the *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* are prefaced in the *Torah* with an introduction of "the new month" - which refers to the *mitzvah* of *Kiddush HaChodesh*, the obligation of *beis din* to determine the correct date for the beginning of each new month. The **Seforno** explains why this *mitzvah* relates particularly to *Pesach*, as follows: “*HaChodesh Hazeh lachem” this month of Nisan is for you, for in Nisan you are elevated to the exclusive status of Am Hanivchar, the chosen nation. “Rishon Hu Lachem L'chadshei Hashana” - from now and onward, all months of the year, are yours as well.*”

R’ Mordechai Gifter zt”l, *Rosh Yeshivah of Telshe*, explains the deeper significance of the word "לכם" to mean that *Am Yisroel* is empowered to rule over and define time, rather than allow time to control them. The essence of *geulah*, redemption, is the ability to choose and chart one's own course. The *geulah* of *Pesach* is what gave *Am Yisroel* the ability to elevate the time, with no constraints or limitation. We, as a people, are always able to connect with *Hashem* and engage in His *mitzvos* freely.

R’ Gifter continues. The *Torah* stresses that the months are "לכם" - only for you, excluding the nations of the world. The nations of the world may seem free as well,

הלילה הזה כלנו מסובין (סדר מה נשתנה)

A custom dating back to the olden days of the Talmud, was that the wealthy and noble class would recline while they ate, whereas simple poor people would eat while seated on the floor. Reclining is indicative of a person of leisure, of royalty, as the **Rambam** writes, “*In the manner that kings and important people eat.*” The importance of leaning at the *Seder* is to emphasize that since we were slaves in Egypt and now we are free men, therefore we must act in accordance with our new status. Since it was the custom of noblemen to eat while reclining on a sofa or on cushions, we too, are obligated to eat as noblemen who recline.

One might wonder: eating in the manner of kings and aristocrats may seem appropriate and yet, it also smacks from arrogance and haughtiness! True, we remind ourselves of how *Hashem* took us out of slavery and made us into free men - but acting out the role of noblemen in a manner that we would never think to do all year round, is quite another thing altogether! Don’t our Sages warn us numerous times about the evils of haughtiness, the least of which is the dictum: “*One who acts with conceit is as if he served idols.*”

The great Tunisian *Gaon*, **Chacham Dovid Hakohen zt”l** (**Misgav Ladach**) explains that our noble manner on the night of *Pesach* is not for the sake of arrogance; it is for the sake of *Hashem*. We do it לשם שמים - to regale our children, our brothers, our families, with supernatural stories of the greatness of the Almighty! We act out the part of aristocracy, of royal subjects who look upon our King with awe and admiration for all that He did for us back when we were slaves. And above all, we act in a manner of pure, righteous nobility to counter and atone for all those times that we acted with debased conceit and hauteur throughout the year.

This is alluded to, says the *Chacham*, in the *posukim*. First it states: "אלהי מסכה לא תעשה לך" - “*Molten Gods you shall not make for yourself,*” followed immediately with: “*The festival of Matzos (Pesach) you shall keep.*” This is to teach us that although acting with arrogance is a form of creating an *Avoda Zara* for oneself, nevertheless, on the night of *Pesach*, one should keep the practice of reclining in a royal and noble manner, for on this night alone, it will not only be a source of *Kiddush Hashem*, it will also bring a great *Tikkun* (rectification) for our souls.

נרצה: אם עשה בסדר הזה יהיה ריצוי לפני ה' (סדר נרצה)

The last *siman* of the *Pesach Seder* - the fifteenth and final section - is known as *Nirtzah*. The *Baal Haggadah* makes it clear that "אם עשה בסדר הזה יהיה ריצוי לפני ה'" - “*If one has conducted the Seder as instructed, he causes great satisfaction to Hashem.*”

The **Belzer Rebbe zt”l** writes that the numerical value

had calmed him down. He left the room. A short while later, the rabbi heard the door next to his open and then close and a few moments later a motor started. The man was gone.

“I ask you,” the rabbi in his *sicha* exclaimed. “Is this freedom or slavery? The fellow is begging to not desecrate the *Shabbos*, but since he is so addicted and enslaved with his ‘freedom’ and non-conformity, he simply cannot break off the shackles that force him to be ‘free’!”

Fortunate is one who uses his freedom to choose life, and lives the ultimate experience of freedom; woe is to one who enslaves the gift of choice to his *Yetzer Hara*.

וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים דרי זה משובח (הגדה של פסח)

The *Gemara* (מגילה יז.) teaches: “*The best medicine is silence if a word costs one selah (coin) then silence costs two.*” *Chazal* impart to us in many places the advantage of silence over speech. Yet on the night of *Pesach*, we say in no uncertain terms: “*The more one talks about the Exodus from Egypt, it is praiseworthy.*” Indeed, in the famous song known as “*Dayeinu*” we thank *Hashem* for each individual miracle that He performed for us at that time. Then we repeat all of the miracles twice in the main paragraph and sum it up with, "על אחת כמה וכמה ..." - certainly we should thank Him for doing the miracles, and then we list them all a third time. Why are we so verbose and repetitious?

R’ Shloime Brevda zt”l answers with a very moving parable. A poor and sick holocaust survivor made it to the shores of America where he was taken in by his uncle who treated him with love and tenderness. He fed and clothed him. He outfitted him from top to bottom. He took his nephew to the best doctors until he was cured. He taught him English and how to run a store, eventually buying him one to manage. Afterwards, he found him a wife and bought him a house. The young couple was blessed with many children.

Many years later, at the wedding of the nephew’s oldest child, the nephew whispered in his uncle’s ear, “My dear uncle, I must thank you for all the goodness you have bestowed upon me.” His uncle, however, responded with harsh words. “Is this how you show appreciation to me?” he asked. Startled, the nephew asked, “How then should I do it?”

His uncle responded, “You should say, ‘My dear uncle, only I remained from my family, lonely, weak, sick and poor. With your great mercy, you fed me, clothed me, and healed me, etc. etc. All that I have in my entire life, you gave to me. If I live a thousand years, I would not be able to thank you properly ...’ This is how you show appreciation.”

When it comes to being *Makir Tov*, we shouldn’t skimp on our words. On the contrary, the more we talk about how bad off we were, the more we’ll understand the vast goodness of *Hashem*. The more we stress that we can never thank Him enough no matter how long we live, we will be praiseworthy.

דרגה יתירה FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ולפי' שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל כפר בעיקר ואף אתה הקדה את שיניו (הגדה של פסח)

B'ezras Hashem, this Friday night, we will all sit down to the much anticipated *Seder*. So much preparation, so much time and energy has gone into making this a beautiful *Yom Tov*. We make sure that the house is spotless, all the children have fresh, clean clothing and all the shopping and cooking is complete. The mounds of potato peals in the garbage alone can testify to the extreme amounts of food we consume over *Yom Tov*. And that’s just the potatoes! The cakes and desserts and elaborate *Yom Tov seudos* take much time and effort to prepare. And when all is said and done (after all, *Pesach* is only one week), it’s not so much what was done than what was said! In other words, what was done is what went into our mouths, but what is said is what comes out!

סיפור יציאת מצרים is One of the main *mitzvos* on *Pesach*. This is the time, the great opportunity to truly “Pass-Over” the foundations of *Yiddishkeit* to our children and grandchildren. If we show them that the most important thing about *Pesach* is nice (expensive) clothing and sumptuous banquets, and of course, an exciting *Chol Hamoed* trip, then what have we really passed over? And what can we hope for our children to pass over to their children? *Pesach* is our privilege and responsibility to tell over to the all future generations what being a Jew is all about.

R’ Avraham Hakohen Pam zt”l comments on the *Mishna* in *Avos*: “כל המבזה את המועדות אין לו חלק לעולם הבא” - “*One who scorns or belittles the holidays, has no portion in the world to come.*” This sounds extreme and intense. Does this refer to one who doesn’t buy a new suit for *Yom Tov*? Or is it talking about someone who doesn’t have 3 different kinds of dessert on the table? Or maybe it means that if you don’t take your kids on a major טיול, like a 3-day camping trip this *Chol HaMoed*, then you have really belittled the *Yom Tov*! Rav Pam explains that the purpose of any *Yom Tov* is to MEET *Hashem* - a "מיעד" is a meeting point. The goal of every holiday - *Pesach*

משל למת הדבר דומה

לפיכך אנחנו חייבים להודות להלל לשבח לפאר ... למי שעשה לאבותינו ולנו את כל הנסים האלו (סדר מגיד)

משל: An “out-of-towner” is traveling on a business trip to New York, his first time in the “Big Apple.” His friends tell him that in order to get the full NYC experience, he can’t leave without riding the famous New York subway system. A fearless and intrepid guy, he decides to give it a shot.

Like many in today’s day and age, our protagonist has a serious disorder that is especially dangerous in a subway stations. Alas, while trying to take a “subway-selfie,” he becomes the latest casualty of cell phone distraction, falling off the platform directly onto the train tracks.

especialy - is to infuse ourselves and our children with RUCHNIUS, spirituality. On the night of the *Seder*, we sit for hours speaking about the great miracles *Hashem* did for us in *Mitzrayim*. We share numerous *divrei Torah* and *vertlach* about the *Haggadah* and the night is filled with a mystical quality and a holy, spiritual atmosphere.

But it is important to remember ... *Chag HaPesach* is eight days long! There are numerous *Yom Tov seudos*, as well as *Chol Hamoed* meals, that should be enjoyed with good food, good company and *geshmack divrei Torah* and inspiration. The days of *Chol HaMoed* are meant to be pleasurable, spent with healthy doses of family and friends time, but it too, must not pass without *Torah* and *yiras shamayim*. If all we celebrate on *Pesach* is the physical *gashmius*, with minimal *ruchnius*, then this is how we “scorn the holiday.” This is what the *Mishna* refers to when it states unequivocally, “*he has no portion in the world to come.*”

Today, we are blessed with so many books and *seforim* containing wonderful stories and inspiring messages of *Emunah* and *Hashgacha Pratis* to be read and shared throughout the holiday. Let us make every day of the *chag* a celebration of true *Yiddishkeit*. Let us talk to our children about concepts such as *Kedusha*, *Olam Haba*, *Mashiach*, *Bitachon* and *Dveikus* in *Hashem*. Let us take our children to the *Gedolim* to receive *berachos* and bask in the presence of their greatness. Let us allow our children to share their own stories and feelings about their relationship with *Hashem*. This *Pesach*, let *Yiddishkeit* come alive!

Let the real *simcha* of connecting ourselves to RUCHNIUS be felt in our homes! Let us inflame and excite our children with EMES - *Toras Emes* - not from STUFF or FLUFF or BLUFF! Let them see and perceive what is true, authentic *Yiddishkeit* - what it means to foster a relationship with *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*! And may we all be *zoche* to properly honor the holiday - all the holidays - and thereby merit a portion in *Olam Haba*!

of "נרצה" (345) equals the numerical value of "משה" - *Moshe Rabbeinu*. This is to signify that by the time we have reached this portion of the *Seder*, we have performed the *mitzvos* as laid down by *Moshe Rabbeinu*. We have eaten the *matza* and the *maror*, drank all four cups of wine, and recited the *sippur* and *Hallel*, all according to *halacha*. However, a Jew is not only a person of discipline, a robotic figure who strictly adheres to every rule

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV

מחשבת הלב

FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

הלילה הזה מטיבלין שתי פעמים ... (סדר מה נשתנה)
Chazal debate whether or not eating *Charoses* at the *Seder* is a *mitzvah*. Although it is certainly not in the same category as *matza*, *maror* and the four cups of wine, still the *Gemara* (פסחים קטו) tells us that spice-dealers in Jerusalem would yell out their shop windows, “Spices for the *mitzvah*!” This was a reference to *Charoses*. In truth, the essence of *Charoses* is that it should be tart, like apples, and thick like mud. On a personal level, *Charoses* brings back fond memories of my dear parents ע"ה, who would make the most delicious *Charoses* and distribute it on *Erev Pesach* to all our neighbors, friends and relatives, since most of them did not know how to make it with the correct ingredients and the proper “*Yehi Ratzon*.”

The understanding behind the *Charoses* mixture is explained by Rashi (in *Pesachim*) who offers two distinct interpretations. 1- It is a reminder of the (tart) apple trees in Egypt under which the Jewish women delivered six babies at one time (ששה בכרס אחת). 2- It is a reminder of the mud and straw, the mortar for the bricks the Jews made as slaves. The *Medrash* in *Parshas Shemos* states that the harshest labor that was performed in *Mitzrayim* was making the mortar. In *halacha* it is brought that when we make the *Charoses*, we should add one ingredient - red wine. The redness is to remind us of the blood of the Jewish children who were killed when their unfortunate parents were unable to fill their daily quota of producing 600 bricks. This is the final ingredient in the *Charoses*.

And yet, the question remains: doesn't it seem odd to add

מצה זו שאנו אוכלים על שום מה? ... (הגדה של פסח)
We begin the *Haggadah* by describing *matza* as “*the bread of affliction*” that our forefathers ate in *Mitzrayim*. Later on, towards the end of *Maggid*, we ask: “*What is the reason for this matza? It is because our forefathers were driven out of Mitzrayim and did not have enough time for their dough to ferment and rise.*” Okay ... so which is it? Do we eat *matza* because our forefathers ate it as slaves in *Mitzrayim*, or do we eat it because it reminds us of the *matzos* of freedom that our forefathers baked on their backs marching out of *Mitzrayim*?

and regulation which he is obligated to keep. He also possesses a lofty soul and great depths of feeling, which makes him desire to pour his heart out in praise and gratitude for the great bounty that *Hashem* has given him. He yearns with a great longing to come closer to *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, to bask in His Presence. This leads him to declare "נרצה" - “My aim to satisfy the Almighty for I possess a deep and abiding love for my Creator.”

ingredients that make the *Charoses* tasty even though, like the second explanation of Rashi, its purpose is to remind us of the most bitter and backbreaking labor that we were forced to do? This seems like a paradox in the extreme.

My *machshava* here is based on what many of the *Seforim Hakedoshim* tell us; that the harsh work *Bnei Yisroel* did in *Mitzrayim* was, in truth, the main reason why the *Ribono shel Olam* redeemed us 190 years earlier than was originally destined. *Hashem* told Avraham: ויעבדום ועט "אתם ארבע מאת שנה" - “*They will be enslaved and tortured for four hundred years.*” But in the end, we left Egypt after 210 years. This was a *chessed* that *Hashem* did because of the terribly harsh labor. It is well known what the **Vilna Gaon zt"l** writes about the the *trop* (musical cantillation) on the words "וימררו את חייהם" - “*And they embittered their lives.*” It is a "קדמה ואזלא" - a soaring note, which literally means to hurry up, to go quicker. Homiletically, cites the *Gaon*, these musical notes teach us that *Bnei Yisroel* left Egypt quicker than was planned because of the intense bitterness of their labor. One might add to this thought that the *gematria* of "קדמה ואזלא" is precisely 190, which is the exact number of years that *Hashem* removed from the original decree of *Golus* that was forecast to Avraham Avinu by the *Ribono shel Olam*.

Thus, it was due to the bitterness that the decree was sweetened! And we make a sweet/tart/red tasty combination for *Charoses*, even though it is made to commemorate the backbreaking labor. In short, because of the bitterness, the results were sweet!

The answer is fairly obvious. This is the *matza* that was eaten both during the bitter years of servitude and also as they marched to their freedom. *Matza* represents both sides of the coin - the ups and downs of life, the failures and triumphs, the despair and hope in our lives. The *matza* that we eat at the *Seder* speaks for itself because it has a life of its own. It brings back memories of horror and pain, bitterness during the dark times of our history, terrible memories of persecution, of pogroms, of the Holocaust, of terrorism and anti-Semitism. But at the same time, *matza* symbolizes the ongoing Jewish story of hope, of redemption

Mozambique, a war-torn, lawless country to gain another Jew's freedom. He was accompanied by Congressman Gilman, and joined by Mrs. Markus, who flew in from Israel. After spending the first night of *Pesach* as guests of the Johannesburg community in South Africa, they continued on to the dangerous border region of Mozambique.

The group boarded a small plane to Manzini, Swaziland, deep in the African backwoods. Ben Gilman was very anxious, especially as they were taken by jeep on the long, dusty road to the border town of Gaba, where Miron Markus was being held. In that very spot, two foreign missionaries had been shot dead just two weeks earlier. Ronnie kept reminding Ben Gilman that their mission had been blessed by Rabbi Feinstein and there was nothing to worry about. They ate *matza* at the border and davened the holiday prayers with extra intent, praying that their mission be successful.

The pair arrived at the Mozambique prison late on *Pesach* night, accompanied by the prisoner's wife, where they were met by a dazed, blinking Miron Markus, who had been blindfolded and was certain he was being led out to be shot.

Mrs. Markus began to shout, “That's my husband!” and collapsed. Ronnie greeted Markus and hugged him tight. “Do you know what day it is today?” an exultant Rabbi Greenwald asked the freed captive.

“I don't know the month, the day, or the hour,” Markus replied hesitantly, in Hebrew. “*Hayom Chag HaPesach - Zman Cheiruteinu!* Today is the holiday of *Pesach*, the time of our freedom!” he informed him. Markus smiled, probably his first in twenty-one months. “It was one of the high points of my life,” Ronnie would reminisce proudly. He never forgot that smile.

“*Israel will have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us.*” - Prime Minister Golda Meir.
On July 17, 2014, the day when a five-hour ceasefire had been brokered by the U.N. between Israel and Hamas, over 100 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into Southern Israel. Operation Protective Edge was the Israeli military operation aimed at stopping rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, which had increased after an Israeli crackdown on Hamas in the West Bank was launched following the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers by Hamas members. What the world did not know at the time was that the rockets were a distraction. Hamas actually planned to use a terror tunnel in order to launch a devastating attack against Israeli civilians.

The story gets even more interesting. Three weeks before the ground war began on July 17, **R' Aharon Samet shlit'a**, a *dayan* in the *Eidah Charedis*, led a *chabura* of Jews from Bnei Brak who were harvesting wheat to bake *matzos* for *Pesach*. This group harvests the wheat every summer when the sun beats down on the fields, thoroughly drying out the wheat. It is then stored until the winter when the *chabura* begins the production and baking of *matzos*.

On a *Chareidi* radio program, R' Samet told the story of the great miracle which occurred for the people of Israel thanks to his *chabura's* efforts. “This year, we were getting ready for the upcoming *Shmitta* year (agricultural sabbatical). As a result, this summer we harvested wheat grain for two years. We searched the whole country, looking for wheat which was sown late in the season and needed rain which fell late. At *Kibbutz Sufa*, very close to the Gaza border, we found an entire field sown in mid-January, an unusual occurrence, and came across almost 2000 acres of green wheat which was perfect for our needs.”

“We harvested the wheat,” said R' Samet, “and ran into IDF soldiers, military police, as well as undercover officers who came to check out who we were.” The Gaza air campaign of Operation Protective Edge was already underway, and the *Yidden* from Bnei Brak were able to clearly see clouds of smoke billowing over Gaza and hear the air raid sirens while they were busy harvesting and transferring the wheat to trucks. They then hurriedly moved it all in the direction of the processing plants near Masmiya for cleaning, fumigating and tithing the wheat.

When they had completed the harvest and processing, they left the area and didn't give it another thought. Only weeks later when the fighting between Israel and Hamas was at its peak did these Jews realize the significance of their actions.

On July 17, 2014, a homicide tunnel opened up on the Israeli side of the border, and 13 Hamas terrorists emerged intent on murdering, maiming, and taking Israeli men, women and children captive. They infiltrated from Gaza and the tunnel's entrance opened up at the exact spot near *Kibbutz Sufa* where R' Samet and his *chabura* had been harvesting. The terrorists were shocked to discover that their natural camouflage - the giant wheat field that they had been planning to hide in - had totally disappeared. The now empty field allowed IDF surveillance to spot the terrorists immediately as they emerged from their hole, opening fire on them and dropping a bomb on them from above. The terrorists were neutralized and many Jewish lives were saved by the grace of Heaven.

Commenting on this miraculous development, Givati Brigadier Commander Col. Ofer Winter concluded, “Soldiers experience so many miracles that it is impossible not to believe in G-d.”

other nights?’ In other words, we, the Jewish children of *Hashem* will ask, ‘*Tatte*, why is this terrible, dark exile longer than all the other exiles we have previously endured? When will this long night end - and the light of the *Geulah* - the arrival of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* - will shine forth?’”

As he uttered these last words, the Shpoler Zeide could not contain his emotions and he burst into bitter tears. “Father in Heaven, redeem us quickly from the exile while we are only in a ‘half sleep’ and our hearts still remain awake! *Hashem*, do not wait until we fall into a slumber so deep that we can never be awakened!” All those at the table who witnessed this scene were shaken to the core with a desire for repentance, many weeping from the depths of their souls.

But R’ Aryeh Leib abruptly interrupted this sad mood. Brightening appreciably, he called out, “*Kinderlach*, children, let us have some liveliness at the *Seder*, and give our Father a little ‘*nachas*.’ Let us show Him that His ‘*kleina kinderlach*’ - small children, can dance and be joyful even in this deep darkness!” And with that, the *Tzaddik*, who was renowned as an exceptional dancer, began to twirl around in a dance of spiritual rapture.

ותתן לנו ה' אליקנו באהבה ... את יום חג המצות הזה זמן חירותינו מקרא קודש (קידוש ליל הסדר)

What motivates a man to risk his safety, his life, and that of his family, to help brothers he has never met before? In an interview given a few of years ago by Hamodia’s Inyan Magazine, **Rabbi Ronnie (Reuven) Greenwald z”l**, the legendary Jewish statesman, international diplomat, community activist - a man who made a career of spy trading, hostage mediation, and other forms of high-stakes diplomacy - gave a very candid - and telling - response.

“I was learning with my *chavrusa* in *Telshe Yeshivah*,” he recalled in the interview, “and we were studying the *halacha* that permits the sale of a *Sefer Torah* for the *mitzvah* of *pidyon shvuyim*, freeing captives. I commented to my *chavrusa* that this is a *mitzvah* that we Americans never get a chance to do. Little did I know then that I would spend many decades of my life traveling the world in order to fulfill this *mitzvah*.”

Among his numerous accomplishments on the national and international scene, Ronnie Greenwald, working alongside Congressman Ben Gilman, negotiated the complicated rescue of a 24-year-old Israeli citizen named Miron Markus. Rabbi Greenwald was approached by a French businessman and member of the Israeli Knesset, and asked to get involved to effect the release of Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky, who was then imprisoned as a refusenik in the Soviet Union. Ronnie traveled to East Germany, and appeared in the office of a key Communist lawyer, Wolfgang Vogel, looking, in his own words, “about as conspicuous as a three-headed giraffe!”

He proposed a swap between the famous refusenik Sharansky and Robert Thompson, a former U.S. official in East Berlin, who had been arrested in 1963 after the FBI received evidence that he was passing classified secrets to the communists, and sentenced to thirty years in a U.S. prison. Now, proposed Rabbi Greenwald, the U.S. would swap Thompson for Sharansky. Vogel demurred, saying that Sharansky was off the table, whereupon Ronnie, at the urging of the French Knesset member, suggested exchanging Thompson for Miron Markus instead. Markus was an Israeli citizen living in South Africa who had an appliance business that required him to travel periodically to Zimbabwe (called Rhodesia at the time). Zimbabwe was a battle-fatigued country, and its neighbors were no better.

In 1978, Markus was traveling in a private plane, piloted by his brother-in-law, Jackie Bloch, heading to Zimbabwe, when bad weather forced them to land in the middle of a field in Mozambique, an African Communist client state of the Soviet Union. They were immediately accosted by officials of Mozambique’s Marxist government and accused of spying for Israel. Tragically, Jackie Bloch was shot and killed on the spot, while Markus was taken prisoner and held in solitary confinement. By the time Ronnie got involved, Markus had already been held hostage for a year.

Rabbi Greenwald realized it was a long shot, but this was a matter of *pidyon shvuyim*. He called Congressman Ben Gilman from Israel, even though it was 5:00 a.m. in America, to discuss the matter. Gilman, a former army pilot who had been recognized for his heroism during World War II, was a close friend of Ronnie, who had facilitated his election to Congress by urging the White House to support his campaign. Working in utmost secrecy, Ronnie Greenwald, Congressman Gilman and other diplomats negotiated a complex swap that involved four countries: Mozambique, Israel, the U.S. and East Germany. The other players in the prisoner swap were convicted East German spy Robert Thompson and U.S. exchange student Alan van Norman. In the end, everyone got something.

The exchange was set for April 10, 1978. Markus’ actual release took place on the second night of *Pesach*, which fell out on *Motzei Shabbos*. Ronnie asked a *shaila* to **HaGaon R’ Moshe Feinstein zt”l** about traveling on *Pesach*. After hearing all the relevant details, R’ Moshe *paskened*, “Definitely, you must travel. Travel and be successful.”

Thus, on *erev Pesach*, as *Klal Yisroel* prepared to celebrate the *Yom Tov* of freedom, Ronnie prepared to travel to

and salvation. The *matza* that we eat speaks volumes, but each one of us has different thoughts based on our own life experiences. That is why at the start of the *Seder* we break the middle *matza* in two and make sure that one half is bigger than the other, saving the larger half to eat later as the *Afikoman*. This is precisely the lesson of our lives - we always

have hope that the bigger half will emerge in the future to be eaten, not as a poor man eats his bread, but as a sweet dessert while reclining in a display of joy and freedom.

May the sweet taste of the *Afikoman* remain with us together with the message of hope for a life of *nachas*, *arichas yamim* and *harchavas hadaas*. Amen v’Amen.

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים קדש ... ורחין ... כרפס ... יחין (סימני הסדר)

The customs of the *Seder* night are ancient and profound. They have been handed down for thousands of years, generation after generation, and there is much to learn from the varied and unique procedures. From a very young age, each and every Jewish child is taught the special mnemonic device to help remember the fifteen sections that make up the *Seder* night. It begins: “*Kaddesh, Urchatz, Karpas, Yachatz*” It means, “Recite *Kiddush*, wash the hands, eat the *Karpas*, break the middle *matza*” It has been a timeless custom for teachers to instill these words into the hearts and minds of their smallest, most impressionable students, who then recite them on the *Seder* night, explaining each word in Hebrew, often followed by a translation in the *Yiddish* vernacular.

The first word, “*Kaddesh*” is explained thusly: “*When the father comes home from shul on the night of Pesach, he puts on his kittel and makes Kiddush right away, so that the little children do not fall asleep without saying the Four Questions, beginning with ‘Mah Nishtana.’*”

One year in the home of the **Shpoler Zeide, R’ Aryeh Leib Saba zt”l**, his young son began the customary recitation with the word “*Kaddesh*” and then proceeded with the *Yiddish* explanation, as follows: “*Kaddesh* When Tatty comes home from shul on *Pesach* night, he must recite the *kiddush* immediately.” His explanation, however, went no further, and after a few moments of silence, his father asked, “Nu? Why don’t you continue?”

The little boy shrugged his shoulders. “My teacher didn’t tell me anything else to say,” replied the child.

The Shpoler Zeide then proceeded to tell his son the rest of the explanation, which continues: “.... so that the little children will not fall asleep and they will ask the Four Questions beginning with ‘*Mah Nishtana* why is this night different from all other nights?’”

The following evening, on the second night of *Pesach*, the boy’s teacher was among the guests at the Shpoler Zeide’s table. Right before the *Seder* began, the *Tzaddik* asked the teacher, “Why did you leave out part of the *Kaddesh*? Why didn’t you teach the children the rest of the explanation that has been around for so many years?”

“Oh,” replied the teacher nonchalantly, “I didn’t think it was so important for a little child to know. Anyway, that is not the most important part of the explanation.”

The Shpoler Zeide was unhappy with this reply. He simply couldn’t fathom why a teacher would do such a thing. He said, “How do you dare take upon yourself to alter the venerable customs of our illustrious ancestors? You simply don’t understand the depth and profundity of this teaching.” Immediately, however, the Shpoler Zeide calmed down and smiled. “Listen, and I will explain the inner meaning of these words.”

R’ Aryeh Leib said, “The words ‘*Kaddesh, Urchatz*’ - they are the introduction to the whole *Seder*. In the **Zohar** it is written that Rabbi Chiya opened up his discourse with the words from *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs), ‘אני ישנה ולבי ער’, - ‘*I am asleep but my heart is awake.*’ This means, ‘I am asleep during the *Golus* (exile)’ - the long and enduring exile has caused the Jewish people to fall asleep, lacking the heights of spiritual sensitivity.

“Thus, the true meaning of the children’s words are, ‘*When the Father comes home from shul on Pesach night*’ - when our Father in Heaven returns to His Abode on High and He sees that all the Jews, no matter how exhausted they are from their preparations for the holiday, all go to *shul* to pray and give thanks to Him, what does He do? ‘*He puts on his white kittel and recites the Kiddush right away*’ - *Hashem* takes on the role of the *chosson*, the groom, and renews His vow of betrothal to His deserted bride, the Jewish people, as it says in the *Navi Hoshea*: (ב-כא) ‘אֶרְשֶׁתִּיךָ לִי לְעֹלָם’ - ‘*And I will betroth you to Me forever.*”

The Shpoler Zeide’s eyes were shining with a feverish glow. “And why must He do this with such haste? ‘*So that the little children will not fall asleep.*’ The prophets often refer to the Jewish people as the precious children of *Hashem*. The Almighty must act immediately to redeem His people, lest the deep slumber of the Exile totally overwhelms them (G-d forbid), and they cannot be awakened, for in that case, the future redemption would be impossible.

“The end of the phrase is, ‘*So that they will ask the question, ‘Mah Nishtana why is this night different from all*