



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

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**חג כשר ושמה**

We welcome all visitors to Ohr Yerushalayim over Pesach and invite you to make use of our facilities

The times of Minyanim are inside, including the various Shacharis Minyanim during Chol HaMoed

## So Who Cares About the Ten Plagues Anyway?

Richard Danziger

The Nesivos Shalom asks some poignant questions regarding the Ten Plagues. The Torah goes on in some length – the warnings, the plagues themselves, the conversations between Pharo and Moshe. But why do we need it? The Torah isn't a story book, as he puts it, so why all this detail? What life-lessons can be gleaned and applied from the events of a year that took place over three and a half thousand years ago? And if the climax of the plagues, the ultimate catalyst for the Yidden leaving Mitzrayim, was macos bechoros – death of the firstborn, why not just hit the Mitzrim with the final maccah and be finished? And furthermore, what's the chiddush of R' Yehudah who summarises the maccos as a set of 3 roshei taivos: DATZACH ADASH B'ACHAV. This seems fairly superfluous – what does it come to teach us?

We can answer these questions by a beautiful explanation from the Kli Yakar. The Kli Yakar explains that each of R' Yehuda's groups came as a response to a form of denial from Pharo, the ultimate non-believer, and to build the emunah of the Yidden in the same area that Pharo denied.

When Moshe and Aaron initially came to Pharo, his response was "who is Hashem that I should listen to His voice, I do not know HaShem". So we find at the beginning of the plague of blood that the Almighty says "With this they they will know that I am Hashem". This is the lesson of the first set of plagues – DATZACH, blood, frogs and lice. The blood and frogs were in a sense a judgment on the Nile, which the Mitzrim worshipped as a god. The blood showed their god to be powerless, while the frogs showed that the river could be mekadaish shem Hashem, as the frogs threw themselves into the Egyptian ovens. The lice was to prove the Egyptian sorcerers powerless – as the dust was too insignificant for their power to affect.

Although Pharo then acknowledged the existence of Hashem, he still denied His involvement with worldly matters – and we find that at the announcement of the plague of wild beasts Hashem informs Moshe "so that they will know that I am Hashem in the midst of the land". This is the lesson of the second set – ADASH, wild animals, pestilence and boils.. The beasts stopped at the border with Goshen, the pestilence only afflicted Egyptian animals and not those of the Yidden, and the boils first affected the Egyptian sorcerers – demonstrating Hashem's involvement and knowledge of ownership and behaviour.

Pharo's final denial was that although Hashem existed and was involved in the physical world, He was not all powerful and other powers existed that rivaled Him. At the warning of the plague of hail, Hashem informs Moshe "so that you shall know that there is none like Me in all

the world". This is the lesson of the third set – B'ACHAV – hail, locusts, darkness and the death of the firstborn – that Hashem is all powerful, and that the natural world is bent to His will. The hail mixed fire and ice, opposing elements that otherwise would not exist together. The locusts appeared in unprecedented numbers and blocked out the sun, yet another force that the Mitzrim worshiped. The darkness was all encompassing and held the Mitrim in place, and was another judgment on the Egyptian sun-god. The final plague, death of the firstborn, demonstrated that Hashem knows fully that which man thinks hidden, as each Egyptian house contained unexpected firstborns – a result of the licentious nature of the Egyptian society.

The plagues then are not just given as a mere history, rather they contain the essential make up of Jewish emunah – the existence of Hashem, His involvement with our daily lives and His encompassing omnipotence.

## Afikoman: i)Yachatz ii)Yaakov

Eli Bookman

The Taamei Haminhogim gives a practical explanation for the mitzvah of yachatz. The evening revolves around the number 4 - per the Vilna Gaon, corresponding to the 4 reasons for bringing a Korbon Todah – all which apply to the Bnei Yisroel – i) leaving prison (Mitsrayim) ii) refuah (the spiritual healing of Kabolos HaTorah iii) crossing the sea (Krias Yam Suf), and iv) crossing the dessert. Yet, at the start of the Seder we have only 3 Matzos. However with yachatz, we now have four.

'קרבן פסח' – 'אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן'

אפיקומן (lit. dessert) has the גמטריא of 287.

Explains that when יצחק was going to give the ברכות ל דיסקין עשו יעקב, came in first, bringing with him two goats. רש"י explains that it was ליל פסח and the two goats were for קרבן פסח and חגיגה. Later on, when עשו comes to collect the ברכות, יצחק says to him: 'אחיר במרמה' – 'your brother came with wisdom' since I have already eaten the פסח I can't eat anything else because אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן. Incredibly the גמטריא of במרמה is 287!

With thanks to HaRav A.Z. Herman שליט"א

## The Pesach That Could Have Been

Ari Cramer

Picture the scene...

You are tired, you are cold and hungry, you are crying. Tomorrow could be your last day alive, or a fate you don't want to even think about as a captive. You live in a small stone house with your family looking over the walls of Yerushalayim, and it is Erev Pesach 2,500 years ago.

The Bnei Yisroel that once occupied the whole of the land have now been reduced to just this city. The Assyrians have been flexing their might across the region, destroying absolutely all in their path with ease. Nothing has been able to stand in their way and they are brimming with confidence. Their main prize is Yerushalayim and nothing can stop them. Looking over the wall you can see tents as far as the eye can see. Rumours have spread that there are around 185,000 of the wicked Assyrian king Sancheriv's battle hardened soldiers all ready and willing, but they are in no rush so they've camped for the night, ready for their day of victory tomorrow. The noise is incredible, the taunts that they are yelling are vulgar and scary, and you are shaking and trembling with the expectation.

You wish you had your small golden idol to turn to, to offer some kind of vague hope but the Jewish King Chizkiyah's new reforms has ensured that all idols have been destroyed throughout the city, even the powerful ones on the Temple Mount. All is lost, all is lost.

Your family members are sobbing and crying out to anyone and no one. There is no one to save you or them. The prophets and religious men are fasting and praying. You remember your grandparents talking about the start of this Festival day many years back as one of rejoicing and eating together in groups. Eating lamb, eating meat, eating bread of affliction to remind us we were once slaves in Egypt, where we used to suffer great hardships until we were miraculously saved and brought out and formed as a nation in the belief of one true G-D, but it looks like the suffering and hardships are upon us once again. Where is this G-D now? There is no hope, all is lost all is lost.

You wake up with a start at dawn, you didn't think you would sleep at all but you must have dozed off. All is quiet, all your family around you are sleeping. You peer over the wall to find all is quiet, too quiet. Suddenly in the distance you hear a small yell of pain and anguish from an Assyrian soldier as he goes from tent to tent. Nothing else moves. What is going on? Confusion and gossip reigns supreme. Eventually news filters through during the morning that all 185,000 soldiers surrounding the walls had died during the night in a mysterious plague, save for a handful to be able to tell the tale. It's an absolute miracle! The Malach HaMaves that had swept through the land of Egypt hundreds of years previously killing all firstborn males has been at it again. You can't quite believe it but you've been saved!

There is joyous dancing in the streets! Everyone is in a state of disbelief, uncontrollable laughter of the absurd. How could this have happened? Why did it happen? It must be due to our King Chizkiyah following the old ways. Let's celebrate this Festival! Let's dance and sing and eat and be merry! We're alive and we can't quite believe it!

According to Melachim Beis (Chapter 19) this unbelievable miracle actually happened and the reasons for the redemption were due to

Chizkiyah Hamelech following the right path and doing complete Teshuvah, going against the grain of his wicked father before him, together with the help of the Navi Yishayahu... and yet it could have gone even further!

According to Gemara Sanhedrin (94a), if Chizkiyah Hamelech had publicly sung and praised Hashem like Moshe Rabbeinu had done at the splitting of the sea, and given the remnant of Bnei Yisroel that extra hope and belief then he would have merited to see many more nissim, and he could have even been transformed into the Moshiach.

Well here we are 2,500 years later, and still no Moshiach, but he is coming, "H in our lifetimes. By celebrating this Pesach with the right understanding and inclination, singing the Pesach songs on Seder night and praising Hashem, may he come sooner rather than later.

### Double Dipping

Aryeh Bookman

On Monday night, we will dip twice in the סדר. Initially we will dip the כרפס into the salt water, and then subsequently the מרור into the חרוסת, and we are told this process of dipping is to be taken as a sign of חירות.

On this we can ask a twofold question. Firstly how and why do these dippings have any significance in the חירות of בני ישראל? And also as we say in מה נשתנה in the third question: שבכל הלילות אין אנו מטבילין אפילו פעם אחת

From this we can ask why do we need two dippings, surely if 'on all other nights we dip not even once', one dipping should suffice to illustrate the diversity from our usual regime?

The בני איש חי shines a new light on these dippings and by doing so proposes a solution to our problem.

The בני איש חי suggests that as opposed to actually symbolizing חירות these dippings almost tell the story of our יציאה. As we know the עבודת germinated from a dipping. That is the dipping of the כסונת הפסים into the goatling's blood (וישב לוי לא). This concealment of the sale of יוסף eventually spiralled into the מצרים and subsequently to the עבודת. We are also aware of a dipping towards the end of the פסח story, when בני ישראל dipped bundles of hyssop into blood to paint their doorposts in order to inform the מלך המות to Passover this particular dwelling as it housed Jews (בא יבי כב).

The בני איש חי takes it one step further and says that each dipping can be correlated to those events we have mentioned. At כרפס we take a nice, possibly sweet, food which we then embitter by dunking it into salt water, symbolizing the initiation of גלות and hardship. Whereas the dipping of the מרור is quite the opposite. We take a bitter food and sweeten it to symbolize the גאולה and transition into a state of חירות

May we, this year, be זוכה to the ultimate גאולה, the coming of משיח במהרה בימינו

### A Question of Precedence

Dani Epstein

There is a time-worn aphorism I particularly enjoy which goes thusly: "Two Jews, three opinions". We actually make a virtue out of arguing. The gemoro is full of it. Go into any Yeshiva study hall and what do hear? Arguing, and lots of it.

In fact we enjoy arguing so much that it is even included in the הגדה, the dispute between Rabbi Elozor and the Chachomim.

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בפלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא: שפאמר, למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חניך, ימי חניך - הגמים, כל ימי חניך - העלילות. והקמים אומרים: ימי חניך - העולם הזה, כל ימי חניך - להביא לימות המשיח.

Rabbi Elozor Ben Azaryoh said: "I am like a seventy-year-old, and I did not succeed in having the Exodus retold by night; until Ben Zoma expounded [the verse] which says: "...in order to recall the day you left the land of Egypt all the days of your life". "The days of your life" implies the day, "all the days of your life" implies the nights [as well]. But the Sages say "the days of your life" [implies] this world, "all the days of your life" implies the days of the Messiah.

The Chasam Sofer poses a simple question: what exactly did Ben Zoma achieve for Rabbi Elozor? Here we have a classic case of יחיד ורבים - חידושי רבים we follow the majority opinion, in our case being that of

בס"ד

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invites you to

# נעילת החג

On last day Yom Tov between  
Mincha & Maariv

With guest speakers:  
**Rabbi Yitzchok Douek**  
& **Rabbi Benji Silverstone**





the ; חכמים in which case Rabbi Elozor is back where he was before Ben Zoma expounded the verse.

To understand what is happening here, the Chasam Sofer takes us across to a related topic.

When משה was instructed to contact the בני ישראל in Egypt, he was given various signs as well as a code-phrase: - אהיה אשר אהיה I shall be what I shall be. What this enigmatic phrase referred to was that Hashem would be with the בני ישראל in this גלות as He would be in all the future גלות.

דעה צרה" prayed to have this phrase changed; after all: "דעה צרה" - worry about something at its due time". Why mention the future exiles at this point? It would simply be rubbing salt into an open wound.

So Hashem responded by telling him to simply say "אהיה sent me", and in this way the בני ישראל were under the impression that they had been redeemed from the only exile they would be forced to endure. Naturally they were disabused from this notion after the incident with the מרגלים, but the precedent was set that a future exile is not mentioned within the context of an extant trouble.

At the time this למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך פסוק was mentioned, they were still in the context of the first exile. If this phrase was said regarding the final redemption, this implies that it talks of a different exile than the Egyptian one. Given that the precedent was set with regards to not mentioning future exiles within an extant one, surely this phrase cannot be referring to a future exile and therefore must be referring to nights after all?

You might argue that this פסוק was only recorded after the incident of the מרגלים in which case mentioning a future redemption is very much on the cards.

Rabbi Akiva, however, in the first פרק of חגיגה states that the כללות אוהל מועד - all the details were taught at Sinai, revised in the פרשת פקודי and once more in ערבות מואב in which case the phrase למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך was mentioned at Sinai. How could this have referred to the final redemption, since this would break the rule mentioned above?

A possible answer to this conundrum is that here we have an argument between Rabbi Akiva, an individual, and the רבנו, a majority group!

To this the Chasam Sofer answer that it is likely that the רבנו of Ben Zoma's argument held like Rabbi Yishmoel that every detail was mentioned in the chronological order recorded by the תורה, in which case the phrase למען תזכר... was in fact said after the incident of the מרגלים.

There is a rule that הלכה כרבי עקיבא מחבירו - in a dispute we follow Rabbi Akiva over his colleague.

Since we have to follow Rabbi Akiva with regards to when the phrase was taught, we have to conclude therefore that it was taught at Sinai. If this is the case, and given the rule mentioned previously regarding mentioning future exiles, this sentence must be talking about the evenings after all, in which case the הלכה follows Ben Zoma after all.

## Freedom - פסח

Rabbi Benji Silverstone

In the עמידה of פסח we identify the essence of פסח as being זמן חירותנו. פסח was the time in history that the Jewish people experienced their ultimate redemption following more than two centuries of slavery and oppression.

It is at this time that we ourselves are meant to connect to the spiritual energies of the festival and attain our own freedom.

We live in the most unique מלכות של חסד, where every freedom is righteously protected. As Jews we have never been freer to practice our Judaism.

I can understand a Jew praying for freedom whilst living in war torn Eastern Europe, or in present day Iran, or in Spain in 1492, or in Ukraine during the Chmielnicki Massacres, or in Stalin's Russia or in any of the countless eras and locations of religious persecution; but why do WE pray for freedom? What exactly is it that we are praying for? What

exactly is it that we are striving to attain?

To get to fully appreciate how to re-experience the חירות of ניסן, we need to understand what we mean by חירות.

פרקי אבות in חז"ל (6:2) tell us:

ואומר: "והלחת מעשה אלהים המה והמכתב מכתב אלהים הוא חרות על שאין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק הלחת". אל תקרא "חרות" אלא "חירות". בתורה

The Luchos were the work of God and the writing was the writing of God; engraved on the Luchos. Do not read this as "Chorus" (Engraved), rather read it as "Cheirus" (Freedom); because there is no man more free than one who follows the תורה.

חז"ל tell us that תורה brings us to freedom.

Now, we trust the words of חז"ל, but this seems hard to understand. The תורה is replete with restrictions. Every second of our lives is controlled by laws from the תורה. Following the תורה is indeed a meaningful and worthwhile endeavour, but freedom??

In order to understand this, we need to appreciate a simple truth. For a society to function properly, society need to be kept in order. חז"ל in פרקי אבות tell us that we must pray for the well being of our government as without the laws implemented by the government, we would eat each other alive. One only needs to see the immediate reactions of society when law and order is forcibly suspended such as in times of rioting or blackouts to see how true this is. Otherwise upstanding members of society join in with the looting and wanton destruction.

We are lucky that we have 2 sets of rules. The country and the תורה.

Only when we have control, guidance and direction; do we have freedom.

Freedom is not freedom to do what we WANT to do, but to do what we MUST do. It is freedom TO not freedom FROM.

When a 2 people on diets are sitting together and are faced with same big, juicy, burger and one falls for the temptation whilst the other maintains restraint; Who is truly free? An immature person would say the one that ate the burger, a mature person would say the one that showed restraint. The one that ate it is a slave to his desires. Post facto, the one that feels better about themselves is the person who didn't eat rather than the person who did eat.

This is a simple example. A more extreme example but no less common is a person who is the subject of addictions. On the most superficial level a drug addict is the freest person alive, but in reality he is totally enslaved to his addiction.

It is no coincidence that in our free world addiction is more rife than ever before. This is because the freedom in the country that we live is freedom FROM. This allows people to become slaves TO. We are the most enslaved people in the freest country.

Just like a child needs rules and structure, so do we.

The law protects us from ourselves. The תורה creates the space for us to do what is best for us.

The East Indian poet and Nobel Prize winner, Rabindranath Tagore, put it this way:

"Lying on my table is a violin string. It is free. I pull one end of it and it responds. It is free. But it is not free to do what a violin string is supposed to do: to produce music. So I take it, fix it in my violin, and tighten it until it is taut. Only then is it free to be a violin string. Only then can it sing."

פסח is the time when we can attain our spiritual freedom from whatever is holding us back from attaining our potential in life.

On פסח we have four cups of wine and we are told that this is because there are 4 different expressions of Redemption. Why should this be the case? Each of these expressions is describing a progression of levels of freedom. והוצאתי illustrates freedom from oppression but still working, והצלתני denotes freedom from work but still in Egypt and וגאלתני signifies physically leaving Egypt. Why then is there a 4th

expression and a 4th cup? Surely the redemption was complete?

The 4th and final expression of redemption is ולקחתי, referring to when God took us for himself by giving us the תורה. Only then were we truly free.

Being free from slavery without a direction, purpose and structure would have destroyed us. This is why in הלכה we are allowed to drink other cups of wine between the 1st and 2nd cups and between the 2nd and 3rd cups, but not between the 3rd and 4th cups - the redemption was only complete after cup number 4.

I was asked why we eat an egg on the night of פסח. There are many answers. One is from our point: Where does an egg come from? The hen. The egg goes through two stages. The first is the laying of the egg and the second is the hatching of the baby chick. Every egg goes through two redemptions. Firstly the womb and then to absolute freedom from itself. Just like the redemption from Egypt was in two stages, so too the birth of a baby chicken is in two stages.

The תורה says “ממצרים גאלתנו ומבית עבדים פדיתנו”. The פסוק uses two different expressions of freedom. The Vilna Gaon says that In Hebrew there are no synonyms. Each word has its unique essence and exclusive interpretation. גאולה and פדיון are both translated into English as redemption, but actually have remarkably different meanings. What is the difference? גאולה refers to the person's physical situation. The situation can change, but the person stays the same. פדיון is used to denote a changing in the essence of the individual. Coming out of Egypt was a freedom of situation, getting the תורה is when we changed our essence.

The freedom that we are striving and praying for on פסח is not the freedom from external oppression, rather the freedom experienced by living according to the wonderful constraints of the תורה, which in turn gives us the opportunity to fulfil our true, unique and respective potentials.

### Chad Gadya – Nice Song, but why on Pesach?

Binyomin Freedman

(Some ideas I heard from Harav Yehoshua Chaitovsky שליט"א Segan Menahel Yeshivas Torah Ore)

The last thing you say at the Seder is חד גדיא. It's a nice song – but the story makes no sense.

Another question that is asked, why חד גדיא, חד גדיא – just say it once.

Thirdly – we have a concept in Judaism of Acheron, Acheron Chaviv – the last thing said is the most important, and so why is חד גדיא last?

The Vilna Gaon says something amazing. Everyone knows that we went out of Egypt on Pesach Night. But something else happened that night many years before. That event affects us to this day.

By the blessings by Yitzchak for Esav and Yaakov, Rivkah makes for Yitzchak two beautiful Goats. When Yaakov went to Yitzchak and gave him the goats – Yitzchak asks for some wine!?? Now we are talking about Yitzchak Avinu here, he doesn't fress that much, so why did she make two goats and wine?

Rashi points out that it was Pesach night, so one was Zecher the Korban Pesach, and the other was Zecher the Chagigah – and he had four Cups of Wine.

The Vilna Gaon shows that Gadya (גדיא) has a gematria of 18. But there is also a gematria called Mispar Katan, where 10 is the highest number so י = 10 and כ = 1 ...

So in Mispar Katan ברכה (blessing) = 18 as well. Also the בברה (birthright) that Yaakov bought from Esav = 18. So Yaakov bought “Gadya” for Bread and Lentils – 2 Zuz. “Chad Gadya, Chad Gadya which my father bought for 2 Zuz”.

Which child did Yaakov give the birthright after him? To Yosef, who was sold because of the jealousy from his brothers. What animal is jealous? Cats. “The cat came and ate the goat”.

They were sent to Egypt. The semblance of Egypt is a dog. “ The dog

## פסח Wordsearch

מ	ו	מ	ל	ל	ה	צ	מ	א	ש	ד	ה	ע	ק
ר	ג	י	ד	ט	ה	ז	ב	ו	כ	צ	פ	ר	
ו	ל	מ	ש	י	ה	ב	א	ת	ל	ס	ר	ל	ב
ר	פ	ל	ע	צ	ע	ר	מ	ח	ח	ג	נ	פ	נ
ע	כ	ח	ח	כ	ש	צ	ר	מ	נ	ח	ד	י	ס
ת	ו	ר	ו	כ	ב	ט	צ	ה	ע	ר	פ	ר	ב
י	ח	ו	ס	ה	ד	ה	ש	מ	ו	ת	ק	נ	א
צ	ו	ה	נ	ת	ש	נ	ה	מ	ר	ע	ש	י	ל
ז	ג	פ	א	מ	ט	נ	ע	כ	ה	ד	כ	צ	צ
ב	ר	כ	ק	כ	ו	ע	ל	פ	ג	י	א	י	ת
ט	ה	ר	ב	מ	צ	ח	י	ה	ד	צ	ג	ע	י
צ	פ	ו	נ	ר	י	א	ר	ח	פ	ק	מ	ד	ט
א	ס	כ	ק	ש	א	ע	ד	פ	ר	צ	ו	פ	ד
ק	ד	ש	ה	ע	ח	ג	ה	א	ב	י	ב	ה	ר

צפרדע	הלל	מדור	יחזק	חג האביב
קרבן	נרצה	כורך	מגיד	חמץ
בכורות	חד גדיא	שולחן עורך	רחצה	קדש
עשר מכות	ארבע כוסות	צפון	מוצאי	רחץ
דם	מי מלח	ברך	מצה	כהפס

came and bit the cat”.

Then came Moshe Rabbeinu who brought the 10 Makkos using a staff. “And the staff came and hit the dog”.

That staff stayed with the Yidden, and all miracles in the first Beis Hamikdash was because of this staff. But the first Beis Hamikdash was burnt because of Avodah Zarah – which is equated to fire. “A fire came and burnt the stick”.

The Anshei Kneses Gedolah davened to remove Avodah Zarah from the world. Torah is like water. “The water came and put out the fire”.

But the Second Beis Hamikdash was also destroyed by the Romans (Edom). What are the Romans compared to – an ox. “The ox came and drank the water”

But Moshiach ben Yosef will come and destroy Edom. “The slaughterer came and slaughtered the ox”.

But the Gemara in Succah says Moshiach ben Yosef will die. “The Angel of Death came and killed the slaughterer”.

Then Hashem will come and save us. “Hashem came and wiped out the Angel of Death”.

So why do we always repeat all that happened previously? Because everything is based on this, Yaakov vs. Esav, but in the end Yaakov will win. So at the end of the Seder we ask why are we here – because of the blessings of Yitzchak. And we can go out thinking הבאה לשנה בירושלים, with Hashem's help we will be there next year.

### 94 Years Adrift

Adam Bookman

If one were to ask a representative sample, 'How long was the slavery in Mitsrayim?', a small number would say 400 years (a very small number might say 430 years) and the vast majority would say 210 years.

This needs some clarification.

The period from when Yaakov descended until Yetsiyas Mitsrayim was 210 years (רש"י 42:2 בראשית). But, we have to appreciate it was most certainly not the case that Yaakov was immediately clapped in irons upon crossing the border into Egypt - quite the contrary, as we know Yaakov received a Royal welcome (ספר הישר). Hence this and other historical events need to be deducted from the 210 year period to arrive at the correct duration of the slavery.

Yaakov lived in Mitsrayim for 17 years (בראשית 47:28), which reduces our running total down to 193 years. However even with his passing the



slavery did not start, for we must also remember that Yosef was the Prime Minister, and enslavement of the Jews would not take place during his lifetime. Yosef was 17 when he was sold (בראשית 37:2) and was 'missing' for 22 years (בראשית 37:34 רש"י) making him 39 upon Yaakov's arrival, and bringing him to 56 upon the passing of his father. We are told that Yosef, the first of the Brothers to pass away, lived to 110 (בראשית 50:26), therefore outliving his father, and extending the period before slavery started, by a further 54 years. Applying this, our running total now comes down to 139 years.

We are told that in actual fact the slavery began with the passing of the last remaining brother, Levi, who died aged 137 (שמות 6:16 (and רש"י)). We now need to establish Levi's age when Yosef died in order to see by how long he outlived Yosef.

Meam Loez tells us that Levi was born in the year 2195 (\*), and we are able to calculate that Yosef was born in 2199 - working back from Yetsiyas Mitsrayim in 2448, less 210 years from when Yaakov arrives, less 39 years old Yosef was at that point, takes us back to 2199.

This makes Levi 4 years older than Yosef, and therefore 114 at Yosef's passing. With Levi living to 137, he outlives Yosef by 23 years. We apply this against the current running total of 139, which brings our final revised number of years of slavery to 116 (confirmed in שפתי חכמים (שם)), hence 94 years adrift from the popularly held 210 year period.

(\*) With Levi born in 2195, this means that Yehuda, Don, Naftoli, Gad, Asher, Yissocher, Zevulun and Yosef are all born over a very short 4 year period. Whilst this warrants further discussion, a partial solution to this conundrum may be found in the Meshech Chochmo (בראשית 30:10) who suggests that Gad and Asher were twins, hence 'saving' one gestation period.

## The Mitzva of Sipur Yetzias Mitsrayim

Josh Smith

The Haflo'oh asks: Why did HaShem have to perform all of the ten Makkos and not just last one? He answers that HaShem wanted to leave us with a lot of miracles to remember and to be thankful for.

Because the miracle was not because of a necessity but just to leave us with memories that HaShem looks after us, there is a special Mitzva to tell over the story of Yetzias Mitsrayim more than any other miracle.

Similarly Reb Yitzok Issac Chova asked that if HaShem just wanted us to understand His miracles why did He just not give us a scientific brain? The answer is because He wanted us to personally experience first hand the Golus and then the relief of the salvation.

This is not just a cold scientific proof of HaShem but something we can emotionally connect to.

That is why we say Avodim Hoyinu. We had to be slaves to Paaroh, not just to get a scientific proof but to have the experience. This explains the reason why the Hagodoh continues to say that even if we are clever and wise, we would still have to discuss Yetzias Mitsrayim.

## Seder and Hagadah

Dr Mike Wilks

This is what I took from Rav Leuchter's shiur given at Chodosh on 2 Apr 14.

There are two themes in the whole Yom Tov of Pesach. They are one, the avodah, the work of Klal Yisroel in Egypt and two, the miraculous eternal existence of Klal Yisroel.

### AVODAH

The avodah (the service of Hashem) took place before the death of the Egyptian first-born. The result was a revelation of the Divine Presence that took place at the death of the Egyptian first-born. (Rav Leuchter did not specify which avodah but I assume he meant the bris milah and the daring act of taking the lamb which was the god of the Egyptians for the korban pesach and later slaughtering it and roasting it.)

### ETERNAL EXISTENCE

The other theme in the Hagadah is the miraculous eternal existence of Klal Yisroel. This, although essential, is nevertheless kept as a secondary theme.

Hashem cleared away Esav to make room for Yaakov. As the possuk says, "And I gave Esav Mount Seir" to (so to speak) get Esav out of the picture. This eternal existence depends on trust (בטחון) in Hashem as we see in the next phrase in the Hagadah, "Blessed be He who keeps His promise (הבטחתו – same root as בטחון) to Israel."

The main enemy in the Hagadah is Paroh (wanted to kill the boys) even though Lovon wanted to do worse than Paroh. The Hagadah says that Lovon wanted to uproot everything. He threatened the entire existence of the nation and Hashem saved us from him. But as noted

## Tefilla Tidbits

Dani Epstein

שמונה עשרה - אבות: תפילה

ומביא גואל לבני בניהם למען שמו באהבה

And He brings a redeemer to their descendants for His Name's sake, with love

How many times have we heard a phrase along the lines of "in the זכות of this [insert something appropriate here], may we be זוכה to see the גאולה שלימה!" This implies that if we perform a sufficiency of מצות and מעשים טובים we will be able to bring about the גאולה.

This makes the phrase in the שמונה עשרה this week's column is dealing with quite difficult to understand. If we have the capacity to bring about the גאולה with our deeds, then why do we say that Hashem will bring the redemption about purely for His own sake, as opposed to what we have achieved?

Furthermore, if Hashem brings the גאולה about for his own sake, then what does this have to do with the אבות? Why mention it in the ברכה that concerns the אבות?

Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein in his דרשות solves this problem from an argument recorded in the מדרש רבה (שמות רבה פרק ט"ו).

מדרש רבה says that כלל ישראל will be redeemed in the merit of the אבות.

states that כלל ישראל are highly cherished by Hashem, since he revealed Himself in a place of idol worship, filth and impurity in order to redeem them. He brings a parable of a כהן who accidentally drops some of his תרומה into a בית הקברות – a graveyard. Now he is in a quandary. On the one hand, the כהן does not want to become טמא but on the other hand he does not want to leave his cherished תרומה in the בית הקברות. Eventually he decides it's worth his while to be מטמא himself on this one occasion, rather than ask anyone else to rescue it for him.

To all intents and purposes, רבי שמעון and רב יהודה are arguing as to what will motivate Hashem to redeem us – the merit from the אבות or His love for us.

At first glance this the שמונה עשרה appears to support רבי יהודה, that the אבות are the reason we will be redeemed.

One can argue, however, that there is in fact no argument here; רבי שמעון certainly agrees that we will be redeemed for the sake of the אבות.

However רבי שמעון was bothered by the fact that it is Hashem Himself who will redeem us from our גלות. Why could He not do this via a messenger? After all, the פסוק does not say "ואחריכּן אוציאם" and after that I will bring them out with a great treasure. Hashem never promised the אבות that He was going to be personally involved in the redemption from Egypt or any other exile. Why will He come Himself to carry out this task when there is no need to do so?

This is why רבי שמעון quotes this parable, in order to explain why Hashem Himself will undertake the redemption; because of His great love for His children.

The implication is that the meaning of the phrase ומביא גואל לבני בניהם means that the זכות of the אבות is what will bring about the redemption in the first place. It is the love that Hashem has for us that will result in Him redeeming us personally.

before, the eternal existence of Klal Yisroel is a secondary theme.

### FIRST & LAST DAYS

The same two themes are echoed in the first and last days of the Yom Tov. The first days and the seder are devoted to the exodus from Egypt. The last days are devoted to the splitting of the Red Sea.

The splitting did not involve the work of Klal Yisroel. It was evidence that Hashem can create a space (the dry land in the sea) for Klal Yisroel out of miracles in order to save Klal Yisroel. But the nations cannot live in such an area. And so while Klal Yisroel could operate in the miraculous space of the dry land in the sea, the Egyptians could not and were drowned.

### FIRST & SECOND PARAGRAPHS OF HALLEL

We also see these two themes in the first two paragraphs of Hallel.

The first paragraph says etc. הלל-ה הללו עבדי השם. That speaks about work, about being עבדי השם servants of Hashem. The second paragraph speaks about the splitting of the sea, "הים ראה וינס".

Rav Leuchter would translate the word ממשלותיו in this second paragraph as "His embassy". The embassy of, say, the USA is amongst other things powerful evidence of that country's existence and importance. We are evidence of Hashem's existence and importance in the world through our miraculous survival.

Nishmas, נשמת also speaks about that miraculous existence for which we cannot sufficiently praise Hashem אין אנחנו מספיקים להודות לך. It is something that does not depend on our avodah.

But it is that trust in the miraculous existence which precedes our amidos. So we see the splitting of the sea and the shirah mentioned before the amidah in Shacharis and Maariv.

### BEING AN עבד השם

Rav Leuchter added a point about being an עבד השם. If we had an עבד and all he did was stand around looking submissive, we would give him a kick and tell him to get on with his work. What is his work? It is work that the master would have had to do if he did not have an עבד. In a similar way it is not enough for us to go around looking submissive; we must get on with Hashem's work.

### דינו Motti Black

דינו seems to be a very difficult part of the Haggada to understand. How can we say that 'it would have sufficed us' had Hashem not split the sea for us and had He not provided us with all our needs in the desert; surely without those miracles we would not have survived?

Similarly, how can we say that 'it would have sufficed us' had we not received the Torah and had we not received certain mitzvos like shabbos; surely these are the very essence and identity of the Jewish people, without which it is impossible for us to survive?

The Malbim asks this question in his Haggada and also asks a further question: The words

How many stages of goodness did Hashem do to us' are used to introduce דינו. However, the literal translation of these words is as follows: 'How many stages of goodness to Hashem upon us'. This does not seem to make any sense; what does 'to Hashem' mean, should it not say 'from Hashem'? Furthermore, the Haggada should have used the word לנו 'to us' and not עלינו 'upon us'?

The Malbim starts his answer by saying that the word מעלות does not mean 'stages', as most translate it, but rather 'praises'. Therefore, we can now understand the statement עלינו טובות למקום עלינו as saying 'How many praises is it incumbent upon us to give to Hashem for the goodness'.

The word עלינו now fits in and its meaning is 'it is incumbent upon us', like when we say 'עלינו לשבח' ('it is incumbent on us to praise') in davening.

With this we can answer our original question. We can now see that the

whole idea of דינו is for us to appreciate that for every single one of the miracles that Hashem did for us, we are obliged to praise and thank Hashem. It now makes sense to say that 'Had Hashem given us their wealth and not split the sea for us, it would have sufficed for us (to praise Hashem)' and also 'Had Hashem brought us near to Mount Sinai and not given us the Torah, it would have sufficed for us (to praise Hashem). Of course we needed Hashem to give us every single one of the kindnesses listed, for otherwise we could not have survived either physically or spiritually as the Jewish people. However, we are acknowledging with דינו that every one on the list deserves in its own right more praise than we can possibly give.

### The Korban Pesach - An Eye Witness Account Chinuch.org

The highlights of our Pesach holiday is the Seder. We have matzah and marror. We read the Haggadah and explain it. BUT—we do not have a Korban Pesach.

Centuries ago, when we had a Bais Hamikdash, hundreds of thousands of our people gathered in Yerushalayim on the fourteenth of Nissann to offer the Korban Pesach.

Where did they all get sheep/or the Korban? Was it organized, .or a pushy mob! Was it confusing, or impressive?

The answers are preserved for us by a man who was there and wrote it all down.

In the book Shevet Yehudah, mentioned by Rav Yaakov Emden in his Siddur, there is an eyewitness description of the ceremony of the Pesach sacrifice, written by a Roman official who was stationed in Jerusalem during the period shortly before the destruction of the second Bais Hamikdash. His account corresponds to all the details laid down in the Torah and elaborated by our Sages. He describes the beauty of the ceremony and the impression it made on him.

"When the beginning of 'the month, which they call Nisan, arrives, couriers and messengers are sent out by order of the king and the judges to all the area surrounding Jerusalem that whoever possesses

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R' Simon Bernstein נ"י

**יום ז פסח**  
Rabbi Refoel Katz נ"י

**יום ח פסח**  
Rabbi Yitzchok Douek שליט"א  
Rabbi Benji Silverstone שליט"א



sheep and cattle should hurry to bring them to the capital so that there be a sufficient supply for the pilgrims, both for their sacrifices and for their food. If anyone did not obey this order, his money would be confiscated for the use at the Bais Hamikdosh.

All owners of cattle would hurry to obey and, on the way to Jerusalem, they would bring their herds through a river to cleanse them at any dirt. When they reach the mountains round Jerusalem, they are so numerous that the grass cannot be seen. It appears to have become completely white because of the many sheep there.

The sacrifice is offered on the fourteenth, so when the tenth of the month comes, everyone goes to buy his sacrifice which they call the 'Pesach.' It is a rule among them that no one asks another to let him go first, even if it were King David or King Shlomo.

When I suggested to one of the Kohanim that this was not polite, he told me that before the Omnipresent there is no greatness and in His service all are equal.

"When the fourteenth of the month arrives they go up a high tower of the Bais Hamikdosh and blow on three silver trumpets. Then they make a proclamation, 'O, people of G-d, hearken! The time has come to slaughter the Pesach offering for the One Who causes His Presence to dwell in this great holy House.' When the people hear this announcement, they put on their holiday clothing for, from midday onwards, it is a festival for the Jews, since that is the time for the sacrifice.

"At the entrance to the great courtyard, twelve Levites stand outside with silver sticks in their hands. Inside stand another twelve with golden 'sticks.' Those outside are to keep the pilgrims in order that they do not harm one another in their great haste, and so that they do not enter in confusion and cause quarrels.

It once happened on Pesach that an old man and his offering were crushed by the pressure of the crowd. The Levites who stand inside have to keep order among those who are leaving the courtyard. These also used to close the gates of the courtyard when enough people had entered.

"At the place where the offerings are slaughtered there are several rows of Kohanim, some with silver spoons and some with golden spoons in their hands. The Kohanim in one row all have silver spoons and those in another row all have golden ones, so that it looks most beautiful.

The Kohen at the head of each row receives a spoon of blood from the slaughtered animal and passes it to his neighbor, and he to his neighbor until it reaches the altar. The one standing nearest the altar would send back the spoon empty and this would be passed from hand to hand until it reached the other end of the row. This was done in such a way that each Kohen received a full vessel with one hand and an empty one with the other. There was no delay in this procedure. The men were so nimble that it seemed as if the vessels were flying like arrows from the bow of a trained marksman. They used to practice this for thirty days before the required time so that there should be no mistakes and they would know their task perfectly.

"At the same place there are two high platforms on which stand two Kohanim with trumpets of silver. These are sounded whenever a new group of pilgrims begins to bring sacrifices so that the Levites who are standing on their platforms should know that they must now sing the Hallel with joy and thanksgiving, accompanied by all the musical instruments which they possess. The owner of the offering also says Hallel, and if all the offerings have not yet been slaughtered, then Hallel is repeated.

After the slaughtering the pilgrims go to the courtyards. Here all the walls have iron teeth and prongs so that the offerings can be hung up and skinned. There are also bundles of sticks so that if there is no hook vacant, a person will suspend a stick from his shoulder to that of his friend and skin the lamb on it. The parts that are to be offered on the altar are given, and then the owner goes away joyfully, like a victorious warrior returning from battle.

For it is considered a great disgrace among the Jews if one does not bring the Pesach offering at the correct time. "While the Kohanim are engaged in this task, they wear short red tunics reaching to the thighs. These are red so that any blood which is spilt does not show. They stand barefoot and their sleeves reach only to the elbow so that they should not be hampered while they work. On their heads they wear a small hat with three cubits of cloth wound round it into a turban. People have told me that the Kohen Gadol has a white turban made of forty folds of cloth.

"The ovens on which they roasted their sacrifices were at the entrances to their houses, and they told me that this was to demonstrate their faith and also to rejoice even more. They sing joyfully while they eat and their voices can be heard from afar. No one locks his door that night in Jerusalem out of respect for the many strangers passing through the streets."

This description makes us realize how great is our loss in the destruction of the Bais Hamikdosh. We should daven to G-d with all our heart to restore the Service to His Bais Hamikdosh speedily in our days.

## A Dvar Torah for 7th day Pesach, from Chasam Sofer

Dr Zev Davis

### ותען להם מרים שיר לה' כי גאה גאה סוס ורוב רמה בים

And Miriam responded to them [the women]: Sing to Hashem etc.

This was Miriam the prophetess, leading the women of Klal Yisroel in joyous praise to Hashem for the miraculous saving of Klal Yisroel at yam suf.]

The Chasam Sofer quotes two apparently contradictory sayings of Chazal:

1. The Midrash says that in the merit of waiting '1 hour' for her baby both Moshe who had been put in a basket in the Nile, she merited to say these 9 words of song.
2. The Mishna [end of 1st Perek Sota] says that because she waited for baby Moshe, Klal Yisroel waited for her when she was smitten with tzoraas for speaking badly about Moshe Rabenu to her brother Aharon [end of Parshas Behaalosecho].

The Chasam Sofer explains the Mishna first.

We know that Hashem repays mida kneged mida- measure for measure. But this is for bad. Reward for good is 500 times greater. This is learnt from the fact that the Torah tells us that punishment may extend to 4 generations, whereas reward may extend to 2000 generations.

Now, how long did Miriam wait for baby Moshe by the Nile? Tosfos in Sota explain that although the Mishna says that she waited a 'sha'ah', this means a short unit of time, which is a **מיל** or 'mil'. [A standard Talmudic measure of distance, or the time it takes to walk this.]

He adds that this is hinted at in the words of the Pasuk: She waited to see **מה יעשה לו** – what would befall him. The initials of those 3 words are **מיל**.

Therefore she deserved that they should wait for her [when she had tzoraas] 500 milin. So let's see:

The Gemara in Pesachim says that a person can walk 10 'Parsas' in a day, i.e. 12 hours. Therefore in 24 hours he could walk 20 Parsas.

In the desert, the Bney Yisroel might walk day and night, covering 20 Parsas which is 80 mil **[שמונים מילין]** in every 24 hours [1 parsa = 4 mil].

6 days therefore represent  $6 \times 80 = 480$  milin.

On Shabbes they could only walk within the techum, which according to some rishonim is 12 milin min haTorah, so they were therefore limited to 11 milin.

Therefore, 1 full week represents  $480 + 11 = 491$  milin.

So Miriam's reward, which should have been 500 milin, [which corresponds to the 7 days that they waited for her], is lacking 9 milin **[תשעה מילין]**.

Therefore, explains the Chasam Sofer, to complete her reward which seems to lack 9 milin, she merited to say 9 words of Shira **תשעה מילין**

## שירה!

[The word מילין has 2 meanings, distance and words.]

Thus he concludes, all the droshos of Chazal complement each other, we just need to know how to explain them!

Good Yomtov

PS: This is a 'good value' dvar Torah, as it can be said on Pesach, Parshas Shemois, Parshas Beshalach, and Parshas Behaalosecho!

### Maybe Next Year, in Jerusalem! [Rabbi Label Lam \(Torah.org\)](http://RabbiLabelLam.org)

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat: Whoever is in need, let him come and celebrate the Pesach. This year we are here; next year may we be in the Land of Israel. This year we are in slavery; next year may we be free people. (Haggadah)

Right at the beginning of the Seder we confront a major problem. First we declare that we are here and now, presently in exile. Then we for the rest of the evening we build up a world of gratitude for having exited Egypt. One could cynically ask, "What was the accomplishment of the Exodus experience if now we find ourselves back in the hot soup of history. What changed?"

The Maharal writes in Gevuras HASHEM 31: "Some ask, "What does it help us if we are already under the authority of others? What was made different by the Exodus from Egypt?" These are hollow words. When Israel went out from Egypt they received an essential quality of good to the extent that they are intrinsically fit to be free because of the essence of their being. Circumstance can never nullify the essential. Because Israel is imbued with this quality that they are free people and they just happen to be presently in a setting of exile..."

Let's decode the words of the Maharal. What is the meaning of the distinction he makes between "etzem"-essential and "mikroh" – circumstance? Imagine a wealthy man who having left his hotel room and consumed a sumptuous restaurant meal discovers that he forgot his wallet with his credit cards and ID. Now he finds himself in serious negotiations with the management. They study him with suspicion and although he is humiliated in the process, he knows deep inside that behind a locked door in a hotel room on the other side of town is a little black leather folio that holds the answer to his problems. So he endures the indignities with equanimity. He is essentially a rich person but his present circumstance has the trappings of poverty.

A couple of close friends of mine who were learning in Yeshiva in Israel happened to be golf pros. Although they were enthused about learning Torah they never lost their love for "the game". One day they put on the old uniforms and indulged themselves with a round of golf, yes (don't ask me where) in the holy land. Returning to Jerusalem with their golf bags over their shoulders, they encountered the visage of a monkish looking fellow in full black robes with hood and icons and all. It's not such an uncommon sight in Jerusalem, but my buddy Label commented whimsically to his golf partner Reuven who is a Cohen, "See that fellow over there! He's no priest but you with the golf bags, you are a priest!" Son after son for 3320 years from Aaron the High Priest undeniably qualifies him as a priestly candidate whatever uniform he happens to be wearing on a given day.

In war torn Europe a young girl was standing with her parents and all their possessions in tow. It was obvious they were on the run. An observer approached the child with great sympathy for her plight and commented, "It's so unfortunate that you don't have a home! The little girl answered profoundly, "I have a home! I just don't have a house to put it in!"

As we sit around the table on Pesach night, we too can declare, "We have a home! As long as we are together, we have a home. We may not have a house to put it in yet. Maybe next year, in Jerusalem!"

## זמני תפילה לפסח

### Monday 14th April ערב פסח

Shacharis followed by סיום	6.45/7.10am
<b>Chometz eaten until</b>	<b>9.59am</b>
<b>Chometz burnt by</b>	<b>11.27am</b>
Mincha & קבלת שבת ויום טוב	7.52pm
Candle Lighting	7.52pm
Nacht	8.54pm

### יום א' פסח

Shacharis	9.15am
Mincha Followed by Shiur by ר' Chaim Gershon נ"י	7.55pm
Maariv	8.50pm
Candle Lighting - no earlier than	9.03pm

### יום ב' פסח

Shacharis	9.15am
Mincha Followed by Shiur by שליט"א רבי דניאל ראו	7.55pm
Maariv & Motzei Yom Tov	9.05pm

### חול המועד

Thur Shacharis 1st/2nd/3rd Minyan	7.00/8.30/9.30am
Mincha & Maariv	8.00pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm
Fri Shacharis 1st/2nd/3rd Minyan	7.15/8.30/9.30am
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.10pm
Candle Lighting	7.20-7.25pm

### שבת חול המועד

Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha followed by Shiur by ר' Simon Bernstein נ"י	7.55pm
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	9.11pm

### חול המועד Sunday

Shacharis	7.15/8.30/9.30am
Mincha & Kabbolas Yom Tov	7.10pm
Candle Lighting not before	7.23pm

### יום ז' פסח

Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha followed by Shiur by רבי רעפול קאץ שליט"א	8.05pm
Maariv	9.00pm
Candle Lighting no earlier than	9.15pm

### יום ח' פסח

Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha Followed by Neilas HaChag	8.05pm
Maariv & Motzei Yom Tov	9.18pm

### אסרו חג

Shacharis 1st/2nd Minyan	6.40/7.15am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.00pm