

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON PESACH Pt 2 - 5759

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From: -mj-ravtorah@shamash.org haggadah1.99 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim (Shiur date: 1969)

The Rav observed that, at times, the recitations comprising the Haggadah appear at first glance to lack continuity and structure. The Rav focused on the analysis of the Maggid portion of the Haggadah, from Mah Nishtanah through the concluding blessing of Go'al Yisrael. The Rambam refers to this section as the Haggadah, which forms a unique composite of recitations. The sections concluding the Hallel after Bircas Hamazon and Nishmas are not unique to the night of Pesach, as they are recited on the various festivals and every Shabbos morning.

The Rav focused on the structure of the Haggadah, dividing Maggid into 3 sections, beginning with Mah Nishtanah/Avadim Hayinu and concluding with Go'al Yisrael, and enumerated and examined them in reverse order. We have the section that begins with Bchal Dor Vador (in every generation the Jew must view himself as if he just left Egypt...) concluding with the first 2 sections of Hallel, hymnal praise to Hashem. The middle section comprises the narrative portion from Arami Oved Avi and concludes with the description of Pesach, Matzah and Marror based on the statements of Rabban Gamliel which is included as part of the narrative. The first section presents the philosophical principles that form the root and foundation of the Mitzvas Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim. Without these postulates it would be impossible to conduct Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim. The first section also includes some Halacha as well as it pertains to the obligations of the night. The Rav noted that we split Hallel into 2 parts. The first 2 sections are recited at the conclusion of Maggid while the remainder is recited after Bircas Hamazon. Why separate the sections of Hallel on the night of Pesach when we never make such a separation at any other time in the year that we recite Hallel? Why leave some of it for recitation over the fourth cup? What is unique or special about the 2 sections we include in Maggid relative to the rest of Hallel?

The Rav explained that the first 2 sections are completely dedicated to thanksgiving and praise of Hashem. It is void of any request or petition on the part of man to Hashem. These sections mention the selection of Bnay Yisrael as the chosen nation. They fit comfortably into the context of the Haggadah section. The remaining sections of Hallel introduce supplication together with praise. For example, the chapter of Min Hamaytzar juxtaposes the verses Zeh Hayom with Ana Hashem Hoshiya Na, praise with supplication. The focus of these verses is that although we have been

delivered and we rejoice on this day, we can't escape the fact that we are not completely free. There are still enemies that surround and threaten us and we pray to Hashem for salvation. In the section of Lo Lanu, we express the greatness of Hashem but we juxtapose it with the scoffing of the nations of the world mocking us to point out the location of Hashem. Similarly, the themes of praise and supplication can be seen in the section of Ahavti. This juxtaposition of praise and supplication is noted in the Mishna as the format of praying to Hashem. We express gratitude for the past and supplication for the future. Man is never secure. Happiness today does not guarantee happiness tomorrow.

Hallel is split up on the night of Pesach because after we tell the story of the exodus, we have an obligation to praise Hashem in a format that is complete praise without any petition. We suspend our normal method of prayer, removing all non-praise elements. We do not exclaim Zeh Hayom Asah Hashem in the Maggid section, which would appear to be very appropriate at this point on the night of great joy, because it continues with the petition of Ana Hashem. We focus at this point completely on the praise of Hashem which is the theme of the first 2 chapters of Hallel. The conclusion of Hallel, recited over the fourth cup, is a mixture of joy with an outcry of pain. Tefila plus Shevach. At the very moment we reach the height of joy we cry out in pain. The structure of Hallel is dialectical in approach: the happy Jew followed by the desperate Jew. These sections are specifically chosen for the fourth cup, because they do not mention the exodus from Egypt, rather they refer to our pain and longing for the ultimate redemption that will come with Moshiach. We express this yearning even though we are in a celebratory mood this evening. The fourth cup is devoted to the idea that in the Messianic Period, all pledges on the part of Hashem to Bnay Yisrael will be fulfilled.

As mentioned before, the narrative section begins with Arami Oved Avi and concludes with the interpretation of Rabban Gamliel's statement on Pesach Matzah and Marror. Why were the sections based on the explanation of Arami Oved Avi selected to form the core of the Haggadah? If the main purpose is to tell the story of the exodus, why don't we simply read the sections in the Torah from Parshas Shmos through Parshas Bo which tell the story of the exodus in detail? After all the Haggadah does not really contain extensive stories of the exodus. Our Maggid is barely a synopsis of the events of the exodus. Indeed, the Karaites would read the stories from the Torah on the night of Pesach as their "Haggadah". Why select a portion from Sefer Dvarim instead of a section from Sefer Shmos as the central part of Maggid?

The Rav explained: Arami Oved Avi is related to the Mitzvah of Bikurim (bringing the first fruits to the temple). There were 2 Mitzvos associated with Bikurim: 1) the actual bringing of the Bikurim; 2) the recitation of the Parsha of Arami Oved Avi. Apparently, Chazal felt that there was a common denominator between Bikurim and Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim. The Rambam and the Chinuch explain that the main theme behind Mikra Bikurim is to express gratitude, Hakaras Hatov, to Hashem who gave us the gift of the land. Hakaras Hatov is also the central theme of Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim, as we recite Lfikach Anachnu Chayavim Lhodot (therefore we are obligated to thank Hashem...). In order to express thanks to Hashem for all the miracles that He performed for us, we have to tell the story of the exodus. The gift of the land was the fulfillment of the fifth form of Geulah (redemption), V'hayvaysi (and I will usher you in to the land). The Jew is obligated to thank Hashem not only for the fulfillment of the fifth form of Geulah, but for the other 4 as well, Vhotzaysi (and I will take you out of Egypt), Hhitzalti (and I will rescue you), Vgoalti (and I will redeem you), Vlokachti (and I will take you unto me as a nation), which refer to the events of the exodus.

The obligation to thank Hashem as part of Mikra Bikurim is equated with the obligation to thank Hashem for the exodus on the night of Pesach. If the Torah formulated the Parsha of Arami Oved Avi as the proper format to express gratitude to Hashem for the exodus and the gift of the land, then the Parsha must be recited in both cases, on the night of Pesach and upon bringing Bikurim. However, there is a difference in emphasis between the 2

recitations. For Mikra Bikurim, we stress the aspect of having been brought into the land and receiving it as a gift, while for Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim, we focus on the aspects surrounding our enslavement and redemption from Egypt.

On the night of Pesach we are not all that interested in the details of the exodus and the events that led up to it. For instance, we don't devote much text and time to the suffering of the Jews in Egypt, or to the plagues that were visited upon the Egyptians. Arami Oved Avi serves the purpose of thanking Hashem for our freedom and the ultimate gift of Eretz Yisrael. The focus of the evening is thanks to Hashem as expressed through the Mitzvah of Vhigadta Lvincha, and you shall teach your child. Would not additional details of the story inspire me to thank Hashem even more? The answer is that the Torah was not as interested in the telling of the story as much as in the study of the story. Otherwise, we would have read the early chapters of Sefer Shmos which give all the details of the bondage and exodus of the people.

There is a difference between narrating a story and studying a story.

Narration relates past events. However when I study past events, I appreciate the significance of these events and their impact on me. A good study of history does not include every last detail. Rather, Lhavdil, the historian tries to capture that which is important outside of the context of time and space. This approach keeps the events alive for us today. That is why we spend very little time describing the plagues. Our focus is on the greatness of Hashem, who took us out of Egypt. We are interested in the moral motives of the exodus that are still with us today.

Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim simply put is a Mitzvah of Torah study. We are obligated to study not only the events of the exodus, but the laws of the festival as well. The Tosefta quotes a slightly different version of the story in Haggadah of the sages that were gathered in Bnay Brak and were involved all night in Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim. The Tosefta states that they were studying the laws of Pesach that night. The study of this night requires us to immerse ourselves in Torah Shbeal Peh, to examine and interpret each and every word of Arami Oved Avi. This Parsha is examined not as an abstract event in the past but as something that impacts us here and now. With this approach we can understand many aspects of the structure of the Haggadah. For example, why do we introduce many of the sections with questions, e.g. Matzah Zu?

Because Talmud Torah is conducted through a process of question and answer. The Rambam says that anyone who devotes extended time to interpreting the Parsha of Arami Oved Avi is praised because this is the essence of Torah study, it is not simply a time of story telling. Even though the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah applies all year, on Pesach night there is an extra Mitzvah to study all the aspects of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

The answer of Avadim Hayinu, we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, is the answer written in Sefer Devarim (Parshas Vaeschanan) that is given to the wise son. We say Vayotzianu, and Hashem took us out of Egypt. The exodus happened thousands of years ago, why do we include ourselves in this event? This is the principle of Bchal Dor Vdor, in each generation, we are obligated to view ourselves as if we just left Egypt. Before we begin to develop the theme of Yetzias Mitzrayim and its study, we lay down the premise of full identification with Jews of past generations and the events they encountered. Not only do we remember the events, but we relive and reenact, restage and re-experience these events. The Jew is closer to his past and history than any other nation. The best example is his attachment to Eretz Yisrael. The memory of the Jew is both factual and experiential. Not only do we remember the destruction of the temple, but we relive it each year during the 3 weeks and on Tisha Bav. The past does not die for the Jew. The focus of our celebration is Vayotzianu, it impacts us as much as our forefathers.

Chachmay Hakaballah describe the life of man as an experience of various levels and stages of slavery. Man has many masters in his lifetime, sometimes he himself (unknowingly) is both the master and slave. Through the story of the exodus we relive the individual and national redemption. Instead of Avadim Hayinu L'Pharoh, we might have substituted the phrase Avday Pharaoh, we were the slaves of Paroh. The latter phrase would imply that the Jew lost his identity, his personality, his quest for freedom. It would

give the impression that all the Jew knew was slavery and the service of his master. Avadim Hayinu L'Pharoh says that the social status of the Jew was that of a slave to Paroh. But slavery was an external manifestation. Internally, the Jew remained the descendant of the patriarchs and yearned for the day that he would be free. We find the phrase Avday Hashem, the slaves of God, which defines the Jew in terms of his total commitment to serve Hashem. Slavery can be both a social as well as a psychological institution. We may have been slaves to Paroh, but we always resented the servitude.

When Moshe encountered the burning bush, the Torah describes the event as the bush was burning in fire, but the bush was not consumed. Rashi interprets the words Labas Aish as 1) the flame 2) the fire was in the heart, or center of the bush. The exterior of the bush was not on fire. Many interpret Moshe's question as "why is the bush not consumed"? Another interpretation of his question is why does the fire remain in the middle, why doesn't it spread outward? The angel of God spoke to Moshe from within the heart of the bush, as if there were concentric circles comprising the extremities of the bush, the center of the bush within that, and the angel at the burning epicenter. What is the symbolism of the bush?

The Rav explained that even though there was an intense fire at its core, the fire did not affect the rest of the bush. The same was true of the Jew in Egypt. Hashem was showing Moshe that while externally they are the slaves to Paroh, internally they are yearning to be free and their aspirations are not those of slaves. In the center of the personality of the Jew, the fire burns. Often the fire does not extend beyond the core and leaves the outer parts of the Jew cold. Moshe's experiences with Bnay Yisrael led him to doubt their worthiness and readiness to be free. The bush showed him that it is possible for one bush among many to be different and unique, to have a flame ablaze inside while outwardly appearing to be unaffected. God showed Moshe that the Jew is the same as this bush. He is surrounded by Egyptians and externally he appears to have fit into his niche, yet the internal flame can be exposed to reveal the true personality of the Jew. Throughout the ages the Jew has been accused of various characteristics that, externally, have pained him very negatively. The burning bush says that the Jew may be abused externally, but internally he remains pure and aflame seeking Hashem. Copyright 1999, Josh Rapps and Israel Rivkin, Edison, NJ. Permission to reprint this Shiur, with this notice, is granted.

haggadah.2.99 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim - 2 (Shiur date unknown)

Sippur, as in Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim, comes from the word Saper, the same root that includes Sofer, which is Hebrew for scribe. A scribe is not the same as a simple writer. Throughout Tanach the word Sofer is used to indicate that the position of scribe was one of importance, for example Sofrei Hamelech in Megilas Esther. In Talmudic parlance, Sofer means a Talmid Chacham, a scholar. In contrast to Divray Torah we have the term Divrei Sofrim, which are the teachings of the scholars. There are many examples in the Talmud where the word Sofer refers to the scholar. Apparently the Hebrew language scribe or scholar is distinguished by his ability to write. A Talmid Chacham must be capable of writing. Historically, when a Jew showed the ability to write, he was accepted as a scholar. The statements of the transmitters of learning, the Maatikay Hashemuah, are referred to as Divray Sofrim.

The definition of Sippur goes beyond simple oral story telling, but it includes the ability to tell a story through writing it down. The word Sefer, book, derives from the same root, L'Saper, to tell a story. In Hebrew, writing and oral communication are both included in the framework of the root word Saper. The Gemara says that Megilas Esther refers to itself first as an Igeres, letter, and later as a Sefer, a book. There are significant differences between these 2 forms of writing. A letter is written for a short term purpose. It does not need to be written on parchment; it can be missing letters and may not be complete yet it still conveys the gist of the story. In contrast, a Sefer is intended to transmit the story to future generations. It requires parchment and if even one little letter is missing it is halachically voided. For example, the

prophet commanded the people to write contracts on their land in a Sefer and place them in earthen vessels so that they may last a long time. Sefer documents an event for present and future generations. Another example: Hashem commanded Moshe to document the eternal conflict between God and Amalek in the Sefer and transmit it to Joshua. This message could only be transmitted through a Sefer.

Chazal note that a major Kabbalah principle is that Hashem created the world through acts of Kesiva, writing. For example, the notion of writing is found by the 10 commandments that were written Betzba Elokim, K'vayachol, by the finger of God. The Sefer Hayetzira maintains that the world was created through 3 Seforim (forms of the word Saper): B'sfor, B'sippur U'Bsefer, through counting, relating a story and through the book. We know from the Torah that Hashem wrote the Luchos, but how does the Sefer Yetzira know that the world was created through these 3 forms of the word Saper? According to the Kuzari, when the Torah repeatedly mentions Vayomer Elokim, it is referring to the act of Sippur by Hashem. The result of this Sippur was the Sefer, all of creation. It was the word of God that created the world and is embedded in nature and continues to drive it. At the same time, nature must obey the will of Hashem. If the flowers bloom, the birds fly, man walks and the heavenly bodies remain in motion it is because this is the Ratzon Hashem, the will of God. The manifestation of the will of God was inscribed into every function of nature. According to the Baal Shem Tov, the word of God, the Vayomer Elokim, that created everything is as real and ongoing today as it was at the time of creation, Udvarcha Emes Vkayam Load, and Your words are true and everlasting.

Chazal valued very highly of the ability to write. Chazal say that Ksav Vmichtav were among the miraculous things that were created at twilight of the sixth day prior to the onset of the Shabbos. Chazal recognized the amazing gift in the ability of man to record events that happened thousands of years ago in such a way as to allow subsequent generations to identify with, understand and appreciate the thoughts and feelings that moved the author so many years before. The events of past generations are alive for us today. For example, when we read in the Torah the stories of the patriarchs and the 12 tribes, we feel as if we are part of the actual events that are unfolding before us. We cry with Joseph when he is sold into slavery by the brothers and we rejoice with him when he is elevated to the position of Viceroy of Egypt. We travel with Abraham as he leaves Charan for the unknown land of Canaan and our hearts skip a beat as Yaakov narrowly departs with the blessings before Esau enters his father's room. Reading the written word allows us to span generations in an instant and to identify with our ancestors. Educators today must make the stories of the Torah come alive for their students and make them feel as if they are part of the story and not some impartial bystander.

In contrast, the Rav noted that today, unfortunately, parents and children can't communicate across a gap of a single generation. Children of today can't understand or relate to the experiences of their parents. To many Jews today, the Lech Lecha of their parents, their life experiences and their Judaism, means nothing to them. In order for us to inject meaning into the stories that we write during our lives, we must do more than simply put words on paper. We have to create a climate through which we appreciate all the events that shaped Jewish history, for example to feel the pain of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash or to understand other events in Jewish history. Today we have many aids to study, unprecedented numbers of translations of the various texts are readily available to the masses to assist them in study. However in too many cases, we have words written on paper, but we lack the atmosphere of involvement and participation in the events we study. The greatest Sofer, scribe, is not one who can write on parchment or paper, but rather the one who can write on the hearts of living beings and influence their lives. The great scribe is the one that can transmit a living Torah that passes on the Torah world of Rabbi Akiva, the Rambam and the Vilna Gaon to the next generation. This is Torah Shbeal Peh, which is dependant on the ability of each generation to make these experiences come alive for the subsequent generation to ensure that the flame of Torah burns for eternity. The scholars were called Sofrim because they were the

transmitters of the tradition between generations. Their greatest accomplishment was not the writing of Torah on paper, but rather etching Torah into the hearts and souls of their students to keep it alive for subsequent generations, creating living Seforim.

One need not write tomes during his life to earn the title of Sofer. For example, we have no recorded writings from the Baal Shem Tov. Yet his vast Torah was spread throughout the world by his living Seforim, the many students that he taught during his life. Moshe Rabbeinu was called Safra Rabba D'Yisrael, the great scribe of Israel. Did Moshe spend his time as a scribe of Sifrei Torah, Tefilin and Mezuzos (STAM)? We find that Moshe wrote a Sefer Torah towards the end of his life. Yet he earned the title as the great scribe in Israel because of the Torah he taught all Bnay Yisrael and how he inscribed it into the parchment of their hearts and souls so that they might act as the scribes that would teach the next generation. Just as the original word of God continues to drive nature, so to the Torah that Moshe gave Bnay Yisrael in the desert is as alive for us today as it was thousands of years ago. It is the ability to transmit from generation to generation, despite great difficulties, without diluting the message that makes Bnay Yisrael unique.

Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim is more than telling a story. Vhigadta L'Bincha means that the father must write the book that will become his son. It is the obligation of the father to view his son as a Sefer to be carefully written and not as an Igeres. The obligation to be the scribe of this book extends well beyond the Seder night to encompass all of life. Bchal Dor V'dor Chayav Adam Liros Es Atzmo K'ilu Hu Yataza M'Mitzrayim, in every generation the Jew must view himself as if he has just left Egypt. Man must feel that he has participated in the entire, collective Jewish experience and he must inscribe this knowledge into the book that is his child. Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim is the book of Jewish existence. The greatest accomplishment is when a father carefully transmits his experiences so that he may pass it on intact to his child before he passes on.

There were many great scholars who were not able to permanently inscribe themselves into the Sefer that was their children. They were only able to write an Igeres, a short term note, that their children quickly erased when they left home. Yet there are simple parents who succeeded in making a permanent inscription into their children's personality. They were able to write on the hearts of their children their Seder, their feelings on Tisha Bav, the beauty of their Shabbos, the solemnity of their Yom Kippur and their blessing of their children before Kol Nidrei in a way that made a lasting impression on the child, an impression that stayed with him throughout many years of separation and struggle. The Rav asked why should the scholar fail where the simple person succeeds?

Chazal say that there are 10 synonyms for prophecy, one of which is the word Masa. There are 2 explanations why Masa refers to prophecy. The first is that the prophet would raise his voice when presenting the message of God to the people. The second is the Rambam in the Guide (Moreh Nvuchim) who explains that Masa is used to indicate that prophecy was a heavy load for the prophet to bear. The essence of prophecy is that it is a truth entrusted only to the specific prophet. He is the only one privileged to know this truth communicated to him by Hashem. The vision is a burden that does not let him rest. He has a need to spurt forth spontaneously and a desire to share it with others. For example, when someone is entrusted with a secret they have a difficult time maintaining the confidence. They find themselves constantly struggling to refrain from blurting it out. The prophet seeks to unburden himself by telling the message of God to others.

When it comes to a prophecy or to Torah that a Jew knows, the only relief from his load comes through sharing it with others. The Rambam says that the prophet is required to tell his prophecy to others even when he knows that his intended audience is not interested in the message and may seek to harm him as a result of it, even if it costs him his life. Jeremiah was an example of a prophet who wanted to hold back his prophecy when the scoffers opposed him but he could not hold it back. When the Jew has a prophecy or Torah to transmit, he must view it as a Masa, a heavy burden, that in order to endure must be transmitted with great care and exactness as a

Sefer to the next generation and not as an Igeres.

The ability of the Jewish parent to sacrifice himself for their child is so great that it approaches the point of self negation. How can such a person refrain from transmitting to his child the beauty of Shabbos, Yom Tov, Tanach or Torah Shebal Peh and the great Jewish personalities? Like the prophet of old, he can't control himself, he must blurt out the message. If he does not transmit it to his child, the reason must be because he himself is lacking the feeling for these things. In order to be a successful scribe, you yourself must feel the burden of prophecy, the Masa Dvar Hashem.

In essence, this is the Mitzvah of Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim, V'Higadta L'Bincha, and you shall instruct your children. A Jew must present his child with a Sefer and not an Igeres. Inscribe such a Sefer for the next generation is the way for every Jew to attain the level of prophecy in his lifetime. If you would ask what is the greatest characteristic of Knesses Yisrael, it is the great wonder of Jewish History, the ability to engage in Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim not just on Pesach night. It is the ability for one generation to turn the subsequent generation into its carefully written Sefer.

The Rav noted that the night of Pesach is a symbol for this inter-generational transmission process. We are all familiar with the story of the great rabbis that were assembled in Bnay Brak and were involved in Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim all that night till dawn. The Rav asked which night was it? The Rav interpreted the night as extending beyond that immediate night of Pesach. The "Night" refers to the long and dark exile period that we have endured for 2 thousand years. It is the long night of pogroms and blood libels and crusades and inquisitions and holocaust that we have endured. Not only were Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Tarfon and Rabbi Yehoshua at that table, but Gedolei Rishonim and Achronim who lived through the rain of Jewish blood and misery throughout the ages were there as well. Yet despite all these difficulties, Gedolei Yisrael recognized that they had a mission to be the scribes of their generation, not in terms of writing books but as scribes that engrave a love of Torah in the heart of each Jew. Gedolei Yisrael carried the burden, the Masa Hashem, and transmitted their Torah as an inter-generational Sefer and not as a fleeting Igeres. They seized on the method Hashem uses, the Sippur Bsefer, writing on the book of creation, to ensure the continuity of faith in Hashem and the eternity of the Jewish people. The Torah remains alive to us today because of them. If not for their efforts, we would not be able to sit at our Seder table and discuss the exodus on the night of Pesach. Jews are called the Am Hasefer, the people of the book, not because they are avid readers, but because each and every Jew is a living book that has been authored by the previous generations.

How long must we function as Sofrim, as scribes? When does the Jew complete his assignment of studying Torah? How long must we emulate the ways that Hashem created the world, through Sfor, Sippur and Sefer? Until we see that the next generation is ready to shoulder the load and assume its role in this never ending chain. Until the students knock on their teachers' door and say "Our Teachers, the time to recite the morning Shema has arrived", that they are now ready to assume the leadership role. The essence of Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim is to create the living books, the Seforim, that will ensure the continuity of Torah and Judaism, is not limited to the night of Pesach. It is an eternal mission.

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From: owner-olas-shabbos[SMTP:owner-olas-shabbos@torah.org]
Olas Shabbos beShabbato: Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann
<Hoffmann@torah.org> Pesach 5759 Matzah and Maror - Worthy
Mechutanim

As much as we are told that Purim is a Yom Tov of opposites - "ve-nahapoch hu," the Pesach Seder has more than it's own share of opposites. It

can be confusing: Are we commemorating our freedom and the Exodus from Egypt and slavery, or are we remembering the bitterness of our years as slaves under the cruel rule of the Pharaohs of Egypt. We recline, to demonstrate we are free. Yet we dip our food in salt-water to remind ourselves of the tears of our slavery. We drink the "Arba Kosos - four cups" of wine, which represent the "four languages of redemption," but we eat charoses to commemorate the mortar bricks we were forced to make. Maror reminds us of the bitter times we spent in Egypt, yet we recline to demonstrate our liberty. The explanation, however, is obvious. As our Sages put it, "Light is only fully recognized when emerging from darkness." One can only appreciate the importance of freedom after he fully understands what slavery entails. To truly praise Hashem for taking us out of Egypt, we must first learn about slavery, and even perform physical symbols to bring home to us how bitter it actually was. Matzah and maror can also be seen as "opposites," as the following story illustrates.

One Seder night, the holy Rebbe R' Yissachar Dov of Belz was walking through the alleyways of his town Belz. As he passed by the house of a simple yet G-d-fearing Jew, he stopped by the window to listen in on his Seder. He overheard the Jew saying the section of the Haggadah which establishes the correct time to remember the Exodus: "One might think that the obligation to discuss the Exodus commences with the first day of the month of Nissan... therefore the Torah adds (Shemos 13:8), 'It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Egypt,' [the pronoun this implies something tangible, leading us to conclude that] I have commanded you [to discuss the Exodus] only when matzah and maror are lying before you [at the Seder]." The simple Jew, it seems, was not very learned. Instead of saying, "I have commanded you only when matzah and maror lie (munachim) before you," he said, "I have commanded you only when matzah and maror are mechutanim (i.e. relatives through marriage) before you." It was all his disciples could do not to break out laughing. Yet to their surprise, R' Yissachar Dov took his blunder quite seriously. After pondering the simple Jew's words for a moment, he remarked, "Indeed, matzah and maror are mechutanim!" Seeing his disciples' amazement, he related the following story.

Reb Zelig was a rich and important Jew who's daughter's time had come to marry. Her father searched far and wide for a young man worthy to take his daughter's hand in marriage, yet it seemed that every boy he met just didn't suit the bill. One day, while travelling on business, he came across a young man sitting and learning in beis ha-midrash. At first, R' Zelig was put off by the boy's shoddy clothes and impoverished appearance. The more they spoke, however, the more impressed he became. "This young man is a diamond in the rough," he thought to himself. R' Zelig wasted no time, and immediately arranged a shidduch, with a date for the wedding to be arranged later. So excited was R' Zelig by his chassan that he began to become paranoid lest someone else "discover" him and steal from him his catch. He sent an urgent telegram to the young chassan. "Come right away," it said, "the wedding must take place immediately! Do not worry about clothing or wedding expenses, I will take care of everything." Alarmed, the chassan promptly gathered his meagre possessions, and travelled to the city of the kallah. When he arrived, he was whisked off to the tailor to have a new suit made for the chassunah. The tailor was instructed save the chassan's old torn suit for the father of the kallah, who was footing the bill. Then, not even taking the time to prepare a lavish wedding banquet, as would normally befit a man such as R' Zelig, a hasty chassunah took place. In later years, when R' Zelig's son-in-law disagreed with him, or refused to take his advice, R' Zelig would go to his closet and remove the old, tattered clothing his son-in-law had worn before marrying his daughter. "You forget," he would say, "that I'm the one who made you what you are today. Look at your regal clothing - this is what you used to wear!" Not to be outdone, R' Zelig's son-in-law had his own trick up his sleeve. He had put aside a stale piece of bread from the hastily prepared leftovers which had been served at his chassunah meal, saving it for just such an occasion. Taking it out, he would say, "Ah, but you too forget just how anxious you were to have me as your son-in-law. Why, you didn't even take the time to prepare a normal meal - you just couldn't

wait!" "So, you see," said the Belzer Rebbe, "they were mechutanim worthy of one another."

"The same discussion," concluded the Rebbe, "takes place between the Jewish nation and Hashem on the Seder night. Hashem, so to speak, takes out the maror, showing it to us. 'You see,' He tells us, 'this is how bitter your lives were before I took you out of Mitzrayim. Without Me, you would still be there!' But, not to be had, we too have what to say. We take out the unleavened matzos before Hashem, as if to say to him, 'Ah, but remember the rush You were in to have us as your nation. Why, you couldn't even wait until our bread had time to bake!' Indeed, matzah and maror are the finest of mechutanim." Have a good Shabbos and a wonderful and kosher Pesach!

This week's publication has been sponsored by R' Avraham Koplowitz, in memory of his mother Malka Liba bas R' Moshe Meir. And by R' Shmiel Lemel, in memory of his father Tzvi Yaakov Kopel ben R' Shmiel Olas Shabbos, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann and Project Genesis, Inc. The author is a teacher in Yeshivas Bnei Zion of Bobov -- Toronto. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21215

From: torahweb[SMTP:torahweb@torahweb.org] Subject: Rabbi Mayer Twersky - Pesach And It Happened at Midnight by Rabbi Mayer Twersky

Among the songs with which the first seder concludes is "Vayehi ba-Chatzi ha-Laiylah" ("And It Happened at Midnight"). This song catalogs various miracles and instances of divine revelation which occurred on the night of the fifteenth of Nissan throughout the generations. However, the relevance of this song to the seder and the story of the Exodus is unclear. What element of that story is amplified by enumerating seemingly unrelated events, which occurred over a span of hundreds of years? How is our experience of this night enhanced by adumbrating its history?

At first glance, the fifteenth of Nissan, the date of the Exodus, is special owing to its historical prominence; the Exodus endowed this day with its everlasting significance. While this conventional understanding is not entirely incorrect, it is certainly deficient. A brief excursus on the Jewish conception and philosophy of time will provide a fuller understanding of and a deeper appreciation for the uniqueness of the seder night.

Judaism recognizes the duality of time. On one hand, time is quantitative, an instrument for measuring motion. A single day marks one complete rotation of the earth on its axis, a month measures a cycle of lunar movement, and similarly, all units of time are linked to motion (cf. Pesachim 94a, "What distance does an average person cover in a day? Ten parsangs.").

On the other hand, time is also qualitative, possessing inherent qualities. Shabbat, for example, possesses kedushat ha-yom; it is inherently holy, because "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it" (Gen. 2:3). So too each of the Jewish holidays is distinctively, intrinsically holy. Moreover, it is the unique kedushat ha-yom (inherent holiness) of each holiday which generates that holiday's prescriptions and proscriptions. Thus, for example, the unique kedushat ha-yom of the fifteenth of Tishrei obligates us to dwell in sukkot, and so on.

The kedushat ha-yom of each holiday generates that holiday's spiritual themes and creates its religious opportunities. Consider the following analogy. Within the agricultural cycle, certain periods of the year are especially conducive to planting, others to harvesting, etc. (cf. Berachot 18b). So too within the religious, temporal cycle. By virtue of their inherent spiritual qualities certain days of the year are especially conducive to certain religious experiences. Accordingly, our sages identify the aseret yemei teshuvah (the ten days from Rosh ha-Shanah to Yom ha-Kipurim) as especially conducive to repentance, and in this period repentance is especially efficacious (see Rosh ha-Shanah 18a).

The holiday of Pesach is infused with a kedushat ha-yom of ge'ulah (redemption), and the seder night is singularly suited for experiencing the shechinah (divine presence). This intrinsic redemptive quality of the fifteenth

of Nissan is responsible for the timing of all the miraculous events and instances of divine revelation which have occurred on this night. Especially significant are the miracles and incidents of divine revelation which antedated the Exodus because they clearly attest to the innate quality and intrinsic character of the day. The fifteenth of Nissan does not owe its uniqueness to the Exodus; on the contrary, the timing of the Exodus was determined by the intrinsic uniqueness of this day.

The Torah describes the night of the Exodus as leil shimurim -- a night of anticipation. Our sages explain that it is "a night that from the six days of creation has been anticipated" (Rosh ha-Shanah 11b). In other words, at the moment time was created this night was cast as a time of ge'ulah and gilui shechinah. The song "And It Happened at Midnight" seeks to sensitize us not only to the acquired historical significance, but also to the intrinsic spiritual character of the day. In so doing, it urges us not to be content with passively commemorating the Exodus, but to strive to actively experience the wondrous, wonderful kedushat ha-yom of gilui shechinah.

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owner-yitorah[SMTP:owner-yitorah@vjlists.com] Shabbat Chol HaMoed Pesach 17 Nissan (2 Omer) 5759 Saturday, April 3, 1999 Daf Yomi: Sukkah 2

Guest Rabbi: Rabbi Yaacov Wasser Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ

The Haftorah for today has been a source of great consolation throughout the many dark and gloomy years of galut, exile. It is from Yechezkel chapter 37 and relates the famous vision of the prophet in which he is shown the resurrection of the "dry bones." We also read the Megillah, Song of Songs.

There are a number of reasons put forth as to why we read this Haftorah on Shabbos Chol Hamoed Pesach. The Tur states the reason to be that the resurrection of the dead will take place in the month of Nissan. Another reason offered is that according to one view the resurrected bones were those of members of the tribe of Ephraim who miscalculated the end of the exile, left Mitzrayim before the proper time and were massacred by the inhabitants of Gath.

An interesting difference between the brachot made following the Haftoros on Shabbos Chol Hamoed Pesach and Chol Hamoed Succot is that on Succot we conclude m'kadesh haShabbos v'yisrael v'hazmanim, HaShem sanctifies Shabbos, Yisrael, and the holidays, while on Pesach we conclude the bracha with m'kadesh haShabbos, sanctifies Shabbos. The Magen Avraham says this is because there are different korbanot, sacrifices, brought each day of Succot, while on Pesach the same korban is brought each day. The Mateh Ephraim says that the reason is that the maftir each day of Pesach after the first two days is the same, while on Succot it changes each day.

There is a fascinating Gemarah in Sanhedrin 92 that discusses the episode of the dry bones. The Gemarah first discusses the duration of the resurrection. R' Eliezer says the dead arose, said songs of praise to HaShem, and then died. R' Yehuda says emes mashal hayah, which is interpreted by Rashi to mean that even if the event actually took place, the major lesson was as a parable for the future redemption of the Jewish nation from galut. R' Eliezer ben R'Yose Haglilil says that the resurrected arose, made Aliyah, married and had children. R' Yehuda ben Besaira then stated that he was a grandson of one of them and showed his tefillin, which he said were from his grandfather. (The commentaries ask that according to the view it was only a vision it is difficult to understand how R' Yehuda ben Besaira could have been a descendant. They explain his statement as an exaggeration to prove a point.) Whichever view we follow, this is a clear statement that we will be redeemed from our galut just as the dead were resurrected.

Irving M. Bunim, in his sefer Ever Since Sinai, quotes a story about how, in the early years of the British mandate, the British government was debating whether to invest large sums of money to develop the land. The head of the Bank of England, knowing it was a wise move, took out a Bible and read the section of Yechezkel we read today. He said, "There, do you see? G-d promised the Jews they would come out of their graves and rebuild the land.

With this investment we shall help them. You need have no fears. Dead and inert as these people may seem, they are rapidly coming to life. It would be a wise investment that we make."

We, at the very least, should share this vision of a British banker who understood the plain meaning of this episode. Mr. Bunim, expounding on the discussion in the Gemarah related above says that the view of R' Eliezer was fulfilled by the many holy Jews throughout the centuries who travelled to Eretz Yisrael in the twilight of their lives to draw close to HaShem. They arose, sang shira, praise, and went to their eternal rest. But the views of R' Eliezer ben R' Yose Haggilili and R' Yehuda be Besaira require for, the total resurrection, commitment to Torah and mesorah as evidenced by the tefillin being passed from one generation to the next. We pray for a total fulfillment of this prophesy.

Rabbi Yaakov Niman in his sefer Darchei Mussar asks why our rabbis tell us that, "All songs are holy but Shir Hashirim is the holiest of the holy." Why is it holier than Az Yashir or any other song?

He gives an answer that I believe is the reason for our reading it today. He states that Az Yashir was sung after the Jewish nation witnessed unparalleled miracles. It is easy to sing when you are on a high. It is almost impossible not to. Shir Hashirim though, is a song for galut. It talks about the undying love of HaShem for us throughout the bitter exile. This is a truly holy song. The ability of Jews to march to their death singing Ani Maamin, and for the students of the yeshiva of Kelm to march to their death with sifrei Torah while singing, "How fortunate are we, and how good is our lot" is a testimony of our ability to sing under the most dire of circumstances.

After the first days of Yom Tov we may be a little discouraged. We tell the story of Yetzias Mitzraim and perhaps we feel that our galut will never end. Our rabbis therefore instituted this Haftorah and the reading of Shir Hashirim to drive home the point that no matter how bleak things are, we are still able to sing, because we know HaShem is with us, even in galut. No matter how far we have sunk, the message of the Haftorah is that HaShem can bring back to life even dry bones. We, who see so many signs of the coming Geulah, should surely sing of hope and thanksgiving.

Let us daven that this be our last year in galut and that HaShem will heed our prayers to speedily bring an end to this bitter galut, and that we all merit the bringing the Korban Pesach together at the rebuilt Bais Hamikdash.

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From: owner-daf-hashavua[SMTP:owner-daf-hashavua@shamash.org]
Pesach-5759 United Synagogue - London (O) Chol Hamo'ed Pesach
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PESACH - CHERNOBYL, A SMITTEN GOD by Harav Lord Jakobovits from his book "Dear Chief Rabbi" (The article originally appeared in The Times, May 1987) The biblical account of the exciting events leading up to the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt culminates in the divine warning, "And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements" (Shemot 12:12). From this the Talmud teaches "There is no nation worshipping idols which is smitten without its gods being smitten along with it." How were judgements executed against the gods? The classical commentator Rashi (1140-1205) explains: An idol of wood would rot, or decompose, whilst an idol of metal would dissolve and melt to the ground."

Two recent journeys in opposite directions provide two contemporary illustrations. A few months ago, my son, who lives in Baltimore, visited the Soviet Union together with a friend, meeting a number of Refuseniks in their homes. They all commented on the sudden so-called "liberation" of the Soviet leadership. Whatever its significance in the long run, something

certainly was radically stirring in what had been for 70 years such an inflexible attitude. The Refuseniks attributed this change to Chernobyl. For the Soviets, they explained, faith in science and technology was the new religion, and nothing symbolised this faith more than a nuclear reactor. When this blew up in their faces, their god had exploded, and the fall out produced a spiritual vacuum in which there was a search for new values, or at least a real examination of past policies. The new political realities, whatever their eventual outcome, thus have a truly theological dimension.

Shortly after my son's travel to the East, I was in America and witnessed the explosion of a spiritual idol. TV evangelism had been a multi-billion dollar business claiming millions of devotees. Huge television empires, generating powerful religious cults, were suddenly debunked in ugly sex scandals and bitter mutual recriminations. These gods, in Rashi's words, had been exposed as rotten and were now decomposing, just as the metal icon of the crass materialism worshipped in the East was dissolved literally by a "melt down to the ground." Within that same year, yet another god, worshipped universally throughout the world, came to grief, with fearful effects transcending East and West. For countless millions the "permissive society" was the new religion - the worship of the carefree life in which all that mattered was enjoying oneself, having a good time without moral restraints or disciplines giving free license to every form of sexual perversion and promiscuity.

Then a plague broke out which not only devastated the new god of libertinism, but threatened to kill its worshippers first by the hundreds, then by the thousands and tens of thousands, and eventually by scores of millions. All these shattering explosions will bring major revolutions in their wake. Once their gods have fallen, the worship of materialism, religious cultism, and the idolatry of immorality will never be quite the same again.

Jewish gods, too, have taken terrible punishment. Some have exploded quite a while ago. The nineteenth century German founders of Reform Judaism believed with absolute faith that the process of Emancipation leading to full equality for Jews would be completed if only they would give up being different - praying in the same language as other Germans did, eating the same food, observing the Day of Rest as Christians observed their Sunday, and altogether giving up everything that made Jews and Judaism distinctive.

This idol of individual assimilation which was to bring salvation exploded in the very country in which it was invented, to be eventually melted down and incinerated in the crematoria of Auschwitz.

More recently, the idolatrous belief in Israel's physical invincibility and militancy blew up in the debacle of Lebanon, and the faith in "my power and the might of my hand have gotten me this strength" sustained a chastening blow. Still more significant has been the explosion of another god, worshipped by millions of Jews for nearly a century. Secular Zionism fostered the belief that national assimilation, turning Jews into a people like any other by providing a homeland and thus putting an end to the abnormalcy of the Jewish condition would solve "the Jewish problem," eliminate anti-Semitism and do away with the double standards applied by other nations to the treatment of Jews. Such a false idol could only be constructed by people who were driven to Zionism not by Judaism but by anti-Semitism, believing that the whole return to Zion was only meant to provide a shelter for persecuted or homeless Jews and to remove the cause for discrimination or hostility against Jews.

Religious Zionists never shared this illusion. They never put their faith in the secular god who has now exploded, Zionism, far from eliminating anti-Semitism, has in fact highlighted the double standards to which Jews are subjected, as demonstrated, for instance, in the infamous equation of Zionism with racism endorsed by the majority of nations, and its corollary of equating anti-Zionism with anti-racism.

For religious Jews, the yearning for the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in Zion never was, nor ever will be primarily to secure the equality of safety, or survival of Jews. The supreme purpose was and will always remain inspired by the longing for creating a model state of moral rectitude and spiritual excellence to radiate its blessings to the entire world, fulfilling the

vision and promise of our Prophets: "For out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."
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Yoma 82 THE BABY'S CRAVINGS IN THE MOTHER'S WOMB AGADAH: The Mishnah (82a) states that if a pregnant woman smells a food on Yom Kipur and has a craving for it, we feed her until her spirit is revived. The Gemara relates two incidents regarding pregnant women who had cravings to eat on Yom Kipur. In the first incident, a pregnant woman smelled food and craved it, and the people came to Rabbi to ask what they should do with her. He responded that they should whisper into her ear that it is Yom Kipur (in the hope that the fetus would hear and stop craving the food, -Rashi). They did so, and her craving subsided. Rabbi described her unborn baby with the verse, "Before I formed you in the stomach, I recognized you, and before you left the womb I sanctified you" (Yirmiyah 1:5). That child turned out to be the righteous and holy Rabbi Yochanan. In the second incident, another pregnant woman smelled food and craved it, and Rabbi Chanina ruled that they whisper into her ear that it is Yom Kipur. They did so, but her craving did not abate, and they had to feed her in order that her life not be endangered. Rabbi Chanina referred to the unborn child with the verse, "The wicked are estranged from the womb" (Tehilim 58:4). That child turned out to be the wicked Shabsai who hoarded produce, driving prices up and causing many people to suffer.

The Acharonim have several insights about this Gemara. (a) Why did Rabbi apply the verse, "... before you left the womb I sanctified you," to this child? In what way did the unborn child demonstrate "Kedushah," sanctity, and in what way did Rabbi Yochanan, after he was born, stand out as being especially Kadosh? Likewise, why did Rabbi Chanina choose the verse, "The wicked are estranged from the womb," to describe the unborn child who did not give up its craving? What does that verse have to do with the specific act of the unborn child? Regarding the righteous child, the TOSFOS YOM HA'KIPURIM explains that the Gemara (Ta'anis 10a) says that "one who fasts is called Kadosh" (because he separates himself from worldly pleasures). Rabbi saw that the unborn child was Kadosh because he abandoned his craving for food. We find that Rabbi Yochanan was known for his attribute of Kedushah, for he was able to sit by the Mikvah and instruct women how to be Tovel, without fear that his Yetzer ha'Ra might be aroused (Berachos 20a). The Gemara in Yevamos (20b) says that someone who is not attracted to sensual lusts is also considered Kadosh.

In what way does the verse, "The wicked are estranged from the womb," describe the unborn child in the second incident, and how does that verse reflect Shabsai's actions? The TOSFOS YOM HA'KIPURIM and the VILNA GA'ON answer that the verse in Tehilim there go on to say, "He does not listen to the voice of the whisperers" (Tehilim 58:6) -- which alludes to the unborn child that does not listen to the people when they whisper to him that today is Yom Kipur, and he continues to crave for food. The unborn child in this incident did not listen to the whisperers and insisted on fulfilling his lustful desires. Likewise, when he grew up, Shabsai, was not able to curb his lust for money, and he oppressed the poor by hoarding the produce and raising the prices.

(b) How could Rabbi and Rabbi Chanina declare the unborn child a Tzadik or Rasha? The Gemara (Sanhedrin 91b) concludes that a person only has a Yetzer ha'Ra upon exiting from his mother's womb! The TOSFOS YOM HA'KIPURIM explains that the Gemara there means that the Yetzer ha'Ra only begins to *rule* ("Sholet") over the person after he is born. But even before he is a born, a person has a Yetzer ha'Ra, and it was the presence of that Yetzer ha'Ra which influenced the unborn child to eat. Alternatively, RAV S. WOLBE (AleI Shor II:182) explains this incident to mean that the first child exhibited the attribute of changing one's natural tendency, while the child of the second incident did not exhibit the trait of suppressing one's desires. Since the essence of a "Tzadik" is the trait of changing one's natural tendency, while a Rasha is one who gives in to his desires, the Gemara applies these terms to the fetuses who exhibited similar traits (-- and not because they actually were held accountable for their actions in utero). The SEFER CHASIDIM (#1137) says that we find on very rare occasions a child who *does* have a Yetzer ha'Ra, and may be described as a Tzadik or Rasha, before he is born. This is a result of the child being one of the people from the 974 generations who were supposed to exist before the Torah was given, but whose existence was pre-empted by Hashem when He saw how wicked they would be, and He gave the Torah instead after only 26 generations. The souls of those people were dispersed throughout the history of the world, so that in each generation some of them are created (Shabbos 88b, Chagigah 13b). Those individuals were pre-inclined to do evil before birth. (The Sefer Chasidim probably means that it is harder by nature for some people to do good than it is for others; the word "Rasha" in this Gemara's context means "a person for whom it will be very hard to do good." See, for example, Shabbos 156b, the story of Rav Nachman and his head-covering, and Insights to Yoma 22:3b. See also Rashi, beginning of Parshas Toldos, with regards to Esav and Yakov's character in utero. -M. Kornfeld)

(c) The VILNA GA'ON finds an allusion in the Torah to show that one can test whether an unborn child will be righteous or wicked by seeing how he responds when he craves food and is told that it is Yom Kipur. The last verse in Parshas Shemini says, "To distinguish between the impure (Tamei) and the pure (Tahor), and between the creature (Chayah) that may be eaten and the creature (Chayah) that may not be eaten" (Vayikra 11:47). The Vilna Ga'on explains this homiletically to mean, "In order to distinguish between the Tamei (the wicked person) and the Tahor (the righteous person), we must see *which Chayah (pregnant woman) eats* [on Yom Kipur when the fetus craves food] and *which Chayah does not eat*."

Yoma 83b THE MAD DOG AND LASHON HA'RA AGADAH: The Beraisa lists five characteristics of a mad dog, so that one will know when he sees one to stay far away from it. Those

characteristics are (1) its mouth hangs open and (2) spittle drips down, (3) its ears hang low, (4) its tail rests between its legs, (5) it walks along the far side of the road, and some add that it barks but its voice is not heard. Shmuel says that the danger of a mad dog is the Ru'ach Ra'ah that rests upon it. The Gemara cites a Beraisa in support of Shmuel. The Beraisa says that when one attempts to kill a mad dog, he must only do so from afar (such as by throwing something at it), so that he not be harmed by the Ru'ach Ra'ah that rests on the dog. The Beraisa continues and says that one who rubs against a mad dog will become endangered, and his only remedy is to throw off his clothes immediately and run away. If a person is bitten by a mad dog, the person will surely die (Abaye, though, describes an antidote to the bite of a mad dog).

The CHAFETZ CHAIM (in SHEMIRAS HA'LASHON, Sha'ar ha'Zechirah, ch. 4) cites the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni, Parshas Ki Setzei) which compares one who speaks Lashon ha'Ra to a person who is bitten by a mad dog. The Chafetz Chaim points out that just like our Gemara says that there is no remedy for the bite of a mad dog, similarly the Gemara in Erchin (16b) says that one who is accustomed to speaking Lashon ha'Ra, G-d forbid, has no atonement. Why, though, is someone who speaks Lashon ha'Ra compared specifically to someone who was bitten by a mad dog? The Chafetz Chaim shows how one who speaks Lashon ha'Ra has all of the attributes of a mad dog as described in our Gemara. When a person is bitten by a mad dog, the Ru'ach Ra'ah that rests on the dog and causes it to have the above-mentioned characteristics rests on the person, giving the person all of the attributes of the mad dog. Someone who speaks Lashon ha'Ra also has those attributes, as if a Ru'ach Ra'ah rests upon him. (1) His mouth hangs open. Similarly, the mouth of the person who speaks Lashon ha'Ra is always open, waiting to find a listener, no matter who it might be, to listen to his gossip. (2) His spittle drips down. The dog is always angry and is ready to attack anyone it meets up with, as is indicated by his constantly dripping spittle. So, too, the person who speaks Lashon ha'Ra is eager to speak about anyone who comes up in conversation. In addition, the spittle of a dog is most disgusting, especially that of a mad dog, and it the mad dog leaves a path of spittle behind wherever it goes. So, too, the disgusting speech of the person who speaks Lashon ha'Ra leaves its impact wherever he goes. (3) Its ears hang low. By hanging its ears, the mad dog makes himself look uninterested in attacking anyone. That way, no one will be afraid to come near the dog, and he will be able to pounce on his unsuspecting prey. For the same reason (4) its tail rests between its legs; it walks slowly and does not run excitedly. Likewise, (5) it walks along the far side of the road so that it appears to be walking far from the central flow of people and is uninterested in anyone. Some add that it barks but its voice is not heard -- this is another guise that it engages in order for people to think that it is a quiet, happy, kind-hearted dog, so that no one will take any measures of caution when they see it, assuming it to be a harmless canine. And then it viciously attacks its victim. The same attributes exist in one who speaks Lashon ha'Ra. He walks humbly, away from other people, so that they think he is not interested in their affairs and that he is not one who goes around spreading gossip. Furthermore, when he speaks Lashon ha'Ra, he does it in such a sly way that at first, it is not evident that any Lashon ha'Ra is being spoken. His ears are down as if he is not listening to anyone else's business, and he walks along as if he is minding his own business, all so that no one will put up their guard when he comes to attack with his vicious Lashon ha'Ra. And just like some say that a mad dog barks and no voice is heard, the one who speaks Lashon ha'Ra does damage that is not noticeable right away, for he speaks in private about a person. Just like one who rubs against a mad dog must immediately throw off his clothes and run away, one who comes near someone known to speak Lashon ha'Ra should run away immediately, even at the cost of much embarrassment.

Yoma 85 THE STATUS OF A BABY FOUND IN A CITY POPULATED MOSTLY BY GENTILES QUESTION: The Gemara cites a Mishnah which states that if one finds a child in a city in which most of the residents are gentiles, we follow the principle of "Rov" and assume that the child is not Jewish. Shmuel, though, says that we treat him like a Jew with regard to desecrating Shabbos in order to save his life. If so, asks the Gemara, then in what way is he treated like a non-Jew? Rav Papa answers that we treat him like a non-Jew with regard to feeding him Neveilah. RASHI (DH I'Ha'achilo) says that we may feed the child Neveilah until he becomes an adult (Bar Mitzvah) and accepts upon himself to become a Jew. Rashi repeats this idea -- that when the child becomes of age he will convert -- a few lines later (DH Naisi Ra'ayah). Why does Rashi say that we assume he is going to convert? If he has a status of a non-Jew, let him remain so! ANSWERS: (a) The NETZIV (Meromei Sadeh) answers that the principle of "Rov" -- that we follow the majority -- is a part of the Torah ("Acharei Rabim I'Hatos") which applies only to Jews. A non-Jew has no right to follow the "Rov" in any area, and therefore his doubt always remains unresolved even when there is a "Rov." Therefore, with regard to feeding the child Neveilah, which involves a question of whether we -- the Jews -- are transgressing an Isur by feeding it to him, we follow the "Rov." Since the "Rov" says that he is a non-Jew, we are permitted to feed him Neveilah. With regard to whether the child himself, though, may eat Neveilah (or transgress any other Mitzvah) when he becomes an adult, he may *not* follow the "Rov" to determine that he is a non-Jew, because if he is indeed a non-Jew he is not entitled to rely on the "Rov!" He may only eat Neveilah as a child, because even if he is a Jew he has no Chiyuv d'Oraisa until he reaches the age of Bar Mitzvah. When he reaches that age, though, he has no choice but to accept upon himself all of the Mitzvos. (Semantically, this expresses itself in an odd way: there is a Safek whether this person is a Jew or a non-Jew. On the side that he is a Jew, he is drawn after the "Rov," which determines that he is a *non-Jew*, while on the side that he is a non-Jew, he may not rely on "Rov," and thus he must conduct himself as a *Jew*!) (b) Perhaps Rashi was bothered by a question. Shmuel says that we must save this child's life, even if it requires desecrating Shabbos to do so. Why must we save him on Shabbos if the "Rov" tells us that he is not Jewish? The Gemara in Sanhedrin (69a) says that Beis Din may even kill a person based on a "Rov!" Why, then, do we save this child, when "Rov" tells us that he is not Jewish? Because of this question, Rashi perhaps understood that Shmuel's principle that we do not follow "Rov" when it comes to saving a life is a Din d'Rabanan. Even though the Torah does not require us to save the life of the child that was found in a city populated mostly by non-Jews, the Rabanan do require that we desecrate Shabbos in order to save his life. (Since there is a possibility that the child actually is a Jew, the rule that "Ein Rabanan Yecholim La'akor Davar Min ha'Torah b'Kum v'Asah," Yevamos 90b, does not apply here.) Accordingly, it would not be logical for the Rabanan to require us to save the child's life, and then let him go live his life as a non-Jew and eat Neveilah. It must be that the Rabanan instituted more than just saving him; they also instituted that we encourage him to undergo a proper conversion and become a Jew when he reaches adulthood,

because of the possibility that he is a Jew (which is why the Rabanan instituted to save him in the first place). Even though we feed him Neveilah now because there is a "Rov" that he is not Jewish, we encourage him to become a Jew and when his life is in danger we save him on Shabbos. TOSFOS (DH ul'Fake'ach) appears to have been bothered by this question -- how could the Rabanan institute to desecrate Shabbos in order to save his life and then let him live his life as a non-Jew. Tosfos explains that the requirement to save his life even when the majority of the city is not Jewish is indeed mid'Oraisa. The Torah says, "v'Chai ba'Hem" -- "You shall live in them (the Mitzvos)" (Vayikra 18:5), which teaches that even if there is a "Rov" that the child is not Jewish, we cannot take chances with a possible Jewish life. When it comes to feeding him Neveilah, though, we follow the "Rov" like in every other area. (When Beis Din kills a person based on a Rov, "v'Chai ba'Hem" apparently does not apply since there is a majority suggesting that there is reason to actively kill the person. In the case of the found baby, on the contrary, there certainly is no reason to take his life; our doubt is only whether we must be Mechalel Shabbos to save it or not.) (M. Kornfeld)

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