

# Torah Tidbits

ט"ו ניסן תשפ"ב 16<sup>TH</sup> APR 2022 ISSUE 1464

פסח - פרשת אחרי מות

PESACH - PARSHAT ACHAREI MOT

ב"ה

OU  
ISRAEL

DOUBLE ISSUE

PESACH AND  
PARSHAT ACHAREI MOT ▶



Dear Torah Tidbits  
Family  
Rabbi Avi Berman  
Executive Director, OU Israel  
page 4



29th Yahrzeit Of  
Rabbi Joseph B.  
Soloveitchik zt"l  
A Seder Prayer for Covid  
and the War in Ukraine  
page 46

OU  
ISRAEL

OU Israel  
wishes you  
Chag Kasher  
Ve'Sameach

YERUSHALAYIM IN/OUT TIMES FOR SHABBAT/PESACH

Candles 6:32PM • Earliest 5:47PM • Havdala 7:47PM • Rabbeinu Tam 8:26PM

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### HELPFUL REMINDERS FOR PESACH

- Latest time to eat Chametz: Friday April 15 - 10:05 am (Magen Avraham) 10:29 (Gra)
- Latest time to burn/annul Chametz: Friday morning April 15 - 11:22 am (Magen Avraham) , 11:34 am (Gra)
- We eat the Afikoman at the Seder no later than 12:37am
- Tefilat Tal is recited on the first day of Pesach
- We begin to say *ותן ברכה* in the weekday Amidah (we stop saying *משיב הרוח מוריד הגשם*)
- On Motzei Yom Tov Rishon we begin counting Sefirat Haomer
- On the first day of Pesach the Book of Shir Hashirim is read (\*Please note correction from last week's Torah Tidbits)



### REMINDERS FOR THE END OF PESACH

- Yizkor is recited on the last day of Pesach
- We do not eat Chametz on Shabbat following the seventh day of Pesach (Chametz can only be eaten after Shabbat)
- We light Shabbat candles (following the 7th day of Pesach) from an existing flame 
- We customarily eat the Eruv Tavshilin on Shabbat (please see Torah Tidbits Shabbat Hagadol edition for more details)
- We begin the cycle of Pirkei Avot on Shabbat Achrei Mot (First Chapter)
- Yom Hashoah is observed Wednesday eve April 27/Thursday April 28

# CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



## OTHER Z'MANIM



CANDLES	EARLIEST	PESACH - LEIL HASEDER	HAVDALA	7TH DAY PESACH		ACHAREI MOT		HAVDALA
				Candles	Earliest (Plag Hamincha)	Candles from pre-existing flame	Earliest (Plag Hamincha)	
6:32	5:47	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	7:47	6:36	5:50	6:37	5:50	7:52
6:50	5:49	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	7:49	6:54	5:52	6:54	5:53	7:54
6:51	5:48	Beit Shemesh / RBS	7:47	6:55	5:51	6:56	5:51	7:53
6:48	5:47	Gush Etzion	7:47	6:52	5:50	6:53	5:51	7:52
6:49	5:49	Raanana/ Tel Mond/ Herzliya/ K. Saba	7:49	6:54	5:52	6:54	5:52	7:54
6:48	5:48	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	7:48	6:53	5:51	6:53	5:51	7:53
6:50	5:49	Netanya	7:49	6:54	5:52	6:54	5:53	7:54
6:49	5:48	Be'er Sheva	7:48	6:53	5:51	6:53	5:52	7:53
6:49	5:49	Rehovot	7:48	6:53	5:52	6:54	5:52	7:54
6:32	5:49	Petach Tikva	7:48	6:36	5:52	6:37	5:52	7:54
6:48	5:48	Ginot Shomron	7:48	6:53	5:51	6:53	5:51	7:53
6:40	5:49	Haifa / Zichron	7:49	6:44	5:52	6:45	5:53	7:55
6:47	5:47	Gush Shiloh	7:47	6:52	5:50	6:52	5:50	7:52
6:50	5:49	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	7:49	6:54	5:52	6:54	5:53	7:54
6:48	5:47	Giv'at Ze'ev	7:47	6:52	5:50	6:53	5:51	7:52
6:48	5:47	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	7:47	6:52	5:50	6:52	5:51	7:52
6:50	5:50	Ashkelon	7:49	6:54	5:53	6:55	5:53	7:54
6:49	5:49	Yad Binyamin	7:48	6:53	5:52	6:54	5:52	7:54
6:43	5:47	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	7:47	6:47	5:50	6:48	5:50	7:53
6:47	5:46	Golan	7:46	6:51	5:49	6:52	5:50	7:52

**Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 8:26 PM • next week - 8:31 pm**

Times According to MyZmanim (20 min. before sundown in most cities,  
40 min. in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva, 30 min. in Tzfat/Haifa)

### JERUSALEM

**Ranges 11 days Wed.- Shabbat  
April 13 - 23 / 12- 22 Nisan**

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin	5:21 - 5:08
Sunrise	6:13 - 6:02
Sof Zman Kriat Shema	9:26 - 9:19
Magen Avraham	8:44 - 8:41
Sof Zman Tefila	10:31 - 10:25
(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)	
Chatzot (Halachic Noon)	12:39 - 12:37
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	1:12 - 1:10
Plag Mincha	5:45 - 5:50
Sunset (Including Elevation)	7:11 - 7:18

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# DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



**RABBI AVI BERMAN**  
Executive Director, OU Israel



OU Israel is made up of remarkable people, each of whom feels a sense of responsibility toward Am Yisrael and dedicates themselves to a unified mission of inspiring the next generation of Klal Yisrael. Twice a year, before Rosh HaShanah and Pesach, I have the honor of gathering OU Israel staff from around the country for a Haramat Kosit, during which we leave our offices, posts and programs to gather at the OU Israel Center in Yerushalayim.

This past week the OU Israel Center was filled with employees who work across every program and operation we run. From Torah Tidbits, to JLIC couples from IDC, Herzliya, Bar Ilan and Givat Shmuel, to NCSY, to Birthright, to Yachad, to Mommy and Me, to shiurim and additional programming for Anlgo-Israelis. OU Israel's impact on Am Yisrael would not be possible without each and every one of our staff members who inspire people of all ages - from two to over 100 - with creative and engaging programs.

With such a breadth of impact I continue

to be inspired by the growing OU Israel team of 300 employees that I hope will continue to expand with additional funding and reach even greater heights. For this reason, each Haramat Kosit is a highlight for me because it's not often that we can all gather under one roof, and every time we do I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude to HaKadosh Baruch Hu for the incredible people powering OU Israel. I also feel a responsibility to find a unifying message that resonates with each and every one of our programs. I'd like to share that message with you, for I feel it is directly applicable to members of Klal Yisrael.

On Pesach, we sit down with our loved ones and read the Haggadah, during which we say,

“כִּנְגַד אֲרֻבְעָה בָּנִים דְּבָרָה תוֹרָה: אֶחָד חֹכֵם, וְאֶחָד רָשָׁע, וְאֶחָד תָּם, וְאֶחָד לֹשְׁאֵל יוֹדֵעַ לְשֵׁאוֹל.”

But this statement begs the question, why does “אֶחָד” need to be repeated before each son? The Ba’alei Haggadah could easily have written,

“כִּנְגַד אֲרֻבְעָה בָּנִים דְּבָרָה תוֹרָה: חֹכֵם, רָשָׁע, תָּם, וְלֹשְׁאֵל יוֹדֵעַ לְשֵׁאוֹל.”

The word, “אֶחָד” seems superfluous, but clearly, the Ba’alei Haggadah felt it important. There are many lessons we can learn from the inclusion of “אֶחָד”, and I'd like to highlight three that stood out to me as I spoke to the staff of OU Israel:

“אֶחָד”: We must remember that every Jew we interact with, regardless of how they behave, dress, talk, walk, speak, is “אֶחָד” of Am Yisrael. For those leading the Sedarim,

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Simon Posner (OU Press) and to  
Lenny Bessler (HR - OU NY)  
and families on the passing of their  
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**Raphael Posner z"l**

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and those who find themselves giving over Torah ideas on Seder night, every single Jew is part of the incredible nation of Am Yisrael and, regardless of our differences, together we make up “אָרֶךְ”.

“אָרֶךְ”: Every person is capable of being a חֶכֶם, אִתָּם, אֶלֶּיךָ לְשִׂאוֹל, and maybe even at times a נֶחֱדָה. And as a unified nation, we must help one another become a better version of ourselves. As Am Yisrael, our lives cannot stay stagnant and we need each other to help us be the Ovdei HaShem that Hakadosh Baruch Hu needs.

“אָרֶךְ”: The Ba’alei Haggadah put an emphasis before each child to illustrate that as Banim of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, each of us is an individual who deserves to be seen as such. As parents, friends, educators, community members, neighbors, we have a responsibility to give others our undivided attention.

Personally, I find that the last idea “אָרֶךְ” demonstrates to be the toughest lesson to implement, but I do believe that in today’s generation, it is easier than ever to show someone they matter. All it takes is putting our phones, tablets, computers, iPads and any other digital medium aside, and looking at the person sitting before us directly in the eye. Living in the digital age with our faces turned down all too often, we have lost the power of eye contact and subsequently, our connection to others. When I come home, I make a concerted effort to put my phone away. It’s not easy. I know at any given moment, I have more than 100 WhatsApp messages in need of my response.

But when I am around my family it is even more crucial that I show my wife and children that I am putting myself aside and making space for each and every one of them.

As members of Klal Yisrael, we each have a special place in HaKadosh Baruch Hu’s eyes, regardless of the חֶכֶם, נֶחֱדָה, אִתָּם, וְשִׂאוֹל “אָרֶךְ לְשִׂאוֹל” category we fit into. The beauty of Pesach is that it offers us a time to reset, internalize these ideas, and embrace the Tefillah each of us has as Banim LaHaShem throughout the rest of the year. May we all be zoche to carry out the mission of “אָרֶךְ” and succeed in our efforts.

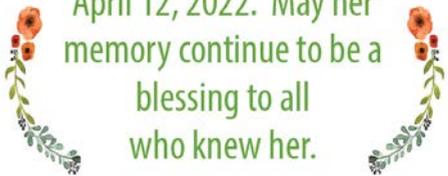
I wish you all a חג כשר ושמח, and an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman  
Executive Director, OU Israel  
[aberman@ouisrael.org](mailto:aberman@ouisrael.org)



The entire OU Israel Family,  
remember our dedicated & loving volunteer  
and dear friend  
*Mrs. Tziporah Pronman aly*  
on her 1st Yahrzeit  
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memory continue to be a  
blessing to all  
who knew her.



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לשנה הבאה בירושלים הבנויה

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# FIRST DAY PESACH



## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



### Rabbi Reuven Tradburks Director of RCA Israel Region

This year the first day of Pesach is Shabbat, so we have 7 aliyot.



**1<sup>st</sup> aliya (Exodus 12:21-24)** Offer the Pesach offering, place its blood on the doorposts and remain indoors 'til the morning. For G-d will pass over the homes identified with the blood and your firstborn will be spared. This law is eternal.

The simplicity of this narrative belies its drama. Take the Pesach, offer it; and they did. The willingness of the people to be defiant of Egypt, to slaughter its god (the lamb) is striking. The slave people listened to their G-d regardless of the risk from their overseers.

And this is the first act of loyalty demanded of the Jewish people by G-d. All of the Torah has been G-d's promises to us. Now he asks for our hand to be stretched to Him in return. The Holy One could have redeemed us, could have passed over our homes without the blood on the doorposts. But He wanted us to stretch our hand to Him.



**2<sup>nd</sup> aliya (12:25-28)** When you enter the Land and your children ask you what this service is, you will answer that this is a Pesach, as Hashem

passed over our homes. The people did as Moshe commanded.

These simple verses are as dramatic as the first. "When you enter the Land"? What? Slaves in Egypt, living with hope alone, are being told to keep this mitzvah when they enter the Land. The Land of Israel is the farthest thing from their minds, mired in slavery. From the dawn of our history we have dreams and visions of the future, ignoring the grimness of the reality of the moment.



**3<sup>rd</sup> aliya (12:29-32)** At midnight all the firstborn in Egypt are killed. Paro orders Moshe and Aharon to leave and take all the people to their festival and to bless him as well.

While the buildup to this moment took many months, the redemption occurs in a flash. Out. Now.



**4<sup>th</sup> aliya (12:33-36)** The Egyptians urged the Jews to leave quickly. The Jewish people took unrisen dough and gold, silver and clothing from the Egyptians.

Even the Jews, knowing they are going to be redeemed that night, are unprepared for the moment. The anticipation tempers not the astonishment of the moment. They had not prepared provisions. Faithful they were; prepared, not.



**5<sup>th</sup> aliya (12:37-42)** The people left, including 600,000 of military age, many others who joined, and laden with flocks. The dough was baked hastily as they were expelled in haste. The Jews lived in Egypt 430 years; they departed after exactly 430 years. This day that G-d anticipated for their departure remains a noted day for Jews forever.

The Torah emphasizes that this was the day destined from the start for the redemption. From our perspective the redemption was sudden; we were unprepared. But from His perspective, this was in the cards the whole time. He anticipated it before it happened; we mark that day after it happened.



**6th aliya (12:43-47) The Pesach**

**Offering:** Non Jews may not participate, must be eaten in one

home, may not be taken out of the home, no bone may be broken, all Jews participate.

The law that the Pesach may not be taken out of the home sounds an awful lot like the laws that korbanot cannot be taken out of the Mikdash. Our homes become the Mikdash on the Seder night.



**7th aliya (12:48-51)** One who joins the Jewish people and is circumcised may join the Pesach; there

is one law for all. On that day G-d took the Jewish people out of Egypt.

Circumcision and the Pesach are 2 sides of the same coin – Brit Milah is a sign of the covenant with G-d, while Pesach is our yearly renewal of dedication to that covenant. ■

**MAFTIR**

**BAMIDBAR 28:16-18**

**HAFTARAH**

**YEHOSHUA 5:2- 6:1**

The haftarah for today mentions the Korban Pesach, echoing the Torah portion which describes the preparations and the sacrifice done in Egypt under Moshe's leadership.

After thirty days of mourning Moshe's

passing, Yehoshua tells the people to prepare themselves for the crossing of the Yarden river, he tells the kohanim to carry the Aron Hakodesh in front of the people. Hashem tells Yehoshua that He will show his greatness to the people of Israel “that they may know that as I was with Moshe, so will I be with you”.

Hashem tells Yehoshua to circumcise the Jewish men who had not yet been circumcised due to the desert weather, he does so, reminding them of the previous generation of men, who had gone out of Egypt, who had all been circumcised before partaking of the Korban Pesach. Yehoshua reminds the people of past events, how they had to wait for that generation to die in the desert as they would not be able to enter the Land of Israel. Once everyone was circumcised they waited for all the men to

Yehoshua sees a sword-holding man on the outskirts of Yericho and asks him on whose side he is on. “And he said, No, but I am the leader of the host of the L-rd; I have now come. And Yehoshua fell on his face to the earth and prostrated himself, and said to him, What does my lord say to his servant? And the captain of the Lord’s host said to

Yehoshua, Remove your shoe from your foot; for the place upon which you stand is holy. And Yehoshua did so.”

The haftorah ends with a message that the city of Yericho was under siege and that Hashem was with Yehoshua. ■

## SEVENTH DAY PESACH



**1<sup>st</sup> aliya (Exodus 13:17-22)** The people traveled away from Egypt toward the sea. Moshe

took the bones of Yosef, as Yosef had instructed them to do. A Divine cloud guided them by day, fire by night.

Yosef was so confident in the redemption from Egypt, he was willing to have his bones remain in Egypt, to be brought out of Egypt when the Jewish people were redeemed. For Yosef, the Divine promise was not mythical; it was a certainty.



**2<sup>nd</sup> aliya (14:1-14:8)** The people camp at the sea; Paro pursues with the elite of his fighting forces.



**3<sup>rd</sup> aliya (14:9-14)** With the sea in front of them and Paro in pursuit, the people are desperate.

They question why Moshe brought them out of Egypt to die in the desert. And state: this is what we said in Egypt. We would rather remain in Egypt to live and work as slaves than leave Egypt to die in the desert. Moshe reassured them.

This is the first we hear of the reluctance of the people to leave Egypt. While the Torah tells the story of the Jewish people leaving slavery, that doesn’t mean that every Jewish

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and special אמה and סבתא  
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person was a willing participant. Skepticism is not a modern invention; it is part of the human condition. But, while skeptical, they took their place as part of the Jewish people who were redeemed. Skeptics join the Jewish adventure of redemption, albeit skeptically.



**4<sup>th</sup> aliya (14:15-25)** G-d tells

Moshe to march forward, raise his staff over the water, the

water will split and the people will proceed through the water. Moshe does so, the sea splits, the people march through and the Egyptians pursue. By daybreak the Egyptians are stuck in the sea, claiming G-d is fighting the battle of the Jews.

Redemption occurs with water. The first thing in creation was water; verse 2 in the Torah states G-d's spirit hovered over the waters. Water recurs as a symbol of beginnings. The splitting of the sea and the redemption from Egypt closes a chapter of Jewish history and opens a new beginning. It is the beginning of the national march to receive the Torah and to enter the Land of Israel. A new beginning marked by water.



**5<sup>th</sup> aliya (14:26-15:26)** The sea

waters return, drowning the Egyptians. The people sing Az

Yashir, the song of thanks. Miriam leads the women in song. The journey into the desert begins.

Redemption brings song. This song creates a religious paradigm. When we are the

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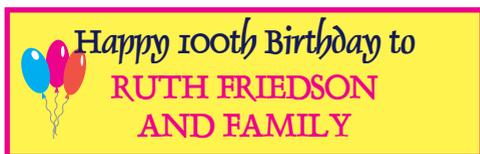
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recipients of Divine gifts, we must respond with appreciation and joy. This is reflected in our siddur as well. When we mention the exodus from Egypt in the brachot of the Shema we include that the people sang this shira. What He does must be responded to by what we do. Song. ■

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**A SHORT VORT** | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES  
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“ליל שמרים הוא לה' להוציאם מארץ מצרים הוא הלילה הזה לה' שמרים לכל בני ישראל” (יב:מב)

“It was a night of watching for Hashem to bring them out of Egypt. This same night is a night of watching to all the children of Israel throughout their generation.” (12:42)

Why does the Pasuk have to refer to the “night of watching” twice?

Rashi explains the “night of watching” as the night of anticipation, waiting and watching for Hashem to take us out of Egypt.

The Yalkut Shimoni (Shemot 210) answers the question by referring to the double redemption that is to take place. Firstly, the redemption of the Jewish people. Secondly, the redemption, so to speak, for G-d. The word “shemurim”-“watching” appears in the plural form, for we find that throughout our generations, when Israel were enslaved, it was as if G-d too was enslaved with them. Whenever the Jewish people were in exile, G-d went into exile with them, in the same way.

The Michtav M'Eliyahu (Rav Eliyahu Dessler 1892-1953, Mashgiach Ponovez Yeshiva) answers that it is referring to the night of our past redemption and also to our future redemptions. On this night He delivered Chizkiyahu from Sancherev; Daniel was saved from the lion's den and the eventual final redemption of Mashiach will transpire this night.

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IN THE PARSHA

## Imagine That!

There was a time when I would only go out of my way to listen to speakers who were older and more experienced than I. Recently, however, I have changed my preferences and have begun to seek out speakers, rabbis and teachers, who are young and relatively inexperienced. I find their ideas fresh and often very much on the mark. After all, they are in much better touch with our fast-changing world than I am.

Once, during a visit to Israel, I sat in on a series of lectures which were designed to prepare the audience for the upcoming Passover holiday. The speaker, a brilliant young rabbi, focused upon the *Seder* night, and particularly upon the text of the *Haggadah*. He spent most of his opening lecture elaborating upon what he considered the most difficult task with which we are all confronted on the first night of Passover.

The task is described in the following famous passage:

“In each and every generation, a person must see himself as if he personally left Egypt. As it is written, ‘And you shall explain to your son on that day that it is because of what the Lord did for me when I went free from Egypt (*Exodus* 13:8).” The requirement is explicit in the biblical text: the Lord did it for *me*, when *I* went free from Egypt.

The young rabbi candidly confessed to his audience that he had never been able to fulfill this requirement. Indeed, he didn’t think it was possible, certainly not for most of us, to envision ourselves as if we personally had experienced slavery and redemption. “This,” he insisted, “is the most difficult task we are faced with on the *Seder* night.”

When I first heard this assertion, I found it to be quite provocative. I wanted to protest but maintained my silence in respect for the young rabbi. I attributed his conviction to his relative immaturity. I have never found this obligation difficult. Personally, I have found it quite easy to imagine myself as a slave and to personally exult in the emotional experiences of redemption and freedom.

I usually forget the content of most lectures that I hear almost as soon as I leave the lecture hall. This time, however, I could not rid my mind of the young rabbi’s

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statement. I began to question my own inner certainty. Had it really been so easy for me all these years to envision myself as one of those who had experienced both slavery and the Exodus?

In the midst of my extended preoccupation with the young rabbi's assertion, a long-forgotten memory suddenly surfaced in my mind. I was taken back in time to another lecture I had heard just before Passover many years ago. This time, the speaker was not a young rabbi at all. Rather, he was an old and revered Chassidic *rebbe*, a survivor of the Holocaust who had spent years in Auschwitz and had witnessed the vicious murder of his wife and children with his own eyes.

That old *rebbe* was Rabbi Yekutiel Yehudah Halberstam, may his memory be blessed, who was known as the Klausenberger *Rebbe*, after the small town in the Balkans where he had served prior to World War II.

In that lecture, Rabbi Halberstam recounted his own puzzlement over a lecture he had heard very long ago from one of his mentors. I no longer remember the name of that mentor, but Rabbi Halberstam was careful to identify him in detail because of the strange and almost unbelievable experience that he reported.

The mentor said that he had no difficulty at all imagining himself to have been in slavery in Egypt and to have been redeemed. In fact, this mentor reported that he could clearly remember the experience. He could

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recall in great detail the burdensome work he had to perform, the dirty hovel in which he was forced to live, and the sighs and groans of his companions. He could even still see, in his mind's eye, the cruel face of his tormentors as they sadistically whipped him for not producing his daily quota of bricks.

The Klausenberger *Rebbe* confessed that when he first heard his mentor make those claims, he had difficulty believing them. He thought that his mentor had made such a claim just for the effect it would have upon his listeners. He stressed that sometimes it is justified for a speaker to resort to hyperbole to make his point more dramatic and more graphic.

But then the *rebbe* continued to say that after many years, he had come to realize that his mentor was telling the absolute truth. "It took the experiences I had during the horrible years of the Holocaust," he exclaimed, "for me to realize why my mentor was able to recall his experiences in ancient Egypt's tyranny."

The *rebbe* then went on to elaborate upon two psychological processes that are necessary to invoke during the *Seder* night as we recite the *Haggadah*. He used two Hebrew and Yiddish terms respectively:

*koach hadimyon* (the power of imagination) and *mitleid* (empathy).

The lesson that the old *Rebbe* related to me and to the dozens of other eager listeners that evening so long ago was that we are often restricted by our own tendencies to rely upon our reason, rationality, and intellectuality. We underplay the powers that we have to fantasize, to imagine, to dream freely. In a sense, we are slaves to reason and need to learn to allow ourselves to go beyond reason and to give our imaginations free rein. Only then can we "see ourselves as if we had personally endured slavery." Only by cultivating our imagery can we ourselves experience the emotions of freedom and liberty.

We are all required to imagine ourselves as if we are the other person. If the other person is poor, the *mitzvah* of charity demands that we ourselves feel his poverty. If he is ill, we must literally suffer along with him. This is empathy, and to be empathic, one must rely upon a well-developed imagination.

Imagination and empathy are not words that one often hears in rabbinic sermons, but they are the words that the Klausenberger *Rebbe* used that evening. And, as he concluded in his remarks, he learned about

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those words through the bitter suffering that he endured when he was enslaved in Auschwitz, and he appreciated redemption when he himself was finally freed from his personal bondage.

The young rabbi who started my thinking about this had, through his good fortune, never really experienced anything remotely resembling slavery. Naturally, he was thus deprived of the ability to really appreciate freedom.

After a few days, I approached the young rabbi and shared with him the words that I had heard decades ago, before this young rabbi was even born. I told him what the Klausenberger *Rebbe* had said about empathy and imagination. The young rabbi responded politely and with gratitude, but with a gentle smile got in the last word: “But the Klausenberger *Rebbe* didn’t say that learning to imagine and to empathize were easy.”

I had to admit that the young rabbi was correct. Creative imagination and compassionate empathy are not easily attained. Achieving them may indeed be the hardest task of the holiday of Passover.

But I feel confident that the young rabbi agreed with my assertion: Learning to use one’s powers of imagination in order to empathize with the plight of others is the essential objective of this magnificent holiday, *zman cheiruteinu*, the season of our freedom.

*Chag Sameach!*

A happy holiday! ■

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“*Shal na'alcha me'al raglecha...*”

As this haftarah closes, we read of an event that should strike a familiar chord to us. An angel tells Yehoshua “Remove your shoe....for the ground upon which you is holy”. It is an event and it uses (almost) the exact same words told to Moshe at the burning bush. Is there any significance to this “coincidence”?

In order to respond to this question and to better understand the beginning of Sefer Yehoshua, (including the haftarah we read), we must understand the state of the Israelite tribes at that time of history. The haftarah describes the very first observance of Korban Pesach in Eretz Yisrael, a simple story that would seemingly require no deep analysis. The story poses no real problems nor does it contradict anything we know about

the ritual itself. But, indeed, there truly is much that the events of that time period teach us and a review of the earlier prakim can open for us a deeper appreciation of Yehoshua and the challenges that he, and the people faced.

Turning to the very beginning of the book we read Hashem's guarantees of Yehoshua's future success, repeating three times the charge “Chazak Ve'ematz” – “Be strong and courageous”. Yehoshua then addresses the three and a half tribes, reminding them of their promise to Moshe to serve in the vanguard of the fighters. And they too tell their new leader “Chazak Ve'ematz”. Interestingly, these same words were addressed to Yehoshua by Moshe (D'varim 31:7; 31: 23), who was encouraged to do so by Hashem Who told him “strengthen him (Yehoshua)” (D'varim 1:38). What was it about Yehoshua that everyone needed to tell him “Chazak Ve'ematz”, words that were never addressed to the greatest leader, Moshe?!

In truth, it was not Yehoshua who required the encouragement...but the nation itself. Israel had known but one leader and knew little of Yehoshua. Certainly, he led them into battle but he was also the student who remained “in the tent” of Moshe. We find that he is involved in only a few episodes in the Torah: twice, he remains silent when we expect him to speak (at first, allowing only Calev to defend Moshe from the accusations of the

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spies and later, saying nothing during Korach's rebellion) and twice, when he does speak up, he has to be corrected (Shmot 32: 17-18 and B"midbar 11: 28-29). Is it any wonder that the people were concerned regarding Yehoshua's fitness to lead?

G-d understood that He had to build the people's confidence in their new leader. Precisely for that reason we read multiple actions of Yehoshua that are parallel to Moshe's deeds. Yehoshua leads the nation out of the desert in the month of Nisan as Moshe led the nation out of Egypt in Nisan; Hashem splits the waters of the Jordan to lead the Israelites into Eretz Yisrael as He splits the waters of Yam Suf for Moshe to lead B'nai Yisra'el into the midbar; and, as our haftarah recounts, he leads the nation in observing Korban Pesach – something only Moshe had done before.

And we now can understand Hashem command to Yehoshua:

“Shal na'alcha me'al raglecha...”

...to perform the exact same act with the exact same words He used when he commanded Moshe to do the same.

By doing these things, Hashem fulfilled the promise he made to Yehoshua some chapters earlier, when He said: “Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all of Israel so they might know that, just as I was with Moshe so shall I be with you.”

Successful leadership depends on the efforts of the leader, of the people....and the divine blessings from above. ■

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# Haggadah- A Perfect Title

The book we use to guide us all through the Seder is referred to as the “*Haggadah*.” Why has this booklet merited this title? The term “*vehigadita l’vinha*” – to tell your children is referenced in the response we are to provide to the son who does not know how to ask (*She’eino Yodeiah Lishol*). Yet, the verb “*amira*” to “tell”, is referenced in our response to the other three sons<sup>1</sup>. Since the term *amira* is utilized in connection with three of the four sons, perhaps it would have been more appropriate to refer to the Seder guidebook as - Ha’amirah

1 *To the haham, it states atah emor lo; to the rasha, hak’hei et shinav v’amar lo; the tam, v’amarta eilav; only with respect to the she’eino yodeiah lishol, it states v’higadeta l’vinha.*

rather than Haggadah. We will offer a few suggestions as to why the term Haggadah is a most appropriate title for the guidebook Seder night.

### *V’higadeta L’vincha*

Rav Yerachmiel Kram in his Haggadah Talmudo B’yado explains that the only pasuk that refers directly to the night of the Seder is *v’higadeta l’vinhah*. All the other *pesukim* are more general. They are questions of the sons that are asked throughout the year. By *she’eino yodeiah lishol*, it’s connected to the Seder – *v’higadeta l’vinchah bayom hahu leimor*. It relates to a specific day – **bayom hahu** – referencing Seder night. Teaching us that even if a child does not ask, we are obligated to transmit to him our history – essentially *sipur yetziyat mitzrayim*.

That is why we call it Haggadah, because of the phrase “*v’higadeta l’vincha*” that describes our obligation specifically this evening.

Still, we may ask why is that word most appropriate? Maybe we can glean an answer based on Rashi in a totally different context. Rashi asks in Parashat Yitro (Shemot 19:3), what’s the difference between *amirah* and Haggadah? *Amirah*, explains Rashi, is soft-spoken. In contrast, Haggadah



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is a more serious and intense tone, going into depth. As the *pasuk* states: *ko tomar l'beit Yaakov, v'taged livnei Yisrael*. Moshe is directed to instruct the men and women, yet the term used when instructing the women (Beit Yaakov) is *tomar*, which connotes softer language. When instructing the men (Bnei Yisrael) the term used is *taged* (from Haggadah) which is a harsher language. This does not mean to have a negative connotation. Rather, the Haggadah is meant to be a serious, intense, and lasting experience, not just superficial or soft. That is why Haggadah is most suited for this description.

### Revelation

An additional thought with respect to the term “Haggadah”. The Gra believed that to best comprehend a word, one should study the first time that the word appears in the Torah. The word “*Haggadah*” first appears after Adam and Hava eat from the forbidden tree. Hashem asks Adam-

...ויאמר מי הגיד לך כי עירם אתה...

And [God] said [to Adam], who revealed to you that you are unclothed... (Bereshit 3:11)

The term “*higid*” to reveal, is first used to highlight something that was previously unknown. Only after eating the forbidden fruit did Adam have a **revelation** that he was unclothed. This underscores our obligation on Seder night. We are to inquire and explore our history and our customs this night. We are to gain a deeper understanding and comprehend new ideas that were previously unknown to us. It behooves us to prepare and encourage others present at the Seder to be *mechadesh* – to raise new insights that are engaging and meaningful at the Seder. That is the

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true meaning of “Haggadah”.

### **Testimony**

Another explanation as to the use of the word Haggadah is offered by Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (cited in Haggadat Leil Shel Achdut, Rav Aharon Goldscheider). The Torah itself uses the term Haggadah with respect to the requirement to transmit to our children the historical events surrounding the Exodus from Egypt, as is stated: “*v’higadetah l’vinchah*”. Rav Soloveitchik suggests that perhaps it is related to another area in the Torah where a similar term is used -*haggadat eidut* (testifying). What is *haggadat eidut*? It is when I tell over something that I witnessed or experienced. When a person provides testimony in court, it is based on his personal experience, and not on hearsay. Haggadah means I saw it, I felt it, I witnessed it! On this night we are to feel as if we participated in the Exodus - *b’chol dor v’dor, chayav adam lirot et atzmo, k’ilu hu yatzah miMitzrayim*. We have to feel as if we’ve gone free. That is what we are to experience at the Seder. We should be transmitting the story as if we experienced it first-hand, similar to the requirement of *haggadat eidut*, requiring the provision of eyewitness testimony.

### **Sippur- Inscribe**

There’s another word, another element, we can focus on as well. In the Haggadah the term *l’sapper* is used in connection with the transmission of the story of the Exodus.

וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משובח – all that expound upon telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt, are praiseworthy.

Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik suggests that there is a special meaning to this word as well. *Sippur* is derived from the word *sofer*, and *sefer*. What does a scribe do? He writes on a parchment, on a *klaf*, something that’s meant to last. Whenever we’re *mesaper*, we’re *sofrim*, we’re scribes, and we’re writing it into the hearts of all who will be attending our Seder. When a *sofer* writes a *sefer*, he creates something that has permanence, something that will serve future generations, even beyond the time that the *mesaper*, or *sofer* is physically present. At the Seder, every parent and grandparent, is creating a *sefer* by being *mesaper* (*transmitting the story*). We are each a scribe. We are engraving the messages of tradition on the hearts and in the minds of each child. If we can succeed in telling our story *through the Haggadah* - feeling as if we experienced it, we can be that *sofer*, that scribe, that will create something that will last for generations. Moshe was called the Great Scribe, because he inscribed the Torah on the hearts of all of Am Yisrael.

May we be able to properly comprehend the significance of the evening, share insightful thoughts, and successfully transmit the tradition so that we can engrave a love and appreciation of Torah into the hearts of our children. ■

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## Wine's Whisper

Seder night is the incredible opportunity to share the fundamentals of faith with our children, “*Vehigadita levincha.*” It is the quintessential experience of “*Shema beni mussar avicha ve'al titosh torat imecha.*” Although, as Rav Schwab points out, we modify this mitzvah somewhat with children teaching their parents the *divrei* Torah they have learned in school, the focus of the evening is on transmitting *mesorah*.

The three matzahs can be corresponded to the three *Avot*, and the four cups of wine can be linked to the four *Imahot*. Rav Pincus explains that matzah represents *chochmah*, our intrinsic knowledge that the world has a Creator who is continuously involved in every aspect of this world. The four cups represent *binah*, internalizing what we know. Part of a woman's role is to create an emotional connection to Yiddishkeit, the passion and joy. Matzah is white, reflecting pure, intrinsic nature, while wine is red, reflecting energy and life force. We drink wine at different intervals during the seder to generate and connect to this emotional charge throughout this special night.

Rav Baum in “*Layla Kayom Yair,*” explains the parallel between each of the four cups to each of the *Imahot*. The first cup of wine is for Sara *Imeinu*. We declare in the *kiddush* that Hashem chose us from all other nations, elevated us and made us holy. Likewise, Hashem chose Avraham and Sara, we don't know much about who they were, only that they were the ones especially chosen to start the Jewish people. Further, Avraham and Sara established the principle of

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maaseh avot siman labanim, as they went down to Egypt, effected Paroh's punishment, and left with great wealth.

The second cup corresponds to Rivka Imeinu. Rivka, as her name indicates, carried within her, *b'kirbah*, two sons that struggled with each other, one embracing the world of spirituality, and the other the world of pure physicality. Likewise, when the Jews left Egypt, they are described as one nation emerging from a larger nation, asserting their identity. The second cup of wine is linked to most of the Haggadah that expresses this process of becoming a nation upon the Exodus from Egypt.

Blessing rests upon a home in the merit of the wife. It is Rachel Imeinu who is considered the *akeret habayit*, the conduit to bring blessing into Yaakov Avinu's home. We recite *bircat hamazon* over the third cup of wine, the source of continued blessing in our home.

The second part of Hallel and the Hallel Hagadol is recited over the fourth cup. This corresponds to Leah Imeinu whose strength lay in her ability to give thanks and appreciate everything she had as a gift.

As we drink each cup of wine, we can remember the contribution of each of the *Imahot* to our nation. *Bezechut nashim tzidkaniot nigalu avoteinu miMitzrayim*. We were redeemed from Egypt in the merit of righteous women, and the future redemption will be in the merit of women. May it come speedily in our days. ■



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# Pesach: Anticipation

A Jewish beggar befriended a gentile companion and the two paired up to travel around collecting funds together. The gentile was German, so the two were able to converse in Yiddish. As Pesach drew near, the Jewish beggar hatched a scheme, “Look, on the night of our holiday, you should dress up as Jew and accompany me to the synagogue. You’ll certainly be invited for a “Seder” — that’s a meal where Jews spare no expense to honor the holiday. They celebrate with all the trimmings of a feast fit for the sons and daughters of a king. I’m telling you, you’ll get the greatest meal of your life for free!”

Seder night arrived, and as expected, the German was invited by a generous family. Looking forward to the delicacies that awaited him at the festive meal, the gentile in disguise set out with his hosts. Strangely, after just one cup of wine and a small piece of boiled potato dipped in salt water, they began to recite and discuss some Hebrew pamphlet that he didn’t understand. Hours passed, as

they recited and talked and sang, and he sat there frustrated, confused and desperate to eat.

Finally, they stopped talking and got up and washed their hands. It was finally time to eat! His host broke a big cracker and passed it around. Everyone started eating it with their eyes closed as if it was the most delicious bread, but as he scarfed it down, he almost gagged, it tasted so stale and dry! Confounded, he awaited the next course; surely it would be a large serving of succulent meat. But to his shock, the hostess brought out heaping portions of... horseradish? Famished, he took a mouthful, which seared his tongue and nostrils and almost made him wretch. “That’s it,” he said to himself, “I cannot take any more of this “royal feast”! That was clearly the entire meal, and it was absolutely terrible.” He leapt up and ran from the house, gasping, “Cursed Jews! After all that intolerable religious stuff, that’s all they can serve me?” He went back to the shul where he had arranged to meet up with his partner after their meals. Fuming and hungry, he fell asleep.

After a few hours, the Yid arrived, happy and full, humming a tune. “So *nu*,” he smiled, waking up the German, “How was your Seder?” The German angrily recounted his experience and shouted at him for deceiving him.

“What? You fool,” laughed the Yid. “If only you had waited just a little bit longer! In *mamash* just a few moments, you would

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have eaten like a king, as I did!”

(*Stories of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, #23*).

לֵיל שְׁמִרִים הוּא לַה' לְהוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הוּא הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה  
לַה' שְׁמִרִים לְכָל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְדֹרֹתָם:

“It was a *leil shimurim*, a ‘night of anticipation’ for God to take them out of the land of Egypt” (*Shemos, 12:42*)

Rashi comments: שהיה הקב"ה שומר ומצפה לו לקיים הבטחתו להוציאם מארץ מצרים, “*HaKadosh Baruch Hu* was **waiting for and anticipating** that night in order to fulfill His promise to take them out of the land of Egypt.” In other words, Seder Night is “God’s Night”, the appointed time that Hashem promised Avraham Avinu: “On this night I will redeem your children.”

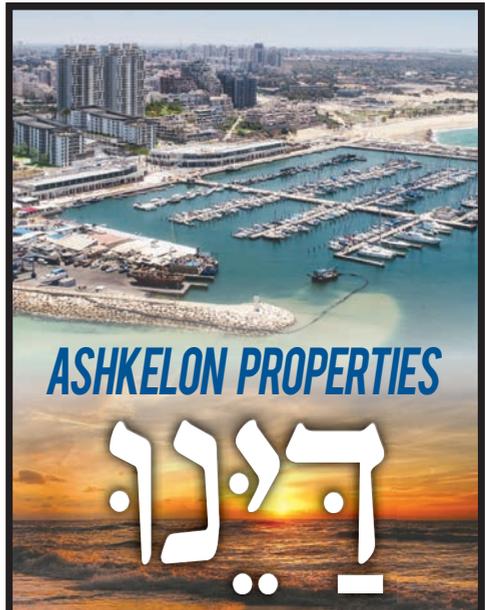
R’ Prof. Yitzchak Twersky, The Tolner Rebbe of Boston, zy’a, extends Rashi’s interpretation as a direct call to action for us. Just as the *Ribbono Shel Olam* was filled with longing, as it were, eagerly awaiting the arrival of the time to fulfill His commitment to us — then it is a form of *ve-halachta b’drerachav*, “walking in God’s ways”, for us to cultivate anticipation for the opportunity and the merit of fulfilling our commitment to Him. We mirror Hashem’s commitment by celebrating Pesach and fulfilling the mitzvos of the night.

Parallel to the term *shimurim* is Moshe Rabbeinu’s review of the directive of *shamor*, to ‘observe’ Pesach:

שָׁמֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעִשִׂיתָ פֶסַח לַה' אֶלְקֶיךָ כִּי בַחֹדֶשׁ  
הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאָךְ ה' אֶלְקֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לַיְלָה

“Observe the month of spring, and make the Pesach offering to Hashem, for in the month of spring, Hashem brought you out of Egypt at night. (*Devarim, 16:1*)

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meaning in *shamor* most beautifully:

שמור את חודש האביב...שיתאוה ויכסוף הדברים ההם  
קודם בואם, וישמח עמם אחרי הנעתם

“*Shamor* the month of spring’ ...It is a mark of positive events that one craves and anticipates them before they arrive, and is joyous after they have arrived, as it says, בְּצֵלוֹ, חִמְדָּתִי וְיִשְׁבָּתִי, ‘I craved to sit in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my palate’ (*Shir haShirim*, 2:3). So too did He commanded us with “*shamor*” in the month of spring — we should crave and anticipate its coming and rejoice in our celebration of the Yom Tov once it has arrived.”

Typically, the word *shamor* is translated as ‘guard’ or ‘watch’. When Yosef relates his dreams, sharing them with his father and brothers, the Torah tells us that Yaakov שמר את הדבר, “watched over the matter”. Rashi comments on the Torah’s choice of language

and explains that Yaakov Avinu was ‘guarding’ the dream, ממתין ומצפה מתי יבוא, ‘eagerly awaiting the time when Yosef’s dreams would come true,’ anticipating and craving for these lofty visions to manifest into reality.

In describing his own experience as an uninformed guest at a Pesach Seder, social commentator Sebastian Maniscalco describes his frustration and bewilderment. Instead of sitting down to the holiday dinner he had hungrily anticipated, he was confronted with two hours of recital and reading material, a little celery, crackers and a strange bitter jam. Overcome with impatience, he blurts out, “I respect the Jews, but let’s have the *Italians* cater the Passover meal, alright?”

Rav Tuvia Bolton, the beloved musician, storyteller and head of Yeshiva Ohr Temimim in Kfar Chabad has likened all of Jewish history until now to one long Pesach seder. We have sat patiently at the table for millenia, yearning and learning and reliving the story of our past salvation from Egypt, sustained by “bread of faith”. Yet, our hunger for the *Geulah Sheleimah*, the Complete Redemption, has never been satiated. Even while eating more than our share of *marror*, the bitterness and strange suffering of exile, we patiently continued to draw strength from sharing the story of our Exodus from Egypt, our national origin story. And in the company of our family and friends, we have expressed our endless craving for Geulah.

Pesach Night, *Leil Shimurim*, is an opportunity time for us to strengthen ourselves and continue to hold onto our holy anticipation and yearning for redemption — to hang on just a little bit longer, with resolute faith that the sumptuous main course is about to be served. ■



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# SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

Among the many incredible messages inherent in the *Seder Layl Pesach* experience is the fundamental idea of sacred speech. Speech plays a central role in the entire evening. Our *Chazal* teach us that we must verbally express and recall the many details and nuances of the redemption from Egypt. Our youngest children traditionally verbalize four questions to begin this dialogue. We then reply to those four questions by stating:

*“Avadim HaYinu LeParoh B’Mitzraim- We were Slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt...and there is a mitzva incumbent upon each of us to discuss and tell of the redemption from Egypt.” “Vchol Hamarbeh lesaper b’yetziat mitzrayim — harei zeh meshubach...” — “All who say much in their description of the redemption from Egypt are to be praised...”*

In the *Haggadah* text of the *Rambam*, we note a slightly different version of this last statement: *“Vchol Hamaarich — lesaper b’yetziat mitzrayim, harei zeh meshubach...” — “All who speak extensively in their description of the redemption from Egypt are to be praised...”*

How are we to interpret the subtle difference between our more familiar version

of this text and that of the *Rambam*? What lesson might we glean from clarifying the difference between the words *hamarbeh* (much) and *hamaarich* (extensive)? Why ultimately do most of us not utilize the *Rambam*’s version of this important text?

Perhaps one answer to these questions is actually hinted at later on in the *Seder*’s discussions of the ten plagues. After listing those ten plagues, we are then introduced to several rabbinic interpretations of those plagues, but the first comments included are those of *Rebbe Yehuda*.

Unlike the other *chachamim* mentioned, *Rebbe Yehuda* doesn’t choose to elaborate extensively about each of the plagues; rather, he teaches us an acronym to recall the plagues in a short, concise, memorable way. *Rebbe Yehuda* seems to be telling us that the most memorable ideas are clear and succinct- instead of the most verbose or extensive.

What *Rebbe Yehuda* is teaching us is that we need to become more accustomed to realizing the power of our words. When we are able to share important information in a most direct and clear manner, it is more likely to be understood, received favorably and remembered by others. When we

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are not aware of this important concept, our intended messages might get lost or misconstrued.

This very idea of the power of speech is actually an important lesson that is also alluded to in the Exodus story itself. The Chasidic Master **Rebbe Moshe Yechiel HaLevi Epstein of Ozarov, zy'a**, makes an interesting observation in his commentary on the *Haggadah*. The Rebbe points out that the prime villain in the Exodus story is not simply called *Melech Mitzrayim*, the King of Egypt, but also **Paroh**. The Rebbe taught that the word **Paroh** is made up of the same Hebrew letters (*pay, reish, ayin, and hay*) as the words **peh ra**, a wicked mouth! The Rebbe wrote that inherent in the Jewish People going forth and becoming freed from Egyptian oppression is the need to work to leave behind that power represented by *Paroh*; that is, to leave behind the use of words for wicked purposes and begin to use our words to speak appropriately and for sacred purposes.

On the *Seder* night we recall *Yetziat Mitzrayim* and we are mandated to speak with clarity of all the miraculous events that transpired as we went free from Egypt. Each year, as we tell this sacred tale and come together to experience leaving behind Egyptian oppression, may we also merit to emulate this beautiful message introduced by the Rebbe of Ozarov. May the words of *Torah* we share on the *Seder* night inspire us to realize the sacred gift that is speech, and the potential redemptive power inherent in channeling our words to inspire, bring clarity, and build unity among us.

Warmest wishes for a *Chag Kasher V'Sameach*. ■



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## The War of the Plagues

ובזרוע נטויה...זו החרב כמו שכתוב... (הגדה של פסח)

“And with an outstretched hand (zero’ah netuyah)..this refers to the sword as is written ....(Hagaddah shel Pesach)

The fourth and final verse of the section known as “*arami oved avi*” describes various aspects of the divine redemption: “G-d liberated us from Egypt with a strong hand and an **outstretched arm...**”. These physical descriptions of hands and arms are incompatible with a non-physical G-d. Evidently, they are metaphors, signaling various redemptive features of the exodus from Egypt. Each of the five terms of the final verse of “*arami oved avi*” is associated with a different aspect of our redemption.

The Haggadah interprets the second term of this verse- the “outstretched arm “ דרוע נטויה - by citing a verse in Divrei Hayamim

in which Dovid views an angel threatening Yerushalayim with his extended arm clasping a sword. Recognizing this ominous threat to his capital city, Dovid begins to fast and pray. Based upon this image of a sword clutched in the “outstretched arm” of an angel, the Haggadah translates the phrase “outstretched arm” in the “*arami oved avi*” section of the Torah as a reference to a sword. Effectively, the verse in *arami oved avi*, which describes redemption from Egypt through Hashem’s outstretched arm, is referring to a “sword”. The haggadah does not clarify which sword the verse it is referring to and we have absolutely no record of any makkah or plague which included a sword. Yet the Torah spotlights a sword as a highlight of our redemption.

An interesting Midrash Tanchumah (Bo perek 4) helps decode the sword which the Haggadah refers to. There are numerous strategies for classifying the series of plagues. The most popular system is based upon Rebbe Yehuda’s division of the ten plagues into a 3-3-4 configuration, known by its acronym of *detzach, adash* and *b’achav*. There are, undoubtedly, numerous other permutations by which the makkot can be assembled and organized. This midrash suggests a different classification method: all ten were part of one long incremental process. The makkot were sequenced as a 10-part series which resembled ancient warfare.

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Stage two of the siege could be called the “pre-war” hostilities. Archers would periodically attack the city, but, ultimately an air offensive cannot conquer the city. Freakish mercenaries were set loose upon the city, murdering, raping and generally sowing fear and panic amongst the inhabitants. As the war effort mounted, fiery boulders were catapulted into the city in the lead up to a

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full-blown infantry invasion.

The 10 plagues in Egypt mirrored this “combat model”. Initially, the Nile was converted into blood, denying both fresh water and fish to the Egyptians. For a country that didn’t eat animal meat, fish was the essential source of protein. The deafening and endlessly croaking frogs shattered their sanity. Soon afterwards, hoards of insects bit and gnawed at the Egyptians, simulating the attack of archers. During arov, ferocious animals invaded the land, mimicking the rampage of ogres or the charge of freakish brutes.

Barad simulated the catapulting of fiery boulders and arbeh symbolized a full-blown infantry invasion. Nothing epitomizes an invading army more than the swarm of innumerable and uniform locusts.

The entire series of makkot was designed based upon a military template. When the Haggadah portrays the “sword” which liberated us, it refers to a metaphoric sword of war. The ten plagues were a figurative war, or a metaphoric sword raised against the Egyptians.

The exodus from Egypt, not only emancipated the slaves, but it also introduced us to Hashem. In addition to identifying Him as our Father and our Creator, it was imperative that the newly liberated people acknowledge Him as Warrior. This fledgling nation would soon be expected to defeat over 30 formidable armies of Kena’an. Originally, we were meant to arrive in early summer and to wage these wars against ferocious local militias. It was crucial that we view Hashem as a warrior who understands ancient warfare and military tactics. How else would we garner the confidence to go to battle against these dominant armies?

After all, a few months earlier, we had been suffering the crushing weight of slavery!

Sadly, our desert sins delayed these wars by 40 years, but the original plan had us arriving in Israel within a few weeks of our emancipation. It was crucial to envision Hashem as a capable warrior in Egypt.

Ultimately, this vision was solidified at Yam Suf, when we proclaimed ה' איש מלחמה - Hashem is a Warrior! Witnessing the Egyptian chariots being tossed among the ocean waves convinced the people of Hashem's military prowess, imbuing them with the confidence that they could wage successful war against all odds. Hashem would fight on our behalf! The plagues in Egypt – modeled after combat strategy – first presented Hashem to his people as a Warrior.

For centuries, this image of Hashem as a warrior was almost irrelevant, as we were dispossessed of Land and army and wandered through the sands of history. Having returned to our Land and to our history we are forced to once again take up arms to defend our Homeland- once again against all odds. We have merited dramatic military triumphs which can only be attributed to divine intervention.

We daven that Hakadosh Baruch Hu continue to wage war on our behalf; we further pray that our efforts, coupled with His providence will yield a world which acknowledges His sovereignty, embraces His chosen people and stills the sounds of war for all eternity. Pesach Sameach! ■



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MON, APR 25

**9:15 AM**  
Divrei HaYamim (L'Ayla)  
**Rebbetzin Pearl  
Borow**

**10:30 AM**  
The Thought of Rav  
Soloveitchik  
**Rabbi Aaron  
Goldscheider**

**11:45 AM**  
Halacha and Agada in  
Contemporary Society  
**Rabbi Shmuel  
Herschler**

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**8:30 PM**  
Semichat Chaver  
Program  
**Rabbi Elyada  
Goldwicht** (The Bais)

TUE, APR 26

**9:15 AM**  
Torah Tapestries (L'Ayla)  
**Rebbetzin Shira  
Smiles**

**9:30AM**  
Minchat Chinuch-  
Meaning in Mitzvot  
**Rabbi Yitzchak  
Breitowitz**

**10:30AM**  
Parshat HaShavua  
**Rabbi Shmuel Goldin**

**12:15 PM**  
Jewish History  
**Dr. Deborah Polster**

**7:30 PM**  
Safrut Course  
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WED, APR 27

**9:00 AM**

Medina and Halacha

**Rabbi Shimshon Nadel****10:15 AM**Contemporary Issues in  
Halacha and Hashkafa**Rabbi Anthony  
Manning****11:30 AM**

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**Rabbi Alan Kimche**

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Halachic Controversies

**Rabbi Aschi Dick**

(The Bais)

THURS, APR 28

**9:00 AM**

Parshat HaShavua

**Rabbi Ari Kahn**

(Resumes May 19)

**9:15 AM****Rabbanit Shani Taragin**

Sefer Kohelet (L'Ayla)

**10:15 am**

Parshat HaShavua

**Rabbi Baruch Taub**

(Resumes May 12)

**11:30 AM**

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Parsha, 7:00PM Mon

Halacha, 7:00PM Wed

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Chazal- Tues, 5:00PM**Rabbi Goldwicht**

Parshat HaShavua

Wed. 8:30PM

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**11:30AM** Understanding the Aveilut of Sefirat HaOmer  
**Rabbi Yitzchak Breitowitz**

**10:20AM** Every Day Counts: Halachic and Hashkafic Insights into Sefirat HaOmer  
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**RABBI AARON**

Editor, Torah Tidbits

**GOLDSCHIEDER**

This coming week will mark the 29th *yahrzeit* of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik *zt”l*. The Rav passed away on the 18th of Nisan (*Chai Nisan*).

The following is an exquisite insight from the Rav regarding the progression of the Pesach Seder. His words continue to resonate deeply decades after his passing.

May we be *zoche* to walk in his ways and continue to aspire to achieve the dreams and visions he had for every Jew and for *Klal Yisrael*.



Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik *zt”l* (1903-1993) taught that right before we conclude the Seder we change our focus. Throughout the initial part of the Seder we celebrate the end of our oppression from slavery at the hands of the Egyptians. However as we reach the crescendo, we remind ourselves that the world is sorely in need of redemption.

We pray not only for our redemption but the redemption of mankind. When reaching the prayer of ‘*Nishmat Kol Chai*’, the Seder night soars to spiritual heights as we pray “every mouth shall give thanks, every tongue shall swear allegiance unto You.” We are concerned not only with the Jewish people but with the welfare of people everywhere.

One of the most beloved rituals of the Seder, opening the door for Eliyahu, which symbolizes the arrival of the harbinger of the Mashiach, powerfully illustrates the Jew’s perpetual hope that all mankind live in a world free of suffering and pain.

In a similar vein, the Rav quoted the famous gentile playwright Henrik Ibsen (1826-1906) who stated: “The Jew has taught me how to wait” (*Peer Gynt*, act IV, sc. i). The Rav praised the poet as being a very sensitive person and explained his

## A Seder Prayer for Covid and the War in Ukraine

There is a passage in the Haggadah which is often overlooked. It comes towards the end of the Seder night. We exclaim: “The soul of every living being shall bless Your Name.” The prayer of *Nishmat Kol Chai*. Why is this prayer included in the Haggadah?

comment: "Waiting is the art which a Jew knows best; no other nation knows how to wait like the Jew. 'This year, we are slaves; next year - free men!' This is a characteristic trait of the Jew. The Mashiach is slow in coming; nevertheless, we are still waiting. If he will knock at our door, we will rush to open it for him." (An Exalted Evening pp. 160-161)

Although we as Jews live distinctly from others around us, there are times, such as these - when we are still suffering a worldwide epidemic and there is a war in Ukraine affecting millions of lives - where we recognize our shared commonality with all mankind. We are one with our fellow man and woman. We are responsible for one another and fervently pray there be healing for all of God's creations. (The Night That Unites Haggadah, p. 243-245) ■

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"דנשךך לשונרא" ... "MEOW!" ... "דאכלא לגדיא" ... "MEH-E-E-E-EH!"  
"דזבן אבא בתרי זויז חד חריא חד גדיא..."



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AND THANK G-D, THE KIDS WERE WELL-BEHAVED, TOO!



AW, LOOK AT HER, SHE'S FALLEN ASLEEP IN A BOWL OF CHAROSET, BLESS HER...

LET'S GET YOU TO BED, SHLOMTZI...

MMM... JERICHO...



WHAT'S THAT YOU'E MUMBLING IN YOUR SLEEP...?

MM... YEHOSHUA...



...I AM YEHOSHUA, YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER, AND YOU ALL NEED TO GET SIR-COME-SIZED! RIGHT NOW!

CIRCUMCISED?! SWEETIE, YOU'RE DREAMING... OR SLEEP-TALKING OR...



"THUS SAID G-D!" BRIT-MILAH'S ALL ROUND, NOW! COME ON, WHO'S FIRST?!

SHLOMTZI! PUT THAT DOWN! IT'S DANGEROUS...

AND BESIDES, I'VE ALREADY HAD ONE, AND BELIEVE ME, THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH FOR ME FOR ONE LIFETIME, THANKS VERY...



"DANGEROUS", YOU SAY? YOU MEAN HAVING THE WHOLE ISRAELI ARMY SIR-COME-SIZED AND PUT OUT OF ACTION FOR AT LEAST THREE DAYS, AFTER WE CROSSED OVER THE JORDAN RIVER INTO A LAND THAT'S FULL OF SUPER-MEAN KINGS WHO COULD FINISH US ALL OFF IN A SECOND IF THEY FOUND OUT...?

WELL, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... MAYBE IT IS DANGEROUS...

THAT'S RIGHT, SWEETIE, NOW PUT DOWN THE KNIFE, PLEASE...



...BUT SINCE WHEN ARE WE AFRAID OF A LITTLE DANGER?!

SHLOMTZI, YOU'RE A LITTLE DANGER, AND BELIEVE ME, I CAN GET VERY AFRAID OF YOU...





## Mistakes in *Kiddush* of *Yom Tov* that Falls on Shabbat

**Question:** I sometimes get confused in the *Kiddush* of *Yom Tov* that falls on Shabbat. What does one do if he did not say all of the correct elements?

**Answer:** There are too many permutations to touch all of them, but we will try to address the main ones, with a focus on likely mistakes. Most of the relevant sources discuss the similar combinations in *davening*, but for the most part, the applications in both cases are the same (Mishna Berura 287:2).

If one totally left out either Shabbat (e.g., by missing all the words in parentheses in the *siddur/bentcher*) or *Yom Tov* (e.g., by opening up to *Kiddush* of Shabbat), one is not *yotzei* (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 47:41). The question is if he mentioned each at some but not all points. It is necessary to relate to the correct day(s) in the main body of the *beracha*, and if he left it out, it is not enough if he recited the right thing in the *beracha's* ending (see Shulchan

Aruch, Orach Chayim 487:3).

If one says "... *vatiten lanu ... et yom haShabbat hazeh*," that is enough even if he forgot the other mentions (and obviously if he left out "*b'ahava*"). It is less clear if he mentioned Shabbat only in the last words before the end *beracha*, as that might be considered part of the end and not the main body of the *beracha* (see Mishna Berura 487:13). Regarding the *Yom Tov* element, "... *vatiten lanu ... et yom...*" is even more important, as one must mention the specific holiday (Mishna Berura 487:11; Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 47:42), and it is mentioned only once during *Kiddush*.

The end of the *beracha* is very important, and if one recites on a regular *Yom Tov* the ending of Shabbat or vice versa, he is not *yotzei* (see Shulchan Aruch, OC 487:1). The matter is less clear on *Yom Tov* that falls on Shabbat. If he leaves out one element, the *beracha* could still be significant because he correctly addressed one element. While the missing element is crucial, perhaps it is enough that it was mentioned in the midst of the *beracha*. The Knesset Hagedola (to Tur, OC 487) says that if one mentioned Shabbat in the middle but not at the end on Shabbat/*Yom Tov*, he does not need to repeat *Shemoneh Esrei*. The Pri Chadash (OC 487:1) presumes that the Knesset Hagedola's basis is the *halacha* (Shulchan Aruch, OC 268:4) that if one *davened* a weekday *Shemoneh Esrei*

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and OU Israel's Torah Tidbits.



on Shabbat and mentioned Shabbat in its midst, without a separate Shabbat *beracha*, he is *yotzei*. However, the Pri Chadash rejects the proof based on the fact that on a certain level, a full *Shemoneh Esrei* on Shabbat could have been appropriate, whereas a seven-*beracha amida* on Shabbat and Yom Tov needs to be done with an accurate middle *beracha*. We assume like the Pri Chadash, including in regard to *Kiddush* (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata ibid. 41). If he did not speak extraneous things, he would not have to repeat Borei Pri Hagafen (HaSeder He'aruch 52:7). If he repeated the *beracha* and the second time mentioned only Shabbat and not *Yom Tov*, he is likely *yotzei* since both elements were ultimately recited (see Igrot Moshe, OC IV, 70:14).

If one mentioned Shabbat at the end and not *Yom Tov*, the situation is better, based on the following source. The *gemara* (Beitza 17a) cites three opinions of *Tannaim* regarding what the proper break-up

of *berachot* is for the *amida* of Shabbat/Yom Tov. Beit Hillel says that the *beracha* ends with mention of only Shabbat, whereas *Yom Tov* is mentioned only in the middle. We *pasken* like Rebbe, who says that the end *beracha* mentions both Shabbat and *Yom Tov*. However, many presume that Rebbe only came to add on *Yom Tov* as a *lechatchila*, whereas if one mentions *Yom Tov* in the middle and ends with only Shabbat, Rebbe agrees that he is *yotzei* (Be'ur Halacha to OC 487:1). The Be'ur Halacha points out that the Yerushalmi's version of Rebbe is like Beit Hillel (the end *beracha* need not mention *Yom Tov*), and the discrepancy is more palatable if Rebbe agrees *b'di'eved*. Thus, regarding practical halacha, mention of the specific *Yom Tov* in the midst of the *beracha* is sufficient *b'di'eved* (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata ibid.). ■

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### Viduy Ma'aserot

The mitzvah of *biur* includes saying the *viduy biur ma'aserot* out loud. In Israel, the *viduy* should be recited on the seventh day of Pesach, before or after mincha (abroad it is also possible to read it on the

eighth day of Pesach). Note that the Mishna (Sotah 7:1) and Shulchan Aruch (YD §331, 143) state explicitly that *viduy ma'aser* may be recited in any language, not only in Hebrew. ■

*(Please see the past editions of Torah Tidbits for more details regarding this ritual)*

The text for *viduy ma'aserot*, which appears in *parashat Ki Tavo* (*Devarim* 26: 12-15), is as follows:

(יב) כִּי תִכְלֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂי תְבוּאָתְךָ בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית  
שָׁנַת הַמַּעֲשֵׂר וְנָתַתָּה לַלֵּוִי לַגֵּר לַיְתוֹם וְלָאִלְמָנָה  
וְאָכְלוּ בְשַׁעְרֶיךָ וְשָׂבְעוּ:

(יג) וְאָמַרְתָּ לְפָנָי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּעֵרְתִי הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִן-הַבַּיִת  
וְגַם נָתַתִּיו לַלֵּוִי וְלַגֵּר לַיְתוֹם וְלָאִלְמָנָה כְּכָל-מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָנִי  
לֵאמֹר עֲבַרְתִּי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ וְלֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי:

(יד) לֹא-אֲכַלְתִּי בְּאֲנִי מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא-בְעֵרְתִי מִמֶּנּוּ בְטָמֵא  
וְלֹא-נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ לְמֵת שְׂמֹעֲתִי בְּקוֹל ה' אֱלֹהֵי  
עֲשִׂיתִי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָנִי:

(טו) הַשְּׂקִיפָה מִמַּעוֹן קֹדֶשְׁךָ מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבִרְךָ אֶת-עַמְּךָ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְאֵת הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לָנוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְרָהָם  
אָרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ:

When you have set aside in full the tenth part of your yield—in the third year, the year of the tithe—and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat their fill in your settlements, you shall declare before the L-rd your G-d: “I have cleared out the consecrated portion from the house; and I have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, just as You commanded me; I have neither transgressed nor neglected any of Your commandments: I have not eaten of it while in mourning,

I have not cleared out any of it while I was unclean, and I have not deposited any of it with the dead. I have obeyed the L-rd my G-d; I have done just as You commanded me. Gaze from Your holy abode, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the soil You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers."

### Some add the following *mishna* (*Ma'aser Sheni* 5:13):

השקיפה ממעון קדשך מן השמים - עשינו מה שגזרת עלינו, אף אתה עשה מה שהבטחתנו, השקיפה ממעון קדשך מן השמים וברך את עמך את ישראל - בבנים ובבנות, ואת האדמה אשר נתת לנו - בטל ומטר וכולדות בהמה, כאשר נשבעת לאבותינו ארץ זבת חלב ודבש - כדי שתתן טעם טוב בפירות.

"Gaze from Your holy abode, from the heavens." We have done what You decreed upon us, so too You do what You promised us: [to]"gaze from Your holy abode, from the heavens, and bless Your nation, Israel," with sons and daughters."And the land You have given us" bless with dew and rain, and [bless] the offspring of [our] livestock. "Just as You have sworn to our forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey" so that You will give a pleasant taste to the fruit.

### After reading the *viduy*, recite the following prayer:

יהי רצון מלפניך ד' אלקינו ואלוקי אבותינו, כשם שזכינו לקיים מצוות ביעור מעשרות ויודי מעשרות, כן יזכנו הקב"ה לקיים מצוות הפרשת תרומות ומעשרות מהתורה, וכן מצוות ביעור מעשרות מן התורה, בביאת גואל צדק ובבנין בית המקדש במהרה בימינו, אמן, כן יהי רצון.

May it be your will, G-d, our L-rd and the L-rd of our forefathers, that just as we have merited to perform the commandment of *bi'ur ma'aserot* [removing tithes from our possession and delivering them to their proper destinations] and *viduy ma'aserot* [reciting the tithing confession], so too will G-d give us the merit to perform the commandment of separating *terumot* and *ma'aserot* as a Torah obligation, and to perform the commandment of *bi'ur ma'aserot* as a Torah obligation, with the coming of the righteous Redeemer and the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, speedily and in our day, amen.  
May it be Your will.





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## A Message from NCSY Israel's Regional Directors

On Pesach night Jewish people from around the world will open up a special book called the Haggadah in which we will tell the story of our servitude, the miracles we experienced in Mitzrayim, and our redemption. Through the Haggadah we fulfill the Mitzvah of "סיפור יציאת מצרים" the telling over of our exodus from Egypt. Specifically this year, the Seder coincides with Shabbat. During Kiddush every Friday night we recall or "זכר" the leaving of Egypt. The Mitzvah of "זכר יציאת מצרים" is a Mitzvah for each day and each night throughout the whole year. What then is so special about the Seder and the Mitzvah to "tell" over the story of our departure from Egypt specifically on this night?

Many answers are given to this question. The Minchat Chinuch (1801-1874) explains that while on each night there is a commandment to remind oneself of our departure from Egypt, tonight we have an obligation to tell the children what happened. We are commanded to continue our story and pass it on to the next generation tonight. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (1903-1993) suggests that it is specifically through telling the story that one is brought to a place where they thank Hashem for the miracles that He has performed for us, while merely recalling the story does not do that for the individual. Rav Kook (1865-1935) writes in his commentary on the siddur, Olat Re'iyah that the fundamental distinction between this night and every other night is that one must actually feel like they are leaving Egypt right now. On the Seder night one must describe their own departure from Mitzrayim as if they are being sent free themselves. The night of the Seder is the night in which we left Mitzrayim and that same influence and energy are recreated every single year at this time. Rav Kook takes this further and explains how it is from this special experience where the power of freedom is evoked in the world where we as a nation must return to our natural independence to fulfill our unique mission. Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon writes that what we experience on the Seder night is what we try to tap into each and every day. We find ourselves in a world where one can limit themselves and not actualize their full potential. Whether one is caught up being distracted by their smartphones, fixated on the news, or even worrying about the future. When one cannot be present on their today and tap into their unique independence they can't truly live and experience the world around them and everything they have to be thankful for.

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## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



### Rabbi Reuven Tradburks Director of RCA Israel Region



#### 1<sup>st</sup> aliya (Vayikra 16:1-17), 2<sup>nd</sup> aliya (16:18-24)

In these first two aliyot, Aharon is instructed to enter the Holy of Holies only through an elaborate process of offerings. He is to bring a private sin offering. And a communal sin offering of 2 identical goats, one as an offering, one sent to the wilderness, determined by lottery. The blood of both his offering and the communal shall be brought into the Holy of Holies, accompanied by incense. The smoke of the incense fills the Holy of Holies. The (scape) goat is sent to the wilderness. The people gain kapara, atonement.

Entry to the Holy of Holies requires an elaborate ceremony of unique offerings; including the scapegoat ceremony and the incense offered in the Holy of Holies. And it is all performed by the Kohen Gadol.

This continues the powerful and crucial theme of the entire section following Mount Sinai. In G-d's reach for man, His love of man, He has created a place of rendezvous; the Mishkan. However, it is rendezvous with care, with reservation, with humility. The building design is with great detail. The offerings are with great

detail; when they are brought, how they are brought, the Kohanim's role in bringing them. G-d says: You may approach Me, I want you to approach Me, but with care. Here, He invites man to rendezvous in the Holy of Holies – the inner, intimate chamber, with the Aron and the tablets, covered by angels. This intimate invitation requires a very elaborate procedure; unique offerings like the scapegoat and the incense, sin offerings, olah offerings. The closer, the more intimate; but also the more care and preparation required.

This is a powerful and crucial theme: G-d invites man, wants man, but demands man's understanding of his inadequacy and his human foibles (sin offerings). And while man is invited to the Holy of Holies it is with great limitation. Not every person, not every day; it is one person, the Kohen Gadol, only one time a year. G-d remains mysterious, ineffable, infinite, unknowable. This is the delicate balance the Torah is creating; G-d wants man. Man is noble, the invitee of G-d Himself. But with enormous deference, enormous humility of man's limited station. Nobility and humility; the majesty in being the invitee of G-d, hand in hand with the reality of our woeful inadequacy.



3<sup>rd</sup> aliya (16:25-34) This entire ceremony is done once a year on Yom Kippur, to gain atonement and purity.

Only at the end of the entire description of how one is to enter the Holy of Holies does the Torah tell us that this is to be done on Yom Kippur. As if to say: the goal of Yom Kippur is to enter the Holy of Holies. It is through man's approach to G-d that he gains atonement and purity.



**4<sup>th</sup> aliya (17:1-7)** Tell the entire people: all sacrifices are to be brought to the Mikdash. The Kohen is to offer them, so they are pleasing. We are to no longer offer sacrifices to spirits.

The centrality of the Mikdash is to emphasize monotheism: one place, one G-d.



**5<sup>th</sup> aliya (17:8-8:5)** Blood is not to be consumed, for the life is in the blood. I have given it to you to use for atonement on the altar, not to consume. The blood of an undomesticated animal or bird that is killed for consumption, that blood is to be covered with earth. Do not do what the Egyptians or Canaanites do. Do My commands; and live.

The prohibition of blood is related to the value we place on life. Our very life force is the essence of an offering; we offer our very selves, though through the offering.



**6<sup>th</sup> aliya (18:6-21)** Sexual relations with relatives are forbidden: including spouses of parents, half siblings, grandchildren, step-siblings, aunts, in-laws. In addition, marrying 2 women who are related. Or a married woman.

The listing of forbidden relationships changes the subject from the laws concerning the Mishkan. It is not the first such change of subject. The laws of Kashrut of Parshat Shemini were also a change of subject. Thus, the first 2 subjects of laws unrelated to our approach to G-d in the Mishkan are food and family. These are the first things said to the first man and woman on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation: be fruitful and multiply. And eat of the herbs. Family and food were said to Adam and Eve. Family

and food are the first laws to be outlined in detail to the Jewish people.



**7<sup>th</sup> aliya (18:22-30)** A man shall not lie with a man. Sexual relations with an animal are forbidden. These things (all the above) defile the Land: it will spit you out.

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## HAFTORAH AMOS 9

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This week's *haftorah* describes the exiles and punishments that will befall the Jews because they strayed after the ways of the Gentiles — behavior that this week's Torah reading proscribes.

The prophet Amos delivers G-d's message, reminding the people of G-d's kindness to them — taking them out of Egypt and singling them out as His chosen nation. Nevertheless, because of their misdeeds, G-d will destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel; but will not completely destroy the house of Jacob. The Jews will be scattered amongst the nations, but eventually they will return to their Land — on the day of the redemption. G-d will then reinstall the House of David to its former glory and there shall be peace and abundance upon the Land.

The haftorah ends with G-d's promise: "And I will return the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall rebuild desolate cities and inhabit [them], and they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their produce. And I will plant them on their land, and they shall no longer be uprooted from upon their land, that I have given them, said the L-rd your G-d." ■



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## The Scapegoat

The strangest and most dramatic element of the service on Yom Kippur, set out in *Acharei Mot* (Lev. 16:7-22), was the ritual of the two goats, one offered as a sacrifice, the other sent away into the desert “to Azazel.” They were to all intents and purposes indistinguishable from one another: they were chosen to be as similar as possible in size and appearance. They were brought before the High Priest and lots were drawn, one bearing the words “to the Lord,” the other, “to Azazel.” The one on which the lot “To the Lord” fell was offered as a sacrifice. Over the other the High Priest confessed the sins of the nation, and it was then taken away into the desert hills outside Jerusalem where it plunged to its death. Tradition tells us that a red thread would be attached to its horns, half of which was removed before the animal was sent away. If the rite had been effective, the red thread would turn

to white.

Much is puzzling about the ritual. First, what is the meaning of “to Azazel,” to which the second goat was sent? It appears nowhere else in Scripture. Three major theories emerged as to its meaning. According to the Sages and Rashi, it meant “a steep, rocky, or hard place”. In other words, it was a description of its destination. In the plain meaning of the Torah, the goat was sent “to a desolate area” (*el erez gezerah*, Lev. 16:22). According to the Sages, this meant it was thus taken to a steep ravine where it fell to its death. That, according to the first explanation, is the meaning of Azazel.

The second, suggested cryptically by Ibn Ezra and explicitly by Nahmanides, is that Azazel was the name of a spirit or demon, one of the fallen angels referred to in Genesis 6:2, similar to the goat-spirit called ‘Pan’ in Greek mythology, ‘Faunus’ in Latin. This is a difficult idea, which is why Ibn Ezra alluded to it, as he did in similar cases, by way of a riddle, a puzzle, that only the wise would be able to decipher. He writes:

“I will reveal to you part of the secret by hint: when you reach thirty-three you will know it.”

Nahmanides reveals the secret.

Thirty-three verses later on, the Torah commands: “They must no longer offer any

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of their sacrifices to the goat idols [*se'irim*] after whom they go astray.” (See Lev. 17:7)

Azazel, on this reading, is the name of a demon or hostile force, sometimes called Satan or Samael. The Israelites were categorically forbidden to worship such a force. Indeed, the belief that there are powers at work in the universe distinct from, or even hostile to, God, is incompatible with Judaic monotheism. Nonetheless, some Sages did believe that there were negative forces that were part of the heavenly retinue, like Satan, who brought accusations against humans or tempted them into sin. The goat sent into the wilderness to Azazel was a way of conciliating or propitiating such forces so that the prayers of Israel could rise to heaven without, as it were, any dissenting voices. This way of understanding the rite is similar to the saying on the part of the Sages that we blow shofar in a double cycle on Rosh Hashanah “to confuse Satan.” (Rosh Hashanah 16b)

The third interpretation, and the simplest, is that Azazel is a compound noun meaning “the goat [*ez*] that was sent away [*azal*].” This led to the addition of a new word to the English language. In 1530 William Tyndale produced the first English translation of the Hebrew Bible, an act then illegal and for which he paid with his life. Seeking to translate Azazel into English, he called it “the escapegoat,” i.e. the goat that was sent away and released. In the course of time, the first letter was dropped, and the word “scapegoat” was born.

The real question, though, is: what was the ritual actually about? It was unique. Sin and guilt offerings are familiar features of the Torah and a normal part of the

service of the Temple. The service of Yom Kippur was different in one salient respect: in every other case, the sin was confessed over the animal that was sacrificed. On Yom Kippur, the High Priest confessed the sins of the people over the animal that was *not* sacrificed, the scapegoat that was sent away, “carrying on it all their iniquities” (Lev. 16:21-22).

The simplest and most compelling answer was given by Maimonides in *The Guide for the Perplexed*:

There is no doubt that sins cannot be carried like a burden, and taken off the shoulder of one being to be laid on that of another being. But these ceremonies are of a symbolic character, and serve to impress people with a certain idea, and to induce them to repent – as if to say, we have freed ourselves of our previous deeds, have cast them behind our backs, and removed them from us as far as possible.<sup>1</sup>

Expiation demands a ritual, some dramatic representation of the removal of sin and the wiping-clean of the past. That is clear. Yet Maimonides does not explain why Yom Kippur demanded a rite not used on other days of the year when sin or guilt offerings were brought. Why was the first goat, the one of which the lot “To the Lord” fell and which was offered as a sin offering (Lev. 16:9) not sufficient?

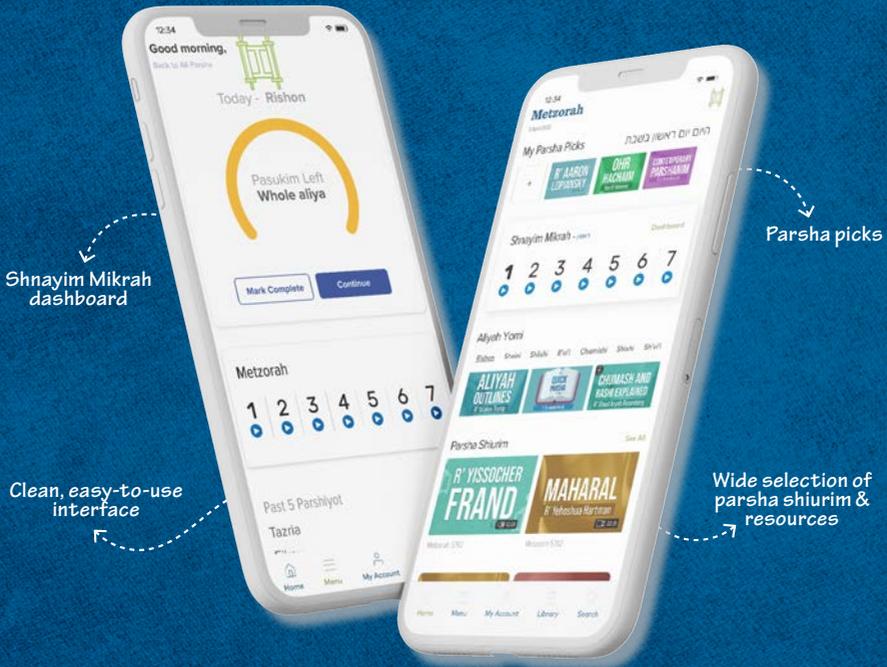
The answer lies in the dual character of the day. The Torah states:

This shall be an eternal law for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must fast and not do any work... This is because on this day you shall have all your

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1 *The Guide for the Perplexed*, III:46.

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sins atoned [*yechaper*], so that you will be cleansed [*le-taher*]. Before God you will be cleansed of all your sins. (Lev. 16:29-30)

Two quite distinct processes were involved on Yom Kippur. First there was *kapparah*, atonement. This is the normal function of a sin offering. Second, there was *taharah*, purification, something normally done in a different context altogether, namely the removal of *tumah*, ritual defilement, which could arise from a number of different causes, among them contact with a dead body, skin disease, or nocturnal discharge. Atonement has to do with guilt. Purification has to do with contamination or pollution. These are usually<sup>2</sup> two separate worlds. On Yom Kippur they were brought together. Why?

As we discussed last week in parshat Metzora, we owe to anthropologists like Ruth Benedict the distinction between shame cultures and guilt cultures.<sup>3</sup> Shame is a social phenomenon. It is what we feel when our wrongdoing is exposed to others. It may even be something we feel when we merely imagine other people knowing or seeing what we have done. Shame is the feeling of being found out, and our first instinct is to hide. That is what Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden after they had eaten the forbidden fruit. They were

ashamed of their nakedness and they hid.

Guilt is a personal phenomenon. It has nothing to do with what others might say if they knew what we have done, and everything to do with what we say to ourselves. Guilt is the voice of conscience, and it is inescapable. You may be able to avoid shame by hiding or not being found out, but you cannot avoid guilt. Guilt is self-knowledge.

There is another difference which, once understood, explains why Judaism is overwhelmingly a guilt rather than a shame culture. Shame attaches to the person. Guilt attaches to the act. It is almost impossible to remove shame once you have been publicly disgraced. It is like an indelible stain on your skin. It is the mark of Cain. Shakespeare has Lady Macbeth exclaim, after her crime, "Will these hands ne'er be clean?" In shame cultures, wrongdoers tend either to go into hiding or into exile, where no one knows their past, or to commit suicide. Playwrights in these cultures have such characters die, for there is no possible redemption.

Guilt makes a clear distinction between the act of wrongdoing and the person of the wrongdoer. The act was wrong, but the agent remains, in principle, intact. That is why guilt can be removed, "atoned for," by confession, remorse, and restitution. "Hate not the sinner but the sin," is the basic axiom of a guilt culture.

Normally, sin and guilt offerings, as their names imply, are about guilt. They atone. But Yom Kippur deals not only with our sins as individuals. It also confronts our sins as a community bound by mutual responsibility. It deals, in other words, with

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2 *There were, though, exceptions. A leper – or more precisely someone suffering from the skin disease known in the Torah as tsara'at – had to bring a guilt offering [asham] in addition to undergoing rites of purification (Lev. 14:12-20).*

3 Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin) 1946.

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the social as well as the personal dimension of wrongdoing. Yom Kippur is about shame as well as guilt. Hence there has to be purification (the removal of the stain) as well as atonement.

The psychology of shame is quite different to that of guilt. We can discharge guilt by achieving forgiveness – and forgiveness can only be granted by the object of our wrongdoing, which is why Yom Kippur only atones for sins against God. Even God cannot – logically cannot – forgive sins committed against our fellow humans until they themselves have forgiven us.

Shame cannot be removed by forgiveness. The victim of our crime may have forgiven us, but we still feel defiled by the knowledge that our name has been disgraced, our reputation harmed, our standing damaged. We still feel the stigma, the dishonour, the degradation. That is why an immensely powerful and dramatic ceremony had to take place during which people could feel and symbolically see their sins carried away to the desert, to no-man's-land. A similar ceremony took place when a leper was cleansed. The Priest took two birds, killed one, and released the other to fly away across the open fields (Lev. 14:4-7). Again the act was one of *cleansing*, not

*atonement*, and had to do with shame, not guilt.

Judaism is a religion of hope, and its great rituals of repentance and atonement are part of that hope. We are not condemned to live endlessly with the mistakes and errors of our past. That is the great difference between a guilt culture and a shame culture. But Judaism also acknowledges the existence of shame. Hence the elaborate ritual of the scapegoat that seemed to carry away the *tumah*, the defilement that is the mark of shame. It could only be done on Yom Kippur because that was the one day of the year in which everyone shared, at least vicariously, in the process of confession, repentance, atonement, and purification. When a whole society confesses its guilt, individuals can be redeemed from shame.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why are symbolic rituals important? What do they achieve?
- If Judaism is a 'guilt-culture', why is it still concerned with shame?
- If ritual removes shame, what removes guilt? ■

Covenant and Conversation 5782 is kindly supported by the Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl z"l. These weekly teachings from Rabbi Sacks z"l are part of the 'Covenant & Conversation' series on the weekly Torah reading. Read more on [www.rabbisacks.org](http://www.rabbisacks.org).

ת"ב

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## DIVREI MENACHEM

BY MENACHEM PERSOFF

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# Take Not the Bloody Path

In this week's Parsha, we are introduced to sacrificial offerings where the blood of animals is sprinkled in the Inner Sanctuary or on various parts of the altar. Aharon, for example, was to take a bull – part of his atonement on Yom Kippur – and sprinkle its blood upon the eastern front of the Ark cover eight times in a whip-like fashion.

Later, we are introduced to the prohibition of eating the blood of ritually slaughtered animals, unconsecrated animals, and even the blood of fowl and kosher animals unfit for offerings (Kerissot 20b). Notably, the punishment for doing so was very severe – *Karet*, being cut off from the people.

However, how can blood be sprinkled on the altar if it is forbidden to be consumed? Moreover, how can we consider blood, so freely spilled in our time, to be the instrument of atonement! Indeed, just the thought of “blood” upsets our sensibilities, conjuring up primitive practices, Draconian crimes, and heinous bestiality.

The Torah, however, explains – “For the soul of the flesh is in the blood” (Vayikra 17:11). Rashi elucidates: Our lives are dependent on blood. Blood is the medium

that goes on the altar, as if to say, “Let one life (of an animal) be offered to atone for the other.” Consequently, it is inappropriate that the animal's blood be eaten.

Less one should think otherwise, Sforno points out that because blood represents the “life-giving force” in animals (and humans), it signifies man's dedication of his life to God's service – and NOT God's desire for blood!

Blood is representative of life! So, no wonder that when a woman loses blood during the monthly cycle, she becomes ritually unclean – for an opportunity for life has passed. No wonder at a Brit Milah, a drop of blood is extracted from the infant to symbolize a life to be dedicated to Hashem's service. No wonder we must be stringent to remove any traces of blood from our meat and fowl and cover the spilled blood of slaughtered animals.

No wonder, then, that blood expiates for sin! But more so, we are commanded: “not to stand idly while your neighbor's blood is shed” (Vayikra 19:16). Therefore, at this time, let us respect our souls, the life-giving side of ourselves that incorporates our divinely inspired attributes. Concomitantly, let us protect humanity from vain and sadistic bloodshed, whether on the individual plane or in the international arena. ■

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Rav Ya'akov Levi

For more information please contact:  
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# Real Life Rescues



## A Dramatic Crossing Results In a Life Nearly Lost, Then Saved

Aryeh Yaffe, a physician first responder who volunteers with United Hatzalah was taking care of some errands a few weeks ago when his emergency comm device began to buzz. The device was alerting Dr. Yaffe to a medical emergency taking place near his location.

A teenage pedestrian was struck by a city bus as he crossed Derech Hevron Street in Jerusalem. Aryeh flipped on his lights and sirens and dutifully raced to the scene on his ambucycle. Yaffe zipped past the late-night traffic with the sirens blaring, reaching the location swiftly.

Finding the 15-year-old victim lying on the asphalt unresponsive, Aryeh checked for arterial bleeding and provided initial trauma treatment, securing a clear airway and caring for the patient until he regained consciousness. Aryeh then assisted in securing the young man on a gurney and transferring him to a United Hatzalah ambulance for medical transport.

As the attending physician on scene, Aryeh offered to assist with evacuation efforts. The skilled physician climbed in the back of the ambulance and provided continued care, as the driver screeched off to the trauma center. Upon arrival at the hospital, Aryeh updated staff on duty and assisted with patient transfer.

It wasn't until the early morning hours, that Aryeh finally made it back to the accident scene, got on his ambucycle and headed home. Though he was exhausted, he was gratified to have been there for the wounded pedestrian in his time of need.





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