

דרכי נועם

A Journal of *Divrei Torah*
in honor of Pesach 5772

Compiled by the Members of the



*Bais Medrash
of Ranchleigh*



Darchei Noam

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דרכיה דרכי נועם וכל נתיבותיה שלום

לעילוי נשמת

דבורה חיה בת נפתלי גדליה ע"ה

ט"ו סיון תש"נ

Imi Morasi, Doris Rock, a"h, was the epitome of noam, pleasantness, and shalom, peace.

She was an icon of tzenius, encouraging and enabling many women to cover their hair. Her name Doris Rock is still remembered, loved and respected by many people in the community for her immense sensitivity and kindness towards every person and situation.

As a shaitel macher, her tzedakah and chesed to women who had monetary issues or sicknesses were limitless. She always provided for them or paid personal visits in a way that they would have no embarrassment or shame.

Both my mother, *a"h*, and my father, *shetichyeh*, instilled in me a strong love for Hakadosh Baruch Hu, brought me up to be a *shomer Torah u'mitzvos*, and were the foundation for my *emunah* and *bitachon*.

Baruch Hashem, I was given an *eizer kingdo* with the same values of *emunah* and *bitachon* so we can keep each other strong.

Mom, may this *sefer* be an *aliyah* for your *neshamah*.

Love,
Moshe and Lisa

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Preface: The Work of a *Tzibbur*

You have in front of you the work of a *tzibbur*. What is a *tzibbur*? Before we answer that question, let us first examine the famous Gemara in Rosh Hashanah (16a), where R' Yose expounds the *pasuk* in *Melachim I* (8:59): לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט עֲבָדוֹ וּמִשְׁפָּט עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל: דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, *to do the judgment of His servant and the judgment of His people, Israel, the matter of each day in its day*, to teach that a person is judged each and every day. The Gemara, though, concludes that his is a minority. According to most opinions, a person's judgment is limited to Rosh Hashanah. Therefore, there would be no point in praying during the year for a sick or weak person. *Tosafos* and other Rishonim ask there, then, how is it that we do include prayers for the sick in our daily *Shemoneh Esrei*? They present various answers to this problem.

Interestingly, the *Yerushalmi* (there and in *Sanhedrin* 2:3) understands this *pasuk* differently. The *Yerushalmi* understands the phrase *His servant* to refer to a king, and the phrase *His people, Israel*, to refer to a *tzibbur*. It therefore derives from this *pasuk* that a king and a *tzibbur* are judged each and every day.¹ The *Korban Eidah* concludes that being judged each day gives a *tzibbur* a tremendous benefit: that is, if they were judged unfavorably, the bad decree can be torn up at any time with their *teshuvah*. They need not suffer until Rosh Hashanah, when according to most opinions, an individual person is judged.

¹ R' Yochanan in *Bavli* (ibid. 17b) also distinguishes between an individual and a *tzibbur* in a different context. And *Tosafos* use that distinction as one of their answers to the purpose of our daily prayers. Remember that R' Yochanan is considered the primary redactor of the *Yerushalmi*.

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However, *Yefeh Mareh* asks how the judgment of a *tzibbur* differs from that of an individual. Why, a *tzibbur* is merely a collection of individuals. If so, their judgment should take place only on Rosh Hashanah according to the majority view in the Gemara! He answers [second explanation in *Yerushalmi Sanhedrin*] that Hashem reacts differently to when a group of people pray – or sin – together, than when an individual does so.

Now, the key word in the *Yefeh Mareh's* explanation is that they do it יחדיו, *together*. That is the definition of a *tzibbur*: a group of people who do things together. You can have a hundred people in a grocery store, but they are not a *tzibbur*; they are not working together. You can even have a hundred people davening in a shul, but they might not be a *tzibbur*. They are only a *tzibbur* if they are davening *together*.

What makes the members of a shul a *tzibbur*? It is when they care about each other even if they come from different backgrounds and even if they are at different points in life. It is when they daven together with the knowledge that they all make a difference to the effectiveness of their *tefillos*. It is when they can tap into the special *kedushah* available certain times of the year through their song or through their serious davening.

Our members have been successful in creating a *tzibbur* in our Bais HaMedrash, presenting many opportunities to act *together*. Not everyone can take advantage of every opportunity, but there is certainly something for everyone. There is the weekly kiddush where they socialize and share their *simchos*. The men learn together at the *seder* following kiddush, while their children enjoy the playground and the women socialize on the park benches in the shade. The women also participate in *shiurim* and *chaburos* given by the Rebbetzin and other guest

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speakers. The bar mitzvah *bachurim* are allowed and encouraged to be full participants in the davening, from *laining* and being a *shaliach tzibbur*, to serving as *gabbai*.

The men come before Shacharis during the week for a *seder*, creating a strong *kol Torah* to begin the day. And those who cannot make it personally can support the *Kollel Zichron Yaakov Elyah*, which has been the catalyst for the powerful learning and davening every morning. They contribute the classic and modern sefarim to create a striking, first-class library for people to use, including a children's library. They enjoy the *seudas* Purim together in our beautiful Family Center. And finally, they have created this work of Torah that is in your hands.

I would like to digress a minute to express what this work means personally to me. Through the years we have been together I have tried to connect to anyone who was interested in such a relationship, and I feel that we have all grown together. I try to be accessible to anyone who needs to speak to me, and I try to remember the names of all of the children who come to davening. I try to offer enough *shiurim* and *chaburos* so that there will be something for everyone. But working on this *kuntress* has added the dimension of being able to work with each contributor in learning. And we know that Torah is the strongest connection that can exist between people. The back-and-forth, the discussions, and the writing together have created a special bond that I am sure we will want to take advantage of in the future. [We don't need to wait for another *kuntress*. We can work together on a *sugya* any time.]

A final word about this *kuntress*. The goal was not to create an original *chidush*, although there are some here. The assignment was to pick a *dvar* Torah that resonated in one's mind and heart,

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which he felt was worth sharing with his fellow members of the *tzibbur*. You, the reader, will therefore find a diverse selection of topics, but all written from the heart, each composed with the conviction that his words are worth writing and sharing with others.

I will close with a thank you to the members of the *maareches* (in alphabetical order) who helped with this production: R' Michael Keidar, R' Moshe Rock, R' Elli Schwarz, and R' Chaim Sugar. Thanks also to the sponsors who made the printing possible; their names are listed on the sponsorship pages. Very special thanks to the Rock family for sponsoring the name of this year's *kuntress* in memory of Mrs. Doris Rock, *a"h*, who exemplified *darchei noam*. May the Torah study that comes from it be a *zechus* for her and her entire family. Thanks also to Dr. Michael Samet, who was visiting our shul last year and inspired this idea by showing me *kuntreisim* that were put out by two shuls in New Jersey. And a final thank you to my *eishess chayil*, the *Rebbetzin*, who allowed me to spend even more time away from my family duties to work on this *kuntress*.

In this inaugural *kuntress* I would like to invoke the memory of my father, Mr. Gerald E. Naiman, יעקב אליהו בן דוד ע"ה, who exemplified the spirit of togetherness in a *tzibbur* from his serving as candy man for the children to his cheerful remarks to the adult latecomers: “וַיִּבְּ א”

May we all be *zocheh* to produce another *kuntress* next year, in Eretz Yisrael, with the coming of the *Mashiach*, במהרה בימינו
אמן.

Abba Zvi Naiman

Adar 5772

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From Yosef to Yosef there Was No One Like Yosef, A Tribute to HaRav Yosef Tendler, z"l

Rabbi Yitzchak Strauss

The *pasuk* in *Tehillim* states (81:6, recited as the *shir shel yom* on Thursdays): עָדוּת בִּיהוֹסֵף שָׁמוּ בְּצֵאתוֹ עַל אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם, *He imposed it as a testimony for Yosef when he went forth over the land of Mitzrayim*; שָׁפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֲשֶׁמַע, *I heard a language I never knew*.

The Gemara (*Sotah* 36b) explains that when Pharaoh wanted to install Yosef to his leadership role, the officers of Pharaoh complained, saying, “A slave should rule over us?” They also said that he would need to know all the languages. So the *malach* Gavriel came and taught Yosef all the languages, and he was able to converse. That is how the Gemara interprets the *pasuk* that Yosef understood a language that he did not know before. This was the turning point for Yosef that placed him in direct control of the entire land of Mitzrayim.

Just as Yosef HaTzaddik was placed over the land of Mitzrayim, so too Rav Yosef Tendler z"l was installed as a cornerstone and leader of Klal Yisroel. Through his position at the helm of Mechinas Ner Yisroel for fifty years, Rav Tendler directly influenced and became a role model for thousands of *talmidim*. Rav Tendler created an institution that would mold and cultivate many of our leaders and teachers in our community as well as communities across the world.

Just as Yosef understood all languages, so too Rav Tendler understood all his *talmidim* and had an innate appreciation for

each of them. He understood what was best for his *talmidim* and led each *talmid* to reach his full potential. It was Rav Tendler's fortitude and clarity that served as an example to all his *talmidim*, which helped many of them become solid, well grounded leaders and *balabatim* within their communities. This was true for *talmidim* who came from America, Iran, South America, Europe, Israel or any number of other countries. Just as Yosef knew all the languages, so too Rav Tendler understood each *talmid*, no matter where his origin.

I heard another explanation of this *pasuk* from Rabbi Baruch Greenfield, shlit"á, my wife's Zaidy. I think this *pshat* gives us a better insight into the Yosef saga and also helps us have a better appreciation of Rav Tendler as well. Pharaoh's dream is first cited in the beginning of *Parshas Miketz* as follows (41:1): וּפְרָעֹה הָלַם וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד עַל הַיָּאֵר *Pharaoh was dreaming that behold! – he was standing over the river.* However, when Pharaoh later called in Yosef and told him the dream, he told Yosef (41:17): בְּחֶלְמֵי הִגַּנִּי עֹמֵד עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּאֵר *in my dream, behold! – I was standing upon the bank of the River.* He thus changed the actual dream, which was over the River, to describing it as being on the *banks* of the river. He had added the Hebrew word שְׂפַת into his description of the dream.¹

That is what the *pasuk* in *Tehillim* is telling us: שְׂפַת לֹא יָדַעְתִּי אֲשַׁמַּע, *I heard a שְׂפַת I never knew.* Yosef with his *ruach hakodesh* knew that Pharaoh's dream was actually on the river, not at its banks; Hashem did not reveal to him anything about Pharaoh being on the banks of the river. Yosef therefore said that

¹ See pg. 99 for another approach to this question.

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he was not familiar with the תַּבָּשׁ, *banks*, that he heard from Pharaoh. This is what impressed Pharaoh, that Yosef knew Pharaoh's dream better than Pharaoh himself knew it. That is how Pharaoh knew that Yosef was the real thing. Yosef knew Pharaoh better than Pharaoh knew himself.

That is the *pshat* in Rav Tendler as well. Rav Tendler saw and knew his *talmidim* better than they knew themselves. He was able to guide the *talmidim*, his family, and the community because he knew the *derech hayashar*. Everything was black and white to Rav Tendler; there was no such thing as gray when it came to leading so many of his *talmidim* with that unswerving, innate understanding of what they needed. If there was a *talmid* who could not accept the truth, a *talmid* who was too entrenched into his modus operandi, Rav Tendler would work with this *talmid's* talents that the *talmid* himself did not realize he had. This, of course, included the many, many *sedarim* Rav Tendler had with *talmidim* throughout each day. Yes, in many cases Rav Tendler knew each *talmid* better than the *talmid* knew himself.

Not only did I have Rav Tendler as a Rebbi, but so did my children. One of my sons said he wanted to find someone like Rav Tendler to continue as a role model for him in the place of Rav Tendler. I was very quick to point out that there is no one I have ever met that comes close. We all need to try and use what we remember and what we learned from him, make ourselves better people, and not waste our lives, because there is no one like Rabbi Tendler with his unique qualities, character and knowledge who can replace him.

[Editor's note: We were honored to have Rav Tendler daven in our Bais HaMedrash over the past several years when he was in

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the neighborhood. His presence gave us much *chizuk*, and we know he was happy to see his *talmidim* in action. Although in a weakened state over the past year, he was able to get his *aliyah* here for *parshas zachor* and even this past Succos. His *hakafos* with his *hoshanos* on Hoshanah Rabbah were inspiring to all who saw them.]

Tolerance in Our Communities

Jeff Silverberg

Yosef HaTzaddik had a lot on his plate as the viceroy of Egypt, the most powerful country on earth. There were to be seven years of enormous plenty, followed by seven years of terrible famine. Yosef had to arrange for the storage of an unfathomable amount of grain, to supervise the transfer of almost all privately owned land to the throne, and to set up an arrangement of sharecropping to enrich Pharaoh's coffers while providing sustenance to his subjects. The Torah explains this in great detail so we can understand how the stage was set for the arrival of Yosef's family to Egypt.

But the Torah does not stop there. It relates further how as the famine in Egypt intensified Yosef ordered the residents of every Egyptian city to move to another city (*Vayigash* 47:21). *Rashi* there explains that he did this in order to solidify the power of the Egyptian monarchy for the trying times ahead. But why do we need to know Yosef's methods in strengthening his rule? *Rashi* answers that Yosef had an ulterior motive in this maneuver. That was in order to make the native Egyptians "strangers in a strange land," just as his family was. He wanted to remove any social embarrassment from his brothers by preventing any native Egyptians from calling them exiles. Accordingly, this effort teaches us another admirable decision of Yosef. He wanted his family members to be comfortable with the natives of the land (although, of course, while maintaining their identity through maintaining their names, clothing styles, and language).

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The Baltimore Jewish community, thank G-d, is notable and renowned for its genuine *achdus*. The mutual respect that our rabbanim have for each other, the participation of leaders with different outlooks in community events, and the mixed attendance of different groups in all kinds of shuls, all demonstrate this *achdus*.

This is a wonderful *berachah*. However, I believe that we must also be tolerant of other Jews who are not as observant, towards our fellow citizens who are not of our faith, and particularly of those who are not of our color. My goal in this essay is to argue that tolerance, not just for other observant Jews, but for all Jews, and indeed for all people, is imperative.

The Gemara (*Taanis* 20a-20b) relates in great detail a story about the Tanna R' Eliezer ben Shimon. One day he was enjoying a ride along the bank of a river feeling quite proud of himself for his great Torah learning. An unattractive man approached and greeted him. But R' Eliezer did not return the greeting, and instead asked him, "Empty one, are all the people of your town as ugly as you?" The man answered, "I'm not sure. Why don't you ask the Craftsman who made me why He created such an ugly vessel?" Immediately, R' Eliezer realized that he had committed a wrong and begged the man for forgiveness. The man refused unless R' Eliezer agreed to ask HaShem what His purpose was in creating such an unattractive person. R' Eliezer followed the man back to the city, where the townspeople greeted their rabbi with great respect. "Who are you calling 'Rebbi, Rebbi'?" the man asked. "The one who is walking behind you," the townspeople answered. "There is no rabbi like him in Israel. Why do you ask?" After the man explained what R' Eliezer had done, the people urged him to forgive him for he was

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a great Torah sage. The man agreed to grant forgiveness for the people's sake, but only on the condition that R' Eliezer pledge never to act in this manner again. Immediately R' Eliezer agreed and taught the people that they should be "flexible as reeds, and not hard as cedars." *Tosafos* write that the unattractive man was Eliyahu HaNavi, sent to earth to arrange that R' Eliezer correct this character defect. We see from here that proper behavior is not defined solely by Torah knowledge. In fact, the story proves that Torah learning is not enough by itself. Tolerance is also a requirement of proper conduct.

It is interesting that the Gemara does not reveal whether R' Eliezer believed that the unattractive man was Jewish. Perhaps not; it's not clear from the text. It is reasonable to say that this ambiguity teaches us another lesson: Tolerance isn't just required for other Jews, but for every person. A lack of tolerance, warrants a visit from Eliyahu HaNavi.

Another Gemara (*Berachos* 17a) informs us that it was said of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai that no one in the marketplace ever greeted him before he greeted them, even non-Jews. Never! Imagine! This tzaddik was a Tanna and the leader of the Jewish people. It is safe to say that he was a very busy man. But he took the time to say hello to all those that he passed, to all neighbors, and to all strangers at the store. He greeted all non-Jews as well as all Jews. Then, should we ignore those whom we pass on the street and fall prey to bigotry? I will cite three examples that I find egregious, all from my own experience.

- Many of us will remember the awful story of a woman in South Carolina who committed an unspeakable crime against members of her own family. Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, shlit"a, was the rabbi of Congregation Shomrei

Emunah at the time this incident took place. He wondered that week at *shalosh seudos* how a mother could harm her own children. After offering some explanation, he stressed that it was important to remember that the worst murderer while detestable, the worst terrorist while it might be a mitzvah to kill him, was still *betzelem Elokim*, created in the Image of G-d. “Not the n_____s,” said the man sitting next to me in a low but certain voice, and then repeated his words a second time. Is such an attitude a fulfillment of *ratzon HaShem*, the Will of G-d? Should not we, of all peoples in the world, comprehend and abhor the ultimate danger and consequences of such dehumanization?

- Some time ago I was in a yeshiva bais hamedrash. After one of the boys used the word “*shvartza*” and I objected, I became engaged in conversation with groups of young men on this topic. It was my experience that almost all of them were incredulous that I found the word objectionable and that I did not accept their casual putdowns of black people. I was even asked once why I didn’t know that Cham and his descendants were cursed. I asked the boys which of the *monei hamitzvos* count the fulfillment of this curse as one of our 613 obligations. They could not show me any source, but it was clear that to some of them casual bigotry was acceptable. But how could they find it so easy and attractive to use demeaning terms towards blacks? It is true that the word “*shvartza*” means “black.” But in 5772 it is less than honest to contend that it is not, by its very nature, a derogatory term, even without insulting adjectives attached. Any of us under seventy who did not grow up

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in a home where Yiddish was the primary language have no business using this word. The use of such language demeans us much more than those to whom it is directed.

- I have often witnessed the use of bigotry – sometimes real, sometimes feigned – by those who wish to avoid serving as a juror in a trial. Jury duty can be inconvenient and it is only fair to the system that prospective jurors answer truthfully. But is it really proper for an observant Jew to stand in a filled Baltimore courtroom and unashamedly make known his racial prejudice? Does convenience justify falsely asserting bigotry in order not to be selected? How do we feel when others publicly proclaim their disdain for Jews? Should we not be sensitive to the feelings of others to our displays of prejudice?

Some might counter that the halachah provides for different treatment of non-Jews. For example, the Gemara (*Sanhedrin* 76b) criticizes those who return a lost object to an idolater. However, according to most *Poskim*, this does not apply if *kiddush* HaShem will be achieved by the return of the lost object. Is it not true that greeting everyone *beseiver panim yafos* is a virtual guarantee of creating a *kiddush* HaShem?

There are those who may suggest that our prejudice is justified by the crime that occurs in our community. I have been told that victims of crime have an excuse to be prejudiced against an entire group if some members of that group have wronged them. But is this really so? Victims of a crime might certainly be expected to have a strong negative reaction to the actual criminals who personally harmed them. But if every individual is created *betzelem Elokim*, how can it follow that the actions of

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one of more members of that group justify bigotry against the entire group?" Try that logic in reverse. Does the fact that a certain Jewish money manager ran a Ponzi scheme that defrauded his clients of untold millions of dollars, greatly damaging their lives in very profound ways, justify hatred of all Jews?

I have been the victim of crime more than once. I do not consider this to be a *p'tur*, a license, to adopt racist attitudes. Rather, it is a *nisayon*, a test, to avoid falling into that unhelpful and negative mindset.

Many years ago I learned a profound lesson from my father-in-law, Eugene Hettleman, *a"h*, who was a man who did not believe in allowing himself to become aggravated. A person had insulted me and caused me a fair amount of inconvenience. My father-in-law encouraged me to let it go. I insisted that I had a right to be upset. "Well, he said, looking at me over his reading glasses, if you have a RIGHT to be upset, please don't let me talk you out of exercising that RIGHT."

His point was simple and obvious. One who is insulted may have a "right" to be upset, but how does it benefit him to insist on being upset? Is it such a privilege to be upset? A victim of crime may think he has a right to become prejudiced, but how does it benefit him to do so? It hurts a person to be upset. It hurts a person to insist on holding on to prejudice.

HaShem *Yisbarach* in His infinite wisdom found it fitting to create every single human being that inhabits this planet. We can raise ourselves only by improving ourselves, not by putting others down. May these be our goals and may it be HaShem's will that we succeed.

Positive, Negative, and Neutral Responses

Dr. Eli Lazar Singman

Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez (*Shemos* Vol. 1, p. 30, based on *Sotah* 11a) describes a situation concerning Pharaoh and his three advisors, Bilam ben Peor, Yisro and Iyov. In the year 2367 (1394 b.c.e.), Pharaoh had a dream in which an old man placed all the nobility of Mitzrayim on one side of a balance-scale and a small lamb on the other; the lamb outweighed all the nobles.

Bilam explained that the dream hinted at the birth of Moshe Rabbeinu and the consequences of his efforts to deliver the Jewish people. He suggested that that all newborn Israelite boys must be thrown into the Nile and gave reasons why other forms of annihilation would be insufficient. Bilam rose to prominence as a prophet to the nations and took advantage of his special ability to sense the precise, brief (*Tehillim* 26:20), daily (*Tehillim* 7:12) moment when one can provoke HaKodesh Baruch Hu to mete out punishments. He would accept bribes to curse a person or peoples at this time (*Me'am Lo'ez*, *Bamidbar* Vol. 2, p. 155). After inciting much evil, including developing a plan to entice Israelite men to sin with Moabite women, Bilam eventually died a horrible death, falling upon a sword (*Bamidbar* 31:8).

Yisro reminded Pharaoh of how HaKodesh Baruch Hu protects his people and punishes those whom might seek to harm them. He also reminded him that when Pharaoh befriended Yosef HaTzaddik, things went very well for Egypt and Pharaoh, and he urged Pharaoh to release the Israelites and allow them to return to Canaan. Pharaoh did not like Yisro's advice and Yisro was forced to flee Mitzrayim to Midyan. He was ultimately rewarded

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by becoming a *ger*, with his daughter marrying Moshe Rabbeinu and his descendants becoming members of the Sanhedrin.

As for Iyov, he remained silent and was punished with bodily afflictions and loss of wealth, as discussed at great length in *Sefer Iyov*.

We find a symmetry between the responses of Bilam, Yisro and Iyov and a discussion that occurred many centuries later between the Tannaim R' Yehudah, R' Yose and R' Shimon ben Yochai (*Shabbos* 33b). During that conversation, R' Yehudah praised the Roman infrastructural development in Eretz Yisrael. R' Shimon denounced these improvements as serving only the needs of the Romans, while R' Yose remained silent. A witness to this exchange reported what was said to the Roman authorities. In response, they elevated the stature of R' Yehudah by giving him the honor of speaking first at every occasion. The Romans also exiled R' Yose to Tzippori and passed a death sentence on R' Shimon. R' Shimon and his son fled to a cave where they lived for a total of thirteen years; during their stay R' Shimon composed the *Zohar HaKadosh* and his Torah acumen grew tremendously.

Let us consider if we can draw parallels between Bilam's words that pleased Pharaoh and R' Yehudah's words that pleased the Romans, the silence of both Iyov and R' Yose, and the upright words of Yisro and R' Shimon.

Yisro is the hero of the story with Pharaoh, not being afraid to denounce his plans in support of Israel. R' Shimon also was not afraid to denounce the actions of the Romans as self-serving and of no importance to Israel. Yisro was rewarded with a son-in-law, Moshe Rabbeinu, who was the one who taught Torah to Israel. R'

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Shimon bar Yochai was rewarded with the esoteric teachings of Torah and became the composer of the *Zohar HaKadosh*.

Iyov was silent and received terrible afflictions for that silence. R' Yose was silent and was exiled to Tzipori. These might also be similar in that being exiled from one's hometown to be under house arrest in a strange town is arguably one of the most trying experiences one can face.

But when we consider the dual fates of Bilam and R' Yehudah, we seem to run into a problem. Bilam was punished with death. (We have heard our Mara D'Asra speak about how HaRav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l used to say that death is worse than the most horrible afflictions. Hence, Bilam who was wicked died, whereas Iyov who was more of a neutral figure received "merely" afflictions). Now, R' Yehudah, who was apparently wrong in praising the Romans, was rewarded with becoming the head speaker. What did R' Yehudah lose through his faulty praise of the Romans?

Perhaps we can answer that R' Yehudah was also known for his extreme poverty (see *Nedarim* 49b and *Sanhedrin* 20a). And we also know from the Gemara (*Nedarim* 64b) that an indigent person is considered as if he is dead. (Our Mara D'Asra has also spoken about how Harav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l used to say this is so because just like a dead person cannot help anyone, so an indigent person is unable to extend aid to the needy). Accordingly, it might be possible to say that there is a similarity between the experiences of Bilam and *lehavdil* R' Yehudah. Bilam met actual death, while R' Yehudah lived a life of poverty, which is similar in a certain aspect to death.

Bitul Chametz

Irvin Naiman

The Gemara states (*Pesachim* 4b): מְדַאֲרֵי יִתָּא בְּבִטּוּל בְּעֵלְמָא סְגִי לִיהּ, According to Biblical law, mere *bitul* [nullification] is sufficient to absolve someone from violating the prohibition against owning chametz on Pesach. I would like to discuss the mechanics of how *bitul* works in removing that prohibition.

Rashi there writes that this is based on the *pasuk* (*Exodus* 12:15): אַךְ בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ שְׂאֹר מִבְּתֵיכֶם, but on the first day you shall eliminate leaven from your homes. By using the term תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ, eliminate, rather than תִּבְעֲרוּ, destroy, the Torah implies that the *chametz* can be eliminated in one's heart — by nullifying it — without physically destroying it (see *Rosh Yosef*). However, *Tosafos* object to *Rashi's* reasoning because the Gemara later (5a) indicates that the term תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ refers to burning the *chametz*, not to nullification. *Tosafos* therefore explain that nullification is sufficient because through it the person renders his *chametz* ownerless or *hefker*, and no one is liable for *hefker chametz*. Just as someone can relinquish ownership of his property through making it *hefker*, one relinquishes ownership of his *chametz* through *bitul*.

The *Ran* (2a, see also *Ramban* to 6b), though, argues that the fact that the Gemara consistently uses the term *bitul* rather than the more familiar *hefker* proves that *bitul* means something other than renunciation of ownership. Moreover, the Mishnah (49a) and Gemara (7a) speak of nullification "in one's heart," and declaring something ownerless requires a verbal declaration and

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takes place before three people (in the *Ran's* opinion), whereas there is no such requirement for *bitul*.

The *Ran* therefore explains the mechanics of *bitul* as being based on the dictum of R' Elazar (6b) that *chametz* is not actually in one's possession, yet the Torah treats it as though it were. That is, since one is liable only for his own *chametz*, and something from which one may not derive benefit cannot be owned, one should really not be liable for possessing *chametz*. Nevertheless the Torah regards the *chametz* food *as if* it belonged to the person provided, however, that the person cares for the *chametz* and wishes it to exist. It follows, therefore, that where the person nullifies the *chametz* and declares it valueless in his eyes, he is not liable for it, since even the reason for the Torah's "imposed ownership" has disappeared. There is no need to make an official act of *hefker* to remove the *chametz* from his possession.

The *Shaagas Aryeh* (§77) questions this explanation of the *Ran*. For the Gemara (ibid. 28b) cites the view of R' Yose HaGlili who holds that *chametz* is permitted for benefit on Pesach. According to his view, *bitul* should not be effective based on the *Ran's* reasoning. Since he actually owns the *chametz* – without need for the Torah to have placed it in his possession – he should need a full-fledged *hefker* to remove it from his possession. The *Mekor Chaim*, though, writes that even R' Yose HaGlili would agree that *bitul* is effective even though in his view *chametz* is permitted for benefit. This is difficult to understand because why is the *Shaagas Aryeh* not correct when he asserts that according to R' Yose HaGlili *bitul* should not be effective?

Perhaps we can answer that the *Ran* subscribes to the explanation of *Tosafos* regarding the view of R' Yose HaGlili.

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For *Tosafos* write (28b) that R' Yose HaGlili does not permit any type of benefit from chametz. Rather, he permits only benefit derived while the chametz is being burned. Accordingly, it is very possible that such property is not considered in its owner's domain. For only something that a person can use at will for whatever he wants is considered in his domain. But since in this case, the owner is severely limited in his usage of this chametz – permitted only to use while it is burning – that is considered out of his domain. The *Ran* can therefore say even according to his view that *bitul* would be sufficient since through that procedure the owner demonstrates that he wants to comply with the Torah's directive to keep it out of his possession.

Searching, Burning, Blood and Gold

Yehoshua Dixler

Before performing בדיקה, the *search* for chametz, we make the *berachah* ending with the words על ביעור חמץ. Although at this time we are searching for chametz, the *berachah* shows we consider this act to be ביעור, *destruction*. It is simple enough to understand the appropriateness of the word choice because בדיקה is a prerequisite and a necessary part of the ביעור process. But, on a deeper level, in what way did *Chazal* associate בדיקה with the Torah's ביעור process? Is בדיקה a separate mitzvah associated with ביעור or is it actually part of the mitzvah of ביעור? A little known halachic detail found in the laws of covering the blood after slaughter (כיסוי הדם) will help clarify the nature of this mitzvah.

When the Rama (שו"ע אורה חיים סי' תל"ב ס"ב) mentions the prevalent *minhag* to disperse ten pieces of chametz to be found during the בדיקה, he first says the reason is to avoid a ברכה לבטלה in case no chametz is found. He then says, based on the opinion of *Kol Bo*, that one can still make the *berachah* even in the absence of finding any chametz because: דעת כל אדם עם הברכה: לבער אם נמצא, *The intent of each person with the berachah is to destroy if found*. This means the *berachah* is for the act of searching and whether chametz is actually found is not required for a *berachah*.

The *Taz* provides a different explanation for the *berachah* in the absence of finding any chametz. He writes: הברכה קאי על מה שיבער, בודאי אלא מהיום מתחיל על ידי בדיקה, *The berachah refers to what will certainly be destroyed, but today it begins with the checking*.

The *Taz* is clear that the *berachah* isn't for the בדיקה performed now; rather, it's for the ביעור performed later. The *berachah* is made at the time of the בדיקה because it is part of the ביעור process, regardless of whether any actual chametz is found at the time of בדיקה. This contrasts with the *Rama* who emphasizes that the *berachah* for the בדיקה is said because chametz may be found during the search.

Since the *Taz* says the *berachah* is actually on ביעור, it appears his opinion is consistent with saying *Chazal* instituted בדיקה as part of the ביעור. In contrast, the *Rama* who states the *berachah* is on the בדיקה would align with the view saying that *Chazal* established בדיקה as its own mitzvah.

The opinions expressed by the *Rama* and the *Taz* in the *halachos* of כיסוי הדם seem to contradict this hypothesis. Although when the Torah mentions the mitzvah of כיסוי הדם it requires the blood to be covered with עפר, literally *dirt*, the Gemara understands this to also include substances called עפר in *Tanach*, including ashes and, surprisingly, gold dust. Consequently, if someone is stuck in a place, such as a ship in transit, which does not have dirt but does have available gold to grind into dust or a garment to burn into ash, he must sacrifice those materials for the mitzvah of כיסוי הדם.

Rama (שו"ע יורה דעה סי' כ"ה סכ"א) cites an alternative opinion from the *Geonim*. Instead of burning the garment into ashes, the *Geonim* allow the person to instead soak the blood of slaughter into the garment. Upon arrival to a place that has actual dirt, the person would wash the blood from the garment and cover it with dirt to complete the mitzvah. Interestingly, the *Geonim* rule that the standard *berachah* על כיסוי דם is recited at the time of the

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initial soaking into the garment. The *Beis Yosef* rejects this ruling because there is no actual dirt at the time of the *berachah*.

The *Rama*, writing in *Darchei Moshe* in reference to the *Beis Yosef*, defends the *Geonim* by comparing *כיסוי הדם* to *בדיקת חמץ*. Although the mitzvah of *בדיקה* takes place well before the *ביעור* and no actual destruction of chametz occurs during *בדיקה*, we still recite the *berachah* *חמץ* על *ביעור חמץ* at the time of the search. He explains: מידי דהוי אבדיקת חמץ דמברכין על ביעור חמץ אע"פ דלא מבערין עד למחר הואיל והבדיקה תחילת הביעור, *As is the case with checking for chametz we make the berachah חמץ* על *ביעור חמץ*, although the destroying doesn't occur until the next day, because the checking is considered the beginning of destroying.

The *Rama's* comparison of *כיסוי הדם* to *בדיקה* makes sense, but his use of the words *תחילת הביעור* to describe it indicates that *בדיקה* is the beginning and part of the *ביעור* process, seeming to contradict the *Rama's* opinion cited earlier in the *halachos* of *בדיקת חמץ*. A closer examination of the *Rama* in the context of a challenge from the *Taz* will resolve this difficulty.

The *Taz* asks a strong question on the *Rama's* comparison of *כיסוי הדם* to *בדיקה*. He says that it is sensible to make the *berachah* at the time of *בדיקה* because it is necessary for *ביעור*. In his words: א"א לבער אלא אם כן יבדוק אחריו תחילה, נמצא שבשעה שציוו א"א לבער היה בכלל זה גם הבדיקה אחריו, *It is not possible to destroy unless one checks after it first. We find that at the time they commanded to destroy searching for it was also included.*

In contrast, because *כיסוי דם* does not generally have a delay between the *berachah* and the actual covering, the exceptional case of absorbing the blood in the garment for later covering

should be considered separate actions. Consequently a *berachah* cannot be recited during the initial absorption.

Since the *Rama* calls בדיקה the תחילת הביעור, why doesn't he make the same distinction between בדיקה and כיסוי דם as the *Taz*?

We can explain that in fact the *Rama* is of the opinion that בדיקה is a separate mitzvah from ביעור. He stills calls it תחילת הביעור because it precedes and enables ביעור; but it does not become, like the *Taz* holds, part of the mitzvah of ביעור. Although the *Rama* holds that it is independent of ביעור, as a necessary predecessor it's still appropriate to say the *berachah* of על ביעור המז at the time of בדיקה.

It is this understanding of the mitzvah of בדיקה as a separate mitzvah that enables the *Rama* to use it as proof for the case of כיסוי הדם through absorption in the garment. Because the absorption is the first step in this case of כיסוי הדם, and later the blood will be covered in dirt, the *berachah* על כיסוי דם בעפר is appropriate. Although no dirt is covering the blood at that time, the *Rama's* understanding of the independent mitzvah of בדיקה shows this is unnecessary. It is the *Taz's* different understanding of the relationship of בדיקה and ביעור, viewing them as one mitzvah called ביעור, which causes him to question this comparison and say no *berachah* can be recited without use of dirt at that time.

A Time of *Nissim* and *Niflaos*, or Business as Usual?

Moshe Rock

It's another year. We have just gone through our entire house, every nook and cranny. We have gotten all of the crumbs out of every groove. We've cleaned our desks and cabinets at work, and even vacuumed up all of the chips and candy from a year's worth of carpools. We've packed up all of the old dishes, and gotten out our special Pesach set. Mountains of food have been prepared, cases of wine, cakes and matzah bought, and no expense spared. We have highlighted our favorite Hagados, dry-cleaned our nicest suits, set the table with our finest linens, taken all of the afikomen bags and matzah covers out of our children's knapsacks, gotten all of our props together, and we are now ready.

But for what???

To sit down at the Sedarim into the late night or early morning, and tell over all of the *nissim* and *niflaos* that Hashem did for us. To retell the "*Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*." I cannot even begin to list here every aspect of every miracle that Hashem did for the *yidden* in those days. There are volumes just on the aspect of *Kerias Yam Suf* alone. But this is what we do. This is the special time of the year that was set aside, to recall the innumerable and magnanimous miracles that HaKadosh Baruch Hu (HKB"Y) did for His children. But we may be missing one very important aspect of this scenario. Sure we must recount and thank HKB"Y for all that transpired, but were these *nissim* the TRUE *chesed* that we received back in the time of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*?

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I'd like to propose that the true *chesed* that Hashem did for us was something more than the *nissim veniflaos*.

At least three times a day in the *tefilah* of *Modim*, we acknowledge that Hashem is our G-d and the G-d of our fathers. We also give thanks: *עַל נִסֵּיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם עִמָּנוּ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ וְצַדִּיקִים וְצַדִּיקוֹתֶיךָ*, *for Your nissim that are with us every day, and for Your niflaos and Your goodness at all times, in the evening, morning, and afternoon*. So clearly we are admitting that *nissim* and *niflaos* happen to us every single day, *at all times*.

In fact it is said in Chazal, that not a day goes by where a miracle is not performed for every single yid.

So if this is the case, what was special or different about the time of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*? Could it have been the amount of *nissim* that occurred? I don't think we can say yes to that, because we don't necessarily know how many *nissim* we are granted on a daily basis. Then perhaps we can say it is the magnitude of the *nissim* that occurred. I don't think we can say yes to that either, because we say *עַל חַיֵּינוּ הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדֶיךָ וְעַל נְשָׁמוֹתֵינוּ הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ*, *for our lives that are given over in Your hands, and for our neshamos that are deposited by You*. And even more clearly, every morning we acknowledge to HKB"Y: *שֶׁחָזַרְתָּ בִּי נֶשְׁמָתִי*, *that You returned my neshamah to me*.

Can you think of any *nes* greater than having our *neshamos* returned to us on a daily basis? Of Hashem restoring our life to us once again?

So what is so special about the *nissim veniflaos* that happened at the time of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*? The true *chesed* of HKB"Y wasn't the *nissim* He did for us; it was that He let us actually see

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His *yad* in all that occurred. We saw the *nissim*, and we were able to internalize the great favor that Hashem was doing for us; how He was saving us.

That is the key difference between the miracles back then and the ones in our daily lives. Seeing, realizing, and internalizing the good that Hashem is constantly doing for us. We are still being saved by Hashem. He is still granting us favors all day every day. But for the most part we might not realize how much the *yad* Hashem is involved in our daily routines. For example, one *erev* Rosh Hashanah, I was running late, but really needed to get a check to a specific charity organizer. I stopped at a store to get some last minute things, and with my mind befuddled, I nearly literally bumped into this person that I needed. Chance? Coincidence?? Luck???

There is NO SUCH THING. It was *hashgachah pratis*. A *nes* from Hashem. And if you really think about what it took to perform that *nes*, and who else was involved, you can start to appreciate your every move even more. It meant that Hashem had to control the timing of every move both I and this person made that day. Plus the schedules and timing of all the people we interacted with, since these interactions also guided how our day went. Even the cars along the way that affected our arrival to the store played their parts. And there was the necessity that made us both have to get a last minute thing on *erev* Yom Tov. It was all calculated and precise. If anyone had been off schedule by even a minute, the whole final interaction probably would not have occurred.

This is the meaning of שְׁבִבְךָ יְתַעֲרֹב וְיִצְדָּקוּ יָמֵינוּ. The problem is, we don't generally see it. We don't internalize the everyday

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nissim. Therefore, when Hashem is kind enough to “show us” the miracle, it is an event worthy of retelling for years to come.¹

Any time you use the words “it happened by chance” “I got lucky” “it was a coincidence,” think again. Even if it is for the smallest detail or event.

Every red or green light we hit can be Hashem’s way of getting us there quicker, or saving us from a possible mishap. Every time we pull change out of our pocket, and get the right amount or not, it could be Hashem saying He is pleased, or that we need a bit of frustration.

But is Hashem REALLY that involved in the minutiae of each of our daily lives?

I could easily answer this for you, but why don’t you try to answer this question on a more individual level. Think about a *shidduch* that was made, or a job that you got, or money that you acquired. Find one where you can see that something happened earlier in time that made this event possible. One where you might have said, “It’s a coincidence that we were in the same group together,” or “I’m lucky that I was there at that time.” Well, it was neither coincidence nor luck that led you to this point. That is the precise planning that Hashem involves himself in from the day we are born. He sets things in motion that can have an effect on us years later. We have all seen it, now we have to realize it more often.

Hashem talks to us ALL day EVERY day. We just need to Listen.

¹ See also below, pg. 103.

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It is an excellent exercise for us to start looking at our day and “seeing” something that HKB”H did for us. We should ask our children, “What did Hashem do for you today?” I believe that this would be great *chinuch*, and maybe soon, it won’t just be for the Sedarim that we stay up into the late night or early morning to recount Hashem’s greatness.

Remembering the Oppression of Egypt

Rabbi Moshe Grossman

The story of the Exodus from Egypt provides us with profound insights into how Hashem metes out justice. The Torah tells us to remember the Exodus numerous times in different contexts.

In *Parshas Mishpatim* (*Shemos* 22:20), the Torah forbids us to mistreat a convert, referring to him as a stranger: Do not verbally abuse or oppress the stranger because you were strangers in the land of Egypt. The *Ramban* explains that the Torah adds the reason “because you were strangers in Egypt” as a reminder to us that Hashem saw our suffering in Egypt and responded to our prayers. As a result, He redeemed us. The *Ramban* states that this is a way of Hashem. He hears the cries of the oppressed, those who have no one else to turn to, when they turn to Him. Therefore, He will hear the cries and the prayers of the convert if he is downtrodden and will save him from his oppressors and punish them as He does for the widow and orphan when they are oppressed.

The question is, however, how do we see this from the Exodus? After all, Hashem made a covenant with Avraham during the *bris bein habesarim* to redeem the Jewish people. Perhaps the redemption from Egypt was simply a fulfillment of that covenant. Once Hashem heard their prayers and the 400 years of subjugation were up, He began to bring about the redemption that He had promised. In fact, the *pesukim* in the beginning of *Shemos* (2:23-25) suggest just that. How does the Exodus from Egypt show how Hashem will react to the prayers of a convert where there is no such covenant? Furthermore, in the covenant

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itself, Hashem promises to judge the nation that will enslave the Jewish people. The *Ramban* (*Bereishis* 15:14) explains that even though the slavery itself is part of the covenant and He will not punish the oppressing nation for that alone, He will punish them for any harm they do to the Jewish people beyond that. Therefore, it seems that Hashem is just fulfilling His promise in the *bris bein habesarim*. How can it be that this shows that He will do the same for the convert? Perhaps it is only because of the covenant!

It seems that the *Ramban* is not just referring to the fact that Hashem answered their prayers and saved them from their oppressors. As he mentions in *Parshas Shemos* (2:25), Hashem had mercy on them when He heard their prayers and redeemed them as He promised even though they had no merits on their own. The *Ramban* explains this idea in more detail in *Parshas Bo* (*Shemos* 12:43). He discusses the calculation of the 400 years mentioned in the *bris bein habesarim* in the *pasuk* (*Bereishis* 15:13): וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יְדָע תְּדַע כִּי גֵר יִהְיֶה זְרַעְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם: וְעָנָו אֲתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה, *And He said to Avram, you shall surely know that your children will be strangers in a land not theirs, and they will serve them, and they will oppress them for four-hundred years.* Although *Rashi* and others explain that the 400 years commence with the birth of Yitzchak as mentioned in the *Midrash Rabbah*, the *Ramban* holds that the 400 years began at the *bris bein habesarim*, 30 years before the birth of Yitzchak, as stated in *Seder Olam Rabbah* (*Perek* 1). Therefore, the 400-year period ended 30 years before the Exodus. The *Ramban* explains that the Exodus should have occurred 30 years earlier but did not because of the sins of the Jewish people at that time. Since they had committed grave sins and had completely turned away from Hashem, He could not redeem them. The *Ramban* states that the servitude would have even lasted longer if the Jews had not cried

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out and prayed to Hashem. However, their prayers aroused Hashem's mercy and He redeemed them.

This is how the *Ramban* understands the *pasuk* about the convert. When the Jewish people turned to Hashem and prayed that He help them, He responded to their prayers and redeemed them even though they had no *zechusim*. The Torah is telling us that if this is the case with the Jewish people who did not deserve to be redeemed, certainly the convert will be answered when he prays to Hashem. The prayers of the convert, who has given up so much to become part of the Jewish people and serve Hashem, will surely be answered. Hashem will help him and protect him from those who seek to do him harm.

It is worthwhile to consider how much Hashem did for us and how far He went to redeem us in Egypt. As mentioned above, the Jewish people had no mitzvos to merit Hashem's intercession. The *Mechilta* (*Parshas Bo*, *Perek 5*) understands from a *pasuk* in *Yechezkel* that Hashem went so far as to actually give them mitzvos to perform to merit redemption. That *pasuk* states (16:6): וַאֲרָאֲךָ מִתְבּוֹסֶסֶת בְּדַמֶּיךָ וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי וְאָמַר לְךָ בְּדַמֶּיךָ חַיִּי, *And I saw you writhing in your blood, and I said to you: By your blood, live! And I said to you: By your blood, live!* The *Mechilta* understands that this repetition in the *pasuk* of “By your blood, live” refers to the two mitzvos involving blood that Hashem gave them just before the Exodus: the blood of the pesach-offering and the blood of *milah*. Through the fulfillment of these two mitzvos they merited being redeemed from servitude in Egypt. Hashem not only heard their prayers, but He also provided them with the means to be redeemed! This incredible chesed was only the result of their prayers. Thus we see how powerful sincere prayer is.

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Pirkei DeRebbi Eliezer (Perek 29) derives another insight from the *pasuk* in *Yechezkel* based on the repetition in that *pasuk*. He says that not only did the redemption from Egypt occur because of these two mitzvos, but the final redemption will also come in the merit of these two mitzvos. The *Radal* in his commentary on *Pirkei DeRebbi Eliezer*, asks how can it be that we will be redeemed in the merit of these two mitzvos? We cannot offer a *pesach* sacrifice nowadays. He answers that since the Jewish people in Egypt accepted and performed these mitzvos with such great *simchah*, Hashem remembers their performance, and they stand by us as a merit to this day. Why does the *Radal* single out performing the mitzvos with *simchah* as the reason they provide a *zechus* to the later generation? Apparently because if they were performed with *simchah*, we can assume they were also performed with the proper *kavanah*, with *yirah*, and with *ahavah*. But why then does the *Radal* mention only *simchah*? Furthermore, we learn from the *Ramban* that even a *bris* with Hashem alone is not sufficient to bring about redemption without mitzvos performed by that generation. Also, even though the Avos performed many mitzvos on a level of *simchah* that we cannot imagine, the generation in Egypt still had to perform their own mitzvos to merit redemption. How can the *zechus* of mitzvos performed in Egypt help bring about the final redemption?

I think that performing a mitzvah with *simchah* leaves a very deep impression on those who witness it. In particular, children are very moved by it. They, too, are excited and inspired to perform that mitzvah in the same way. Their bond to the mitzvah is strengthened; and they, similarly, pass on not only the performance of the mitzvah, but also the enthusiasm and dedication that accompany it to the next generation, and so on.

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Today, two mitzvos that seem to be kept by all Jews, who identify as Jews, are *bris milah* and Pesach. Most Jews attend a Seder. Although we cannot have a *pesach* sacrifice at our Seder, we have certain things at the Seder to remind us of it. While it is true for many Jews that their observance of Pesach might not be complete and their Seder might be minimal, they still express a connection to Hashem and to the Jewish people through these mitzvos. This dedication to these mitzvos is because of the *simchah* through which the Jews in Egypt carried out these mitzvos. Thus the performance of these mitzvos by all Jews, who identify as Jews, connects us to the mitzvos performed by the Jews in Egypt that will thereby provide the *zechusim* needed to bring about the final redemption.

Lastly, we also learn from here an important principle in *chinuch*. We teach our children by example to a very great extent. Mitzvos carried out with *simchah* will leave a profoundly deep impression on our children

***Seder HaSeder* (the Order of the Seder)**

Aaron Cheifetz

[The following *dvar Torah* is based on *Festival of Freedom*, by HaRav Joseph B. Soloveitchick zt”l.]

The word “Seder,” which means structure or organization, does not appear anywhere in the Mishnah or Gemara. It is mentioned in the Rambam, סדר עשיית מצות אלו בליל חמישה עשר כך הוא, *The “Seder” of performing these mitzvos on the night of the fifteenth is as follows...* He then lists the order of the Seder. This structure is apparently necessary to fulfill the mitzvos performed at the Seder.

What would be wrong, asks the Rav, with coming home and making kiddush, washing and eating and then having the Seder? The first cup would be kiddush, the second cup would be *bentching* and so on. The Rav answers that you must first understand that each of the mitzvos of the Seder has two aspects, two fulfillments (קיומים). Each mitzvah is a performance in itself, and each one also contains an aspect of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* (סיפור יציאת מצרים). This is how the Rambam understands Rabban Gamliel’s statement that one has not fulfilled his obligation of Pesach without the *korban pesach*, matzah and maror. This means that it is necessary to explain the reasoning behind each of the three mitzvos in order to fulfill one’s obligation.

The Torah commands us (*Shemos* 12:18): בָּעֶרֶב תֹּאכְלוּ מַצֹּת, *In the evening you shall eat matzos*. One could fulfill this command simply by eating the matzah, without explaining anything. But the Torah also says with regard to the mitzvah of matzah (*ibid.* 13:8): וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בְּעִבּוּר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי בְצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרָיִם;

You shall tell your son on that day saying: "It is because of this that Hashem acted upon my behalf when I left Egypt. That is, we are commanded to tell the children why we are eating matzah. The Hagadah expounds this *pasuk*: בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה לֹא אָמַרְתִּי אֵלָּא בְּשַׁעָה שִׁישׁ מִצָּה וּמְרֹר מוֹנַחִים לְפָנֶיךָ, "*It is because of this*" teaches that you fulfill the obligation of telling the child only at the time that matzah and maror are before you (we don't have the *korban pesach* nowadays). From this we can infer that there is a fulfillment of the mitzvos of matzah and maror that is related to *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* in addition to the fulfillment of the mitzvos that are fulfilled by the physical act of eating the matzah and the maror.

The best proof that eating matzah contains an element of *sippur* is because you have to recline, which is required for *sippur*. If one eats matzah and maror before *sippur*, he fulfills only the mitzvah of eating, but not that of *sippur*. Therefore, if you eat the matzah and maror before you read the Hagadah, you have not fulfilled the mitzvos properly. You need both parts, the eating and the explaining, which is why they need to be done in the context of the Hagadah. Even kiddush and *bentching* are integrated in the framework of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*, so they need to be in their proper place.

We can now understand why we need to wait until it is dark to start the Hagadah. We might have thought that it is because the mitzvah of kiddush is fulfilled with first cup of wine and one may not recite kiddush until it is dark. But the real reason is that kiddush is part of *sippur*, and *sippur* cannot begin until dark, just like the *korban pesach* could not be eaten until dark.

Reward for the Dogs

Chaim Sugar

[The following *dvar Torah* is based on several *shiurim* heard from HaRav Yisroel Dovid Schleisinger, shlit”a.]

When describing *makkas bechoros*, the *pasuk* tells us (*Shemos* 11:7): וְלֹכֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִחָרֵץ כְּלָב לְשׁוֹנוֹ, *To all the Bnei Yisrael no dog shall whet its tongue*. That is, the dogs will not bark at the Bnei Yisrael when they leave Mitzrayim after the firstborn of Egypt are smitten. The Chazal (*Shemos Rabbah* 31:9) tell us that in return for not barking, the dogs were rewarded with (*Shemos* 22:30): וּבָשָׂר בַּשָּׂדֶה טְרֵפָה לֹא תֹאכְלוּ לְכָלֵב תִּשְׁלְכוּהָ, *Meat of an animal that became a tereifah in the field you shall not eat; to the dog shall you throw it*. On the other hand, we know that others also made sacrifices but were not rewarded. For instance, Chazal (*Pesachim* 53b) tell us that the frogs jumped into fire when told to do so by Hashem, yet they receive no special mention. What was so special about the silent dogs?

Before Hashem gave the Torah to the Bnei Yisrael, he went to the other nations and asked them if they would accept the Torah. When they asked Him what was in the Torah, He told the people of Esav that it says stealing is not allowed, and they refused to accept it. To the people of Yishmael, when they asked what was in the Torah, He said that illicit relations are prohibited. At first glance it can seem the Hashem was playing a game and had He told them about some of the other wonderful mitzvos, instead of the “don’ts,” maybe they would have accepted the Torah. Was He intentionally trying to get them to say no? Was He testing them? And if so, where was the test for Bnei Yisrael?

When an individual who cannot sleep or is an early riser goes to a 6:00 a.m. Shacharis minyan, it is wonderful. But when a person who would normally sleep until 8:00 a.m. gets up to go to a 7:00 a.m. minyan, he deserves special mention. When an individual strengthens himself to do something that does not come naturally, to do something against his nature is a commendable act.¹

When Hashem asked the other nations if they would accept the Torah, He gave each nation an example of something that is in the Torah that is contrary to their nature. To a people steeped in murder, telling them that the Torah requires you to eat cholent on Shabbos is not a true test. Only if you are willing to accept something requiring you to go against your natural tendency is it a true and complete acceptance.

Were the Bnei Yisrael also tested? Absolutely. The *neshamah* of every Jew wants to constantly reach higher spiritual levels. That is the *neshamah's* natural tendency. Imagine what was going on at the top of Har Sinai during *matan Torah*. The Ribono Shel Olom was there, Moshe was there, the Torah was being handed over to the Bnei Yisrael; can one imagine a more spiritual moment? And the natural tendency of our *neshamos* would be to get as close to the top as possible. And here comes the test. The Bnei Yisrael were given a limit to how close they could get. A boundary was set and if it was crossed the punishment was death (*Shemos* 19:12).

And so it is with the dog. A dog barks. That is what it does by nature. It was certainly a big sacrifice for the frogs to jump into a fire for Hashem. However, it was accomplished with one swift action. On the other hand, for the dogs to refrain from barking

¹ See also below, pg. 70.

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the entire night required an extreme amount of self-control and discipline. And for this a reward was required.

One more point. Many of the items that we eat and acts that we perform during the Seder are intended to symbolize our enslavement in, and redemption from, *Mitzrayim*. Is there something done during the Seder that recounts the dogs' not barking? Yes, there is. The Gemara tells us that a town with many dogs will not have many thieves. This is simple to understand, since the thieves know that if they try to enter a house at night the dogs will start barking. And what thievery goes on at the Seder? Stealing the *afikomin*. We steal the *afikomin* to symbolize the silence of the dogs.

Inviting a Non-Jew to the Seder

Rabbi Yitzchak Yochanan Friedman

The *Yaavetz*¹ claims that our announcement in the beginning of the Seder, כל דכפין ייתי ויכול, *Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat*, refers to non-Jews. This understanding is echoed by the *Shem MiShmuel* in his commentary to the Hagadah. Their rationale to invite the non-Jew to the Seder is due to Chazal's mandate (*Gittin* 61a): מפרנסין עניי עכו"ם, *We support indigent non-Jews*. The *Yaavetz* could have asserted that one should invite non-Jews to his Seder since they are commanded to believe in Hashem and the purpose of the Seder is to fortify that belief. It is reported² that Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l allowed his gentile physician to attend his Seder. Admittedly, this case was different since the doctor asked to be present and Rav Yaakov didn't invite him. However, we will soon see that this should also be problematic.

There are two *chidushim* in the words of the *Yaavetz*: one technical and one philosophical. First, the technical. The *Shulchan Aruch* (512:1) codifies the words of the Gemara in *Beitzah* that it is forbidden to invite a non-Jew to a Yom Tov meal lest he come to cook extra food for the non-Jew (on Yom

¹ Found in his commentary on the Hagadah, as published in the *Hagadah Kol Bo*.

² *Yated Neeman*, March 4, '11, pg. 42-3

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Tov). Rav Yaakov,³ the *Yaavetz* and *Shem MiShmuel* don't seem to be concerned about this restriction?

The *Aruch HaShulchan* (512:3) claims that, according to the *Rambam*, the prohibition only applies to inviting a non-Jew. However, if he asks you to attend the Yom Tov meal you may agree. This would explain the behavior of Rav Yaakov. However, the *Aruch HaShulchan* continues that according to the *Tur* one must tell the gentile that he should know that no extra food will be prepared for him. The *Shulchan Aruch*, though, *paskens* like the *Rambam* and not the *Tur*. The *Taz* (512:4) says that even according to the *Rambam* this line should be told to the non-Jew, not out of a halachic requirement (as the *Tur* maintains) but out of good manners. Perhaps, Rav Yaakov told this to his doctor when he acquiesced to his request. However, what do the *Yaavetz* and *Shem MiShmuel* do with the aforementioned prohibition?

My answer to this question is not as good as the question itself, but this is what I propose as a possible solution. The *Taz* (ibid) continues that if you beg the non-Jew to attend the Yom Tov meal and he doesn't confirm his attendance before the holiday and then shows up on the holiday, you may not feed him. Saying כל דכפיך on Pesach night will only attract the most destitute of guests. In such an instance there is no fear that he will try to flatter the guest by cooking a special pot of food for him. He will surely be satisfied to eat what the family is eating and there is no worry that the Jew will cook especially for him on Yom Tov. Though the *Shulchan Aruch* (ibid.) uses this rationale to allow

³ Rav Pesach Diskind, a grandson of Rav Yaakov, conjectured that it must have been a Shabbos Seder to which the doctor invited himself.

one's servants, messengers, and walk-ins to partake from the Yom Tov meal (and here the non-Jew is invited) one could add the following *sevarah*. On Pesach night, Jews view themselves as kings and queens. Therefore, we don't worry that Jews will go out of their way to accord the special honor of cooking a dish especially for the non-Jewish guest. All this is speculative in trying to understand the position of the aforementioned *Acharonim*.

As for the philosophical issue: Is there really an obligation to inform gentiles of the miracles that transpired to the Jewish people. In other words, is there *pirsumei nissa* to non-Jews? Rav Moshe Shternbuch (*Moadim U'Zmanim* 2:141), brings the opinion of his uncle Harav Pines that (at least according to *Rashi*, *Shabbos* 21b, ד"ה תרמודאי) there is an obligation of *pirsumei nissa* to gentiles. In footnote aleph, Rav Shternbuch brings that the *Bais Pinchas* and other *Chachomim* also concurred with this opinion. Rav Shternbuch, though, rejects the proofs proffered by his uncle out of hand and maintains that there is no such obligation. What seems to be the conceptual *machlokes* between Rav Shternbuch and his uncle and hence the *Bais Pinchas*?

The *Rambam paskens* that the obligation to die for the sanctification of Hashem's name is only applicable in the presence of ten Jews. This follows the literal reading of the *pasuk* in *Parshas Emor* (22:32): וּנְקַדְשִׁיתִי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *I will become sanctified in the midst of the Children of Israel*. He seems to be saying that *Kiddush Hashem* is for Jewish eyes alone.

However, when Hashem wanted to annihilate the *Bnei Yisrael* after the חטא העגל, the *pasuk* in *Ki Sisa* cites Moses supplicating Hashem as follows (32:12): לָמָּה י' אִמְרוּ מִצְרַיִם לְאֵמֹר בְּרַעַה הוֹצִיאָם, *Why should Egypt say the following: "with evil*

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intent did He take them out, to kill them in the mountains...
Similarly, King David records in *Tehillim* (79:10): לָמָּה יִאָמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם אַיִה אֵלֵהֶם לְהַיָּהֵם, *Why should the nations say where is their G-d?*
The Torah in *Parshas Va'Eschanan* further insists that if the Jews keep the Torah the non-Jews will observe (4:8): וּמִי גוֹי גָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים צְדִיקִים כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיךָ הַיּוֹם, *Which is a great nation that has righteous decrees and ordinances, such as this entire Torah that I place before you this day?*

All of these *pesukim* seem to indicate that it is a desirable that the non-Jewish world appreciates the Jewish people, its Torah and the Divine Providence showered upon them. Although you might not have to sacrifice your life to avoid the three cardinal sins in the presence of non-Jews, other forms of *Kiddush Hashem* are appropriate for the viewing of non-Jews. How do we put all these sources in context?

What is the definition of *Kiddush Hashem* and hence *pirsumei nissa*? Rav Moshe Heinemann, shlita, has said often that there is a mistake in understanding the true nature of the mitzvah of *Kiddush Hashem*. It does not mean that one should cause gentiles to view Jews as nice and kind. Rather, the true definition of *Kiddush Hashem* is that the Jew is willing to act in consonance with the will of Hashem, despite hardship. With this he becomes a role model of one who follows in the ways of Hashem. Thus, any mitzvah that one does in front of other Jews contains an aspect of *Kiddush Hashem*. Any one of the seven Noachide commandments that he performs in front of a non-Jew has an element of *Kiddush Hashem*. However, when one gives up his life rather than transgress one of the three cardinal sins he

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is modeling an obligation that is exclusively Jewish. Hence, only a Jewish audience necessitates giving one's life.

With this we can understand the *Yerushalmi* (*Bava Metzia* 2:5) that my father *a"h* would constantly mention to me, in my formative years. Shimon ben Shetach bought a donkey. Lo and behold, when he opened the saddlebag, there were diamonds that had been forgotten by the gentile seller. Rav Shimon returned the diamonds, at which point the gentile exclaimed, "Blessed is the G-d of Shimon ben Shetach." The Gemara cites this as an example of *Kiddush Hashem*. Of course in money matters there is *Kiddush Hashem* to gentiles. For are they not commanded to be honest in money matters? It falls under one of the seven Noachide laws, that a non-Jew may not take money that does not belong to them.

Similarly, when the *Rambam* discusses supporting indigent non-Jews he cites two reasons: not to incur their wrath and to emulate Hashem, Whose mercy extends to all his creations. What about *Kiddush Hashem*? According to Rabbi Heinemann's formulation, the answer is simple. Non-Jews are not commanded to give charity. Hence, there is no *Kiddush Hashem* to non-Jews by modeling acts of charity. Yes, he might think that I am a nice guy, but that does not make for *Kiddush Hashem*.

However, we quoted the *pasuk* in *VaEschanan*, *Which is a great nation that has righteous decrees and ordinances...* It sounds like there is an aspect of *Kiddush Hashem* that includes the non-Jews respecting all the laws of the Torah, not just the seven Noachide laws? In response to this question we must say that this realization on the part of the gentiles is something they will arrive at on their own. There is no proactive obligation on the part of the Jew to model the *taryag* mitzvos to non-Jews.

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Now, we can answer our original question. First, we need to split the act of *pirsumei nissa* into the *maaseh hamitzvah* (the requisite act) and the *tachlis hamitzvah* (purpose of the act). In the case of Pesach, the requisite act is the drinking of the four cups of wine. On Chanukah, we light the candles of the menorah. In both cases, the purpose of these acts is to publicize Hashem's providence towards the Jewish people. The absence of a requirement to share the Pesach story with gentiles indicates that even though non-Jews are required to believe in G-d's providence, we do not fulfill *pirsumei nissa* when we share this message with them. We focus on the *maaseh hamitzvah*. Non-Jews are not required to recount the Jewish exodus or to light Chanukah candles. Hence there is no obligation to model these acts for non-Jews.

What would be the rationale of Rav Pines and the *Beis Pinchas* that there is a mitzvah of *pirsumei nissa* with the Chanukah lights but presumably, not with the four cups of wine? To answer this question, we add another question. Why does the mitzvah of *pirsumei nissa* manifest itself in the four cups of wine and not the re-telling of the exodus story?

It seems obvious that even though both acts are titled *pirsumei nissa*, they have different objectives. Had the Seder just consisted of the *sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* it would be a recounting of the story. Though our Rabbis have instructed that "one is obligated to see himself as having himself gone out of Egypt," the proof that one has accomplished this goal is in the four cups. When one feels that he is the beneficiary of a great kindness he will toast the giver of the kindness. The drinking of the four cups is a proof that he feels the effects of the miracle, even today. In the context of the four cups we define *pirsumei*

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nissa that we feel the effect of the past miracle even in the here and now. The non-Jew, who was not the beneficiary of the Egyptian miracle, has no connection to this mitzvah.

In contrast, the *pirsumei nissa* that involves the Chanukah candles is of a different nature. The lighting of the menorah reminds us that just as Hashem performed miracles in the past, he is capable of doing the same in our current situation. This is a message that is universal. All non-Jews are required to believe in an involved G-d. Those that say there is no *pirsumei nissa* to non-Jews maintain that either there is no need to model *pirsumei nissa* for non-Jews since it is not one of their mitzvos or that the message is not the universal one of G-d's providence but that one can feel Hashem's closeness at the time of miracles. Again, this is exclusively for the Jewish people.

[This *dvar* Torah is dedicated to Dr. Erwin Friedman zt"l and Mr. Aaron Pernikoff zt"l, who were *mikadesh shem shomaim* wherever they went.]

The Structure of the Hagadah

Reuven Kaplan

I. Dipping for *Geulah*

The Seder begins: בארעא דישראל הבאה לשנה הבאה, *this year we are here, next year in the Land of Israel...*” And we end the Seder similarly by proclaiming בירושלים לשנה הבאה, *next year in Yerushalayim*. Our Seder, however, is symbolic, as we do not perform the principle part of it: bringing of the *korban pesach*, since we no longer have the Beis HaMikdash. Chazal teach us that the second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed because of *sinas chinam* (baseless hatred). So, if we are beginning and ending our symbolic Seder with a plea that this *galus* come to an end and for our final redemption to come, why do we not discuss this concept of *sinas chinam* at the Seder and take corrective action for this defect? We should discuss at the Seder the remedy for *sinas chinam*, as that will bring the final *geulah*.

The *Ben Ish Chai* suggests that we do talk about it in our Hagadah. The question “why is it that on all other nights we do not dip even once, and on this night we dip twice?” alludes to the notion of *sinas chinam*. The first dipping (egg into salt water), reminds us of the original *sinas chinam* that affected us – when the brothers dipped Yoseph’s tunic into blood (*Bereishis* 37:31). The second dipping (into *charoses*) corresponds to the second dipping mentioned in the Chumash, when the Jewish people in Mitzrayim used the bundle of hyssop, dipped it into blood of the *pesach* offering and then put that blood on the door posts – in order to save themselves from the plague of the firstborn (*Shemos* 12:22). The bundle, points out the *Ben Ish Chai*, is

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referred to as אגודה, which also means unity. It was this dipping of unity in *Mitzrayim* that served as a *tikun* for the original dipping of Yoseph's tunic by the brothers, the original separation of the *shevatim*.

It is through the analysis and discussion of this concept of “dipping” that we come to the realization of what needs to be done to end our current exile: unity is the *tikun* for the *sinas chinam*.

Rav Elchanan Wasserman points out that from the many slanders that the anti-Semites have used against us throughout the years, it is the recurrent lie of “blood libel” that ironically has always come out around Pesach time. This is a Divine message – we have not yet rectified the sin that led to the destruction of the second Beis HaMikdash, and Hashem is giving us a hint as to what needs to be done. (Blood alludes to the original *sinas chinam* transgressed by Yoseph's brothers.)

It is no accident that the Seder night and Tisha B'Av fall on the same day of the week. If we are celebrating the Passover Seder symbolically without the *korban pesach*, then we have not rectified the sin that led to the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, and therefore we are mourning the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash instead of celebrating its rebuilding and our final redemption.

The above is based on lectures and writings of Rav Yissachar Frand. I would like to add to this a thought based on the *derashos* of our *Mara D'Asra*. When we hear how we have to remedy our *sinas chinam* in order to merit the *geulah*, this cannot be all we need to do. Think of someone who *chas veshalom* had a heart attack because of a buildup of cholesterol. If he merely

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goes on a low-fat diet to lessen his cholesterol intake, he will not succeed in repairing the damage to his injured heart. Yes, cholesterol caused the damage; but the damage is much greater than having a dangerous amount of fats in his system, and it must be addressed without delay. His heart problem might now require stents or any number of emergency procedures to stabilize it and prevent even worse damage, including death. Only after the person is out of danger can we go back to the root of the problem to prevent it from reoccurring.

The Beis HaMikdash was destroyed through *sinas chinam*. But merely working on improving one's *sinas chinam* will not fix the damage of our lost Beis HaMikdash just as the low-fat diet will not help the heart-attack patient in the CCU. We could all be the nicest people in the world, but be content with our lives in *galus*; that would not bring the *geulah*. We first have to recognize what we are missing without our Beis HaMikdash, and how painful it is for us to be in *galus* without the opportunity to have a normal, close relationship with Hashem. Only if we have done that can our work on avoiding *sinas chinam* effect the *geulah*.

We can now have a deeper understanding of the words of the Gedolim mentioned above. Yes, there are *hints* about avoiding *sinas chinam* during the course of the Seder. But more importantly, we openly and explicitly proclaim at the beginning and at the end that we want to get out of our *galus* and return to Yerushalayim. Only with a complete awareness of our goal will our hints at avoiding the cause of the *galus* have any meaning so that this year's Tisha B'Av will be a Yom Tov.

II. Remembering Yetzias Mitzrayim: How is this mitzvah different tonight than all other nights?

Since we have a mitzvah to remember *Yetzias Mitzrayim* every day, how is the mitzvah different on the night of the Seder?

Rav Chaim Soloveichik explained that there are three differences:

1. There is an obligation on Seder night to tell others about it in question and answer format.
2. We tell it over as a chain of events (as a specific order in the Hagadah).
3. We have an obligation to explain the reasons behind the different mitzvos that we do while reciting the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

Rav Pam says that Rav Chaim's explanation also explains the specific order of the Hagadah, as follows: We start with an introduction and then talk about the four sons (corresponding to first point, obligation to tell to others). Then the passages that start with *מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו*, *Originally our ancestors were idol worshipers*, describe the events that preceded and led to our bondage in *Mitzrayim* (corresponding to the second point, chain of events). Finally, the section that starts with *רבן גמליאל אומר*, *Rabban Gamliel says*, begins the explanations behind the different mitzvos done this evening (corresponding to the third point of the obligation to explain the reasons behind the different mitzvos).

Lessons from the *Rasha*

Moshe Kravetz

The Hagadah states: רשע מה הוא אומר? מה העבודה הזאת לכם? *What does the rasha say? What is this service to you?* Now, what is the complaint of the *rasha*? The *Beis HaLevi* explains that when the *rasha* asks לָכֶם הֲדָאָתָהּ הָעֵבֶר דָּהּ הַזֶּה, he really means to ask why we are still doing these antiquated practices. The *rasha* is agreeable that Hashem gave us the mitzvah of *korban pesach* and “it once had its place” – only when *avodah zarah* was common. At that time, bringing the *korban pesach* was of big significance and a *kiddush Hashem*. However “it does not apply nowadays” when *avodah zarah* is no longer rampant; therefore, there is no *kavod Shamayim* to continue these practices and instead let’s honor Hashem in a more “practical way”!

In the Torah the answer given immediately following the *rasha*’s question is (*Shemos* 12:27): וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבַּח פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה' אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל בְּתֵי וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבַּח פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה' אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל בְּתֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנִגְפוֹ אֶת מִצְרַיִם וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבַּח פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה' אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל בְּתֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנִגְפוֹ אֶת מִצְרַיִם, *You shall say, “It is a pesach-offering to Hashem, Who passed over the houses of the Bnei Yisrael when Hashem smote the Egyptians.*

The Torah is teaching us an important lesson: that when one hears *apikorsess* he has to strengthen himself. So the answer we say to *ourselves* is וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבַּח פֶּסַח הוּא לֵה'. The *pasuk* does not say לֵה', *you shall say to “him.”* Rather, it is an answer to **yourself**.

What then do we answer the *rasha*? The Hagadah chooses much blunter terms and uses the *pasuk* of (*Shemos* 13:8): בְּעַבְוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי בְצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם, *It is because of this that Hashem acted on my behalf when I left Egypt.* This is essentially the same thing we

answer the שאינו יודע לשאול, [*the child*] who does not know how to ask (see Rashi to *pasuk* 5). בפעבור זה, it is because of this, teaches us a fundamental answer to all *apikorsim* – that although you may have some validity to your claim that the *pesach* in *Mitzrayim* was to eradicate *avodah zarah* (and the reason we eat *matzah* is because the dough did not have a chance to rise and *marror* because “our lives were made bitter”), all these reasons are not why we keep these mitzvos or commemorate these events. Rather, the mitzvah of *matzah* was written in the Torah, and we know that the Torah preceded the creation of the world. In addition, as is well known, the *Avos* also kept the *mitzvos* before the Torah was given, and they certainly ate their *matzah* before the *geulah* from *Mitzrayim*!

Therefore, we cannot say that the mitzvos of Pesach came about because of a commemorative event, but rather it was the *zechus* of the mitzvos that brought about the event; and contributed to the *geulah*!

This is precisely the answer we give the *rasha*: בפעבור זה עשה ה' לי, *It is because of this that Hashem acted on my behalf when I left Egypt*. We do not say because I left Egypt therefore I do these mitzvos. To the contrary! **The mitzvah brought about the reason.** As we say that in the *zechus* of *pesach*, *matzah*, and *marror* we were able to be redeemed. This concept similarly applies to all mitzvos.

This now leaves us with a powerful, fundamental refutation to all those who claim that mitzvos are outdated if the reason no longer applies. For the reason we keep mitzvahs is simply because it is the commandment of Hashem. Therefore, the concluding *pasuk* reinforces this by stating (*Shemos* 13:10): ושמרת את ההקדה הזאת, *You shall observe this decree at its designated*

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time from year to year. That is, even though we sometimes may have a reason for a certain mitzvah, it is still a *chok* and it applies *מִיָּמִים יְמִימָה, forever and ever*, even if the reason no longer seems to apply.

The Torah commands parents time after time to impart the lessons of *Yetzias Mitzraim* to their children in the correct way to hopefully prevent having a child that is a *rasha, chas veshalom*.

שמות יג, ח - וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר
שמות יג, יד - וְהִיָּה כִּי יִשְׁאַלְךָ בִּנְךָ מָחָר לֵאמֹר מָה זֶה וְאַמַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו
שמות י, ב - וְלִמְעַן תִּסְפָּר בְּאַזְנוֹי בִּנְךָ וּבִן בִּנְךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר הִתְעַלְלִיתִי בְּמִצְרָיִם

Why does the Torah mention this obligation in so many different ways? The Torah stresses this concept to inform us that the primary obligation of educating one's child is upon us, the parents. Information can be passed on from teacher to student but *yiras Shamayim* (fear of G-d) and *middos tovos* (proper manners) must be taught at home. Parents set the tone; they create the atmosphere in which a child is nurtured. It is not enough to exempt ourselves from our obligation of *chinuch* by sending our children to Yeshivah. *Chinuch* begins at home. The *pasuk* says *כִּי יִשְׁאַלְךָ בִּנְךָ*, when your son asks you, not just his teacher educating him.

May we be *zocheh* to fulfill mitzvos with the right *kavanah* so that we have a lasting impression on our children and future generations *מִיָּמִים יְמִימָה, forever and ever!*

The Four Sons of Recent History

Label Cooper

The radical pace of change in modern Jewish History has reverberated in every imaginable direction. In the most recent century, Jews worldwide have experienced history's worst oppression, poverty, suffering and catastrophic destruction. This has been true on both a national and individual level. But also within this time period Jews worldwide have experienced some of the very opposite – immense national joy attaining a previously unimaginable resettling of our ancient Homeland, the winning of miraculous wars, witnessing the ongoing blossoming of Judaism, and much more. On an individual level, large segments of our people have also experienced unparalleled freedom, wealth and all types of worldly successes. Furthermore, it's quite amazing to note that even some of the very same people have lived lives overlapping these seemingly opposite worlds, partaking first-hand in the lowest of lows and the highest of highs.

These huge swings of fate, which so often find our people right in the middle of the drama, tend to indicate that we're part of a larger unfolding story, a Divinely-guided journey of some type, hopefully bringing us towards a planned and purposeful direction. We hope that if it's true, we won't be left behind. But the picture is so big and complex that our heads spin if we try to make sense of it as a whole.

Hidden in the words of Chazal, we know there are gems of illumination, each tailored to directly shed light on the very unique structure of tests and circumstances for each time period.

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As such, there is in fact a fascinating observation that I heard which seems almost as if it were designed to fit the unique and specific times of our modern history. As you'll see, we can also extrapolate from its wisdom to learn in what direction we must go if we are to attain fulfillment of our national destiny.

This observation is initiated by analyzing the specific order in which the four sons are noted in the Pesach Hagaddah. The order that our tradition provides is as follows:

- (1) the *chacham* (wise son),
- (2) the *rasha* (wicked son),
- (3) the *tam* (simple son),
- (4) the *she'eino yode'a lish'ol* (son that knows not how to ask).

Please keep this specific order in mind as we go forward.

Now, before we set out to parallel this order with the unfolding of modern history, let us consider one aspect of where Jewish observance and non-observance currently stands.

We have today, more so than ever before, a very sizeable percentage of committed, observant Jews who actually grew up on the very edge of spiritual abyss, thousands upon thousands of Jews who were a hairsbreadth away from being forever assimilated and cut away from the unbroken thread of Jewish heritage stretching for millennia. Furthermore, and most unfortunately so, precious few of these Jews are being spared the pain of seeing close family – brothers, sisters, cousins, childhood friends – seemingly drifting ever further away and remote from their last vestiges of Jewish spiritual survival.

Let us now study this observation. It suggests that the four sons and their order is by design – meant to illuminate through parallelism the unfolding of recent Jewish history:

- The *chacham* (wise son): This is the first generation, first in the sense that we see it that way – meaning the Jews of pre-World War II, still connected to old history, a world still linked to a totally different era. The vast majorities are observant, deeply adherent to our faith; they are remembered and still revered as the pious, the learned and the righteous – in short, they are reflective of the *chacham*.
 - (2) The *rasha* (wicked son): This is the generation of war and great suffering. Though we dare not label them as deserving of the horror that befell our people in their time, we nonetheless presume that some level of guilt of the Jewish nation may have made it possible for such degradation to have been allowed to be brought upon us. Whether intentionally or not, we are aware that Jews leading into this time were beginning to turn away from tradition and embracing the lure of the many false beliefs and ‘isms,’ leaving our Holy tradition behind. Sadly, at some level, there is wrongdoing, it is indicative of sin, suggesting it is likened to the path of the *rasha*.
 - (3) The *tam* (simple son): Consider who are the children of the above, the post-war and thus early modern world generation? For most of those who became rather than were born into religious observance, this would be the generation of our
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parents. These were the young survivors of the old world suddenly thrust into a totally new world, with little if any guidance left from the previous destruction. But most knew (know) that they were Jews, and whatever that means, it seemed to be of some importance to them – at least this much they retained from the teachings or memories of their parents. So they went to a Temple twice a year, they made some kind of Seder, they could almost all read Hebrew, probably speak some Yiddish, and of course – they ate bagels and lox and sang *Havah Nagillah*, because that was their tradition. They by-and-large did not want their children to intermarry, but could not convincingly explain to them ‘why not.’ They began to thrive in a brand new era where observant Judaism was a relic of an old forgotten and no longer relevant world. They were indeed the simple Jew.

- (4) The *she'eino yodei'a lish'ol* (the son who knows not how to ask): We are that generation. Those who are the offspring of the simple Jew (above), know very little, and in some cases next to nothing. Most know that they are Jewish, but in most cases this has little or no significant meaning to them. It's not that they wouldn't be curious and ask important life questions – but the questions will likely *not* be about being Jewish. What kind of Judaism did they grow up with that would inspire such questions? Why would they even remotely expect to find answers to the meaning of life hidden in that small drawer of their father or grandfather's room that contains a

couple of nylon kippot and a fringed scarf-like relic or two that hardly ever was worn? Of what appeal could this have to them any more than canned gefilte fish, which for some reason the older folks still find tasty? Aren't all of these artifacts part of the same outdated and silly tradition? They don't even know that there *is* something about Judaism worth asking. So, they are the sons who know not how to ask.

Which leads us to one more curious observation: In a couple of places in the Torah there is reference made to “three or four” generations. For example, we read of this idea in the portion we read on fast days (*Shemos* 34:7): פֶּקֶד עֲוֹן אָבוֹת עַל בְּנִים וְעַל בְּנֵי בָנִים: *[Hashem] recalls the iniquity of parents upon children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.* We must ask: Why three or four? The Torah is so specific with every word and letter, every nuance, but in the topic about shedding the path of observance the Torah cannot find a way to be more specific than using the generality of “three or four.” Why is this?

But now we can see, using the progression of recent history as it parallels the four sons, that we are left with a large percentage of the Jewish people dangling dangerously on the edge of Judaic survival. Most have not the foggiest idea who they really are and why it matters, and unless it begins to matter they will likely begin to disappear. Nearly every Jew alive today has some religious ancestor, probably some Rabbi, two or at most three generations back. But following the progression of the four sons, the fourth generation is so distant and removed, that barring a life-changing turnabout, somewhere in the range of the third or fourth generation there is practically nothing left. Loss of

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observance might last three, perhaps four generations, but beyond that seems to lay the precipice of Jewish identity.

Lastly, we can now take this to heart. From the perspective of the four sons paralleling the unfolding of modern history in its wild and turbulent swings, we should feel grieved that we might well be the generation of the fourth son. So if we don't find a way to halt the steering wheel, if the ship with its millions of passengers moves any further off course, it is likely to be too late.

Is there really anything that we can do to help the generation of children who do not even know what to ask? Maybe. Let's first consider if we think our own lives of observant Judaism are being lived with meaning. Then, we can ask if there is a way to evoke some curiosity from those "children." If they see how we live, how we observe the mitzvos, and how we speak, can that serve to arouse some of them to take notice that in the realm of living as a Jew maybe there's a question worth asking? Perhaps here is a good starting point: Let them see you and what's important to you, and at the very minimum, be delicately stirred to move up to the level of the third son and ask "What's this"? Maybe that could be the beginning of a great return, G-d willing.

Originally our Ancestors Were Idolaters

Baruch Raczkowski

In מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה, *Originally our ancestors were idol worshippers...* the Hagadah cites a *pasuk* from *Yehoshua* to demonstrate the less than ideal origins of our people. The *pasuk* there states (24:2): בְּעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר יָשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם תְּרַח אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וְנָחֹר וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, *Your fathers always lived beyond the [Euphrates] River, Terach the father of Avraham and Nachor, and they served other gods.* Last year at our Seder, my son Nachum Gershon asked why that *pasuk* in *Navi* is used? Why not quote the relevant *pesukim* from the Torah in *Sefer Bereishis*, where the events are first told? I did not have an answer so I began to look into the matter.

I found that this question is asked by the *Malbim*. In order to understand the answer, though, we need to examine two matters.

- We need to understand the specific role of this paragraph מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה.
- We need to understand the general goal of the Hagadah.

The *Malbim* (in his *Midrash Hagadah*) notes that the Gemara in *Pesachim* (116a) presents a dispute between Rav and Shmuel regarding the Mishnah there that requires the Hagadah to begin with Israel's disgrace and end with its glory. The *Malbim* explains that the goal in organizing the Hagadah this way is to capture our interest, by contrasting our disgrace and our national glory. It is the hope of the Hagadah to impress upon us the greatness of *chasdei Hashem* by telling us where we came from and how Hashem brought us to the opposite extreme.

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Rav and Shmuel disagree about the definition of the “disgrace” with which we are supposed to begin the Hagadah, and the subsequent “glory.” According to Shmuel the disgrace is עבדים היינו במצרים, *We were slaves in Egypt...* Accordingly, the glory is Hashem took us out of *Mitzrayim*. This is included in the very next sentence: ויוציאנו ה' אלקינו משם, *And Hashem took us out from there...* The Hagadah is thus able to satisfy Shmuel’s opinion very easily in one paragraph, explaining how we were servants to a very strong king, poorly treated by our master with no hope for the future, and Hashem nevertheless redeemed us.

Rav, though, holds that we start the discussion of Israel’s “disgrace” from the time of Terach, the father of Avraham, who worshiped idols. The subsequent “glory” is therefore how Hashem brought us to His service on Har Sinai. This is mentioned in the continuation of that sentence: ועכשיו קרבנו המקום, *But now Hashem has brought us near to His service.* Now, this chain of events is much harder to convey since it covers not just the story of *Mitzrayim*, but also all the years and events that took place before the *galus* contained in *Sefer Bereishis* through the subsequent *geulah* enabling us to receive the Torah at Sinai.

The *Malbim* points out that we would never finish the story before the *seudah* if we had to go through it that way. The Hagadah therefore found the passage in *Yehoshua* where the sequence of the generations from Terach through *galus Mitzrayim* is condensed in a few *pesukim*. In this section of *Navi*, *Yehoshua* relates how when our forefathers lived across the river they worshiped idols. And that Terach was not only the father of Avraham but also of Nachor. Terach did not teach his sons to believe in Hashem, and Nachor continued to worship idols.

Avraham, though, was able to discover on his own that Hashem was the one G-d of the world. Therefore, only Avraham was commanded to leave his home to travel to Eretz Yisrael to become the first of the *Avos*. The passage continues that although Avraham was to have many children, including Yishmael and the children of Keturah, only Yitzchak was considered his successor and became the second of our *Avos*. Yitzchak had two children Eisav and Yaakov; but Eisav got Har Seir. Eretz Canaan was to become the sole inheritance of Yaakov, the third of our *Avos*. The passage concludes with Yaakov and his children going down to *Mitzrayim*.

This passage sums up the relevant sections of *sefer Bereishis* except for one very important incident – the *bris bein habesarim*, where the *galus* and subsequent *geulah* were foretold to Avraham. This incident is described in the next paragraph of the Hagadah which begins, ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל, *Blessed is [Hashem] Who keeps his promise to Israel*. It really is incredible how the Hagadah was able to synthesize the whole of *sefer Bereishis* into these two paragraphs, primarily making use of the quote from *Yehoshua*. The *Malbim* goes on from here to explain how the next sections of the Hagadah expound the four *pesukim* in the *parshah* of *bikkurim* in the beginning of *Parshas Ki Savo*. For those *pesukim* present a concise description of the actual *galus* and *geulah*, which led to our receiving the Torah on Har Sinai. The Hagadah states each *pasuk*, one at a time, followed by the *derashos* that are derived from each describing the actual *galus* and *geulah*. These present the most basic material in the Hagadah for fulfilling the mitzvah of speaking about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* on the night of Pesach.

In Every Generation They Rise Against Us

Arkady Pogostkin

One of the fundamental ideas connected with the Yom Tov of Pesach is the close escape of the fledgling Jewish nation from the impending spiritual destruction threatening it in Mitzrayim, the place identified by Chazal as the embodiment of spiritual degradation, powerful enough to drag us down to the forty-ninth level of *tumah*, a single step away from the point of no return.

Along with the physical release from the clutches of murderous Pharaoh we experienced a miraculous rescue from the brink of spiritual destruction – the forty-ninth degree of *tumah*.

Our Sages teach us that the Jews' experience in Mitzrayim is a template and a guide for the future exiles and redemptions of our people, both on national and personal levels. Many times over the thirty centuries that followed *יציאת מצרים*, the Jewish people as a nation and Jews as individuals have had our spiritual survival threatened. Not a generation passes (*שבכל דור ודור עומדים*) (עלינו לכלותינו) in which a new destructive force does not arise to challenge our survival. And each time we must rise to meet the challenge.

In this generation, literally before our eyes, a new challenge has arisen. The invention and spread of new technologies has made our world very different from what we remember from twenty years ago, or could hardly have been imagined fifty years in the past.

Darchei Noam

Past inventions that have transformed the world have brought us challenges in areas of Kashrus (industrial food production), Shabbos observance (cars, electricity), *chinuch* (compulsory public education), and *shemiras haloshon* (telephone), to name a few. Yet the Jewish people have never failed to overcome the challenge and turn these developments into tools for reaching even higher levels of sanctity and service of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. We have not just survived, but thrived on the new inventions that human ingenuity has given us.

In this new age, we face a new challenge – communications technologies that enable unprecedented connectivity with people, groups, ideas, images, and sounds from around the world – a type of instant, cheap, and pervasive connectivity that is qualitatively different from that of the recent past. With this unprecedented ability comes unprecedented responsibility to put this tremendous power to good use and not let us be caught unawares by its destructive potential.

The Baltimore community is fortunate to have in its ranks a dedicated group of volunteers – technology professionals, guided by the Rabbonim and *mechanchim* –working as a free expert resource to provide education and promote awareness of *concrete* solutions to the problems inherent in the use of the Internet and related technologies.

The Technology and Family Safety Alliance (TFSA) provides the following categories of service to the Baltimore community:

- Education and promotion of awareness of *concrete* solutions
- Technical support and training

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- Technical guidance for community leaders, school officials, organization leaders, and individuals
- Influence with tool vendors and service providers to benefit the public

Because there is no consensus among *Poskim* on specific approaches to the addressing the dangers of the Internet, TFSA does not attempt to resolve those differences. We simply rely on the well-established agreement among all that doing nothing is not acceptable.

TFSA strongly promotes the responsibility of each individual, who has a need for Internet use, to consult a competent source about its use.

TFSA does not endorse any particular product, setup, approach, or level of protection. Rather, we act as a free expert resource to help community leaders, school officials, organization leaders, and individuals to make *informed decisions* regarding Internet safety.

More information can be found at www.TFSA.org or by calling 443-420-TFSA (8372).

We should all merit Divine assistance in this important effort.

[Editor's note: Detailed guidelines developed exclusively for BMR under direction of our Mara D'Asra are also available at those addresses.]

Havdalah for the Second Day of Yom Tov

Elli Schwarz

This year we recite Havdalah after the first night of Pesach into the second night, because Pesach falls out on a Shabbos and one must recite Havdalah from Shabbos to Yom Tov. However, we will see that there is good reason to recite Havdalah after any first day of Yom Tov into the second; and we will discuss why we do not do so nowadays.

The Gemara in *Beitzah* (4b) presents a dispute between Rav and Rav Assi regarding whether it is permitted on the second day of Yom Tov to eat an egg that was laid on the first day. There is no question that the egg may not be eaten on the day of Yom Tov on which it was laid because it is *muktzeh*, being in the category of *nolad* (newly formed matter). The dispute centers on whether it remains forbidden the second day. The Gemara states as follows:

אתמר, שני ימים טובים של גליות, רב אמר גולה מותרת בזה, ורב אסי אמר גולה אסורה בזה. לימא קא סבר רב אסי קדושה אחת היא, והא רב אסי מבידיל מיומא טבא לחבריה, רב אסי ספוקי מספקא ליה ועביד הקא לחומרא והקא לחומרא, אמר ר' זירא פנתיה דרב אסי מסתברא דהאי דנא ידעינן בקביעא דירחא וקא עבדינן תרי יומי.

It was stated. [Regarding] the two-day Yom Tov of Galios, Rav holds that an [egg] laid on this [first day of Yom Tov] is permissible [to be eaten] on this [second day]; but Rav Assi holds that an [egg] laid this [first day of Yom Tov] is forbidden on this [second day].

לימא קא סבר רב אסי קדושה אחת היא

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The Gemara at first assumes that Rav Assi holds that the egg is forbidden on the second day because in his view both days are really one extended period of *kedushah* (קדושה אחת היא). It would then emerge that the egg that was laid on the first day of Yom Tov is *muktzeh* throughout the entire two-day Yom Tov because that period is considered a single entity.

וְהָא רַב אֲסִי מְבָדִיל מִיּוֹמָא טָבָא לְתַבְרִיָּה

The Gemara asks that Rav Assi made Havdalah after the first day of Yom Tov going into the second. This implies that he holds that the two days of Yom Tov are not a single entity, but two completely separate days of *kedushah*. That is, the reason two days of Yom Tov are observed is because people in the Diaspora did not know which day Rosh Chodesh was declared by the Sanhedrin. They therefore had to keep two days out of the doubt as to which day was the real day of Yom Tov. Rav Assi, though, knew that the first of the two days was the true Yom Tov, with the second day kept only because that was the custom of the previous generations that did not know the true day of Yom Tov. He therefore recited Havdalah after the first day of Yom Tov ended. But if that is the case, he should also permit on the second day of Yom Tov an egg that was laid on the first day since he did not consider the two days to be a single entity.

רַב אֲסִי סְפוּקֵי מְסַפְקָא לֵיהּ וְעָבִיד הֵבָא לְחוּמְרָא וְהֵבָא לְחוּמְרָא

The Gemara answers that Rav Assi was uncertain as to the status of the two day Yom Tov and he therefore recited Havdalah as a stringency, yet also ruled the egg forbidden on the second day of Yom Tov as a stringency. *Rashi* explains that Rav Assi was not sure if the *Chachamim* of the earlier generations made their decree to keep two days no matter what, even if one would happen to know the correct day of Yom Tov according the

calculation of the *molad* – in which case the *Chachamim* essentially “extended the Yom Tov” to establish both days as one long day; he therefore ruled the egg forbidden for both days. But it was also possible that the two days of Yom Tov were established only because of the doubt as to the true day of Yom Tov; but were we to know with certainty that the first day is the true day, we would need to recite Havdalah after that day ended.

אמר ר' זינא קנתיה דרב אסי מסתברא דהאי דנא ידעינן בקביעא דנרקה וקא
עבדינן תרי יומי

The Gemara then mentions that R' Zeira says that it makes sense to prohibit the egg on the second day, since even nowadays (in R' Zeira's time) that we know the קביעא דנרקה, *the establishment of the moon*, (which *Rashi* explains as referring to the calculation of the *molad*) we keep two days. It must be that the *Chachamim* established these two days as one long day regardless of knowledge of the correct day. (It should be mentioned that R' Zeira is speaking after the time of Rav Assi, but still before our current fixed calendar.)

The *Ritva* asks how R' Assi was able to make Havdalah because of his doubt. It is a *safeik berachah*, and the rule is that if there is a doubt whether or not to recite a *berachah* one should not recite it (ספר ברכות להקל). How then could R' Assi recite Havdalah when it was a possible unneeded *berachah* (ברכה לבטלה)!

The *Chasam Sofer* answers that Rav Assi was one of the few people in his time who knew the precise calculation of the *molad*. (However, in R' Zeira's time, the method of calculation was more widespread so it was widely known on which day the *molad* would occur, as the Gemara states.) Since Rav Assi personally knew with certainty which day was the correct day of Yom Tov, this should require him to say Havdalah. However, his

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doubt was if the *Chachamim* established the two days of Yom Tov as one extended period, thereby abolishing the mitzvah of Havdalah through their decree. (The *Chachamim* have the power to abolish a mitzvah by instituting that a certain action should not be performed [שב ואל תעשה]); for example, not blowing the shofar when Rosh Hashanah falls out on Shabbos). On the other hand, perhaps the *Chachamim* did not establish the two days as a single entity, but ruled that everyone should keep two days because of the uncertainty as to the correct day; in that case the *Chachamim* never abolished Havdalah. However, most people could not make Havdalah because they could not be sure of the correct day. But for R' Assi who knew the correct day there would be no problem in making Havdalah according to this second possibility.

Therefore, the *Chasam Sofer* explains, it turns out that there was no doubt about the obligation of Havdalah *per se*, but only a doubt if the *Chachamim* abolished it. Because there was only a doubt whether the *Chachamim* had decreed *not* to recite Havdalah, we can employ the principle that one may be lenient in a doubtful violation of a Rabbinic law (ספק דרבנן לקולא). R' Assi was therefore allowed to act leniently and assume that Chazal never abolished Havdalah on this day, and therefore he made Havdalah!

Nevertheless, we *pasken* like Rav (who disputes R' Assi above) that an egg laid on the first day of Yom Tov is permissible on the second day (except on Rosh Hashanah). According to Rav, the two days of Yom Tov were originally kept because of the doubt as to the correct day of Yom Tov, but in truth one day was the actual Yom Tov and the other day was a regular weekday. Rav cannot hold the two days are one Rabbinic entity, because then

the egg laid on the first day would be forbidden on the second day. According to Rav, havdalah would not be recited after the first day because of the possibility that it was not really Yom Tov, and we don't make a *berachah* in case of doubt.

This was true in Rav's time, when there was still a doubt as to the correct day of Yom Tov. With the advent of the modern calendar, there is no longer any doubt. The Gemara says that Chazal instituted that we still keep a second day of Yom Tov because we must follow the customs of our ancestors (הִזְקֵרוּ בְּמִנְהַג (אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בְּיַדֵיכֶם). The *Tzlach* asks that since R' Assi made *havdalah* even though he had a doubt as to whether it should have been recited, in our times when we know with certainty that the first day is really Yom Tov, we should certainly be obligated to recite Havdalah! He further adds that the dispute between Rav and R' Assi was not in regards to Havdalah; therefore we don't find anyone who argues with R' Assi regarding the necessity to make Havdalah.

The *Tzlach* answers that making Havdalah after the first day would be inconsistent (תִּרְחִי דִּסְתֵּרִי) for the following reason: By making Havdalah we would be saying that Yom Tov is over, yet at the same time, on the same cup of wine, we would be making Kiddush saying that Yom Tov is beginning. However, if so, how could R' Assi have made Havdalah? The *Tzlach* points out a Gemara in *Succah* (47a), which mentions an opinion that we eat in the succah with a *berachah* on *Shemini Atzeres* in the Diaspora. Although we *pasken* to not make a *berachah*, we clearly see that there is an opinion that is not concerned with the inconsistency of making a *berachah* that states that it is Succos even though it is really *Shimini Atzeres*. The *Ritva* there says that

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R' Assi in our Gemara held of this opinion and was not concerned with inconsistency.

There are several other answers to this question of why we don't make Havdalah. The *Rashba* says that when the *Chachamim* made the decree to add a second day of Yom Tov, they were concerned that if people made Havdalah after that day, they would treat the second day lightly (זלזול). Therefore the *Chachamim* abolished this mitzvah by instituting that it should not be performed [שב ואל תעשה]. The *Tzlach* above notes that R' Assi was not concerned with זלזול.

The *Re'ah* says that Havdalah is only recited when there is a change in the *halachic* status of the next day – i.e., after Shabbos or Yom Tov going in to a weekday when work becomes permitted, or from Shabbos going in to Yom Tov, when cooking becomes permitted. However, there is no change in status from the first day of Yom Tov to the next – although the second day is only Yom Tov מדרבנן, the same restrictions apply on both days (in most cases). Therefore there is no need for Havdalah after the first day of Yom Tov. See *Kovetz Shiurim* for yet another reason.

Korban Omer vs. Shteï Halechem

Michoel Cooperman

There are two ways in which the *korban omer* brought on Pesach differs from the *korban shteï halechem*, which is brought on Shavuos. The *omer* is brought from שעורים, *barley*, and cannot contain chametz. The *shteï halechem* is brought from חיטים, *wheat*, and contains chametz. What is the significance of the differences between these two *korbanos*? Barley is fed to animals and is called מאכל בהמה, *animal food*. Wheat is eaten by man and is referred to as מאכל אדם, *human food*.

We should keep in mind that although Pesach is a focal point in the year and much preparation, energy, and discussion is exerted for this *chag*, it is not the end goal. We are on a spiritual high during *Yetzias Mitzrayim*; however, we are not yet ready for *kabbalas HaTorah*. *Sefiras haomer* is the bridge between Pesach and Shavuos, and our ultimate goal of receiving the Torah. During these seven weeks we are transformed through Torah and mitzvos from *beheimah* to *adam*.

There is another interesting contrast between these two *korbanos*. That is, the *omer* is brought as matzah and has no chametz, while the *shteï halechem* is brought as chametz. But this leads to the following question: How can we arrive at our prized destination of Shavuos after seven weeks and bring a *korban* of chametz on that day? Wasn't chametz the enemy on Pesach? All of our preparations and cleaning were to rid the evil chametz, the paradigm of the *yetzer hara*, from our lives to the point where we are not allowed to eat even a משהו, *a minute amount*, on the *chag*. How then now, on Shavuos, when we

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reach our final destination and the pinnacle of what we have been striving for so long can we bring a *korban* of chametz?

I believe the answer is the famous observation of the *Ariza*"l regarding the similarity between the names of two special days of the year: Purim and Yom Kippur. In the Torah, Yom Kippur is called (*Acharei Mos* 23:27): יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים, *the day of kippurim*. The word *kippurim* can be vowelized as כִּפּוּרִים, *ke'purim*, to yield: *like Purim!* Thus, Yom Kippur is a day like Purim in a certain way.¹ Not only that, it emerges that Yom Kippur is only *like* Purim, but not quite as high a *מדריגה*, *level*, as Purim. How can that be? Anyone would assume that the holiest holiday of the year – Yom Kippur – is certainly at a higher level than Purim!

However, the answer is that we know that man is the only created being that is a composite of two completely opposite components. That is, man has a physical *guf* [body] and a spiritual *neshamah* [soul]. The *guf* of a man is similar to the body of a *beheimah*, while the *neshamah* is comparable to the spirituality of angels. On Yom Kippur we negate the *guf* and concentrate on the *neshamah* aspects of our being through davening and refraining from all physical pleasures. On Purim it's the opposite; our focus is on the physical aspects of our being: eating and drinking.

Why then is Purim at a higher level than Yom Kippur? Because it is more difficult and challenging to serve Hashem properly with our physical bodies on Purim than it is to do so with our

¹ [Editor's note: The *Gra z"l* (*Likutei HaGra* p. 154a) explains that the feasting on Purim takes the place of the feast on Yom Kippur that we are not allowed to have. The two days are similar because they both involve קבלת התורה.]

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neshamos on Yom Kippur.² To serve Hashem with our *yetzer hara* as well as our *yetzer tov* on Purim is a *מדריגה* even higher than what happens on Yom Kippur when we minimize our *yetzer hara* and act like the angels serving Hashem with our *neshamos*.

This answers our question about bringing the *shte'i halechem* on Shavuos from chametz. It is a fine level to rid ourselves of all chametz, representative of the *yetzer hara*, on Pesach. However, a higher level is to take that same chametz, the thing that brings us down, and elevate it on Shavuos. That is how man can reach a *מדריגה* even higher than the angels.

This is the true goal of Pesach – to introduce us to the days of *sefiras haomer* leading up to Shavuos when we can bring a *korban* consisting of chametz.

² See also above, pg. 34.

The Lesson of the Pesach Matzah

Tzvi Friedman, Yeshivas Bais Moshe

The *pasuk* commanding the mitzvah of eating matzah on Pesach states (*Devarim* 16:3): שְׁבַע־יָמִים תֹּאכַל עֲלֶיךָ מַצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֲנִי כִּי בְּחַפְזוֹן יִצְאָתָּה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, *Seven days you shall eat with it matzah, “lechem oni,” for you departed from the land of Egypt in haste.* What is the simple translation of the phrase “lechem oni” mentioned in this *pasuk*? *Rashi* there states (based on *Sifrei*): לֶחֶם שֶׁמְזַכֵּר אֶת הָעוֹנֵי שֶׁנִּתְעַנּוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם, *bread that reminds us of the afflictions to which we were subject to, while in Egypt.* This would seem to place matzah as a symbol of our servitude. How does this reflect the message of this verse which states the rationale for matzah as being a reflection of the speedy manner in which Hashem rescued the Jews from Egypt?¹

The *pasuk* concludes: לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ, *in order to remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt all the days of your life.* This verse lumps matzah into the category of mitzvos that have as a goal the remembrance of the exodus. This category includes: shabbos, tefillin, and mezuzah. What is the purpose of our remembering events in the distant past when we live in the present?²

¹ The Ramban, on this *pasuk* notes that matzah has two themes. However, he does not explain how to resolve the fact that the themes are contradictory.

² See Ramban, *Shemos* 13:16

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When we sit at the Seder table and talk about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* it is not merely a remembrance of an event in the past. Chazal instruct us in the Hagadah: חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו יצא ממצרים, *One is obligated to view himself as if he actually left Egypt!* It is a reliving of the exodus experience. Therefore, it is necessary to know what emotions to relive when eating the matzah. Is it feelings of slavery or those of freedom?

To accomplish the extrication of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, Hashem brought ten plagues on the Egyptians. The plagues were a visible sign of Hashem's strength and His willingness to wield it on behalf of the Jewish people. No, Hashem did not create a world and let it run on its own. He is involved in all its aspects and decides whether to get involved or not. It was obvious that Hashem had decided to save His people from the oppressive Egyptians. The Torah created a group of mitzvos to remind us of the Egyptian experience to remind us that all is under Hashem's rule, both national and individual events. It is He who determines the events we will experience and the consequences of our actions.

Matzah is indicative of Hashem's *hashgachah* in all our endeavors. The same matzah that one day was the staple of the slave became the staple of the free man. This symbolizes the fact that it is consistently the same will of Hashem that determines whether one will be free or not. Hashem is involved in our slavery and our subsequent redemption!

This explains how matzah alludes to both ideas simultaneously. It is both *lechem oni* – bread reminiscent of our slave staples and one that was our ticket to freedom. There is no better symbol for Hashem's involvement in every aspect of our lives than one that contains both sides of the coin, slavery and exodus.

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We have yet to explain how the reaching a high level in our *emunah* is correlated with the Jewish people's leaving Egypt. What made them worthy of acquiring their freedom?

Egypt is described as the כּוּר הַבְּרִזָּל, the oven that smelts metal.³ The Jewish people were in Egypt to cleanse their imperfections and to mold them into perfected people, those willing to accept the yoke of Hashem. There is even a theory that the *makkos* were cleansing the Jewish people and readying them for their redemption, as they were punishing the Egyptians.⁴ However, the eating of the matzah was the conduit to their freedom. Of course, the fact that they did not change their Jewish appearance, name or language had an effect. Similarly, the performances of *bris* and the *pesach* offering were a *zechus* to merit the *geulah*. However, let me explain how matzah directly affected their being chosen to exit Egypt.

The *Maharal* (*Gevuros Hashem*, Chapter 51) explains that matzah is bread in its simplest form. It consists of merely flour and water. Rich matzah, made with eggs or fruit juices is unacceptable to fulfill the mitzvah of matzah (and might even be chametz). Even the element of time has been removed from this dough by insisting that it be removed from the oven hastily. If not, the dough becomes chametz and is forbidden. The *Maharal* continues that this simplicity is the essence of Olam HaBa, the World to Come. In our world, there is the appearance of multiple powers and complexities. However, in Olam HaBa it will be obvious that there is only one source of all matter, HaKadosh

³ *Devarim*, 4:20 and Rashi ad loc.

⁴ See, for example, *Sefas Emes*, Bo 5643. Cf. *Ramban*, *Shemos*, 13:16 for an alternative explanation of the purpose of the *makkos*.

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Baruch Hu. It is the simplicity of the matzah that mirrors the world to come and hence is a spiritual food.⁵ That is the intention of the Torah in labeling matzah as “*lechem oni*.” Just as a poor person has been stripped of all his possessions, matzah is food in its raw physical state.⁶

In eating the matzah, the Jewish people realized the level of Olam HaBa, which is not bound by the complexities of this world. Olam HaBa is where there is only *ratzon* Hashem and no other variables. It is there where the true meaning of Hashem *echad* is manifest. By eating matzah, the Jews were elevated to a level of *emunah* where they were able to view events from an Olam HaBa perspective. Hence, they were able to exit hastily because they were not bound by the constraints of time, a facet of this world alone. Additionally, by eating the matzah and being released from the bonds of this world, they were able to free themselves to be Hashem’s people. This is the symbol of the matzah, *cheirus* – freedom.⁷

According to the *Gra z”l*, throughout the seven days of Pesach, every time a piece of matzah is consumed, a mitzvah is being performed. In each mitzvah we do, there is an element of *cheirus* from the bonds of *gashmius*. *Cheirus* is not just being free from human enslavement; it is becoming more detached from the

⁵ See *Ramchal, Derech Hashem*, Part IV 7:1.

⁶ On this point, the *Maharal* argues with the Ramban (see fn. 1). In his view, there is no aspect of slavery indicated in the verse or in the theme of the matzah.

⁷ Interestingly, the *sefarim* call matzah the bread of *emunah* (see *Sfas Emes, Pesach* 5638), and the *gematria* of *emunah* in *mispar katan* equals that of *cheirus*.

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desires of this world. On Pesach, which Hashem has called “*Chag HaMatzos*”, we are given a unique opportunity to grow in the “*middah*” of *cheirus*. By attaining more *cheirus*, we become more holy and worthy of Olam HaBa, the world of *cheirus*. That is the most important job of the Jew, at least in this life.

Welcoming Guests to Shul on Yom Tov

Roman Kimelfeld

The Torah records two mitzvos that Avraham Avinu performed on Pesach. We are supposed to emulate Avraham by also performing these mitzvos. These mitzvos are:

1. Avraham welcomed guests (*Bereishis* 18:2-8). Like Avraham, we are supposed to practice *hachnasas orchim*.
2. Avraham prayed to Hashem from a permanent place (*Bereishis* 19:27). Like Avraham, we are supposed to designate a permanent place for prayer, a *makom kavua*.

While we strive to emulate both of these practices of Avraham, sometimes they may apparently conflict. For example, let's say we come to shul on Yom Tov (when the davening is already in progress) and we notice that a guest is occupying our *makom kavua*. (This situation often occurs on Yom Tov, when the shul has many guests.) We are then faced with the following two choices:

Choice 1: Allow the guest to remain in our seat.

Choice 2: Ask the guest to vacate our *makom kavua* and to find a seat elsewhere.

If we select Choice 1, we emulate Avraham by exhibiting hospitality. If we select Choice 2, we definitely do not exhibit hospitality, but we seemingly emulate Avraham by insisting on maintaining our constant place for prayer. To figure out which of the two choices is better, we will first need to understand better the parameters of the mitzvah of designating a *makom kavua* for prayer. We will now present the background for this mitzvah.

Section VI: Yom Tov Davening

The Gemara states (*Berachos* 6b):

Rabbi Chelbo said in the name of Rav Huna: Whoever designates a permanent place for his prayer - the G-d of Avraham assists him. And when he dies, it is said of him, “Woe, such a humble person; woe, such a pious person, among the students of Avraham Avinu!” From where do we know that Avraham Avinu designated a place? As it says, “Avraham arose early in the morning [and went to] the place where he had stood,” and 'standing' means prayer, as it says, “Pinchas stood and prayed.”

Rashi explains that the statement “the G-d of Avraham will assist him” means that this person’s prayer will be accepted just like Avraham’s prayer was accepted. Thus, we see the great importance that the Gemara attaches to designating a permanent place for prayer, i.e. the prayer is accepted more readily. The question, though, remains: where exactly does the mitzvah to designate a permanent place for prayer apply?

Rabbeinu Yonah comments that this statement of the Gemara (i.e. that Hashem will accept the person’s *tefilah* like He accepted Avraham’s *tefilah*; and that the person will be called “pious” and “humble”) applies only to a person who designates a permanent place for prayer inside his house. On the other hand, this Gemara is not requiring designating a fixed place within the shul because all places inside a shul are equally favorable for *tefilah*.

Rabbeinu Yonah’s approach seems logical based on how *Eshel Avraham* (from Butchatch, Ukraine) explains the benefit of designating a permanent place. *Eshel Avraham* says that permanently designating a place for prayer brings *kedushah* (sanctity) and the *Shechina* (Hashem’s presence) to that place,

thereby making that place favorable for prayer. Clearly, the act of bringing down *kedushah* is very important for a secular place (such as one's house). By designating the corner of the house as the place of prayer, we are transforming an ordinary place into a sanctified place. On the other hand, the shul is already a place of great holiness, so perhaps no further effort is necessarily to bring in additional sanctity into one's corner of the shul.

Based on the considerations above, designating the permanent place for prayer appears to be far more significant at home than in the shul, and perhaps this is the reason for *Rabbeinu Yonah's* opinion.

The *Rosh*, though, disagrees with *Rabbeinu Yonah*, maintaining that the mitzvah to designate a permanent place applies in the shul as well. The *Rosh* derives this from the following *Yerushalmi* (*Berachos* 4:4, close to the end):

Said Rabbi Tanchum bar Chanina: "A person must designate a permanent place in the shul to pray there." (*Yerushalmi* then quotes a *pasuk* regarding David HaMelech to support this halachah.)

Based on this *Yerushalmi*, the *Rosh* concludes that the person must have a permanent place for prayer in the shul. *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 90:19) rules in accordance with the view of the *Rosh*.

However, this raises the following question: how could *Rabbeinu Yonah* contradict the *Yerushalmi Berachos*? Before we answer this question, let us first try to understand whether the *Bavli* and *Yerushalmi* passages are alluding to the same *halachah*.

Section VI: Yom Tov Davening

Then, we will see whether or not *Rabbeinu Yonah* contradicts the *Yerushalmi*.

When we compare the passages requiring designating a permanent place in *Bavli* and *Yerushalmi*, we notice that only in *Bavli* the person designating a permanent place is assured that his *tefilos* are accepted. On the other hand, the passage in *Yerushalmi* is very low-key. It just requires the person to designate a permanent place, and it does not state any spiritual benefits for those who fulfill this halachah. In fact, according to *Aggadas Eliyahu*, the rationale in *Yerushalmi* for designating a permanent place in the shul is for practical reasons, i.e. to prevent arguments with the other congregants. (If a person does not have a permanent seat, then he will end up sitting in other people's places; this will make the other congregants upset, hence the person should have a permanent seat in the shul.) Thus, *Yerushalmi* requires designating a permanent seat in the shul for *bein adam l'chaveiro* reasons only.

This explains why *Yerushalmi* does not cite the *pasuk* about Avraham Avinu (that *Bavli* cites). Citing the *pasuk* about Avraham Avinu would have implied that designating a permanent seat in the shul would make the *tefilah* more acceptable to Hashem (as *Rashi* explains the usage of the *pasuk* in *Bavli*). Since *Yerushalmi* is not dealing with topic of the acceptance of *tefilah*, the *pasuk* about Avraham does not fit into *Yerushalmi's* discussion.

As we mentioned, *Rabbeinu Yonah* comments on the *Bavli*, which deals exclusively with the acceptance of prayer; and he says that as far as the acceptance of *tefilah* is concerned, it does not matter whether or not the person davens in his regular place in the shul. As we have explained, the *Yerushalmi* does not deal

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with the topic of the acceptance of prayer; therefore the *sugya* in *Yerushalmi* is completely beyond the scope of *Rabbeinu Yonah's* comment. Thus, *Rabbeinu Yonah* does not contradict the *Yerushalmi*; he is dealing with a topic that the *Yerushalmi* does not address.

To summarize, the outcome of the discussion according to *Rabbeinu Yonah* and *Aggados Eliyahu* is:

1. The *tefilah* in the shul is accepted to the same extent regardless of whether or not the person prays from his permanent seat (as *Rabbeinu Yonah* says).
2. Nevertheless, the person should have a permanent place in the shul in order to avoid irritating other congregants (as *Aggados Eliyahu* says).

As we see, the two statements above are not contradictory.

Let us now return to the question we asked in the beginning. If a member comes to shul when the davening is already in progress and he finds that a guest is occupying his seat, should the member ask the guest to leave? The answer is apparent from the *Yerushalmi* that we discussed above. As we have shown, the underlying basis of the *Yerushalmi's* requirement to have a *makom kavua* is that we are not allowed to irritate our fellow congregants. Once we recognize this underlying basis of the *Yerushalmi*, it becomes obvious that asking the guest to leave (which will make the guest uncomfortable) will not represent a fulfillment of the halachah in *Yerushalmi*; rather it will constitute a disregard for the underlying basis of the halachah.

Thus, the member should let the guest remain where he is; and the member should find a seat for himself elsewhere (preferably

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within four *amos* of the original seat, as *Magen Avraham* says). Even if the member will end up sitting in a different part of the shul, it will not have an adverse impact on the acceptability of his prayers according to *Rabbeinu Yonah*.

By making the guest comfortable, the member will emulate the hospitality of Avraham Avinu. Additionally, by avoiding an argument, the member will uphold the spirit of the halachah in *Yerushalmi*. As the result of the member's proper conduct, the shul will become a friendlier place; the congregation will be more unified in davening; and the resulted unified davening will have a more profound spiritual impact on all congregants.

***Lo Sisgodedu* and Tefillin on Chol HaMoed**

Rabbi Abba Zvi Naiman

In recent years, we have noticed that in many shuls around town *mechitzos* are erected on Chol HaMoed to segregate between the *mispallelim* who wear tefillin and those who do not. Some shuls are even more “*machmir*” and establish separate minyanim in different rooms for tefillin-wearers and non-tefillin wearers. This phenomenon is apparently based on a rediscovery of a *psak* of the *Mishnah Berurah*, who writes (31:8): עוד כתבו האחרונים דאין נכון דבית הכנסת אחת קצתם יניחו תפילין וקצתם לא יניחו משום לא תתגודדו, *The Acharonim wrote further that it is not proper that in one shul some of them will put on tefillin and some of them will not, because of [the prohibition of תתגודדו] “You shall not form factions.”*¹ Common thought is that this ruling mandates that some barrier be made between the two groups of people so they will not violate this prohibition.

However, many have wondered why this phenomenon has been limited to the issue of wearing tefillin on Chol HaMoed. Why, there are many differing observances of customs that take place in the same shul or Bais HaMedrash every day of the year. For example, some people have the custom of putting on a second

¹ The “Acharonim” mentioned by the *Mishnah Berurah* is actually the *Malbim* in his *Artzos HaChaim*, which the *Mishnah Berurah* is quoting word for word. Although, the *Malbim* cites *Magen Avraham* and *Pri Chadash* to §493, they do not discuss the issue of tefillin on Chol HaMoed. They just serve to prove that the rules of *lo sisgodedu* apply even outside of a courtroom setting (see *Sdei Chemed*, cited below). We will discuss this source further in a footnote at the very end of this piece.

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pair of tefillin, the tefillin of Rabbeinu Tam, every morning during Shacharis; and they do this even if many or most fellow congregants stick to their single pair of tefillin during the entire davening. There are those of German descent who begin to wear a tallis at the age of bar mitzvah or even younger; and they do that even though most of the other *mispallelim* do not wear a tallis unless they are married. *Litvishe* men sometimes find themselves davening in a *chasidische shtiebel* where the *gartel* is part of the davening uniform, and they do not eschew that minyan for lack of requisite *gartel*. Or someone from the outside may find himself davening in a yeshivah where the custom is to wear a hat and jacket during davening; is he forbidden to daven there if he is not sporting the proper fedora?

Why does *lo sigodedu* seem to apply only to wearing tefillin on Chol HaMoed, and not to these other, everyday examples? And is there any basis for people of differing customs to daven together in the same shul as people used to do?

Before we examine whether or not *lo sigodedu* should apply in our case of wearing tefillin on Chol HaMoed it is important to note that a careful reading of the *Mishnah Berurah* does not justify having the two groups sit on either side of a *mechitzah* or even in separate rooms in the same shul. The *Mishnah Berurah* says only that it is not proper to have the two groups in a single shul. Now, that problem is obviously not solved by putting them on opposite sides of the *mechitzah* because you still have two groups in a single shul. In fact, segregating the groups in the same shul might be an even greater breach of *lo sigodedu* because you are demonstrating that these two sets of people may not sit together; you have only aggravated the problem through the *mechitzah* method. And having separate minyanim in the

same shul is the greatest breach of *lo sisgodedu*. For what are you saying when someone walks in the shul and sees a sign directing tefillin wearers to one room and non-tefillin wearers to a different room? You are saying that these groups are so different that they cannot even sit together in the same room. And you have certainly not complied with the *Mishnah Berurah's* directive to not have the two groups in the same shul. What the *Mishnah Berurah* obviously means is that it is proper for people who wear tefillin on Chol HaMoed to daven at a shul where that is the custom, and for people who do not wear tefillin to daven at a shul that follows their custom. There is no way to read into the words of the *Mishnah Berurah* that both groups should daven in the same shul on different sides of a *mechitzah* or in different rooms.

So our question now becomes stronger. That is, how come no one seems to be concerned about the *Mishnah Berurah's psak* regarding the tefillin wearers on Chol HaMoed? What, if anything, does segregating the groups in the same building accomplish? And is there any justification in having everyone simply sit where they want – like people who put on the tefillin of Rabbeinu Tam, those who wear a tallis, and those who might not have the requisite *gartel* or hat-and-jacket?

The answer is that not everyone agrees with the *Mishnah Berurah* in this matter. Many *Poskim* hold that the principle of *lo sisgodedu* does not apply to wearing or not wearing tefillin on Chol HaMoed, nor to the other examples mentioned above. We will list several of the reasons why it does not apply, limiting ourselves to the *Poskim* who address this issue directly rather than those who talk generally about the principle of *lo sisgodedu*.

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- The *Maharshag* (Vol. 2 §12; see also *Eishel Avraham* §493) writes that the prohibition of *lo sisgodedu* applies only to someone rendering a ruling in contradiction to the accepted custom. This is similar to the Gemara's example (*Yevamos* 13b) of where some members of the town court rule in accordance with Beis Shammai, while other members of the same court rule in accordance with Beis Hillel. But if no one is rendering any rulings, but rather just on his own practicing his custom of putting on tefillin or not putting on tefillin, there is no prohibition. He cites the practice of individuals who put on tefillin of Rabbeinu Tam, mentioned above, as a support to his opinion.
- *R' Mordechai Benet* (*Teshuvos Parashas Mordechai* §4) uses the same Gemara to limit the prohibition to when a court is first issuing its ruling on a certain matter; in that case they must ensure that all their rulings are uniform. But if there is an existing dispute among earlier *Poskim* and different groups follow different rulings, there is nothing wrong if members of the differing groups each follow their custom.
- *Eishel Avraham* (ibid.) adds that someone noticing one who fails to don his tefillin will assume that he already put on his tefillin earlier so there is no appearance of different factions.² [Presumably, one could also assume that he lost his tefillin, has a stomachache, etc.]

² This reasoning obviously does not apply if all of the non-tefillin people are sitting separately from the tefillin donners, proving that segregating the two does not solve the *lo sisgodedu* problem, but rather aggravates it.

- *Sdei Chemed* (חול המועד §14) writes that there is no problem because the people wearing tefillin do not make a *berachah* on them, indicating that they are putting them on only out of the doubt that there might be an obligation on Chol HaMoed. Consequently, those who do not put on tefillin at all are not in open dispute with the tefillin wearers.

Based on these and other reasons the prevalent custom in most locations in America, at least, was not to be concerned if the minyan on Chol HaMoed consisted of a mixture of some people wearing tefillin and others not. This is especially relevant for weekday davening when people often choose a shul based on location and on finishing time. The rules of *lo sigdodedu* do not apply and they can all daven together. And as stated above, this reasoning is necessary in all cases where they daven in the same shul – including when they are on two sides of a mechitzah or in different rooms in the same building.³

Although we now can understand how people with the differing customs can daven in the same shul, we are left with the final issue of whether there is any advantage at all over segregating the two groups in the shul if anyway we have to rely on the *Poskim* who disagree with the *Mishnah Berurah* to have both groups daven in the same shul. I asked this question of the Rosh

³ The exception would be in a minyan that has a strong custom one way or the other – for example a Sephardi minyan where no one at all wears tefillin or a German kehillah where everyone wears tefillin. In that case, someone davening there would have to adhere to the custom of the place, not so much because of *lo sigdodedu*, but rather because of the rule that you have to follow the *minhag hamakom*.

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HaYeshivah, HaGaon HaRav Ruderman z"l when the yeshivah began to separate the tefillin wearers from the non-tefillin wearers with a *mechitzah*. He explained to me that when no one is *makpid*, i.e. no one minds, there is no problem with everyone sitting together. But if there are *makpidim*, then you have to separate the two groups. When no one cared about the groups sitting together, everyone sat together in the bais hamedrash of the yeshiva; but when some people were *makpid*, he allowed them to set up the *mechitzah*.⁴

I am not sure if this is what the Rosh HaYeshivah meant, but perhaps the following is the reasoning behind the difference where or not there is a *makpid*. As we have explained above, just by having both groups daven together in the same building at the same time we must accept one or more of the opinions that dispute the *chumra* of the *Mishnah Berurah* regarding the principle of *lo siggededu*. But when someone is *makpid*, another issue becomes relevant: the Mishnah in *Pesachim* that states (50b): *ואל ישנה אדם מפני מהחלוקת*, *One should not deviate [from the local custom] because of the conflict [that could ensue.]* This rule teaches that when someone is visiting a place with a certain custom, he must follow it even though it is not his personal custom. This has nothing to do with *lo siggededu*, but is rather based on the desire to avoid conflict. Now, as long as no one minds, there is nothing wrong with having everyone daven together according to the views that hold that *lo siggededu* does not apply in these cases. But if there are people in the minyan who are *makpid* that the people who wear tefillin should sit separately from those who don't, they force the tefillin wearers

⁴ Note that the Rosh HaYeshivah himself was not *makpid* and that is why everyone originally sat together. והמבין יבין.

to sit separately in order to avoid conflict. [See *Eishel Avraham* ibid. for similar reasoning.]⁵

How is this different than all the cases listed above – tefillin of Rabbeinu Tam, tallis of the German custom, *gartelach*, and hats and jackets? The difference is that in all these cases no one is *makpid* so there is no reason to segregate the people with differing customs. However, if there would be a *kehillah* that is *makpid* that everyone wears a tallis, or a *shteibel* where everyone must don a *gartel*, etc. one would have to adhere to the local custom or sit out of view, so as not to cause conflict. For some reason (perhaps from misreading the *Mishnah Berurah*?) in our times it is more prevalent for people to be *makpid* about tefillin on Chol HaMoed, so those shuls must resort to a *mechitzah* or separate minyanim. But how much nicer would it be if we would learn not to be *makpid* about something as innocuous as a custom to wear or not to wear tefillin on Yom Tov? Then, everyone could sit in their normal positions, and the shuls would

⁵ The *Mishnah Berurah* himself in the beginning of §8 explains the *Rama's* ruling not to make the *berachah* out loud for this reason. That is, since some people put on tefillin and some don't, and some who do wear them do not make a *berachah*, one should not make a *berachah* aloud מהלוקת כדי שלא לבוא לידי מחלוקת. [It is interesting that *Mishnah Berurah* seems to acknowledge here that one might be wearing tefillin among people who are not. This is especially so since the source of this explanation is *Elya Rabbah*, and there he states only that there is a difference among people whether or not to make the *berachah*.] *Mishnah Berurah* concludes there that one should not make a *berachah* at all.

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not have to do somersaults for people to be able to daven properly on Chol HaMoed.⁶

⁶ We promised above to further examine the *Malbim*, which is the source of the *Mishnah Berurah's* ruling. He cites the *Acharonim* in §493 who apply the prohibition of *lo sisgodedu* to people's customs. The issue in §493 is the varying customs regarding when to refrain from taking a haircut during the days of *sefirah*. The *Rama* rules there that all of the people of a city should keep the same custom; for some to keep the first days with others the second days would be a breach of *lo sisgodedu*. [Presumably, the *Rama* does not issue the same ruling regarding tefillin on Chol HaMoed because he holds that everyone is supposed to wear them.] This further demonstrates that if *lo sisgodedu* were to apply to tefillin on Chol HaMoed, it would not help to erect a *mechitzah* because that would be no better than people on different streets in a city, some with haircuts and some without. Once again, we must say that the *Poskim* do not accept that this constitutes a violation for the reasons cited above. But one wonders if because of *hakpadah* there is reason to make a separation for tefillin, why is there no such *hakpadah* in a case where the *Rama* rules definitively that there is a *lo sisgodedu* problem? In other words, why don't people go around protesting those who take haircuts at different times in the same city? If no one minds haircuts, perhaps it would be better if no one would be *makpid* about whether or not one's neighbor is wearing tefillin on Chol Hamoed.

“Splitting” the *Yam Suf*

Chaim Sugar

[The following *dvar Torah* was told over by HaRav Shmuel Vitzik zt”l in the name of HaRav Yehoshua Leib Diskind, zt”l.]

As the Bnei Yisrael were about to cross the *Yam Suf*, the *pasuk* tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu raised his hands and (*Shemos* 14:21): וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם, *the waters split*. Chazal (*Bereishis Rabbah* 55:8 and *Shemos Rabbah* 21:8) tell us that the Bnei Yisrael merited וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם, *the waters split* because at the time of the *akeidah* the *pasuk* states regarding Avraham Avinu (*Bereishis* 22:3): וַיִּבְקַע עֲצֵי עֹלָה, *he split the wood for the offering*. Obviously the Chazal meant more than the similarity of the words בקיעה, *splitting*.

We know that if someone needs to carry an object that weighs fifty pounds, it is easier to carry it if it is in one piece than to break it up into pieces and then carry it. For example, if one wants to transport a log that weighs fifty pounds, it is easier to transport it while it is one piece than to first chop it onto pieces and then move it.

When Avraham was getting ready to travel to the location of the *akeidah*, he got up in the morning, prepared his donkey, and instead of taking a whole piece of wood with him, chopped the wood into pieces, making it that much more difficult for him to carry. Avraham did this because of his concern for Yitzchak. He understood that when they reached the location of the *akeidah*, Yitzchak would be anxious and would want to get it done as quickly as possible. Having to take the time at that point to chop the log into kindling would just add to Yitzchak’s anxiety. To

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avoid this, Avraham chopped up the log before he left home, which made it more difficult for him to carry the wood, but spared Yitzchak added anguish.

When the Bnei Yisrael crossed the *Yam Suf* the *pasuk* tells us וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם, *the waters split*. This means that the waters of the sea split completely, from one shore to the other, as soon as Nachshon took that first step into the water. Had the *nes* not happened that way, had the sea become dry step by step along the way, the Bnei Yisrael would be unsure if the next step would bring dry land or if the *nes* had ended and the rest of the sea would remain liquid. At every step there would have been the fear of the unknown; not knowing for certain if the sea would continue to dry up as they continued to walk to the other side.

Avraham was וַיִּבְקְעַ עֲלֶיהָ because of concern for Yitzchak, and because of his actions the Bnei Yisrael were *zocheh* to וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם. The Ribono Shel Olam split the sea from shore to shore because of his concern for the feelings of the Bnei Yisrael.

Distant Connections

Rabbi Avraham Yeshuah Rabenstein

The Torah relates the purpose of the *chut shel techeiless*, the string dyed blue proscribed for wear on the corners of one's garment (*Bamidbar* 15:39): וַזְכֹּרְתֶם אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹת ה' וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם, *and you shall remember all the commandments of Hashem and perform them.* The Gemara (*Menachos* 43a) explains that the remembrance is to be effected through the following process: a person is to look at this *techeiless* string and since *techeiless* is the color of the sea and the sea is the color of the sky and the sky is the color of the Divine Throne, upon gazing upon the *techeiless* the string of associations will be made and a person will be reminded of Hashem's presence and not come to sin. The question begs to be asked; if *techeiless* is blue and the Divine Throne is blue why not make the association directly to the Divine Throne without the intermediary steps? It is puzzling that the Rabbis should consider the intermediary steps of the association necessary.

The Gemara (*Berachos* 5a) advises that if one is troubled by his *yetzer hara* he should attempt involvement in Torah study to stave off its advances. If this is ineffective, he should recite Kerias Shema. If even this does not solve the problem, then remembering the day of one's death is a sure way to put the *yetzer hara* in its place. It seems that remembering the day of one's death is the most effective way to control the *yetzer hara*; if this is so why should one start with methods one and two? Why not resort directly to the most effective manner of *yetzer* control?

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When the Bnei Yisrael left Egypt they were privileged to see miracles of incredible proportion. The Chazal say (*Mechilta, Beshalach* §3): ראתה שפחה על הים מה שלא ראה יהזקאל וכל הנביאים: *A maidservant at the sea saw what even Yechezkel and all the prophets did not see.* The Divine revelation at the Yam Suf witnessed by Bnei Yisrael was greater than the revelations experienced by Israel's greatest prophets. This revelation was superseded by an even greater revelation at Sinai, a revelation regarding which Moshe testifies (*Devarim* 5:4): פָּנִים בְּפָנִים דִּבֶּר ה' : *face to face Hashem spoke to you from amidst the fire.* The Bnei Yisrael heard two commandments from the mouth (anthropomorphically speaking) of Hashem Himself. These commandments were (*Shemos* 20:2-3): אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיךָ... : *I am Hashem, your G-d... Thou shall have no other gods...*

It is amazing then to realize that not a full forty days after this most vivid and powerful of revelations, the Bnei Yisrael were able to turn their back on G-d and *chutzpah* of *chutzpahs* violate those very commandments that they had heard from Hashem personally. They worshiped the Golden Calf. Neither Yechezkel who experienced a lesser revelation than a maidservant at the Yam Suf, nor we who never seem to merit revelation have transgressed in such a glaring manner. How could these witnesses of the Divine glory sink so low?

The keys to unraveling the difficulties of the aforementioned issues seem to lay in some observations regarding our physical reality. There are certain physical sensations that can be experienced differently by the same people under varied circumstances. A few illustrations: I am lying on the beach on a balmy summer afternoon; the sun is high in the sky; it warms

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me; and I appreciate the light it provides. The same sun is suddenly shining through my bedroom window at midnight; I scrunch my eyes shut; cover my face; and turn away. I am sitting in my living room listening to a symphony on my stereo system; the tempo of the music mounts reaching a crescendo in the clash of cymbals; I revel in the beauty of it. The same cymbals shock me out of a reverie as I am working on my taxes late one evening; I am startled and cover my ears against the abrasive din. Why am I affected differently in scenario one and two by the same sensory experiences?

I posit that it is because the period preceding the experience and my preparedness to appreciate them differs. When the sun rises in the morning and makes its way across the sky I have time to adjust to the light, to process its effects and ultimately to enjoy it. As the music builds I am given time to anticipate the peak toward which I making a sensory climb. But the same experience suddenly intruding upon a peaceful moment when unanticipated can illicit negative reactions. Shock treatment has its value. If the abrasive sound that startles me out of my reverie is a fire alarm, as unpleasant as it might be, it is necessary. When a person is enticed by sin sometimes the only way to control the urge is a stark reminder of man's mortality.

When Hashem took Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt, it was at a time, we are told by Chazal, that they were flirting with the ultimate level of impurity, a level that had they fallen to they could not have risen from. Crises means were necessary to extract the Bnei Yisrael from a situation where they risked slipping below the surface of Egyptian culture. So deeply were the people mired in the idolatry of Egypt that at the banks of the Yam Suf when Hashem purposed to save the Bnei Yisrael form the Egyptian

hosts, the ministering Angel who always agitate for undeserved Divine mercy said to Hashem (*Midrash Tehillim* §15; *Yalkut Reuveni, Beshalach*): הללו עובדי עבודה זרה והללו עובדי עבודה זרה, [*Why save them?*] *these (the Egyptians) are idolaters, and these (the Jews) are idolaters.*

Hashem performed miracles of incredible proportions for the Bnei Yisrael at the Yam Suf to instill in them the faith that was necessary for them to become Hashem's Chosen People; but the miracles and the subsequent revelation at Sinai were undeserved. Chazal understand the *pesukim* in *Yechezkel* (16:7): ואתָ עָרִים וְעָרְיָהּ, *You were bare and naked*, as a reference to Hashem seeing the Bnei Yisrael in Egypt bare of merit. To instill faith, the miracles and revelation were necessary, true; but unearned and unprepared the miracles were dangerous. A people unused to the blinding light of Divine presence and intense relationship with Hashem that they were experiencing were likely not to fully appreciate the opportunity granted, they were even likely to shy away, to fear the intensity of direct Divine communication. The first indication of this fear was the request the Bnei Yisrael made of Moshe to be Hashem's intermediary and tell them what Hashem had to say because of their fear that the consequence of direct Divine Communication would be their death. When Moshe, their screen so-to-speak was gone (late in coming down from the mountain), they turned away completely and worshiped the Golden Calf in incredible defiance of the first two commandments that they had heard directly from Hashem.

When sin is upon a person and crisis measures are necessary because nothing less will stave off the yetzer, the remembering the day of one's death may be the only way to triumph over sin. But remembering the day of one's death as a defense mechanism

is risky: if used too often it can lead to desensitization; it is an appeal to low-level fear of Divine retribution (see *Rambam, Hil. Teshuvah* 9:1). The first line of defense is immersion in the study of Torah, designed to enhance man's relationship with Hashem, educate him as to the evils of sin and improve him as a person. This is an immersion that requires work and does not see immediate results; but its ultimate value is greater for the reason that it requires effort; its results are earned and have permanence. The prophets of Israel were, despite lesser revelations, greater than the "maidservants at the sea," because of the effort they exerted to achieve their prophecy. The ladder climbed in "prophet school" (see *Radak to I Samuel* 10:5) to merit Divine communication consisted of eleven almost insurmountable rungs beginning in Torah (see *Avodah Zarah* 20b), the foundation for all self improvement.

Let us return to the process of identifying the *techeiless* with Divine Throne. Why not, we asked, make a direct associate of indigo string to sapphire throne? Perhaps because it is precisely that process of indirect association, the process of arriving at identification with He Who resides above, through step-by-step graduated reflection that will yield the most meaningful connection possible, a recognition whose effects are earned and lasting.

shrewdly with them, lest they increase, and a war befalls us, and they join our enemies and depart from the land."

There was another lie that Pharaoh was telling. This lie he was feeding to his own people: Pharaoh himself being a god (which he eventually believed himself). We see this from the following *pesukim* in the Torah. Hashem told Moshe (*Vayeira* 7:15): לָךְ אֵל הִנֵּה יֵצֵא הַמַּיִמָּה בַּבֹּקֶר בְּפָרְעֹה בְּבַקֵּר הַיּוֹם, *Go to Pharaoh in the morning, behold, as he goes forth to the water.* Rashi, quoting *Midrash Tanchuma*, says on this *pasuk*: הִנֵּה יֵצֵא הַמַּיִמָּה: לְנַקְבֵי, שֶׁהִיָּה עוֹשֶׂה, וְעִצְמוֹ אֱלוֹהַּ וְאוֹמֵר שֶׁאֵינוֹ צָרִיךְ לְנַקְבֵי וּמִשְׁכִּים וְיוֹצֵא לְנִילוֹס וְעוֹשֶׂה שֶׁמֶ צְרִכּוֹ, *Behold, he is going forth to the water: to relieve himself, for he had deified himself and said that he did not need to relieve himself; so, early in the morning he went out to the Nile and there he would perform his needs.*

Furthermore, when the Torah describes Pharaoh's dream to us, the following language is used (*Bereishis* 41:1): וּפָרְעֹה חָלַם וַהֲגִיהַ: *Pharaoh was dreaming, and behold, he was standing over/on top of the Nile.* On this *pasuk* the *Midrash Rabbah* comments: *The wicked see themselves as standing over their gods, as it says, "And Pharaoh dreamed; and, behold, he stood over the river" (the Nile being the arch idol of Egypt). But as for the righteous, their G-d stands over them, as it says (regarding Jacob's dream), "Behold, G-d stood over him" (Genesis 28:13).* Pharaoh, thus, saw himself greater than the "divine" Nile river. Yet, when Pharaoh met Yoseph and retold his dream, he said (*Bereishis*, 41:17): בְּחֶלְמֵי הַנְּגִי עָמַד עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּרְדֵן, *In my dream, behold, I am standing on the bank of the Nile.* How do we account for this discrepancy?

The answer is that just by seeing the face of a *tzaddik*, Pharaoh humbled himself. He no longer saw himself above the Nile, but

standing at its bank. Yoseph was able to bring Pharaoh back to reality. The *kedushah* shining from Yoseph was able to ground Pharaoh back to his earthly reality. Furthermore, after Yoseph interpreted the dream, Pharaoh said (Ibid., 41:38): וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֵל עֲבַדְיָו הֲנִמְצָא כֹהֵן אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ *Will we find [anyone] like this, a man in whom there is the spirit of God (Elokim)?*¹

Here Pharaoh acknowledges and even speaks out the name of Hashem. A 180-degree change in Pharaoh's attitude towards seeing himself as a deity, after just a single meeting with Yoseph! We have learned in *Bava Metzia* (84a) that the radiance of Yaakov Avinu resembled the radiance of Adam HaRishon. Additionally, it states in *Parshas Vayeishev* (37:3) that Yisrael loved Yoseph more than all of his sons, since he was a child of his old age. Rashi comments on this by saying that the splendor of Yoseph's appearance resembled that of Yaakov's. We can deduce, therefore, that the radiance and appearance of Yosef HaTzaddik bore a resemblance to that of Adam HaRishon. It is through this radiance that Yoseph was able to have a profound effect on Pharaoh's psyche and self-perception.

This reality, however, did not last forever. The Torah tells us (*Shemos* 1:8): וַיָּקָם מֶלֶךְ חָדָשׁ עַל מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדָע אֶת יוֹסֵף, *A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know about Joseph.* On this *pasuk*, Rashi comments: ויקם מלך חדש: רב ושמואל חד אמר חדש ממש, וחד אמר שנתחדשו גזרותיו *A new king arose: [There is a controversy between] Rav and Shmuel. One says: He was really new, and the other one says: His decrees were new. Since the Torah does not say: The king of Egypt died, and a new king arose, it implies that the old king was still alive, only that his*

¹ See pg. 2 for another approach to this question.

policies had changed, and he acted like a new king. [Rashi to Sotah 11a; see Gemara there and Shemos Rabbah 1:8].

עשה עצמו כאלו לא ידע: אשר לא ידע: And who did not know: [means that] he acted as if he did not know about Yoseph.

According to either opinion, this was a turning point for Pharaoh. Something happened that made Pharaoh (brand-new or renewed) change his mind about the Jewish people. Something happened that made this Pharaoh act as if he did not know who Yoseph was and what Yoseph had contributed to the country. The answer comes from the preceding two *pesukim* (*Shemos*, 1:6-7):
וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף וְכָל אָחָיו וְכָל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא: וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצְמוּ
בְּמֵאֵד מְאֹד וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם *Now Yoseph died, as well as all his brothers and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful and swarmed and increased and became very very strong, and the land became filled with them.*

The Bnei Yisrael, the Torah states, multiplied בְּמֵאֵד מְאֹד, which is usually translated as “increasing very very much” or “a lot.” Another way of looking at this statement is that the Bnei Yisrael increased a lot בְּמֵאֵד, where this מְאֹד is the same as the one we say two times a day while reciting Shema, לְאֵלֵינוּ לְהַלְלוֹתְךָ וְלְשַׁבְּחֶךָ וְלִישְׁמְחֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּבְּחֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּמְּחֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּפְּאֵלֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּמְּדֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּפְּאֵלֶךָ וְלִישְׁתַּמְּדֶךָ. In that *pasuk* מְאֹד refers to one’s means, processions and money. Therefore, we can understand our *pasuk* above to refer to Bnei Yisrael increasing significantly in their processions and wealth. As we know all too well from our history, becoming wealthier than our immediate neighbors has never played in our favor. Furthermore, the last part of *Rashi* is telling us yet another very important part: that the humbling effect that Yoseph (and his brothers) had on Pharaoh had now faded. Pharaoh was now acting as if he did not know Yoseph. He was back to his usual routine of seeing himself as god.

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Therefore, when Pharaoh led his army into the sea, ignoring the great miracle staring him in the face, he was not pursuing the Jewish people; he was trying to attack Hashem. It was god and his followers, versus G-d and His people. Since in his own mind, and in the mind of his people, Pharaoh was god, he and his army blindly followed the Bnei Yisrael into the Yam Suf. While Yoseph and his brothers were alive they were able to subdue Pharaoh's lofty imagination. However, after their deaths, the Jewish people were not able to do the same, and thus Pharaoh and the *Mitzrim* reverted back to seeing Pharaoh as a divine being.

This explains the following statement that Hashem made to Moshe prior to *Keriyas Yam Suf* (*Shemos*, 14:4): וְאֶפְרָדָה בְּפָרְעֹה ה' וּבְכָל חֵילוֹ וְיָדְעוּ מִצְרַיִם כִּי אֲנִי ה' *I will be glorified through Pharaoh and through his entire army, and the Egyptians will know that I am G-d [and not Pharaoh].*

Multiple Miracles and *Kerias Yam Suf*

Dr. Michael Keidar

איתא בגמ' במעשה הידוע של פנחס בן יאיר (חולין ז.), הוה קאזיל לפדיון שבויין, פגע ביה בגינאי נהרא, אמר ליה גינאי חלוק לי מימך ואעבור בך... חלק ליה. אמר רב יוסף כמה נפיש גברא ממשה ושתין רבוון דאילו התם חד זימנא והכא תלתא זימנין, ודלמא הכא נמי חדא זימנא, אלא כמשה ושתין רבוון ע"כ. כמו כן מוצאים בגמרא הרבה ניסים שקרו לתנאים.

ברם הלא דבר פלא הוא אם מעשה הזה קרה לתנא כמו מה שקרה לכלל ישראל בקריעת ים סוף. והלא אנו זוכרים את קריעת ים סוף כנס גדול לדורות ואיך יכול להיות שאותו נס קרה ליחיד. והגם שהיה צדיק נפלא הלא לא היה יותר גדול ממשה רבינו וששים רבוא מישראל.

ואפשר לומר שקריעת ים סוף היה המעשה מסוגו שקרה פעם הראשונה. וכאשר דבר קרה פעם ראשונה בעולם מזה פותח שער ועושה רושם שיכול ליעשות עוד הפעם. ובמילים אחרות מעשה נס הוה מעין מעשה בראשית חדש. שכמו במעשה בראשית מה שעשה הקב"ה אז נמשך לדורות שעולם כמנהגו נוהג, כן כאשר נעשה נס אותו מאורע יכול למשוך לדורות. ולכן כיון שקרע הים פעם הראשונה בים סוף יש עכשיו יכולת ליקרע כמה פעמים בעתיד.

אלא עדיין צריכים להבין מהו ההבדל המשמעותי בין מעשה נס לטבע? והלא אומרים בברכת מודים, ועל הניסים שבכל יום עמנו ועל נפלאותיך וטובותיך שבכל עת, ע"כ. ואם אומרים שהניסים והנפלאות הם עמנו בכל עת, על כרחינו צריכים לומר שהניסים הם ניסים נסתרים, והנפלאות הם על פי דרכי הטבע וכולם הם חסדי ד'.¹ ואם כן מהו ההבדל בין נסים וטבע? אלא י"ל שזה שאנו קוראים טבע הם מעשים בכל יום ויום, וזה שאנו קוראים נס הם מעשים שרואים בפעם הראשונה. וזהו יסוד הדברים שבהם התחלנו. נס זה שאנו רואים פעם הראשונה הוא כמו מעשה

¹ See also above, pg. 24.

בראשת חדש. מה שהקב"ה מביא לעולם כהמשך למעשה בראשית.

אנחנו אומרים בקידוש "זכרון למעשה בראשית" וגם "זכר ליציאת מצרים". וצריכים להבין מה ענין שבת אצל יציאת מצרים. והלא שבת קביעא וקיימא מששת ימי בראשית הרבה שנים קודם יציאת מצרים. ואולי זהו היסוד שנזכרנו. הנסים של יציאת מצרים הם גם כן המשך וחלק ממעשה בראשית.

איתא בגמ' עוד שיש מחלוקת מתי נברא העולם (ר"ה י: -יא.), ר' אליעזר אומר בתשרי נברא העולם... ור' יהושע אומר בניסן נברא העולם, ע"כ. וי"ל לפי היסוד הנזכר שאלו ואלו דברי אלקים חיים. דאפשר לומר שניסן, עם כל הנסים שלו, הוא גם חלק ממעשה בראשית. ואם כן ר' אליעזר מדבר במעשה בראשית הראשון בזמן אדם הראשון, ור' יהושע מדבר בענין ההמשך של מעשה בראשית בנסי מצרים. וידוע מספרים שיש שייכות בין העשרה מאמרות והעשר מכות במצרים.

לשאלה האם יש המשך של מעשה בראשית יש עוד ראיות. למשל כותב רש"י (פ' יתרו יח, יג, ד"ה מן הבקר עד הערב), אפשר לומר כן, אלא כל דיין שדן דין אמת לאמיתו כאילו נעשה שותף להקב"ה במעשה בראשית, ע"כ. ואנו רואים שוב שמעשה בראשית נמשך בכל עת שעושים רצון ד'. וכן מביא האור גדליהו יסוד מהגר"א (פסח עמ' סו), ידוע כי כל המצוות הם זכר ליציאת מצרים, ואין הפירוש בזה שהוא זכר בעלמא אלא שבעת המצוה האדם זוכה לההערות שהיו בעת יציאת מצרים, ע"כ. והיינו שנסי מצרים היו כעין מעשה בראשית.

Note: להבדיל, there are several occurrences in this world that illustrate this concept. We will give an example from the history of scientific discoveries.

Multiple discovery is the concept that was promoted by Robert Merton (*The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, '73) among others. This is the hypothesis that most scientific discoveries are made almost simultaneously by multiple

scientists while at the same time being totally independent. The argument supporting this theory is quite straightforward. When Nobel laureates are announced there are two or even three rather than just a single laureate for the same award. Robert Merton, one of the leading sociologists, defined such multiple discoveries as instances in which scientists working independently of each other make similar scientific discoveries. He stated: "sometimes the discoveries are simultaneous or almost so; sometimes a scientist will make a new discovery which, unknown to him, somebody else has made years before." One of the best-known examples of multiple independent discoveries is independent formulation of calculus by Newton and Leibniz. Merton believed that it is multiple discoveries, rather than unique ones, that represent the *common* pattern in science.

The Sons of Yaakov Avinu

Dovid Boruch Keidar

The *pasuk* listing the names of the various sons of Yaakov who came down to Mitzrayim states (*Shemos* 1:3): יִשָּׂשכָר זְבֻלֹן וּבִינְיָמִן, *Yissachar, Zevulun, and Binyamin*. Why does the Torah mention these three sons in the same *pasuk*? It is understandable why Yissachar would be mentioned with Zevulun, since they were both sons of Leah. But why should Binyamin be mentioned with them?

Perhaps we can answer that it is because Yissachar and Zevulun were gifted to Leah when she gave the *dudaim* to Rochel. But *Rashi* explains there (*Vayetzei* 30:15) that as a result of Rochel trading Yaakov for the *dudaim*, she was not *zocheh* to be buried with him. Rochel died when she gave birth to Binyamin. So it

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comes out that the lives of both Yissachar and Zevulun together with Binyamin were affected by the story with the *dudaim*.

However, it can still be asked why Yosef is not mentioned in this *pasuk*? Yosef certainly should be mentioned together with Binyamin since they are the two sons of Rochel. This can be answered because the Torah here mentions only the sons who were now coming to Mitzrayim, and Yosef was already in Mitzrayim.

קריעת ים סוף ונחל קישון אבא צבי ניימאן

[א] כתיב במלחמת סיסרא (שופטים ד, יג) :

ויזעק סיסרא את כל רכבו תשע מאות רכב ברזל ואת כל העם אשר אתו מחרשת הגוים אל נחל קישון.

וצריכים להבין הענין שסיסרא הביא את כל רכבו דוקא לנחל קישון. וזה לא היה במקרה כמו שכתוב (שופטים ד, ו-ז) :

ותשלח [דבורה] ויקרא לברק בן אבינעם מקדש נפתלי ותאמר אליו הלא צוה ה' אלקי ישראל לך ומשכת בהר תבור... ומשכתי אליך אל נחל קישון את סיסרא שר צבא יבין ואת רכבו ואת המונו ונתתיהו בידך.

והיינו שרצה ה' שסיסרא וכל רכבו ינוצחו דוקא בנחל קישון. אמנם הטעם לזה מבואר בגמרא (פסחים ק"ח):

רבי נתן אומר (תהלים קיז, ב) "ואמת ה' לעולם" דגים שבים אמרוהו כדרב הונא, דאמר רב הונא ישראל שבאותו הדור מקטני אמנה היו, וכדדרש רבה בר מרי מאי דכתיב (תהלים קו, ז) "וימרו על ים בים סוף" מלמד שהמרו ישראל באותה שעה ואמרו כשם שאנו עולין מצד אחד כך מצריים עולים מצד אחר, אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לשר של ים פלוט אותן ליבשה, אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם כלום יש עבד שנותן לו רבו מתנה וחוזר ונוטל ממנו, אמר לו אתן לך אחד ומחצה שבהן, אמר לו רבונו של עולם יש עבד שתובע את רבו, אמר לו נחל קישון יהא לי ערב, מיד פלט אותן ליבשה ובאו ישראל וראו אותן שנאמר (שמות יד, ל) "וירא ישראל את מצריים מת על שפת הים", מאי אחד ומחצה שבהן, דאילו בפרעה כתיב "שש מאות רכב בחור" ואילו בסיסרא כתיב "תשע מאות רכב ברזל", כי אתא סיסרא [אתא עלייהו בדקרי

דפרזלא הוציא הקדוש ברוך הוא עליהם כוכבים ממסילותם דכתביב] (שופטים ה, כ) "מן שמים נלחמו הכוכבים" כיון דנחיתו כוכבי שמים עליהו אקדירו הני דקרי דפרזלא נחיתו לאקרורי למיסחי נפשייהו בנחל קישון, אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לנחל קישון לך והשלם ערבונך, מיד גרפם נחל קישון והשליכן לים שנאמר (שופטים ה, כא) "נחל קישון גרפם נחל קדומים" מאי נחל קדומים נחל שנעשה ערב מקדם, באותה שעה פתחו דגים של ים ואמרו "ואמת ה' לעולם".

ולמדנו מזה שבזמן קריעת ים סוף נעשה נחל קישון ערב להקב"ה על מה שפלט הים סוף את רכבי המצרים. ואם כן צריכים להבין הענין שנחל קישון דוקא נעשה ערב. וגם אם רכבי סיסרא הם משלימים לרכבי פרעה צריכים להיות דומים זה לזה, וצריכים להבין הקשר ביניהם.

בן וגם בשירת הים רואים שרש של ניצוח סיסרא בנחל קישון, דכתוב שם (שמות טו, א) "אשירה לה' כי גאה גאה, סוס ורוכבו רמה בים". והבעל הטורים שם דורש את תיבת "אשירה":

"אשירה", ג', הכא, ואידך "אנכי לה' אנכי אשירה" (שופטים ה, ג), כמו בכאן טבעו בים סוף, גם לשם נחל קישון גרפם, ואידך "אשירה נא לידידי שירת דודי לכרמו" (ישעיה ה, א) על שם "גפן ממצרים תסיע" (תהלים פ, ט).

וצריכים להבין השייכות דוקא לכרם וגפן בענין זה.¹

גן וכן מרמז הבעל הטורים עוד על הפסוק (שמות יד, כד) "ויהם את מחנה מצרים":

1 ויש לעיין עוד מה שכתוב שם בספר ישעיה "אשירה נא לידידי שירת דודי לכרמו... ויעזקהו ויסקלהו". ובמלחמת סיסרא כתיב "ויזעק סיסרא את כל רכבו", וכן (שופטים ד, י) "ויזעק ברק את זבולון ואת נפתלי קדשה". האם יש קשר בין "עזק" ל"זעק".

"ויהם" ב' במסורה, הכא, ואידך, (שופטים ד, טו) "ויהם ה' את סיסרא", לומר כמו שבכאן היה עמוד הענן יורד ומלחלח את הקרקע ועושהו טיט, ועמוד האש מרתיחו, והיו טלפי סוסיהן מתמוטטות, כך היה בסיסרא.²

וצריכים להבין ענין המכה לסוסי מצרים וסיסרא.

סיסרא ומצרים

מכל הנ"ל נראה שמלחמת סיסרא היתה הגמר של ניצוח מצרים על הים סוף. ונעמיק בהקשר בין המלחמות. כותב הרב יהונתן אייבשיץ (אהבת יהונתן, הפטרת בשלח ד"ה אז הלמו):

תשע מאות רכב ברזל של סיסרא הם אשר נשארים מרכבי פרעה, דעדיין היה כח לשר של מצרים, ושר של מצרים היה סוס, כאמרו (שיר השירים א, ט) "לסוסתי ברכבי פרעה", וכאן נהרגו כל רכב פרעה.³

² וכן כותב רש"י (שופטים ה, כב), "הלמו עקבי סוס", נשתלפו טלפי סוסיהם שהיה חום הכוכב מרתיח את הטיט והצפורן נשמטה.

³ ועי' דבריו ביערות דבש (דרוש ב עמ' מה מהדורת מכון ירושלים):
הענין להבין למה יוכבד שהשלימה מנין השבעים נולדה במצרים דוקא, ובכל יוצאי חלציו של יעקב לא היתה נקבה רק יוכבד... אבל דע כי שבעים נפש הן נגד שבעים שרים שבמרכבה שהן שבעים לשון של שבעים אומות, ונגדם הן שבעים נפש לבית יעקב, ודע כי יש מלאכים דוכרין ויש מלאכים נוקבין עלמות תופפות כנודע, ועיין ברית מנוחה שהאריך בזה. וכל שבעים שרים כולם דוכרין חוץ משרו של מצרים שהוא נקבה ולכך כתיב ביה "ערות הארץ" ומצרים מלא זימה וגם מלא כשפים כי זהו הכל בנוקבא כנודע... וזהו שאמרו במדרש (ילקוט שמעוני ח"ב רמז תקסה), "לסוסתי ברכבי פרעה" שנדמה לפרעה השר כסוס אחד נקבה, כי שר שלו היה נקבה... ונגד שר הלזה היו ביוצאי חלציו של יעקב במנין שבעים גם כן נקבה והיא יוכבד.
וזה גם לשיטתו ששר של מצרים הוא כנגד סוס. אבל מוסיף שהוא סוס נקבה דוקא. ואם כן מובן איך בהשלמת מלחמת ים סוף נהרג סיסרא על ידי נקבה.

ואם כן מובן הרמז של הבעל הטורים שדוקא סוס סיסרא נענשו בנחל קישון, כי סוס הוא שרש כחו של מצרים.

ולהבין הקשר ביתר עומק יש להביא המדרש (ויקרא רבה ז, ו):

נימוס קילוסים הוא שכל המתגאה אינו נדון אלא באש וכו', פרעה הרשע על ידי שנתגאה ואמר (שמות ה, ב) "מי ה' אשר אשמע בקולו" לא נדון אלא באש (שמות ט, כד) "ויהי ברד ואש מתלקחת", סיסרא הרשע על ידי שנתגאה ולחץ את ישראל כמה דכתיב (שופטים ד, ג) "והוא לחץ את בני ישראל בחזקה" מהו בחזקה בחרופין וגדופין, לא נדון אלא באש "הכוכבים ממסלותם נלחמו"⁴.

ומבאר הבאר משה, כמו ששרש טומאת מצרים היא הגאווה, כך סיסרא בא בחרופין וגדופין, ע"כ. והיינו שניצוח סיסרא היה על גאותו של פרעה שלא נשלם על ידי קריעת ים סוף. ועל כן גם גאותו של סיסרא נפסקה על ידי נחל קישון. וכבר ראינו שבשרש המלחמה כתיב "אשירה לה' כי גאה גאה..." והיינו שגאות האמיתי אינו אלא בה'.

ובזה מובן גם כן למה דוקא הסוס של פרעה וסיסרא נענשו, דאיתא בגמרא (פסחים קיג:):

ששה דברים נאמרים בסוס, אוהב את הזנות, ואוהב את המלחמה, ורוחו גסה, ומואס הא השינה, אוכל הרבה,

⁴וע"ע במכילתא (שמות טו, א):

"כי גאה גאה" מתגאה הוא על המתגאים, שבמה שאומות העולם מתגאים לפניו בו הוא נפרע מהם וכו', וכן אתה מוצא במצרים שבמה שנתגאו לפניו בו נפרע מהם, שנאמר "ויקח שש מאות רכב בחור" וגו', "מרכבות פרעה וחילו ירה בים" וכן בסיסרא שבמה שנתגאה בו נפרע ממנו, שנאמר "ויזעק סיסרא את כל רכבו תשע מאות רכב" וגו' וכתוב "מן שמים נלחמו".

וגם כאן רואים שהמשך של קליפת סיסרא הוא בכח הגאות.

ומוציא קמעה, ויש אומרים אף מבקש להרוג בעליו במלחמה. והיינו שלסוס יש רוח גסה, וכן כותב הגר"א (ישעיה ב, ח), הכבוד הוא מרוח גבוהה, וכנגדן הסוס גאה שבבהמות, ואמרו (שבת קנב). רכב על סוס מלך, ע"כ.⁵ וכיון שגאות של פרעה לא נתקן עדיין על ידי הריגת שש מאות סוס שלו, דבר זה נשלם על ידי הריגת תשע מאות סוס של סיסרא.

גפן

באות ב' ראינו קשר לשירה שלישי של "אשירה נא לידידי שירת דודי לכרמו" (ישעיה ה, א) על שם "גפן ממצרים תסיע" (תהלים פ, ט). ולפי דרכינו מובן השייכות לשירה זו כאן. כי המדרש מבאר למה נמשל ישראל לגפן בשעת יציאת מצרים (ויקרא רבה לו, ב):

"גפן ממצרים תסיע" ... מה הגפן הזו נמוכה מכל האילנות ושולטת בכל האילנות כך הם ישראל נראים כאלו שפלים בעולם הזה אבל לעתיד לבא הן עתידין לירש מסוף העולם ועד סופו... מה הגפן הזו יש בה אשכלות גדולות וקטנות הגדול מחבירו נראה כאלו נמוך מחבירו כך ישראל כל מי שאחד מהם יגע בתורה וגדול מחבירו בתורה נראה נמוך מחבירו... מה גפן זו בתחלה היא נרפסת ברגל ואחר כך עולה לשולחן מלכים כך ישראל נראין כאלו מאוסין בעולם הזה דכתיב (איכה ג, יד) "הייתי שחוק לכל עמי נגינתם כל היום" אבל לעתיד לבא "ונתנך ה' עליון" דכתיב (ישעיה מט, כג) "והיו מלכים אומניך ושרותיהם מניקותיך", מה גפן זו עולה על כל מסע ומסע כך ישראל סופרין על כל מלכות... מה גפן זה נשענת על גבי עצים יבשים והיא לחה כך ישראל נשענין בזכות אבותם אף על פי שהן ישנין הדא הוא דכתיב (ויקרא כו, מב) "וזכרתי את בריתי יעקב".

⁵ועי' ספר נשמט כל חי שכותב:

סוס מסמל ענין הגאווה כמו שנאמר "כי גאה גאה סוס ורוכבו" וביאר האר"י הקדוש כי "עון" עולה כמנין קכ"ו ואם תחתוך לשנים כל אחד מספרו ג"ס, ושני פעמים מספר ג"ס הוא "סוס" וזהו שידיעת שניהם משכחת "עון".

והיינו שגפן הוא תיקון לגאותו של סוס. שהגפן היא שפלה מכל האילנות, וכן האשכול הגדול אינו מתגאה אלא נראה נמוך מחבירו, וכן הגפן בתחילתה הכל דורסים עליה, והכח של הגפן בא ממה שסומך על גבי עצים יבשים. וכן ישראל אינו מתגאה על זכותו אלא משפיל את עצמו ותולה הכל על זכות אבות. ואם כן השירה של הגפן ראוי להתחבר עם שירת הים סוף ושירת דבורה על מפלת הגאים נגד ה'. ונגד מה שכתב הגר"א מהגמרא שהרוכב על סוס הוא מלך, בגפן מה שבתחילה דורסים על הגפן גורם שלבסוף עולה על שלחן מלכים דוקא.⁶

קישון

ועכשיו יכולים להבין הענין של נחל קישון. שהרמ"ד וואלי מבאר (שופטים ה) שנחל קישון הוא מלשון קיש קיש. ואפשר לפרש על פי יסודו (כי לו יש דרך אחרת על פי קבלה⁷) דאיתא בגמרא (בבא מציעא פה:)

אמר רב חמא, מאי דכתיב (משלי יד, לג) "בלב נבון תנוח חכמה ובקרב כסילים תודע", "בלב נבון תנוח חכמה" זה תלמיד חכם בן תלמיד חכם, "ובקרב כסילים תודע" זה תלמיד חכם בן עם הארץ, אמר עולא היינו דאמרי אינשי אסתירא בלגינא קיש קיש קריא.⁸

⁶ ובשמות רבה (מד, א) איתא, מה הגפן היא חיה ונשענת על עצים מתים כך ישראל הם חיים וקיימים ונשענין על המתים אלו האבות וכן אתה מוצא כמה תפלות התפלל אליהו בהר הכרמל שתרד האש, ע"כ. ונראה למטה איך מעשה אליהו בהר הכרמל גם כן שייך לנחל קישון.

7 ז"ל שם, "נחל קישון גרפם" לפי שבכח הערכות הורידם עד לנוקבא דתהומא רבא שהוא סוד גרף של רעי, וזהו לשון "גרפם", גם "נחל קישון" סוד המלכות שנקראת כך מלשון קיש קיש מפני שהיא הדלת שהכל מקישינ עליה, והיא נקמה את נקמתה מאויביה בכח אי' דאזיפת מנאה לברתא, ע"כ.

⁸ ועי' גם בילקוט שמעוני (משלי טו, רמז תתקנג):
שפתי חכמים יורו דעת, אלו ישראל שעשו זר לארון. ולב כסילים לא כן,
אלו המושפעים ביותר שאין להם דברי תורה, חזקיה אמר אסתירא
בלגינא קיש קיש קריא.

ומפרש רש"י שם, "תודע", מודיע לכל ומתפאר בכתרה, ע"כ. והיינו שלשון קיש קיש הוא רמז לענין גאות וגאווה. ומבאר הרמח"ל במפסידו מדת הענוה (מסילת ישירים פרק כג):

כי תראה שאין הגאווה מצויה יותר אלא במי שסכל יותר, ורז"ל אמרו (שבת לג.) סימן לגסות הרוח עניות התורה. וכן אמרו (זהר ח"ג קצג:) סימן דלא ידע כלום שבוחי. ואמרו עוד (ב"מ פה:) אסתרא בלגינא קיש קיש קריא. עוד אמרו (בראשית רבה טז, ג), שאלו לאילני סרק מפני מה קולכם נשמע, אמרו הלואי יהיה קולנו נשמע ונזכר.

וכן כותב הרב צדוק הכהן (צדקת הצדיק פה):

כשאדם חושב בנפשו שעשה הרבה בעבודת ה' ידע שלא נגע בה כלום כמו שאמרו (קידושין מט:) סימן לגסות הרוח עניות, דתורה כי אסטירא בלגינא קיש קריא מה שאין כן כיס מלא, וכן איתא בזוהר (ח"ג קצג:) סימן דלא ידע כלום שבוחי, ולא דוקא שבוחי וגסות בפני הבריות רק גם בינו לבין עצמו ובלבו בלבד [כי עיקר הגאווה בלבו לבד וכמו שנאמר (משלי טז, ה) גבה לב] כשסבור כן. וקין הקריב דבר גרוע וחשב שעשה עבודה גדולה שלכך חרה לו שלא נתקבל.⁹

ומכל הנ"ל יכולים לומר שנחל קישון, שהוא מלשון קיש קיש, הוא מקום שנתפסים על עניני גאווה. ואם כן דוקא שם נלכדו חיילי סיסרא וסוסיו הממשיכים גיאות מצרים.

ויש להוסיף ענין אחר, שמפרש הערבי נחל בענין הוויכוח בין מיכל בת שאול ודוד המלך כאשר החזיר את ארון הקדוש למקומו (פרשת בראשית ד"ה ויוצא):

9 ובוה יש רמז גם לנצחון סיסרא על ידי אשת חבר הקיני, הבא מקין.

וכראות מיכל אותו מפזז ומכרכר בפני כל העם אמרה לו שלא יפה עשה שנגלה במדריגת ענוה שלו לפני האמהות תפסה המדריגה הפחותה איך שבפני כולם נגלה כאשר נגלה אחד הריקים באיזה מדה טובה שבו דאיסתרא בלגינא קיש קיש קריא, והשיב לה שאני מפזז ומכרכר לפני ה' אשר בחר בי מאביך כו', ור"ל, שאין ראוי לגלות כל מדריגה הטוב שבי אין הכי נמי כי (שמואל-ב ו, כב) "ונקלתי עוד מזאת והייתי שפל בעיני", לא כמו שאתה סבור שזה הדבר שראית ממני הוא תכלית מדריגת ענוה שלי, אלא כי בעיני אני שפל עוד יותר.¹⁰

והיינו שמיכל טענה שדוד המלך נתגאה כאחד מהריקים, ועל זה השיב דוד המלך שבאמת הוא שפל ובתכלית הענוה. ומיכל היא בת שאול בן קיש, שהיה בתכלית הענוה (ע"ש) והיה מתגבר על שום פגם של קיש קיש. ובאמת מענותותו היתירה של שאול המלך שלא הרג אגג מלך עמלק נשתלשל המן הרשע, וראינו במאמר על עיר חצור איך שבאו סיסרא והמן משרש אחד. ואם כן גם בזה יש שייכות של נחל קישון לחיילי סיסרא.

ונסיים בנקודה אחרת בענין נחל קישון. באלשיך הק' מוצאים דבר נפלא בענין נחל קישון, וז"ל על הפסוק בשירת דבורה "נחל קישון גרפם נחל קדומים נחל קישון תדרכי נפשי עד":

כי הנה נחל קדומים שבכריאת עולם הנעשה לארבעה ראשים

¹⁰וכן כותב התפארת שלמה (שם ו, כ):

וזהו שכתוב "כהגלות נגלות אחד הריקים" כי כן הוא דרך הריקים והפחותים אם עושה איזה מצוה הנה הוא עושה לעיני כל כדי לעשות לו שם כמו שכתב החכם (משלי יח, ב) "אין חפץ לכסיל בחכמה כי אם בהתגלות לבו". וזה שאמרה לשון "ריקים" שהאנשים האלה הם ריקים מתורה ומצוות ולכך איסתרא בלגינא קיש קיש קריא. אבל שאול המלך היה צנוע מאד בכל מעשיו כנודע.

היה זה נחל קישון,¹¹ בהיות נחל קטון שבלי גשר יעברו ברגל, כי "תדרכי נפשי" כי בעצמי הייתי דורך בו ועובר, עתה נמצא בו "עוז" לעזרנו את כל אלו.

והיינו שנחל קישון הוא הנחל שכתוב בה (בראשית ב, י) "ונהר יוצא מעדן להשקות את הגן ומשם יפרד והיה לארבעה ראשים". ורואים שבשרש התחלת בריאת העולם היה צורך לנחל קטון, שדוקא ממנו יצא כל השפע לעולם. ואם מתגאים שלא כדין אז נחל קישון עומד להכרית הגאים מן העולם.

זכינו להבין קצת מענין הנורא של נחל קישון בנוגע למלחמת סיסרא. אבל מוצאים נחל קישון בסוגיא אחרת בנ"ך, בענין אליהו ונביאי הבעל בהר הכרמל. דכתיב שם (מלכים-א יח, מ), "ויאמר אליהו להם תפשו את נביאי הבעל איש אל למלט מהם, ויתפשו ויורדם אליהו אל נחל קישון וישחטם שם". וצריכים להבין למה הוריד אליהו את נביאי הבעל דוקא לנחל קישון. ובס"ד נעיין בזה במאמר בפני עצמו בענין הר הכרמל.

הר תבור

ועכשיו נוסיף ענין אחר במלחמת סיסרא. שכמו שראינו בתחילת דברינו איך הקב"ה רצה שסיסרא יפול דוקא בנחל קישון, כן מוצאים שרצה הקב"ה שניצוח ברק בן אבינעם יהיה על הר תבור. שכתוב שם (שופטים ד, ו), "ותאמר אליו, הלא צוה ה' אלקי ישראל לך ומשכת בהר תבור..." ודוקא כשהגידו לסיסרא (שם ד, יב-יג), "כי עלה ברק בן אבינעם הר תבור, ויזעק סיסרא את כל רכבו תשע מאות רכב ברזל ואת כל העם אשר אתו מחרשת הגוים אל נחל קישון". וכן במלחמה עצמה כתיב (שם יד-טו) "וירד ברק מהר תבור ועשרת אלפים איש אחריו, ויהם ה' את סיסרא". ומשמע שנצחון ברק בא מהר תבור. וצריכים להבין חשיבותו של הר הזה. וצריכים להבין הקשר בין הר תבור לנחל קישון.

11 ורש"י על הפסוק כותב שנקרא נחל קדומים שנעשה ערב על זה מימות מצרים ע"ש. וזה מדברי הגמרא בפסחים שהובא לעיל.

אבל לפי דברינו שנחל קישון הוא המקום להפיל הגאים שמוצאים קול של קיש קיש, ענין זה מובן היטב. דאיתא בגמרא (מגילה כט.):

דרש בר קפרא מאי דכתיב (תהילים סח, יז), "למה תרצדון הרים גבנונים", יצתה בת קול ואמרה להם למה תרצו דין עם סיני, כולכם בעלי מומים אתם אצל סיני, כתיב הכא "גבנונים" וכתיב התם (ויקרא כא, כ) "או גבן או דק", אמר רב אשי שמע מינה האי מאן דיהיר בעל מום הוא.

והיינו שהר תבור נחשב לבעל גאווה. וכן איתא בגמרא אחרת (סוטה ה.), אמר רב יוסף, לעולם ילמד אדם מדעת קונו, שהקב"ה הניח כל הרים וגבעות והשרה שכירתו על הר סיני, ע"כ. ורואים שהחסרון של כל ההרים, ובפרט הר תבור, הוא דוקא הגאות שלהם.

וכן איתא במדרש (במדבר רבה יג, ג):

דבר אחר, (משל' כט, כג) "גאות אדם תשפילנו" זה תבור וכרמל שבאו מסוף העולם מתגאים לומר שאנו גבוהים ועלינו הקב"ה נותן את התורה, "ושפל רוח יתמך כבוד" זה סיני שהשפיל את עצמו לומר שאני נמוך, ועל ידי כך תמך הקב"ה כבודו עליו ונתנה עליו התורה וזכה לכל הכבוד הזה, כמה דתימא (שמות יט, כ) "וירד ה' על הר סיני".¹²

¹²ועי' גם מדרש תנחומא (עקב ג):

דבר אחר (ישעיה ב, ב) "נכון יהיה הר בית ה' בראש ההרים" והר תבור יהיה גבוה מאד, משל למה הדבר דומה, לבני פלטרין של מלך שירדו מן העיר והרגו אריות ודובים ונמרים ביער והביאום לעיר ותלו אותן כנגד שער העיר וכל בני העיר היו תמיהין מאותן אריות, והקב"ה כך עשה בסיסרא, בא סיסרא על ישראל בהר תבור, "מן השמים נלחמו הכוכבים ממסלותם" נלחמו עם סיסרא, התחילו הכל תמהים שמעולם לא היה כמעשה הזה שירדו כוכבים מן השמים לעשות מלחמה עם בשר ודם, ואמר הקב"ה בעולם הזה הכוכבים נלחמו בשבילכם אבל לעתיד לבא (זכריה יד, ג) "ויצא ה' ונלחם בגוים וגו' ועמדו רגליו ביום ההוא" גו' וכל אותו ענין, ויהיו הכל רואין ומראין אותו באצבע שנאמר (ישעיה כה, ט) "ואמר ביום ההוא הנה אלהינו" וגו'.

Darchei Noam

והיינו שגם להר תבור היתה מדת הגאות, ועל כן חשב סיסרא שיכול לנצח את ברק כאשר עלה על הר תבור. אבל באמת היה לברק ובני ישראל הגאות דקדושה של גאות הקב"ה, ועל כן דוקא משם כבשו את גאות הטמא של סיסרא הנשתייר מסוסי פרעה.

Derech Hashem Elucidated

Part IV, Chapter 4, Section 9

The Ramchal elaborates on the rectification gained by the Exodus from Egypt:

וְהָיָה כִּי מֵאַחַר הַטָּאוֹת שֶׁל אָדָם הָרָאשׁוֹן – **After the sin of Adam HaRishon,** נִשְׁאַר הָאָנוּשִׁיּוֹת בְּלוּ מְקַלְקֵל כְּמוֹ שְׂזָכְרֵנוּ בְּחֵלֶק רִאשׁוֹן – **all of mankind was left in a corrupted state, as we have explained in Part I.¹** וְהָיָה הָרַע מְתַגַּבֵּר בְּכָל – **Evil prevailed everywhere,²** עַד שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה נִמְצָא מְקוֹם לְטוֹב שִׁיתְחַזֵּק כָּל – **until there remained no place at all where good could gather strength.** וְאִף עַל פִּי שְׂנֵבֵרֵי אֲבֵרָה אֲבִינוּ עָלְיוֹ הַשְּׁלוֹם לְהִיּוֹת הוּא – **Although Avraham Avinu, a”h, was selected to be chosen for Hashem, so that he and his children should be set apart from all the nations,³** הִנֵּה עֲדִין לֹא הָיָה – **nonetheless,** לָהֶם מְקוֹם שִׁיּוּכְלוּ לְהִתְחַזֵּק וּלְהִתְפַּגֵּן בְּבְחִינַת אֲמִתּוֹת שְׁלֵמָה **they still had no opportunity to gather strength and establish**

¹ The Ramchal explained there, 3:8, that as a result of Adam HaRishon’s sin deficiencies increased in the world and it became more difficult for man to achieve perfection.

² *Nefesh HaChaim* (1:6), writes that as a result of the sin evil became intermingled within Adam and within all the realms of creation (*Derech LeChaim*) ; see Part I 3:8, note 74.

³ The Ramchal explained in Part II 4:3 how only Avraham Avinu was chosen at the time of the Tower of Bavel to found that nation that would correct Adam’s sin. The Ramchal is now asking why the exile in Egypt was necessary when Avraham was already chosen at that earlier time.

themselves as a perfected nation⁴ וְלִזְכוֹת לְעֹטְרוֹת הַרְאִוִיּוֹת לָהֶם
– **and to be worthy of the crowns befitting them⁵** מִפְּנֵי הָרַע
– **because of the evil that was spreading its
darkness over them⁶** וְהַהֲמָא הָרְאִשׁוֹנָה שֶׁל אָדָם יָצְאָה מֵהֶם עַד הַיּוֹם
– **and the initial contamination from Adam’s sin that had not yet left
them.⁷** – **Therefore, it
was necessary for them to be exiled to Egypt and enslaved
there.** וּבְאוֹתוֹ הַשְּׁעָבוּד הַגָּדוֹל
– **In that immense
servitude,** וְנִיטְהָרוּ יִצְרָפוּ כְּזָהָב בְּתוֹךְ הַכּוּר – **they would be purified,**

⁴ That is, there is a difference between a group of individuals who have chosen to follow Hashem’s ways and an entire nation that does so. Individuals cannot bring about the same effect as a nation, as the Ramchal proceeds to explain.

⁵ The Ramchal stated above, section §7, that the sons of Yaakov Avinu “crowned themselves with Hashem’s Oneness” when they said *Shema* (see note 209). Perhaps this is his meaning here — that the nation as a whole was not yet deserving of those crowns. However, *Mar’eh Derech* states he is referring to the crowns *Klal Yisrael* received at Sinai (*Shabbos* 88a). See also *Maamar HaChochmah* (ענין סדר ליל פסח), pg. 311), where the Ramchal states that until the Exodus the darkness of corporeality so prevailed over the body that the illumination of Torah could not have had any effect. Only after the Exodus was Yisrael elevated beyond the ordinary level of human nature to be able to be adorned with the crowns of holiness.

⁶ This refers to the sins of the earlier generations, like that of the generation of Enosh (*Derech LeChaim*).

⁷ The Gemara (*Shabbos* 146a) states that by the sin of Adam, the serpent contaminated the world. When Yisrael stood by Har Sinai that contamination was fully removed from them (*Derech LeChaim*). As such, they could not be elevated to the status of the nation of Hashem until they had been cleansed.

refined like gold in a furnace.⁸ – והנה כשהגיע הזמן הראוי
the proper time arrived, חזק האדון ברוך הוא את השפעתו
Hashem strengthened His *hashpaah* and
illumination over Yisrael,⁹ – וכפה את הרע לפניהם
humbled the evil before them.¹⁰ – והבדיל אותם ממנו [Hashem]

⁸ The *pasuk* states (*Devarim* 4:20; see also *Melachim I* 8:51 and *Yirmiyahu* 11:4): “Hashem took you and brought you out from the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be His designated nation.” *Rashi* there explains that the *pasuk* is referring to a furnace used to purify gold. Thus, through the servitude in Egypt, the nation of Yisrael was purged of its impurities caused by the sin of Adam and those of the subsequent generations. See *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid. pg. 312) that *maror* represents the bitterness that purified Yisrael. See also *Maamar HaGeulah* (pg. 12) regarding the purification of exile throughout Jewish history.

⁹ In *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid.), the Ramchal writes that in order to redeem Yisrael from Egypt Hashem had to reveal some of His holiness so that the souls of Yisrael would be drawn after it and become elevated, thereby separating themselves from the *tumah* in which they were entrenched. This was accomplished through the *Pesach* sacrifice, by which Yisrael withdrew from idolatry and substituted it with mitzvah observance.

¹⁰ In *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid. pgs. 313-314), the Ramchal writes that there are four primary levels of *tumah* that took control after the sin of Adam HaRishon. That is why four expressions of redemption are used in the Torah regarding the Exodus. Their control over Yisrael was broken through the illumination of the four letters of Hashem’s Name.

We noted above (note 105) that evil becomes “humbled” when Hashem’s sovereignty is acknowledged, while it becomes completely eradicated when Hashem’s Oneness is revealed. Apparently, the Exodus from Egypt effected a complete awareness of Hashem’s sovereignty, but not a complete revelation of His Oneness, since the powers of evil were only humbled, and not abolished.

set them apart from it,¹¹ וְרוֹמַם אוֹתָם מִן הַשְּׁפָלוּת שֶׁהָיוּ
בו – uplifted them from the degraded state in which they had
been, וְנִמְצְאוּ גְאוּלִים – and elevated them to Him.¹² מִן הַרְעָה גְאוּלֵת עוֹלָם
the evil eternally,¹³ וּמִשָּׁם נִהְיָאָה הַיּוֹקְמוּ לְאַמָּה שְׁלֵמָה – and from
then onwards they were established as a perfected nation

¹¹ Since the forces of evil were only humbled, but still existed, Hashem had to separate Yisrael from them. However, the Ramchal writes in *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid.) that eventually Yisrael will completely conquer those four forces, which will turn on the nations of the world and give them “four cups of punishment,” whereas the Jews will have “four cups of salvation” (see *Bereishis Rabbah* 88:5 and *Midrash Shocher Tov, Tehillim* §11). These are represented by the four cups of wine that we drink at the Seder.

¹² Once the forces of evil were humbled, Yisrael was no longer dragged down by the evil and contamination of the previous generations. They could thus come close to Hashem, as the *pasuk* states regarding the Exodus (*Shemos* 19:4): “And I brought you to Me.” In *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid. pg. 313), the Ramchal writes that in order for Yisrael to be physically ready for the appropriate Divine illumination, they are required to eat matzah for seven days each year, a food which represents the *yetzer hatov* completely devoid of the *yetzer hara* (leavened bread is symbolic of the *yetzer hara*). In this manner they remain readied for holiness the entire year. See below, 8:1, for further discussion about the mitzvah of eating matzah on Pesach.

¹³ Although evil would continue to exist, Yisrael would never again be controlled by it. Even so, the Ramchal writes in *Maamar HaChochmah* (ibid. pg. 314) that each year we are meant to strengthen the gains achieved during the Exodus until the rectification of the world is completed.

דְּבוּקָה בּוֹ יְתַבְרַךְ וּמִתְעַטְרֶת בּוֹ – **in a state of *deveikus* to Hashem and crowned through Him.**¹

Having explained the importance of the Exodus from Egypt, the Ramchal concludes why we recall it each day in the *Shema*:

וְהָיָה זֶה תְּקוּן שְׁנֵיתֵינוּ לְעוֹלָמִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁזָּכְרֵנוּ – **This rectification was permanently established within us, as we have mentioned,**²
וְכָל הַטּוֹבוֹת שֶׁהִגִּיעוּ וְשֶׁמִּגִּיעוֹת לָנוּ – **and all benefits that we received and continue to receive** בְּלִין תְּלוּיּוֹת בּוֹ – **all depend on it.**³
כֵּן נִצְטַוֵּינוּ לִזְכֹּר אוֹתוֹ תָּמִיד – **We are therefore commanded to constantly remember it** וּלְהִזְכִּירוֹ בְּפִינוּ – **and to recite it verbally.**
שֶׁעַל יְדֵי זֶה מִתְחַזֵּק הַתְּקוּן הַהוּא עֲלֵינוּ – **For in this manner the rectification is reinforced within us,**
וּמִתְאַמֵּץ הָאוֹר – **and the light intensifies within us,**⁴
מִן הַתְּקוּן הַהוּא – **and the purpose that is meant to emerge from that rectification remains constantly with us.**⁵

¹ This is the goal that the Ramchal stated above: that there should be an entire nation committed to serving Hashem, dedicated to rectifying the transgression of Adam HaRishon.

² As the Ramchal stated in the beginning of this section that the rectification was forever.

³ This is because without it, we would still be mired in the evil and contamination of the sins of Adam and those of the earlier generations.

⁴ I.e. in contrast to the darkness caused by the sins of the earlier generations, as described above.

⁵ Although the Pesach Seder serves to reinforce the holiness received during the redemption, as noted above, the daily recollection of the Exodus ensures that the rectification remains constant. This helps maintain our acceptance of Hashem's sovereignty and the yoke of His mitzvos (see note 230, above).

לעילוי נשמת

יעקב אליהו בן דוד ע"ה ניימאן

י ליד באלטימאר מעורב עם הבריה

ע וד בנערותו שימש גדולים בתורה

ק יים מצות בשדה מלחמה

ב אשת נעוריו שמח נ"א שנה

א ח נאמן עד דשבק חיים

ל אחר שנעשה ע"ז בשנים

י סורים סבל בסבר פנים

ה ניח אחריו בנים ובני בנים

ו כולם עוסקים בתורה וחסדים

נפטר בשם טוב ח' שבט תשס"ה לפ"ק

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

In honor of our dear mother,

Deborah Naiman (Klein)

Thank you for all that you have
done and continue to do for us.

Love,

Irvin and Eleanor,

Yehudah Mayer, Atara, and family

Avrami, Jen, and family,

and Fayge

In honor of the members of
Kollel Zichron Yaakov Eliyahu
who provide a *Kol Torah* for us
in the early hours of the
morning
by
The Singmans

לזכר נשמת

יעקב בן יוסף ע"ה

מאת

משפחת קיזר

In honor of the
Rav, Gabayim,
and Kiddush Committee
for their tireless efforts
in BMR

by the Sugars

In honor of our parents,

Moshe and Lisa Rock

for everything they do for us.

by

Yehoshua and Devorah Ribakow

In honor of the
Rav and the *Maareches*

by Rabbi Yitzchak Strauss
and family

In honor of the
Rav and the *Maareches*

by Mr. Eli Friedman
and family

לעלוי נשמת

אליעזר בן שלמה ע"ה

Louis Cooper

by his son,

Label Cooper

לזכר נשמת

שמשון בן אברהם הלוי

פסח שני י"ד אייר, תש"ס

משולם בן יעקב חיים

כ"ז ניסן, תשל"ח

Thank you to

the Strauss Family

for the loan of their
beautiful, new Sefer Torah
to BMR.