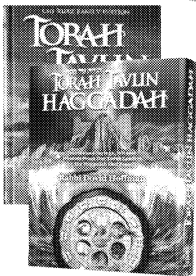


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Shabbos Parshas Tzav - Shabbos HaGadol - Chag HaPesach
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הגדעצרי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א
ראש שיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

טיב התבלין

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

ויעש אהרן את כל הדברים אשר צוה ה' ביד משה וכו' (ה-לו) – צריכים לקיים את רצון הבורא בתמימות ופשיטות ועל זה צריכים להכניע את הגאווה הגדולה, שהוא מפריע להאדם מאוד לעשות כמו שציווה אותו הבורא, שצריכים לשמוע בקול הבורא בלא חכמות, ולא לנסות לימין ושמאל כלל, וכל מה שהאדם הוא יותר גדול, קשה לו יותר, שהוא צריך לשמור את עצמו יותר לא לעשות מש ששכלו אומר לו, ולשמוע בתמימות ופשיטות רק מה שאומר לו הבורא, ועל זה שיקיים את מאמר הבורא כפשוטו, יקבל בזה שכרו משלם.

והגור אריה פירש בזה עוד, ששמחו במה ששמעו ממשה רבינו, כמו ששמעו זאת מפי הבורא עצמו, שהוא מדריגה גדולה מאוד, שכאשר האדם שומע מפי הבורא עצמו, הוא מוכן עוד לקבל, אבל לשמוע מפי אדם את זאת, ויהיה האדם גדול כמה שיהיה, אפילו שיאמר זאת משה רבינו עצמו, האדם אינו מוכן לקבל זאת, כאילו שמע זאת מפי הבורא בעצמו. ולכן זה היה שבחו של אהרן ובניו, ששמחו והאמינו במה ששמעו ממשה, כמו ששמעו זאת מפי הבורא עצמו, שהוא מדריגה גדולה מאוד, שאפילו רק שומעים מפי אדם, האמינו בזה, שהאדם הזה פי הבורא מדבר מתוך גרונו, ולכן נהרו שלא לשנות ממנו שום זי כל שהוא, והוא מדריגה גדולה, שרק אנשים גדולים כמו אהרן ובניו שמרו זאת. וכן אנו צריכים אנו ללמוד מהם, שכאשר שומעים מוסר מפי אדם גדול, או אפילו כשלומדים ורואים בספר קדוש דברי מוסר, צריכים להאמין שהבורא עצמו הוא המדבר מתוך גרונו, ואם יאמין האדם בכך לא ישנה אפילו משהוא ממה שכתוב שם, או ממה ששומע מוסר, ויקיים את הדברים כפשוטו, וכמו תניתן מסיני.

שצריכים להאמין שכל מנהיג, וכל רבי בכל הדורות, שאמר דברי המוסר ודברי החיוק שלו, היה בבחינה בזה כמו שדיבר הבורא מתוך גרונו, ולכן הוא כמו שניתנה זאת מסיני ממש, וצריכים לקבל הדברים כפשוטו, וכמו שמצוה הבורא זאת בעצמו, .

שהוא הבחינה שאומרים המלמד תורה לעמו ישראל, ששמעו זאת לשון הווה, ומשום שהבורא גם היום מלמדינו תורה, על ידי מנהיגי ישראל שחיים איתנו, ועל ידי הספרים הקדושים שנשארו בעולם, וכשהאדם לומד תורה מפי גדולי הדור, ומאמין שהם אומרים תורה מן השמים, לא יבוא לשנות מדברם, ויאמין שהתורה חי וקיים גם היום, ובזה יזכה לקבלת התורה מהבורא ממש בעצמו.

A SERIES IN HALACHAH
שלושים יום קודם החג שואלין גדול פסח

The “Torah Table” - Enhancing the Seder Meal (4)
Discussing the Mitzvos after Doing Them. Apart from the mitzvos of Matza, Maror and Korech, which start off the festive Yom Tov meal, the meal itself has it's own specialities and halachos. The primary ingredient is Simchas Yom Tov, which is a grateful celebration of the Pesach Yom Tov, its mitzvos, and the many miracles that we just discussed in the Haggadah. We first talk and sing about our salvation and then celebrate with a meal. The **Chofetz Chaim ZT”L** writes ⁽¹⁾ that now that we’ve done the Matza, Maror, leaning and dippings that the children all asked about, we should go back and repeat the answers to their questions which will sink in deeper after having done them. The meal has many other connotations worthy of telling over. **Similar to the Meal of Yitzchok Avinu.** The great spiritual meal of our Patriarch Yitzchok, which brought out the eternal blessings onto Yaakov and Bnei Yisroel, happened on Pesach night. One of the two goats prepared by Rivkah was for the *Korbon Pesach*, and the other was to elevate Yitzchok to the level of blessing his son Yaakov with full happiness and *Ruach Hakodesh*. The **Shaloh** ⁽²⁾ equates our meal to that of Yitzchok with all the potential blessings and ריחן עדין present to absorb. **The Meal in Middle of Hallel.** The *Yom Tov seudah* is eaten between the recital of two sections of *Hallel*, because it is one

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
רב דקהל אהבת ישראל, קלובלנד הייטס

spiritual piece of *Hallel* and not a break between two sections of *Hallel*. The meal can give us a taste of being able to make meals into a spiritual experience all *Yom Tov* - and all year round. **The Meal of the Korbon Pesach.** This is also the meal of the *Korbon Pesach*. In the time of the *Mikdash* the meal served as a build-up to the *Korbon Pesach* which was the peak of the meal. Our *Afikoman* is in place of the *Korbon Pesach* and it's very commendable to learn or discuss topics pertaining to eating of the *Korbon Pesach*. (This is in addition to the well documented *minhag* of learning about the bringing of *Korbon Pesach* after *Mincha* on *Erev Pesach*. This is done because learning about a *Korbon* is like bringing the *Korbon* ⁽³⁾, so doing these things at the exact time of the bringing and eating of the *Korbon Pesach* is like actually doing these basic mitzvos of *Emunah*. Many *Haggados* contain a special section of what to say after *Mincha* and some even have (in the middle) what to learn by the meal. Alternatively, since the *Mishnayos* in *Pesachim* ⁽⁴⁾ discuss *Korbon Pesach*, some learn parts of them during the meal.)

One should be careful to not eat or drink too much during the meal in order to be able to eat the *Afikoman* with an appetite, and finish the *Seder* with a clear head. Since the meal is also coming after *Matza, Maror*, etc. it is advisable to serve small portions and save the special *Pesach* recipes for other *Yom Tov* meals.

הוא היה אומר

(1) שער הציון תעב"ב (2) מס' פס' מצה שמורה
(3) מנחות קי' (4) פסחים פרק ה',ז,ח,ט

Apter Rov, R' Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel ZT”L (Ohev Yisroel) would say:

“In the holy *piyutim*, the month of *Nisan* is referred to as 'מקיפות הגאולה' - *'Surrounded with salvation.*’ This word can also be understood to mean ‘borrowed,’ for in this month, *Nisan*, the Jewish People can borrow salvation. That is, even someone who is not worthy of salvation can achieve it anyway, for in Heaven there is always hope that in the future he will mend his ways and so deserve to be redeemed. *Nisan* has had this marvelous potential ever since the *Geulah*. For then the Jewish People were granted salvation from Egypt even though as yet they did not have enough merit to deserve it, because in Heaven it was known that they would later have the merit of accepting the *Torah*.”

Gerrer Rebbe, R' Yehudah Leib Alter (Sefas Emes) would say:

“Until *Yetzias Mitzrayim, Shabbos* was the symbol of one thing alone; that the world was created by *Hashem* in six days and He rested on the seventh. But since that time, *Shabbos* has gained an additional meaning. It also recalls how we left Egypt, as it says, ‘Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and G-d took you out of there ... therefore Hashem commanded you to make the Shabbos day.’ Thus, *Shabbos* has a higher status, since it bears double witness; both to the creation of the world and to our redemption from the house of slavery. It is fitting, then, that the first *Shabbos* to have gained this double meaning should be called 'שבת הגדול' - *The Great Shabbos*.”

R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld ZT”L would say:

“*Karpas* and *Yachatz* allude to *Krias Yam Suf*. How so? The letters of the word 'כרפס' spell out 'רכב פרעה' 'כל סוס רכב פרעה' and when we dip the *karpas* into salt water, we commemorate how Pharaoh and all his chariots were submerged in the salty waters of the Red Sea. Similarly, splitting the *matza* by *Yachatz*, represents the splitting of the Sea.”

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לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו ענף" פרשיות השבע

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

צו את אהרן ואת בניו וגו' (ו-ב) – קיום המצות בשמחה יביא שגם ילדינו ימשיכו בדרכינו (לשבת הגדול)

״תב רש״י בשם התו״כ (וכן איתא בקידושין כ״ט.ל), ״אין צו אלא לשון זירוז מיד ולדורות״. וכתב על זה ה**ריב״א**, ״בתוספות ט״ך למד זאת משני כתובים, שבשילוח טמאים נאמר ״צו את בני ישראל וישלחו מן המחנה וגו׳, וכתוב האלתר ״ועשו כן בני ישראל״, הרי לך ״זירוז מיד״, וזירוז לדורות״, שבעניין הנרות נאמר בפרשת אמור ״צו את בני ישראל, ויקחו אלקי שמן זית וגו׳, וכתוב מיד ״מחוץ לפרוכת העדות יערוך וגו׳, חוקת עולם לדורותיכם״, הרי לך ״זירוז לדורות״.״ היינו שכוננת התו״כ לשני זירוזין- מיד, ולדורות״.

ויש לפרש גם באופן אחר, שהמילה ״צו״ יש לה שתי משמעויות, ״זירוז״, ר״ציווי לדורות׳. ויש לתת רמז בזה, בהקדם מה שביאר ה׳תהלות מהרי״ץ (מאת ה**מהרי״ץ דושינסקיא**) בפסוק, ״נחלתי עדותיך לעולם, כי ששון לבי הנה״ (תהילים קי״ט, קי״א), ומבאר ה׳מצודת דוד״ ״אני מחזיק לעולם בתורה, והיא לי לנחלה, כי המצוות שבה ישישו לבי״. אבל ה׳תהלות מהרי״ץ״ מבאר באופן אחר, בהקדם יסוד גדול בחינוך הילדים, שהדרך היחידה לגרום לילדים שימשיכו בדרך התורה, היא רק על ידי שיראו את ההורים שמחים בקיום התורה והמצוות. כי עי״כ למדים על חשיבותם ועל התענוג האמיתי שחשים בעשייתם.

ולפי זה יש לבאר גם את הפסוק, ״הנסתרות לה״ אלוקינו, והנגלות לנו ולבנינו עד עולם, לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת״ (דברים כ״ט כ״ח), והיינו, שאף שכתוב בפסוק ״הצנע לכת עם אלוקיך״ (מיכה ו׳ ח), איתא במדרש (במדבר רבה א׳ ג׳), יפה הוא הצניעות, בכל זאת על היהודי להראות לילדיו את שמחתו בעבודת ה׳, שבכך הם ימשיכו ללכת בדרכו, ואי״כ כוונת הפסוק היא, ״הנסתרות לה״ אלוקינו״, היינו

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט״א
נר״ץ בישיבת הגר״צ קושלסקי

שאם נסתיר את שמחתנו בעבודת ה׳, רק ה׳ אלוקינו שרואה ללבב יכיר זאת, אבל ״הנגלות לנו ולבנינו עד עולם״, היינו שאם נגלה את שמחתנו בעבודת ה׳ לילדינו, היא תהיה נחלתנו ונחלת בנינו עד עולם, שימשיכו בנינו ללכת בדרכינו לעבוד את ה׳-לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת.״ (ועי׳ בספר **מאור ושמש׳** סד״ה אתם נצבים היום [האחרון], על ״הנסתרות וגו׳)

ולפי זה מבאר ה**תהלות מהרי״ץ** את הפסוק, ״נחלתי עדותיך לעולם״, היינו שעבודת ה׳ היא נחלתי ונחלת ילדי עד עולם, ״כי ששון לבי הנה״, היינו כיון שגיליתי להם את שמחתי בעשייתם (ושמשמעות ״ששון״ היינו שמראה את שמחתו כלפי חוץ, וכן כתב ה**מלבי״ם** [ישעיה ל״ה א׳], ״הששון הוא, הפעולות החיצונות שיעשה להראות השמחה, כמו תוף וכינור ומחול וכדומה״, [ועי׳ גם מלבי״ם שם ס״ו י״ל]), והמשיכו ללכת בדרכי הטובה.

ואי״כ נרמז בדברי התו״כ, שאם נעשה עבודת ה׳ עם **זירוז**, שבה מורה על חשיבותה ועל שמחתו בה, ולכך אינו מתאחר בעשייתה, ימשיכו גם הדורות הבאים ללכת בדרכינו-**לדורות׳**.

ולכן לפני ״ליל הסדר״, שהוא לילה המיועד לחינוך ילדינו ולהעביר להם את מורשת היהדות (ועי׳ **אוהב ישראל**, פסח, ד״ה יכול מר״ח), ואשר נצליח לקיים תפקיד זה רק כאשר נעבוד את ה׳ בשמחה, קורין ב״שבת הגדול״ בהפטרה שבה הנביא מוכיח את ישראל על שאינם עובדים את ה׳ בשמחה, וכמו שנאמר בה ״חזקו עלי דבריכם וגו׳ שוא עבוד אלוקים וגו׳, כדי לעוררנו לעבדו בשמחה, ובכך נצליח להעביר את המורשת לדורותינו ב״ליל הסדר״.

וְכָל הַמִּרְבֵּה לִסְפָּר ... הָרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָז

עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים ויציאנו ה' אלקינו משם ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה וכו' (הגדה של פסח)

For generation after generation, the great commentators such as the **Ibn Ezra, Rabbeinu Bechaye, Rabbeinu Nissim of Geron, Rabbeinu Don Yitzchok Abarbanel**, and those of later generations like **R’ Yisroel Salanter, R’ Shamshon Rafael Hirsch, Zecher Tzaddikim L’bracha**, have all grappled with a most basic and yet earth-shaking question: If *Bnei Yisroel* are *Hashem’s* “Chosen People,” why did He cause us to endure such terrible suffering in Egypt? He is our father and we are His loving children: Is that a way for a father to treat his favorite child?

A second question also arises: why do we sit at the *Seder* table year after year, for thousands of years, and say, “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt?” Why is it so important to remind ourselves endlessly that we were once slaves? Is that something really to boast about?

According to one approach, based on the **Rambam** in **Moreh Nevuchim** (ג-מג), *Hashem* made the Jewish People -

complex and most serious dilemma, a course of action was finally agreed upon.

On the eve of the 15th of *Nisan*, the *Seder* night, R’ Davids took his place at the head of the long table in the male barracks, conducting the ceremony not from a *Haggadah* - there was none of course - but from memory. When he reached the blessing, “*Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to eat matzah ...*” he lifted up his voice and clearly recited the following prayer, as later translated into English by Professor Harold Fisch:

Avinu Shebashamayim, Heavenly Father, it is manifest and known to You that we desire to carry out your will in regard to the commandment of eating matzah, and strictly refraining from chametz on the Festival of Pesach. But we are sick at heart at being prevented in this by reason of the oppression and mortal danger in which we find ourselves. We stand ready to perform Your commandments of which it is said, “You shall do them and live by them,” (ויקרא יח-ה) - that is to say, you shall live by them and not die by them. And accordingly, we heed Your warning, as it is written, “Take heed to thyself and keep thy soul alive.” (דברים ד-ט) Therefore, we beseech You that You will keep us in life and establish us and redeem us speedily from our servitude so that we may in time come to perform Your statutes and carry out Your will with a perfect heart. Amen.

He then reached for a piece of bread and took a bite, thereby urging his brethren to do likewise.

R’ Davids, along with his son Eliyahu, died shortly before the liberation of Bergen-Belsen by the allied forces.

His wife and their daughters, along with approximately 2,800 others, were evacuated by train from the camp. During the two-week journey to nowhere, 570 died and were buried in a mass grave somewhere along the way. Those who survived the trip were abandoned by the Nazis near the East German village of Troebits.

In 1947, his wife and daughters emigrated to the land of Israel, taking with them a copy of the prayer that their husband and father had composed. She died in a Hertzliya nursing home in 1997.

Each year, the family and its descendants read the prayer aloud on the *Seder* night, to hear again how R’ Davids asked for Divine assistance, beseeching a shattered people to do the unthinkable and “*live, not die, by them.*”

This story originally appeared in Jewish Action, the magazine of the Orthodox Union. It is reprinted here with permission from the Aish.com website, under the title, “Story of a Prayer” by Sarah Shapiro. This story was told by Joseph Freuchtwanger, nephew of Rabbi Davids.

משל' למה הדבר דומה

הללו את ה' כל גוים שבוחרו כל האמים כי גבר עלינו חסדו וכו' (תהילים קי״ז, ותפילת הלל)

משל׳: When the **Ger Zedek** - the righteous convert - of Vilna was being led to his execution, he was accompanied by soldiers who lashed him with whips along the way. One of the soldiers was suddenly overcome with a sense of remorse and asked the *Ger Zedek* for forgiveness.

“I was only following orders,” he claimed, “please forgive me, see that I should not be held accountable in Heaven for the cruelty and suffering inflicted upon you.”

The *Ger Zedek* answered him with a parable. “There was once a young prince who had a close companion. They played together and enjoyed each other’s company. One day, however, the prince’s friend suddenly began to beat him up with such ferocity that the prince came away with terrible bruises. He turned to the other boy and said, ‘Just you wait. One day you’re going to be very sorry. When I become king I will take my revenge on you.’

“Many years later, the day of the coronation arrived. There was a great procession and thousands of people thronged the streets. By chance, the new king spied his childhood

friend among the crowd, and he summoned him to approach at once. As the man came nearer, the king noticed great fear in his eyes. Putting his hand on his former friend’s shoulder, he said to him: ‘Don’t be afraid. The joy I feel at this moment is so great that the beating which you gave me long ago seems like nothing. I hereby forgive you.’”

The *Ger Zedek* told the soldier, “When I come before the heavenly throne, the wonderful sense of peace and joy and well-being which I will experience from being in the presence of the Holy One, Blessed be He, will make me forget all the pain which you have inflicted upon me.

במשל׳: *Pesach* is our “*Zman Chayrusenu*” - not just in the past when we lived the exodus from Egypt, but for the future *geulah*, as well. When we experience the revelation of *Hashem’s* care and concern for us, we are so uplifted by joy that thoughts of revenge against those who have harmed us are far from our minds. This benefits the nations of the world, who, because they are safe from our retribution, can then “praise *Hashem*” for the kindness He performs for the Jews.

for those few days before the holiday, in cleaning his home from top to bottom and ridding it of *chametz*. He succeeded in retaining the services of a kindly black woman who would dutifully and methodically scrub each room until there was no trace of *chametz* - or dirt for that matter - anywhere in the house.

On the night of *Bedikas Chametz*, R’ Elya hurried home in order to perform the *mitzvah* at his earliest opportunity. The woman had not yet finished up in a different room, but R’ Elya paid her no mind and proceeded to make the *beracha* and carry the candle from room to room, in the time-honored tradition that characterizes this important *mitzvah*.

When R’ Elya entered his personal study, he remembered that he had an old *chalif* (slaughtering knife) which he kept on top of one of his bookshelves. He pulled over a chair and climbed up reaching for the antiquated case that contained the knife. He slowly and carefully removed the sharpened blade from its container, and checked it, the inside of the case, as well as the area where it had lain, to ensure that there was no *chametz* lying about. Satisfied, he returned the *chalif* to its case and replaced it back on top of the bookshelf. Then, he climbed back down and finished up the rest of the house.

Soon after R’ Elya had completed the *mitzvah*, the black woman came into his study to inform him that she was finished and to receive her pay. But before she left, she asked if she could say a few words to the Rabbi. R’ Elya assented. “I want you know,” she began in a tremulous voice, “that I now truly believe that only your G-d, the G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the real G-d in heaven and on earth.”

R’ Elya looked up at the kind old woman with surprise and asked her what made her come to this extraordinary - if not obvious - conclusion.

The woman was suddenly filled with great emotion and she seemed to be unable to contain herself. “Rabbi, I must confess that I was watching you for a while as you walked from room to room with your little candle. I could not understand what exactly you were doing. When I saw you standing on that chair, with a candle in one hand and a long-bladed butcher’s knife in the other, I suddenly recalled the stories I had heard as a child of Jews who would slaughter a Christian child before their holiday of Passover, and use the blood to bake their *matzos*.” She shuddered inwardly for a moment at the mere thought of it. “Watching you up on the chair, I was sure that I was going to be this years Christian ‘victim’ and I wanted to scream in terror, ‘Bloody murder!’ I wanted to scream but no words would come out of my mouth. I wanted to run - to flee this house and find the nearest policeman - but my feet wouldn’t move. I was frozen in place. I couldn’t move and I couldn’t scream - why, I’ll bet I even turned white!”

Now, a smile broke over her face and she concluded, “Rabbi, of course, I realize now that your intentions were harmless but can you just imagine how it would have looked to a policeman had I been able to run out of your house and screamed just then? What would he have done had he walked in and found you with that knife? Truly, your G-d was watching over you and protecting you. Truly, your G-d is the One and only G-d in heaven and earth!”

והיא שעמדה לאבותינו ולנו שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו לכולותינו ... והקב"ה מצילנו מידם וכו' (הגדה של פסח)

During the waning days of the rule of Czar Nikolai, revolution and insurrection was in the air all throughout the Russian mainland, and the Russian authorities - chief among them the Czar himself - realized the implications if the rebellion was not put down. To that end, anyone deemed a Bolshevik revolutionary was pursued and hunted down with the full force of the Russian army and secret police, and many of the leaders of the revolution were caught and executed without even the benefit of a trial. It was a time rife with fear and terror and Russian citizens trembled and groaned under the weight of the Czar’s persecution - both Jew and gentile alike.

One of the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution, a man who would later rise to the highest heights of the newly established Soviet Union, was hunted mercilessly during those dark days and was even tagged with the dubious distinction of being at the top of Russia’s “Most Wanted” list. On one occasion, the Czar’s men came so close to capturing him, that he was forced to flee on the spur of the moment, with nothing more than the clothes on his back. Escaping the city to the outlying villages by horseback was his only option but even this did not go smoothly and the Russian agents picked up his trail, following him from village to village, until they narrowed their search. The man was cornered with no place to run, and so he began knocking on doors, begging to be allowed in before he was captured. Time after time, he was turned away, as none of the villagers wanted to be caught aiding and abetting a wanted fugitive; the consequence to their own families was too frightening to imagine.

Finally, he pounded on the door of a small house belonging to a Jewish family. Once again, he pleaded with them to let him in and this time, the Jewish villager did just that. The Jew understood the gravity of the situation and how



on this night, we are nothing less than royalty!
ברד - Hail: The hail came down in the form of awesome fiery clusters of ice. The four cups of wine that we drink this night, not only relate to the four expressions of redemption - it also warms up our bodies and souls!
ארבה - Locust: There was not a speck of vegetation in all of Egypt when the locust were done with them. Thus, we dip a vegetable in salt-water and eat to our heart’s content!
חשך - Darkness: The Egyptians experienced a period of

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

תג הפסח

On the night of *Pesach*, the Jewish People celebrate their transition from slavery to freedom. On an emotional level this is a goal for which we must strive constantly in our service of *Hashem*. In our relationship with *Hashem*, we are sometimes referred to as "עבדים" - “*Slaves*” and other times as "בנים" - “*Children*.” As slaves, we serve *Hashem* as a servant obeys his master. We fulfill His commandments loyally and are careful not to transgress the *Taryag Mitzvos* that He gave us. As children, our relationship becomes so much deeper. We not only obey the commandments we were given but we pattern our entire lives, our character, our morals and standards after *Hashem*, our Heavenly Father. We strive - in all that we do - to make Him happy and bring Him *nachas*.

The *gemara* (בבא בתרא י:) tells us: “*When you do the will of Hashem you are called ‘banim’ (sons), and when you don’t do the will of Hashem you are called ‘avadim’ (slaves).*” Now this seems to be an unusual statement of *Chazal*. The question is quite obvious: We understand why we are called *Hashem’s* children when we do His will, for He loves us even more like a father loves his son. But why are we called slaves when we DON’T do His will? We should rather be called rebels! Slaves follow their master’s commands. That is the job of a slave! Why then are we referred to as slaves when we

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

The great *Gaon* and *Tzaddik*, **R’ Elya Lopian ZT”L** served as *Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Etz Chaim Yeshiva* in the East End of London, for over twenty-five years and brought a taste of the Lithuanian-style *mussar* mentality to the proper and dignified residents of Great Britain. He managed to avoid the horrors of the Holocaust by living in England, although he did experience his share of misfortune. He lost one son who was studying in the Telshe Yeshivah during the war, and his *Rebbetzin* died in 1934, shortly after the engagement of their daughter to **R’ Leib Gurwicz ZT”L**, who would become the *Rosh Yeshivah* in Gateshead. R’ Elya lived alone for the remainder of his years.

Many years later, after R’ Elya had already moved to the Land of Israel and was serving as *Mashgiach Ruchani* in the *Knesses Chizkiyahu Yeshiva* in *Kfar Chasidim*, he was once reminiscing about how he cleaned his home for *Pesach* in those years after his wife had already departed this world, and how he prepared for the *mitzvah* of *Bedikas Chametz*.

Now that his children had all grown and left the house, R’ Elya had no choice but to hire cleaning help to assist him

darkness for merely six days. The *Maror* that we eat, reminds us of the hundreds of years of bitter gloom and darkness that the imposed slavery enveloped us in.
מכת בכורות - Killing the First Born: The Almighty Himself smote the Egyptian’s firstborn child at precisely midnight. The roasted shank bone on the *ka’ara* is testament to the *Korbon Pesach* which was eaten at חצות.
Thus, we say "ואלו הן" - “*Here they are*” - for here is exactly where they are: Joining us at our festive *Pesach Seder*.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא ... כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה וכו' DON’T do the will of our Master?

The answer, says **R’ Zev Leff Shlit’a** is the following: One can fulfill all of the 613 *mitzvos* in the *Torah*; one can keep *Shabbos* and all the *Yomim Tovim* properly; one can consider himself an observant Jew. Yet, at the same time, he continues to live a secular and irreligious life with secular and irreligious goals. In this way he is obeying *Hashem’s* command without doing His will. The will of *Hashem* is that the *mitzvos* we perform mold our character and shape our morals and values so that we truly become children of *Hashem*. “Children of *Hashem*” is not a title to be taken lightly! Children who truly wish to please their parents do so by following in their ways and emulating their actions. This is the true *nachas* we wish to give our “*Tatte in Himmel*.” However, one who is “*frum*” in that he keeps the *mitzvos* but is still bound to a secular and irreligious life has 613 problems - not *mitzvos* - and is definitely a “slave” in the fullest sense of the word.

This is truly our goal at this time of year. *Pesach* is our “*Zman Chayrusenu*” - a time that we advance in spiritual levels from merely being slaves who fulfill *Hashem's* commandments, to true freedom. Freedom to become real “Banim” - real children of *Hashem*, who live in a way that our standards, goals and actions are truly the will of *Hashem* - the way He wishes His children to be.

podium, he spoke in an impassioned tone: “It is noteworthy that in the Warsaw Ghetto we were all united - Zionists, Bundists, Agudists. All of us stood in the ghetto rows, lined up behind each other, under the Nazi whip. At that time we all had brotherly feelings towards one another. We felt a great closeness to each other. At that time we also realized that we are one people. Today? We are rid of the Nazi-Hitler, and have been delivered from that vale of tears; why can’t we once again be united in these good days?”

Then, R’ Levin cried out, “Has nothing changed? Have we learned nothing from the destruction? The same divisions prevail between Jew and Jew - Zionist, Agudist, Bundist - the same divisiveness as before, the same envy and hostility. Unfortunately, we have learned nothing from the lesson that ‘We were slaves to Hitler in the Warsaw Ghetto.’”

“The Hitlerian destruction was a very difficult school,” R’ Levin continued sadly. “But the Jews’ erased it from their memory.” What was the point and purpose of the bitter exile in Egypt? The answer is to forge one Jewish People in the Egyptian crucible, a people whose members all possess the same noble pedigree: no upper class and no lower class, all children of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov. (מועדים לשמחה)

במצרים לק עשר מכות ועל הים לק חמשים מכות (סם)

Chazal tell us that the ten *Makkos* (plagues) were intended to teach *Bnei Yisroel*. This is the way of *HaKadosh Boruch Hu*. He brings destruction upon the idolatrous nations so that *Yisroel* will heed and fear *Hashem*, as it is written, “*I wiped out nations; their towers are desolate ... I said, 'At least you (Yisroel) shall fear Me, and will learn a lesson.*” (צפניה ה-י, *Hashem* may have justly destroyed the towers of the heathens on account of their transgressions, but the lesson was intended for the Jews, to encourage them to draw closer to Him. This was true also of the plagues suffered by the Egyptians. Still, they were directed at the Egyptians, and were thus not solely a lesson for the Jews. If the *Makkos* did not properly serve as a punishment, what did they accomplish for the Egyptians?

R’ Yisroel Belsky Shlit’a explains: The *Baal Haggadah* compares the *Makkos* in *Mitzrayim* to those that took place at *Krias Yam Suf*, Splitting of the Red Sea. The ten plagues in Egypt were delivered by an “אצבע” a finger, as the Magicians said, “*This is the finger of G-d.*” (שמות ח-טו) At the sea, it is written, “*And Yisroel saw the great hand.*” (שם יד-לא) If one finger represented ten *Makkos*, then the five fingers of a hand must represent fifty. The Egyptians were therefore smitten with fifty plagues at the sea.

However, there is a deeper comparison here. If a person wishes to strike or punish, he will use his hand. That is where his strength lies. However, if he wishes to teach or

to demonstrate, a person will use his finger to ‘point out’ the truth. This is the distinction between the *Makkos* in Egypt and those at the Red Sea. In Egypt, they were, “*The finger of G-d.*” They were meant to teach the Egyptians. The insolence, *chutzpah*, and haughtiness of Pharaoh who said, “*Who is Hashem that I should listen to His voice*” was itself enough to warrant a series of sharp slaps in the face by *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*. Indeed, this is the basic understanding of the entire story of the *Makkos*. It was as if *Hashem* said, “You have the audacity to deny Me? I shall take you and your people to task for your insolence, that you should never forget before Whom you must always kneel in humility!” At *Krias Yam Suf*, however, *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* smote the Egyptians with, “*His great hand.*” The lesson was over. It was now time to destroy the wicked people once and for all!

אלו עשר מכות שהביא הקב"ה על המצרים (סם)

When we say: "אלו עשר מכות ... ואלו הן" - “*These are the ten plagues ... and here they are,*” it sounds as if the *makkos* are sitting here, right in front of us. Of course, we talk about them and discuss their intricacies; but how can they be right here, right now - before our very eyes?

The great Moroccan *Chacham*, **Rabbeinu Meir Di Avila ZT”L** denotes that in fact, the *makkos* are here, on this very night, intertwined with our actions all throughout the course of the *seder* night. “ואלו הן”:

דם - Blood: The *Charoses*, a reddish tinged mixture, which generally includes red wine, is used to symbolize the blood. But if blood was a harsh fluid for the Egyptians, the *Charoses* is a sweet concoction to soften the *Maror*.

צפרדע - Frogs: The critters croaked and gawked so loudly, that one Egyptian could not hear the other talk. Thus, we read the *Haggadah* in a pleasant tone, and talk to each other - our children, our spouses - for communication is key.

כנים - Lice: For the duration of the plague, the Egyptians scratched and pulled lice off their bodies. At the *seder*, we distribute small nuts and candies to the children (to keep them engaged) who put them in their pockets for later use.

ערוג - Wild Beasts: A horde of every type of beast, brute and monstrous creature descended upon Egypt in a wild synthesis of animal rage and disaster. We, too, combine the elements of *Matza* and *Maror* by the *mitzvah* of *Korech*.

דבר - Pestilence: The word for plague - מגפה - is the same *gematria* (138) as חמץ. We rid our homes of *chametz* and our minds of the plague of sin and impropriety. The **Zohar** states that *Matza* is “מכלא דאסותא” - food that heals.

שחין - Boils: The pain of the boils on the bodies of the Egyptians caused them to lie down on soft beds. To counteract this, we recline on soft pillows and couches, since



the soldiers would be at his doorstep at any moment. He quickly grabbed a *Talis* and wrapped the fugitive in it, pushing him into a corner of the room and handing him a *siddur*. “Just make it look like you’re a Jew praying with great devotion,” he told the man, and when the soldiers eventually arrived, they did a room-by-room search but came up with nothing other than a few unsuspecting Jews swaying in their prayer shawls. The man was saved.

His gratitude and words of thanks were effusive, but when he offered to repay the kind Jew for his selfless action, the Jew refused any sort of repayment, monetary or otherwise. Just saving a human life, was enough, he had said, and the revolutionary went on his way, vowing never to forget the kindness this man had done for him.

One day, a number of years later, after the fall of the Russian Empire, the firing-squad execution of Czar Nikolai and his family, and the rise to power of the Bolshevik proletariats who eventually formed the Soviet Union, a messenger arrived at the home of the aforementioned Jewish villager with a summons to appear at the palatial home of the Premier of the Politburo. Scared and panicked, the man had no choice but to appear. His fear turned to shock when the man who greeted him was none other than the fugitive revolutionary who had hidden in his home, dressed like a Jew and pretending to pray to fool the bloodthirsty Russian soldiers. The Soviet leader once again thanked him for his kindness and reminded him of his promise to grant him any wish his heart desired. The Jew, however, again requested nothing and reiterated that he was only too happy to be able to save a fellow man’s life. He was sent away with many valuable gifts and a permanent pass to visit the Soviet leader anytime his heart desired.

The preceding story was told over by the holy **Chofetz Chaim ZT”L**, who would impart to his students the lesson that a small act by one man can go a long way towards reshaping the landscape of the entire world! By unknowingly saving this revolutionary, he enabled a chain of events to go forth, changing the world - for better or for worse - forever!

But that’s not the end of the story. In 5681 (1921), a group of eighteen *yeshivah* students from the Novardok Yeshivah in Russia were captured attempting to smuggle across the Russian-Polish border, to escape the harsh anti-religious decrees of the Soviets. The boys languished in a cold Soviet prison, undergoing torture and severe conditions, until their trial would take place when they would undoubtedly be sent off to a Siberian gulag for the rest of their lives. The Novardok *Roshei Yeshivah* attempted to use all of their influence to have the boys released but nothing seemed to help.

Eventually, they turned to the *Posek Hador*, **R’ Chaim Ozer Grodzensky ZT”L**, for assistance. R’ Chaim Ozer remembered the Jew who had saved the Soviet leader and told them, “I believe there is one Jew who can help. He once saved a very important man and never asked for anything in return. Now is the time to have the favor repaid.”

The Jewish villager was located and impressed upon to seek the release of the eighteen students, which he did and soon after, the boys were all freed.

But it wasn’t just eighteen *yeshivah* students that were saved, the famed *maggid* **R’ Yaakov Galinsky Shlit’a**, would exclaim. One of those boys turned out to be none other than the great **Steipler Gaon, R’ Yaakov Yisroel Kanievsky ZT”L**, whose *Torah*, *avodah* and righteousness lit up the world from one end to the other! This act of saving another man’s life did not just alter the landscape of Russian life; it changed the world of *Torah* as well! If not for him, where would we be without the great *tzaddik* and eventual leader of his generation, the holy Steipler Gaon?

ושמרתם את המצות ושמרתם את היום הזה לדורותיכם חקת עולם וגו' (שמות יב-יז)

It was *Erev Pesach*, 1944. The entire Jewish community of Rotterdam, Netherlands - men, women, and children - had just been transferred from Vesterbork, a deportation camp in Holland, to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. Conditions in Vesterbork had been harsh, but continued religious observance had somewhat preserved the Jews’ dignity and their will to live. Under the guidance of their spiritual leader, the revered *Torah* scholar **R’ Aharon Davids ZT”L**, some semblance of communal cohesiveness and optimism had been sustained. Upon arrival at Bergen-Belsen, however, daily existence took a sudden, overwhelmingly drastic turn for the worse, as most of the things that make a human being feel human were taken away. Families were divided, people starved, the absurdly hard labor broke body and soul, and disease was spreading fast.

As for the upcoming *Pesach* holiday - *Matzah* was, of course, unavailable.

R’ Davids, whose wife and three children had been separated from him upon arrival in the camp, yearned to keep the spirit of his flock alive, even as their physical strength ebbed. Yet under such circumstances, refraining from eating *chametz* would surely bring on illness and death for an unknown number of Jews. What should be done during the week of *Pesach* with their small daily rations of bread?

He conferred with other rabbinical authorities in the camp, and after anguished and lengthy discussion about this