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To: Parsha@YahooGroups.com
From: crshulman@aol.com

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From jr@caldera.com

To: mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Date: Wed, 27 Mar 2002

Subject: SHIUR HARAV SOLOVEICHIK ZTL

ON HAGADAH AND CONCEPT OF AVDUS

hagadah.02

Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Hagadah and Concept of Avdus (shiur date: 3/15/70. Nordlicht tapes 5194/5195. Thanks to Arnie Lustiger for providing the tapes.)

There are two aspects to slavery: 1) the juridical/political and 2) the typological/personalistic. Under the political/political, slavery is identical with a doctrine of totalitarianism, or all inclusive, private property. It embraces the animate and inanimate, including mankind. The body of the slave belongs to someone other than the slave himself. Under the second aspect of slavery, slavery represents a class of people who think, feel and act (or react) in a distinct manner, thus reflecting a peculiar personality. The personalistic aspect of slavery may be found even among free men. These two aspects of slavery do not always go hand in hand. When we say in the Hagadah (at the conclusion of Magid) that we praise Hashem for the redemption and freedom of our soul, it refers to both kinds of slavery. We were set free physically and we were also liberated from the highly restrictive slave personality.

The Halacha calls the political/juridical aspect Kinyan Mamon. The master has property rights that one has concerning another. The Halacha calls the personalistic aspect Kinyan Issur, which refers to the Halachic constraints that are placed on the slave because of his strange and peculiar personality. It behooves us to analyze the Halachos associated with the personalistic or Kinyan Issur regarding the slave. There are fundamentally 3 Halachos that reflect our view of the slave personality. 1) Eved is relieved of time oriented Mitzvos (Mitzvas Assay Sh'Hazeman Grama). 2) Eved is excluded from matrimony (Ayn Lo T'fisa Kdushin). His act of betrothal does not establish a matrimonial community. 3) The slave is disqualified as a witness in civil and criminal cases.

The laws noted above are not just of technical significance. They are rooted in the slave mentality and personality, in his action and reaction. A slave (the Rav noted that we are talking about anyone who demonstrates the slave personality, which might include free men of distinction) is disqualified to testify in civil and criminal cases simply because we don't trust him. Apparently the commitment to truth or as many ethicists and philosophers call it the "truth norm" is unknown to the slave. Only the free man can experience that norm, not the serf. The reason for the insensitivity of the slave to truth can be found at two levels. In the first level, the slave is a person without options. He has no freedom of choice between alternatives. He has only one course of action that he can follow. When the Torah talks of free people in general and the Jew in particular, it talks of two alternative ways, Tov and Ra, Good and Evil, Bracha and Klala. The free man has the ability to choose between them. The slave does not have that freedom of choice. He has no faith in himself and lacks the urge and drive to initiate. His lack of decision making ability and freedom of choice manifests in an inability to intervene in certain situations to improve his lot. He lacks the tools that a free man would employ to help himself under similar circumstances. People who are not free (slaves or prisoners in concentration camps), whose opportunities are restricted, develop a more imaginative approach to the world. They view things the way they would like the world and reality to be, not the way it actually is.

The inability to intervene and materially affect the reality of their situation leads them to perceive their world through a personalistic/subjective and slanted viewpoint in order to soothe their ego. (The Rav noted that people with various impediments often view the world from a slanted and imagined perspective, colored by their own personal situation and how they would like their world to be.) The Torah did not entrust the slave to testify because he does not see things objectively. He sees events and situations through his slanted subjectivity.

Another manifestation of the slave personality is his fear to contradict others, not only those that have control or jurisdiction over him, but even in situations that contradiction would not result in any harm to him. A sense of unjustified fear is the motivating force in all aspects of his life. The Rav compared this mindset to that of many inmates in concentration camps who were afraid to contradict anyone, even a child, no matter how outlandish the statement might have been. The Torah describes most beautifully this neurotic, unjustified fear that the Jews will experience as part of their exile and punishment. In those nations you will not find peace and will experience fear day and night. The Torah describes irrational fear, a phobia that is not necessarily based in reality.

The slave deemed untrustworthy not only because of his imagination, but also because he is motivated by unjustified fear that will not allow him to contradict anyone of a higher station. When one testifies and tells the truth he has to contradict and antagonize someone. A person who is afraid to do antagonize is disqualified from giving testimony. Simply put, the slave is essentially a frightened person. He can't be objective, his power of observation is determined by his imagination and fantasy and he is engulfed in fear. The slave has no power of observation or courage to stand up for his beliefs and ideas. The free man is capable of telling the truth no matter the situation that he may find himself to be in.

The Rav offered his opinion that Chazal introduced the concept of Heseba, leaning on the side, as the symbol of freedom. The posture of reclining on the left side is one of complete relaxation that manifests abatement from tension or anxiety. One who is anxious can't relax physically. Physical relaxation leads to emotional relaxation. Also, reclining is symbolic of the throwing off of the yoke that exists in one's mind that deprives him of freedom of movement. It is the reverse of the stiff and direct posture that demonstrates obedience. A soldier standing erect at attention symbolizes obedience. Reclining, on the other hand, is indicative of disobedience, of a courageous stand of rejecting the authority of man. I am stating emphatically that I am free to relax and act as I choose. On Pesach night, the Halacha requires that we have a relaxed posture that should be viewed as disrespectful of those that would dominate us. We are no longer slaves. It is indicative of the fearless man who is unhindered by any external forces. To appreciate that Chazal viewed this posture as one of disrespect, they enjoined the student sitting before his teacher from reclining because it is a disrespectful posture, and the student is obligated to respect his teacher. Chazal chose such a posture as the symbol of freedom specifically because it shows disrespect from a subordinate towards his superior. It demonstrates how the poor Jew in Egypt behaved towards his former master on the night of the exodus.

The second Halacha is that a slave is relieved of commandments that are time oriented. The reason is that the slave lacks the time experience. Everything in the universe exists in time and space. All evolutionary processes in nature are the result of time passage. The organic world is intertwined with the passage of time. The characteristic or cycle of all organic tissue is birth, life and death. The life of any organic tissue is the inexorable approach of death. Life and death are phenomenon experiences that can only be understood in the context of time. Even though everything exists in time, not everything experiences time. Man is the only creation endowed by Hashem with the capability of experiencing time. Man is capable of not simply living in time but to appreciate the meaning of the passage of time as the awareness of a time-existential stream of selfhood. Unfortunately not every human takes advantage of the ability to experience time and not simply to live in time. Many human beings simply flow with inexorable tide of all powerful and irresistible time. Yet such people have denied themselves the excitement of the experience of time.

What are the components of the time experience? (Aging is not included, for even the animals in the field age but do not understand the time experience.) There are 3 component parts or acts to the time experience. 1) Retrospection. There is no time without retrospection. By retrospection we mean re-experiencing of the past. Retrospection for a young man is difficult, but it is very easy for an old man. Time is memory. Without

memory there is no time. 2) The time experience consists in exploration of things yet unborn, of events not yet in existence, the exploration of the future. The anticipatory existence of events still unrevealed. 3) Appreciation of and valuation of the present moment as the most precious possession one has. It is an axiological act. Time is the most precious possession. This concept is often overlooked by youth.

No one is capable of time awareness if retrospection is alien to him and if he is incapable of reliving past experiences. What is Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim? The whole Mitzvah does not express itself simply in relating a story of what happened. Rather, it is the reliving of the drama. We must re-experience and relive the exodus. That is history. Archeology describes events that disappeared long ago, and even though they may be reproduced by memory, they are not alive. There is no retrospection. History is not only the recorded story of events, but it is part of the time awareness of a people or group that reenact and restage. No time awareness is imaginable if the latter lacks the historical experience.

The Rav observed that the tragedy of the American Jew is based on the fact that he forgot his past. We are not referring to the simple stories of peasant life in Europe. Rather he lost the ability to relive time as part of his own I-awareness, he lost touch with Judaism's assertion that the past is relevant and is a part of me. Rabbi Akiva is not simply a figure that lived 1800 years ago. He and his teachings have been integrated into our personalities. The same applies to all the great scholars and leaders throughout the generations. Many American Jews forfeited their time awareness and retrospection, they became Jews without a past. The Rav met many young people who did not know the name of their grandfather. They would say that he died a long time ago in the "old country" and they forgot his name. Sadly, their I-awareness begins with his death, not his life. Their time awareness begins with their birth. The existence of the human being does not commence with his birth. The human being is born into the world as part of the endless stream of time. But if the world is born with him, if he has no past on which to draw, then his world is incomplete. On the other hand, to live in time, to feel the rhythm of time, one must move from the memory of the past to the unreality of the future. From events that were, to events that will be real someday. From reminiscing to anticipating. From visions of memory to visions of imagination. To live in time means a commitment to a great past and an unknown future.

To facilitate time awareness, Judaism wants man to be free in order to appreciate the moral element of responsibility for emerging events and the anticipation that involves his intervention in the historical process. Judaism teaches that man is created free so that he may make central decisions that mold and fashion not only his future, but the future of the world as well. Time awareness requires man to intervene when intervention is called for. That is why the Hagadah commences with Avadim Hayinu that retells our earliest history and concludes with the eschatological vision of Nishmas Kol Chai. One can't relive an event without connecting past and future. In order to connect retrospection and anticipation, one must cherish the present fleeting moment as if it represented eternity. Judaism teaches that each moment is valuable and precious. Each moment is the link between the history of the past and the anticipation of the future. With the fraction of a second, one may realize life long hopes and aspirations, or he may lose them.

That is why the Halacha is so time conscious. Sometimes we might think that the Halachic obsession with time borders on the absurd. But of course it does not. Take for example, doing work around the boundary of the beginning of Shabbos. One may do work a minute before sunset. If one does the same act 2 minutes later he is bound to bring an Asham Talluy. Is one minute so important that it can now label the person a sinner? Can the fraction of a second be that important? We see that the fraction of a second is most important to the safety of the Apollo space program. The simplest miscalculation could spell the difference between life and death, success and failure. Apparently the Halacha is not alone in the valuation of adherence to time. The fulfillment of the mitzvah to recite Krias Shma in the morning requires that it must be completed by a certain time. One minute later, the act loses its value. There are many such cases.

The Rav mentioned the story of King Saul who failed to comply with the explicit order of Hashem regarding the complete destruction of Amalek. Saul sought to explain away his actions without taking responsibility. The monarchy was taken away from him. On the other hand, upon being told of his sin with Bas Sheva, David immediately accepted responsibility and pleaded for forgiveness and atonement. The prophet immediately informed him that Hashem erased his sin. Why was David's plea granted and Saul's rejected? Because Saul argued with Samuel and tried to

convince Samuel that he implemented his instructions. Only after Shmuel addressed himself to Saul his final words of rebuke that Hashem has torn away the monarchy from him, only then did Saul admit his failure. But it was too late and his destiny was sealed.

This is typical of Judaism. Time is critical, not simply hours, but seconds. Time appreciation is a singular gift granted to free man. He can utilize time to the utmost, he can also waste it. To the free man, time is equated with creativity, growth, opportunity and accomplishment. Time is a gift to the free man, he wants time to slow down. He feels the pressure of so much to do. For the slave, time is a curse. His time is not his own, it belongs to his master. He is insensitive towards time, life is motionless to the slave personality. The Rav observed that American Jews, after they pass their fiftieth birthday and the children take over the business, are frustrated that they have too much time on their hands. They feel unwanted by their families and unneeded by society. They are gripped with the fear of death. Their lives become motionless and meaningless, without focus, like the life of a slave. Torah scholars are inoculated from such psychological turmoil. The study of Torah is always important, whether one is young or old. The study of Torah extends the person's view and reveals new dimensions of existence. The free man's life expresses itself in the motion of physical and intellectual accomplishment, Vzarach Hashemesh U'Ba Hashemesh, the constant striving and re-striving to accomplish. The same can't be said for the slave. What he neglected to do today can be made up tomorrow. The slave lacks the great excitement of opportunity knocking on the door and challenges that summon man to action, of great expectations coupled with the fear of failure. The slave never attempts and never succeeds. Any Mitzva that is inseparably bound up with time is inapplicable to him. The free man time lives a three dimensional life, past present and future, while the slave lives in the flat uni-dimensional present. No wonder the first cup of the Seder is bound with recital of Kiddush. Kiddush encapsulates the concept of time. Time in the Kantian philosophy is empty, it is a frame of reference, a coordinate system. The same is true of physics, it is quantified and measured by space, but it is not real time. Real time can't be quantified. So how can one correlate the notion of measured time with Kdushas Hayom? Kdushas Hayom represents a living entity that is sanctified and endowed with creativity that can't be captured by a simple measurement. The festivals are called Zemanim, times. Time is a blessed entity charged with meaning and sanctity. That's why the first sign of the free man on the night of Pesach is to acknowledge the sanctity of this time, through Kiddush.

The Rav explained that even though a woman is not obligated to fulfill time bound Mitzvos, she differs from the slave in this regard. The Rav said in the name of his father that a woman is relieved of the obligation but if she performs it she is rewarded. Therefore the woman recites a blessing before fulfilling a time bound Mitzvah. Her act is as meaningful as that of a man. The woman lives in time even though she was relieved of the obligation. The slave is completely removed from the performance and the reward. Hence his act has no effect.

The Rambam inserted in his Hagadah that we begin Magid with the statements that our forefathers departed Egypt in a hurry. Why is this aspect of haste, Chipazon, so important that according to the Rambam it became the focal point of the evening? Because Chipazon means time consciousness. It is the excitement of hurrying, of trying to catch up, because I miss time, and I want to make sure that I am in a position to act when the opportunity next presents itself. Chipazon is the attempt to cover distance, to move forward quickly. This is the manifestation of the concept of living time. That is why the Rambam includes the statement at the start of Magid that regarding the haste of our forefathers when they left Egypt 2 thousand years ago, for it was then that we regained the concept of time, and we became free.

The third typological principle is that a slave can't effectuate a marriage. Judaism considers marriage not only as a sociological institution but also as a metaphysical existential community. It is not only an economic/social partnership of disparate biological units based on mutual benefit, but as personalistic union. Marriage means to tear down barriers that separate individuals from each other. To step out of the shadows of egocentricity and self concern and into the bright spaces of joint existential experience. Marriage is supposed to precipitate the transition from an individual to communal existence. From singular to together existence. There are people who can't undergo the shared existential metaphysical change. They always remain in existential retreat, isolated in metaphysical aloneness. They are incapable of sharing basic personalistic experiences and assume ultimate commitment towards another person beside himself.

Among the Sheva Brachos we have 2 similar blessings. The first, Yotzer Ha'adam, is a short version. We also have Asher Yatzar which also ends in Yotzer Haadam, a longer version. The first blessing does not refer to Eve. The second blessing mentions the divine nature of man's character, his relatedness to Hashem. The second blessing also introduces Eve and describes human nature, that man was created in the image of G-d. Why? The first blessing deals with mundane, natural man, as a natural being. The Rav was not referring to the primitive brute. But rather to the sophisticated man, man doctor, man physicist etc., man who is capable of traveling to the moon. It refers to a man that can't transcend himself or see beyond himself. He can't transcend his natural boundaries and biological pressures. In his opinion there is nothing beyond nature, he is a prisoner of his own world outlook. Such a person can never form the ideal covenantal community. He can enter into a marriage contract for utilitarian pragmatic reasons but he is unable to bring about an existential community. Such a community is called Binyan Aday Ad in the second blessing. Only the person who is created in G-d's image and can transcend himself and extend their concern for others is capable of creating a covenantal community. The oppressed, tortured and insecure slave lacking a sense of pride, is incapable of thinking in terms of compassion and love for others. (The Rav was told by inmates in concentration camps that the concept of love towards siblings and family, and friendships towards others disappeared in the camps. They did not know what would happen in the next minute. They were absorbed with self preservation. Fright extinguishes everything noble and altruistic in a person. Everyone is his enemy, he can't be concerned with the needs of others. The symbol of Geula in the Torah is Korban Pesach. Pesach is distinct from all other sacrifices. The concept of a community does not exist by other sacrifices besides Pesach. Yet Pesach has been linked up with the concept of group to such an extent that according to one Tana only a group may offer the Pesach, an individual may not offer it. Why is Pesach different from all other sacrifices in this regard? Because Pesach is the symbol of community, it is called Seh Lbays Avos, because freedom expresses itself in the awareness of Bayis, community. This concept of Bayis, community, was revealed to the Jews with the dawning of their freedom.

Now we have a definition of slave and free person as typological categories. The slave is a frightened personality, living in time without experiencing the movement of time, imprisoned to live by himself without the ability to share his experiences with anyone else. The free man is just the reverse.

Avadim Hayinu L'Paroh B'Mitzrayim. What is added by mentioning that we were slaves to Paroh in Egypt? There are 2 type of slaves, Sometimes the slave belongs to the individual. Other times the slave is property of the state. In the US before emancipation, the slave was the property of the individual master. In the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, China, there is/was slavery but the slaves were/are owned by the state. The Hagadah tells us that we were slaves to Paroh but not slaves to slaves. Why were Chazal concerned whether we worked for the state or were owned by individuals? After all, both forms of servitude are degrading.

When one is a slave to an individual master, at the personal level, some relationship between master and slave may develop. The slave may develop a position of power or authority within the master's household. He may run the affairs of the house, like Joseph did in the house of Potifar. However, if the slave is the property of the cruel state, then no personal relationship is possible. The state and the oppressors of Egypt were as cruel on the first day of the servitude as they were years later. Slaves of the state lose their identity and become simply numbers. No matter how long an inmate may be incarcerated, he remains as unknown to the warden as the day he arrived in the prison. The life of the serf owned by the government and the lives of the inmates in the concentration camps and the gulags of Russia shared a common theme of all-consuming torture. Egypt of antiquity and Russia were very similar. Both were corporate states, technologically capable. In Egypt, the personality of the king was subsumed and standardized into a common name, Paroh. There was no individuality. We don't know which one in particular was the leader. They were all cruel. The Soviet dictators were also indistinguishable from each other. They used the same terms and language when referring to their enemies and in their attempts to dominate those that oppose them. Both were societies based on slavery, (and the Rav said that the Soviet systems was a slave society) where the individuality submerges and instead of the heterogeneous crowd of a free

society you are faced with an impersonal and cruel society, like that of Paroh and Mitzrayim.

Vayotziyanu Hashem Elokaynu Misham. In Tanach, we find the word Saper used together with the accusative or objective case, Es. But when it comes to Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim the objective case is replaced with the ablative, Lsaper Bytzias Mitzrayim. Grammatically the ablative case does not belong here. We find many cases where Sapper is linked with the objective case. Why do we use the term Lsaper B'Yetzias Mitzrayim? Because Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim is much more than telling a story. It is an investigation, a study to comprehend, an analysis of the exodus. (The Rav said that if he would quit his position as Rosh Yeshiva and concentrated on the Hagadah it would take him over a year to study it.) Why does the Hagadah include the word Elokaynu? We must understand the semantics of the word Elokaynu and the phrase Hashem Elokaynu. We have the verse Shma Yisroel Hashem Elokaynu Hashem Echad. Hashem has been accepted as our King and whose law we are duty bound to abide by and implement. If the word Elokaynu would have been omitted, the use of the name Hashem (Tetragrammaton) would tell us that Hashem had mercy on us and took us out of Egypt, just as Hashem intervenes in nature and in various situations to rescue the oppressed from the oppressor. [Tape cut out momentarily at this point, just before the punch line. I am guessing that the Rav completed this thought in the following way.] The juxtaposition of the name Elokaynu tells us that there was an aspect of Din, judgment, associated with His actions, punishment for the Egyptians and the selection of Bay Yisrael as the Am Hashem for eternity. This selection was bound up with up willingness to submit to G-d and surrender our new found freedom to His will.

Is the committed Jew who observes 613 Mitzvos, a free person or not? Of course he is. Apparently we understand freedom from a different level than most people do. When we say M'Avdus L'Chayrus, freedom in our opinion is in the service of Hashem and conforming to His wishes. Hashem created man as a free being, He endowed man with the most cherished of all gifts: freedom. Yet G-d wants man to surrender his precious freedom and submit to His moral law. The first encounter between Hashem and man was the instructions given to Adam how to live. Apparently, man who is not bound by any code and has not surrendered to Hashem and His moral code, has not achieved full humanity. Man's task is to surrender his freedom, his most precious gift. But by surrendering his freedom, man regains it, but at a higher level.

Fundamentally man is not a free being. At the physiological level, man is a confronted being. Man differs from the animals in the forest in that he is a confronted challenged being. He is a prisoner of natural laws and social institutions. Disaster can strike at any moment. He is subject to many restrictive measures, some due to his being a natural creature, while others are the result of his social integration. In fact, the greater the role of the person, the less his freedom. From this perspective, the President of the United States is the least free of men. Man is a social animal and subject to praise and the opinion of the people. All men, be they slaves or free men, are subject to restrictions, customs and mores of behavior that make the notion of free man nonsensical.

There is only one way to free man from his many phobias: surrender to Hashem. In antiquity man was afraid of leprosy. Modern man is still traumatized, but he has a different fear, fear of cancer. How many people are traumatized by the fear of developing this dreaded disease? Man is frightened of this possibility. The frightened man is not free. The only way to become free of this fright is through total surrender to G-d. One must have great fear of G-d as well. But a great fright frees man from little, smaller frights. Surrender to G-d does not mean surrender of freedom. It means that I must give up my freedom for a short time. For example, there are times that man's natural urges lead him to violate certain laws, for example dietary or sex/morality. G-d wants man to surrender his free will in this case for a few seconds, till the urge passes. All man has to do is surrender temporarily to G-d and in a short while he will find that he is freer than ever before. If we had been taken out of Egypt without the attribute of Elokaynu, without accepting His code and without a willingness to surrender our freedom in order to attain a higher level of freedom, then we would be in bondage again. Had we exited Egypt without surrendering to Hashem and His laws, we would ultimately have been subjugated again by someone else, or by our fears and phobias.

B'Yad Chazakah U'Bzroah Netuyah. Jewish philosophy is based on the concept of Vhalachta Bdrochav. We must imitate the actions and ways of Hashem. If Hashem used Yad Chazakah and Zroah Ntuyah, we must

emulate Him and use it as well. How are we supposed to act when we are called on to act and intervene in historical situations?

Yad Chazakah means effective action. Zroah Ntuyah means vigilance and being prepared. The idea expressed is that man is a responsible being. Judaism teaches that this responsibility transcends his immediate responsibility for his own actions, it is a part of his spiritual endowment. Man is charged with historical responsibility, Kol Yisrael Arayvim Zeh LaZeh. Man was called on to shape history towards worthwhile objectives. There are 2 groups of Mitzvos in Halacha, Tzibbur and Yachid, group and individual. Man's activism and initiative within the historical drama is the foundation of Judaism. The individual is called upon from time to time to participate in the emergence and development of Knesses Yisrael. In order to participate in the historical drama one must possess two capabilities: 1) always be ready for action; 2) when action is called for, to act effectively.

Zroah Ntuya symbolizes vigilance. There are 2 aspects of vigilance. 1) In order to be watchful, one must be totally committed and dedicated. Who is watching? The mother is watchful when her child is ill. She is totally committed, watchful and keen. In Tanach we find that Mordechai portrayed such vigilance at its best. Mordechai was on guard as soon as Esther was taken to the palace. Because he was committed to her just like a father. A worried parent is a vigilant parent. (Children on the other hand are not always worried about their parents, hence they can't be described as vigilant.) The totally committed person stands guard against danger unconditionally. One can't alert someone to danger unless he is concerned. The Jewish community must be vigilant towards Eretz Yisrael and the Orthodox community in particular must be concerned with the preservation of Torah. It requires full commitment. The person who is not vigilant will act too late. 2) Vigilance goes beyond concern. One must possess historical perspective and the ability to discriminate between events that are truly critical and require immediate intervention and those that can wait.

Mordechai had a sensitivity to history. He had the foresight and prescience indispensable for crucial decision making. Esther and Mordechai were exchanging messages. They disagreed to such an extent that Mordechai sent her a very stern warning. The crux of the disagreement was that Esther felt that she should wait to approach the king. She had not been summoned to appear before the king. If she acts prematurely she would in all likelihood be killed and then no one will be able to intercede on behalf of the people. Since the edict was issued before Pesach and the enactment of the edict was not due to happen for another year, there would be ample opportunity to act over the coming year. After all, over such a long period of time she will surely receive an invitation to appear before the king and at that time she would plead for the people. Mordechai disagreed and insisted that she act immediately. Mordechai was obviously right. He was sensitive to the needs of the situation. It is easy to rationalize secondary decisions of preference, why I like this car and not the other one. But when one asks why he is willing to sacrifice his life for a situation or a community, he cannot offer a rational explanation. Suddenly a light goes on and I grope towards my destination, to my decision. I know that I will somehow get there, but I don't know how.

Shuvi Shuvi Hashulamis, the gentile people address themselves to Knesses Yisrael. Why do you show such dedication to Hashem and Torah? Come back to us and forget about all of that. Why remain a Jew? Give up your madness and your unlimited, bizarre commitment. She answers what can I tell you, I am involved in a dance between two camps, I cannot free myself from the dance. One cannot be a non-Jew, it is a part of me that I can't explain or rationalize. It is a basic experience that can't be explained or changed. It is an eternal commitment that is part of my I-awareness and my existence. Can I explain my relationship to my parents and children? I cannot define my existence in terms of a lack of commitment to G-d, like you. I must define it in terms of what I am committed to, to G-d and His Torah. It is the central experience and such an experience can't be explained. Mordechai could not explain his pressure on Esther, he just knew that eventually he would be proven right. This dance is an eternal dance that the Jewish community is engaged in till the coming of Moshiach.

When the Jew intervenes he must do it with a full heart. The Jewish community never undertook half measures in the past. Afilu Kulanu Chachamim, Kulanu Nvonim. Haray Zeh Mshubach. This is subject to two interpretations. One is subjunctive. The other uses the grammatical indicative. One explanation of the statement is that even if all of us were wise and if all of us were intelligent and if all of us were

scholars we would still be obligated to tell the story of the exodus. But it is quite tempting to interpret the statement in the indicative: We are wise and we are scholars and we do know the Torah, we are still obligated to study the exodus. The verse does not refer to the hypothetical but rather the reality. Also, if the subjunctive is correct, and we really are not capable, then why do we have to relate the story? On the other hand, if we are using the indicative form, doesn't it smack of haughtiness?

The Rav said that the indicative form is applicable here as well. The obligation on this night is to study the events that occurred in Egypt. We don't tell the complete tale. We read and explain the Parsha of Arami Oveyd Avi instead of the complete story as written in Sefer Shmos. If the goal was to simply tell the story on the night of Pesach, we would have studied Sefer Shmos instead. We only mention the highlights and we are interested in exploring the verses of Arami Oveyd Avi. Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim is inseparably linked with Talmud Torah on the night of Pesach. It is a Mitzvah of Talmud Torah. The Torah has prepared unique answers for the questions of the 4 sons, but there is a common denominator: teach them about Egypt and the exodus, but teach them the laws, Talmud Torah. The 4 answers that the Torah prepared are indicative that we must teach each child according to his ability. Every Jew is endowed with the potential to comprehend Torah. Rabbi Simlai says that each fetus is taught Torah within the womb and the angel slaps him prior to birth and he forgets. Why teach him if he will forget? Because Torah must be acquired through hard work. If so why teach him in the womb? In order that subsequent study of Torah during his lifetime should be a process of remembering something that he once knew. Plato said that all learning is remembering. Since he knew it once it is not alien and he can reproduce it again.

The potential of studying Torah is latent in every Jew. Every Jew can be a great scholar and attain Chachma, Binah and Daas. Even one who has failed to take advantage of the gift to study Torah. If a good teacher explains it, each Jew will be able to learn and follow. Torah is the possession of the entire Knesses Yisrael. The democratic philosophy of education is the Jewish philosophy. Throughout world history, access to education was controlled by the aristocracy. Judaism always insisted on an exoteric approach to Torah education, that the opportunity to study and acquire knowledge be given to everyone. Because the Torah is not outside the Jew but it resides in the Jew. Sometimes he is conscious of it. Sometimes he is not. There is the knowledge of Torah and the sensitivity towards Torah.

On Pesach night we reenact the events where each Jew beheld the divine revelation. The revelation was a public spectacle not only at the Red Sea, but also on the night of the fifteenth of Nissan. On that night every Jew was wise, sensitive and intelligent. Every Jew felt the presence of G-d, and was initiated into the inner circle. The Jews that left Egypt were met by Hashem. Each Jew must reenact that feeling of encountering the Shechina on the night Pesach.

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From: torahweb@zeus.host4u.net Sent: April 10, 2003 To: weekly1@torahweb.org Subject: RABBI MORDECHAI WILLIG V'HIGADTA L'VINCHA

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Rabbi Mordechai Willig - V'Higadta L'Vincha

The paradigmatic mitzvah of Jewish parenting, combining rich experiential and deeply inspirational tradition with fundamental, and yet, profound, education is the hagadah. The word, "hagadah," is based on the torah's command, "V'higadta l'vincha bayom hahu leimor,"¹ "You shall tell your son on that day saying."

The Ohr Hachaim² asks a fundamental question. The first and last words of this five-word phrase seem contradictory. On the verse, "Koh somar l'veis ya'akov v'sageid livnei yisrael,"³ Rashi

quotes the Talmud, 4"Tomar b'lashon racah, vesageid--d'varim hakashin kegidin."

The verb, amar, means gentle language. The verb, higid, means harsh language. If so, v'higadeta leimor is an internal contradiction. Do we speak to our children harshly, v'higadta, or gently, leimor? The Ohr Hachaim suggests several answers. I would like to share with you a suggestion of my own.

In general society, the practices of which are often adopted by Torah-Jewry living in that time and place, two radically different methods of child raising exist. The first is disciplinarian. Children must be taught the rules and punished if they fail to keep them. In this way, the theory goes, they can achieve great things, as their potential is directed by wiser adults and not wasted on the foolishness of youth. This 19th Century attitude, captured in works by authors as varied as Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, views discipline as an end in itself, as the very essence of the upbringing of a proper, virtuous, and accomplished child.

Recently, an opposing theory has emerged. Discipline is terrible for a child's development and self-esteem. It stunts his ability to grow and achieve his potential, hence the term, "positive parenting," in which the word "no" is almost removed from the vocabulary. Children are to be persuaded that something is wrong, and not prevented forcibly from engaging in it.

Misbehavior is handled by soft talk explaining that an action is wrong. There are no punishments, physical or otherwise.

In five immortal words, the Torah rejects both extremes.

Parenting must begin with v'higadta, with the discipline of harsh words. Red lines must be drawn and a child who crosses them must be punished. A child who is never disciplined grows into an undisciplined adult, incapable of conforming even to the mores of general society, and certainly not to the more exacting norms of Torah u'mitzvos.

American neo-conservative thinkers have attributed many teenage social ills to unrestricted permissive parenting. These ills include drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, diminished attention span, and general underachievement. Apparently, children are not wise enough to set limits and develop their potential on their own.

In Torah society, in Israel and the United States, this type of education has led to the abandonment of Torah observance in great numbers of youth growing up in torah homes. Unrestricted exposure to modern general culture, given the twin developments of the decadence of society and the greater availability of modern media in the home and beyond, has overpowered the natural tendency of copying the lifestyle of the parents.

Does this mean that the Torah endorses the disciplinarian approach? After all, we know that many youngsters were brought up that way and became high achievers and upstanding Jews.

The answer is a resounding no, and for two reasons. First, such an upbringing stunts growth. In the short-term, it produces results: higher grades in school, better behavior at home and in shul. But in the long-term, such an education does not allow a child to do his own thing, to develop his unique talents and personality.

Second, such a chinuch carries a significant risk of rebellion. Perhaps, in earlier times, when we lived in a world of conformity, this risk was minimal. But now, a child who behaves and achieves because he is forced to do so may rebel as soon as the ability to force him is lost.

Is discipline an end in itself, enabling a parent to control a child's development, and brag of a high achieving, well-behaved child? Chas v'shalom! Discipline is only a prerequisite for the primary challenge of parenting- expressing love and warmth, sharing your

innermost soul, talking gently and passionately about love of G-d, love of Torah, love of Israel, love of all creatures.

Yes, v'higadta is no more than a necessary prerequisite for the lifelong responsibility and opportunity of leimor, of teaching with love and by example, as the wondrous passage of one's children into adults takes place. In these five words, the Torah has taught the secret of successful Jewish parenting. Discipline your child only in order to teach him, gently and lovingly, for a lifetime. That is all. The rest is commentary.

Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe, sh'lit"a, wrote a book entitled "Planting and Building: Raising a Jewish Child,"⁵ which expresses similar ideas. When one builds, a precise architectural plan must be followed. There is no room for imprecision or improvisation. This represents the indispensable infrastructure of torah education. A child must be clearly taught: you may not do this, you must do that. All children must conform to the basics.

The essence of education, however, is planting, enabling a child to develop in his own way, to utilize his own strengths and character traits, to grow on his own. This is "chanoch lana'ar al pi darko,"⁶ educate a child according to his own way. As the Vilna Ga'on comments, forcing a child against his nature, even if successful at first, is a recipe for unmitigated disaster.⁷

Like planting, chinuch requires patience. When bringing up my own wonderful, sometimes-rambunctious children, of whom my wife and I are exceedingly, and I hope rightfully, proud, I would repeat over and over again - patience. Rav Wolbe's words, which we heard then on tape, confirmed this idea. "Chinuch hu litvach aruch" Chinuch is a long-range project. Punishment is a quick fix, but love is the only long-term option.

A word on spanking. The Talmud⁸ prohibits spanking an older child, b'no gadol, based on v'lifnei iver lo sitein michshol." Rashi explains that the child may rebel and sin, and the parent is responsible for that sin.⁹

The Shulchan Aruch¹⁰ quotes this halacha. The Rama,¹¹ based on a different passage in the Talmud¹², defines an older child as older than 22 or 24 years of age. This certainly strikes us as counterintuitive.

In fact, the Ritva¹³ interprets gadol to mean 13, bar mitzvah, after which it is common that a youth will respond to a spanking by cursing or striking his parents, both capital offenses.

Rav Wolbe claims that today, striking a three-year old causes a michshol, a stumbling block, and is prohibited. In previous generations, children were more tolerant and had a more positive self-image, and were not damaged by spanking. Today, many children are damaged for life by spanking, especially since rebellion fills the air.

While this is a far-reaching and novel approach adopted in, and for, our times, a precedent exists in the words of the Ritva: "Lo gadol gadol mamash, elah hakol l'fi tiv'o she'yeish lachooch sheyatris k'negdo b'dibur oh b'ma'asav, ki afilu lo y'hai bar mitzvah ein ra'ooy l'havi'o lidei makeh oh mekalel aviv, elah yishtadlenu bid'varim."¹⁴

Even if a child is not bar mitzvah, if, because of his nature, there is a reasonable chance that he will rebel with words or deeds, and ultimately curse or strike his parent, it is prohibited to hit him.

Rather, one must persuade him with words. Thirteen is simply an average age beyond which spanking may lead to rebellion and is, therefore, forbidden. If today the age is three, then that is the cutoff, as Rav Wolbe, says.

Let me conclude with an insight from Rav Simon Schwab, zt"l¹⁵. The prohibitions against hitting and cursing parents, U'makei aviv v'eemo mos yumas-umkalel aviv v'eemo mos yumas, ¹⁶ are separated by the prohibition against kidnapping, v'gonev ish umcharo v'nimtza v'yado mos yumas.¹⁷ Why?

Perhaps the Torah was anticipating the question - how can a child reach such a low level that he hits or curses his father? The answer is that the father continues to control his son by spanking or otherwise beyond the age of 22 or 24. In such a case, the father is effectively enslaving his son with intimidation. If so, he is considered one who stole a person, his own son, by denying his freedom of choice and action. This is the root cause of the son's tragic descent and rebellion to the point that he may hit or curse his father. The son is put to death, but the blame lies with the father.

On Shabbos Hagadol, when we read the Hagada, and on Pesach, when we focus on the mitzvah of v'higadta l'vincha, we must remember that the primary mode of chinuch is amira, talking softly and warmly to our children. May our best efforts to raise our children properly be blessed with success.

1 sh'mos 13:8 2 op. cit. 3 sh'mos 19:3 4 shabbos 87a 5 Feldheim, 2000, Nanunet, NY and Jerusalem, Israel 6 mishlei 22:6 7 op. cit. 8 moed katan 17a 9 op. cit. 10 yoreh dei'ah 240:20 11 op. cit. 12 kidushin 30a 13 supra 12 14 ibid 15 ma'ayan beis hasho'eiva 16 sh'mos 21:15, 17 17 sh'mos 21:16

RABBI ELI SHULMAN

Young Israel of Midwood
www.yimidwood.org

[Drasha from] 2nd day Pesach 5762 [last year]

Each Pesach we begin our Seder with the familiar words: hashata hacha l'shanah ha'baah be'arah d'yisrael, hashata avdei, l'shanah ha'baah bnei chorin. This year we are here, next year in the land of Israel; this year we are slaves, next year, free men. The formula is ancient, preserved unchanged in its original Aramaic, from a time when Jews spoke Aramaic as their vernacular. How many centuries has it been since Jews spoke Aramaic! And yet we continue to say the same words, the same prayer.

Actually, it doesn't sound like a prayer. A prayer would begin yehi ratzon, or — in Aramaic — yehei rava, let it be Your will. Let it be your will to bring us by next year to Jerusalem, to make us free men.

That is not what we say. We don't begin the seder with a prayer.

We begin with a statement, a confident statement of fact: This year we are here; but next year we will be in Jerusalem. This year we are slaves, but next year we will be free men.

And the years roll by, and the decades, and the centuries, and each year we are disappointed, each year our confident expectation fails to be materialize. Last year we were here, and here we are still. Last year we were slaves, and slaves we are still. How is it then that we continue to make this confident prediction, the same confident words, year after year? Shouldn't we at least tone it down, allow for a little uncertainty: This year we are here, perhaps next year we will be in Eretz Yisroel. This year we are slaves; let's hope that next year we will be free men. How do we go on year after year, setting ourselves up for disappointment?

You're probably all familiar with the famous business between Charlie Brown and Lucy, each year she sets up a football for him to kick, each year she pulls it away at the last minute, and yet Charlie Brown, sap that he is, convinces himself each year that this time will be different.

How are we different than Charlie Brown? Where does our confidence come from? This declaration has a very strange opening: ho lachma anya, this is the bread of affliction.

And many commentators have pointed out the difficulty that the Torah describes the matzoh as the bread of redemption, the bread that the Jews baked on their way out of Egypt because they

were hurried out of Egypt so quickly that there was no time for their bread to leaven. And later on in the Seder, too, we say: matzoh zu she'anu ochlim al shum mah? hat does the matzoh signify? And we answer: Al she'lo hispik betzeikam l'hachmitz ad she'niglah aleihem melech malchei hamelochim, because as they left Egypt there was no time for their bread to leaven. And so how can we begin the seder by describing the matzoh, that symbol of our redemption, as lachma anya, the bread of affliction?

And the meforshei ha'hagadah explain that the matzoh had two historical roles. It was, as the Torah says, and as we say later in the Hagadah, the bread of redemption that we baked on our way out of Egypt. But it was also, for centuries, the bread of affliction, the bread that we were fed as slaves in Egypt when we were not allowed the luxury even of waiting for our bread to leaven, before being hurried back to our labors. And so the matzoh is both; both the bread of geulah, and the bread of affliction.

But this answer, at first glance, seems unsatisfactory. Because even if it is true, as a matter of historical fact, that the Jews ate matzoh as slaves in Egypt, that is not the reason that we eat matzoh at the seder! The Torah makes clear that the reason we are commanded to eat matzoh at the seder is because it is the bread that we ate when we were redeemed. So why do we begin the seder by emphasizing matzoh's other, more melancholy aspect? The answer, I believe, is this: Matzoh is the bread of geulah. That is how the Torah characterizes it, that is the reason we eat it at the seder, that is its essential nature. And therefore when the Jews in Egypt during their long years of slavery, under the lash, ate matzoh, they were eating the bread of geulah. With every bite of matzoh that they ate, they were celebrating their geulah. Every meal that they eat in Egypt, where they were fed nothing but matzoh, was a seder.

Only they didn't know it yet.

Because, the process of geulah from Egypt did not start when Moshe arrived back from Midyan. It did not start when Moshe smote the Egyptian overseer. It did not start, even, when Moshe was born.

The process of geulah began the minute the Jews arrived in Egypt.

And we see that in the beautiful Midrash that Yocheved, Moshe's mother, was born bein ha'chomos, between the gates of the walls of the city when Yaakov and his children first arrived in Egypt. Because at that moment — with the beginning of the galus — began the unfolding of the geulah.

That geulah was a long, drawn out process, and for two centuries it was invisible to human eyes. No one realized the significance of Yocheved's birth. No one knew, for that matter, the significance of Moshe's birth and adoption by Pharaoh's daughter. The beginning of the slavery, it's intensification, Pharaoh's decrees, all that was public knowledge and filled our hearts with dismay. But beneath the surface - far from the public eye - the geulah was already happening.

The great R' Yaakov of Lisa, the author of the nesivos, in his commentary on the haggadah, records a beautiful insight. The haggadah says: Baruch shomer havtachaso l'yisroel, she'hakadosh baruch hu chishshav es ha'ketz, la'asos k'mah she'amar l'Avraham. Blessed is He who keeps His promise to Israel; for hakadosh baruch hu calculated the end, in order to do what He had promised to Avraham.

Now this is a difficult passage. What does it mean that hkb"h calculated the end? Does He need to calculate?

Explains the nesivos, all those years in Egypt, hkb"h was busy bringing the ketz about. All those years, when all we saw was misery, He was arranging the geulah. He was busy with the geulah. All the strands of history were being directed towards

geulah. And the slavery itself, with all its horrors, was a necessary part of that geulah, even if we could not - even if we cannot — understand it. All those year when we were calculating how long we had been slave, He was calculating the ketz, how long the process of geulah had been going on, and how much longer it would need.

And therefore every bite of lechem oni, the bitter bread of slavery, was a bite of lechem ge'ulim. The matzo was the bread of freedom even in Egypt — but only Hashem knew it. And that is the lesson that the matzo teaches us, and the lesson with which we begin the seder. As so as we sit down to the seder we take the matzo, that symbol of our freedom which is the centerpiece of our seder table, over which we will soon recount the story of our miraculous deliverance, and we say:

Ho lachma anya: This matzo was for many years the bread of our affliction. We ate it in abject despair, not knowing what it was.

And all this time — all that time — it was the symbol of our redemption. All that time — we were being redeemed. The mills of geulah ground slowly - but they never stopped grinding. Only the process was hidden. Until that final moment when — Ad she'niglah aleihem melech malchei hamelachim — until hkb"n revealed himself to them. He was there all the time - being mechashev the ketz, bringing the geulah about. All that changed at the end was she'niglah aleihem, He revealed Himself.

Ho lachma anya - today, too, we eat the bread of affliction. When we read of bombs and mortars, of shattered lives, of mothers killed along with their children, of families wiped out, when that is our daily fare - then we eat lechem oni, the bread of affliction.

Haysa li dimasi lechem yomam ve'layla, my tears were my bread, day and night. Hashata hacha, this year we are here, still eating the bread of affliction - and there is so much affliction for our people today.

And yet we know that hakadosh baruch hu is here too, with us, being mechashev the ketz, bringing it closer and closer, and this bread, this matzo, is for us today, too — not only lechem oni, but also — lechem geulim, the bread of redemption, which every year comes closer and closer.

And so with that same faith that our ancestors showed when they first made this declaration, with the same words that they used then, with the same undiminished confidence, we declare: l'shono ha'baah b'ara d'yisroel, next year in the land of Israel; l'shono habaah bnei chorin, next year free men.

From: dvartorah@torah.org (Dvar Torah) To:
dvartorah@torah.org Date: 28 Mar 1996
DVAR TORAH SHABBAS HAGADOL
by Chaim Ozer Shulman

The central portion of the Haggadah tells the story of the redemption from Egypt in a somewhat roundabout fashion. It quotes the verses of "Arami Oved Avi Vayeired Mitzraima ..." ("an Aramean attempted to destroy my father then he descended to Egypt"), which is a portion in Devorim (Deuteronomy) dealing with the recitation made when Bikurim (first fruits) are brought to the Beis Hamikdash (Temple). The Haggadah then quotes at length from the Sifri in Devorim, which expounds on each phrase in the Bikurim recitation by referring back to the story of the descent to and exodus from Egypt as taught to us in Bereishis (Genesis) and Shmos (Exodus).

Why the circuitous excursion through a small portion relating to Bikurim in Devarim? Why not just recite directly from Shmos where the story of Egypt is dealt with much more thoroughly?

This question has been raised by many commentators, and many answers have been given. Rabbi Y.B. Soloveichik Of

Blessed Memory, answered that the Haggadah desires to utilize the Torah Shebeal Peh (the oral tradition), and therefore chooses to tell the story through the Sifri in Devarim, rather than directly from the verses in Shmos. This does not entirely answer the question, however, since there is certainly Torah Shebeal Peh expounding on the verses in Shmos that could be utilized.

The Sifri itself is puzzling as to why it constantly refers back to the story of the exodus in Shmos! And what is the connection between the story of the exodus from Egypt and bringing Bikurim?

A closer look at the Parshah of Bikurim in Parshas Ki Savoh will help answer these questions. The Torah tells us that when we bring Bikurim we should recite:

"An Aramean tried to destroy my father. He descended to Egypt ... The Egyptians afflicted us ... Hashem heard our voice ... and Hashem took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with great awesomeness and with signs and wonders." (Devarim 26:5-7)

This is all recited and expounded on in the Haggadah. The last verse of the recitation of Bikurim is omitted from the Haggadah. This verse states: "And He brought us to this place, and He gave us this Land, a Land flowing with milk and honey." (Devarim 26:8)

Bikurim, we are told by the commentators, is a Hakaras Hatov (a token of thanksgiving) for receiving the Land of Israel. The Pesach Seder is a thanksgiving to G-d and commemoration for taking us out of Egypt and giving us the privilege to become His servants. (ViAchshav Kervanu Hamakom LiAvodaso).

The Talmud in Berachos (5a) states: "Three special gifts were given by Hashem to Bnei Yisroel only through suffering: the Torah, the Land of Israel, and the World to Come."

The recitation of Bikurim shows that in giving thanksgiving for the Land of Israel we must remember our previous suffering and that only through the suffering and subsequent redemption from Egypt were we able to receive the Land of Israel. The Haggadah tells us as well that in giving thanksgiving for the redemption and becoming Hashem's chosen people we must remember our previous slavery in Egypt and that only through the suffering were we able to experience the redemption from Egypt and become Hashem's chosen nation.

The Haggadah may have in fact chosen the recitation of the Bikurim to compare and contrast these two acts of Hakaras Hatov (thanksgiving).

The Haggadah cuts the recitation of Bikurim short, not finishing "And he brought us to this place ... a Land flowing with milk and honey," because the Haggadah commemorates the redemption. The gift of the Land of Israel is separate and is commemorated at other times, but not on Pesach.

That is why there are only four Leshonos of Geulah (four descriptions and stages of redemption): Vihotzeisi, Vih itzalti, Vigaalti, Vilakachti (I will bring you out, and I will save you, and I will redeem you, and I will take you to me), with the four cups of wine at the seder corresponding to these four stages of redemption. The fifth stage of redemption "Viheveisi" (and I will bring you to the Land of Israel) is not recited.

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From Parshat Shemini Vol.9 No.25 Date of issue: 25 Adar II 5760 -- April 1, 2000

SHIURIM - HOW MUCH MATZA, MAROR, AND WINE MUST WE CONSUME?

by RABBI HOWARD JACHTER

Introduction The question regarding the minimum amounts (Shiurim) of Matza, Maror, and wine one must consume is a highly controversial and complex topic. Rav Avraham Chaim Naeh in his classic work Shiurim Shel Torah and the Chazon Ish in Kuntress HaShiurim (Chazon Ish Orach Chaim 39) discuss this topic at length. In this essay, we will outline the basics regarding the celebrated controversy whether the Shiurim must be doubled because of the possibility that our eggs are half the size of eggs in the times of the Gemara.

Defining the Size of an Egg The cup used for the four cups of wine at the seder must minimally contain a Reviit of liquid (see Shulchan Aruch O.C. 472:9). One must consume at least a Kezayit (the volume of an olive) of Matza in order to fulfill the Mitzva (see Rambam Hilchot Chametz U'Matza 6:1 and Shulchan Aruch O.C. 475:1). Similarly, one must eat a Kezayit of Maror to fulfill the Mitzva (see Shulchan Aruch O.C. 475:1 and the sources cited by Rav Shimon Eider Halachot of Pesach 21: note 15).

The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 486) notes that a Kezayit is the size of half an egg. The Mishna Berura (486:1) notes that the Rambam says that a Kezayit is a third of an egg. The Mishna Berura rules that a sick individual may rely on the opinion of the Rambam. The Mishna Berura (271:68) notes that a Reviit is equivalent to the amount of liquid that one and a half eggs can displace. The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 324:1) notes that the minimum amount of flour from which we must take Challa is the equivalent of 43.2 eggs. Accordingly, it is vital to determine the size of an egg. Students often ask why the Halacha presents its measures in such imprecise terms such as the size of an egg or an olive. The Otzar Hageonim to Eruvin (chapter three) presents a highly insightful answer. The explanation presented is that Hashem knew that the Jewish people would eventually be scattered throughout the world. Thus, had Hashem presented Moshe Rabbeinu with precise measures they would have easily been forgotten with the passage of time. Since eggs and olives are always available throughout the world, Torah measurements can be determined in any environment and culture.

The Chumra of the Tzlach The Gemara presents two standards for determining the measures mentioned in the Torah. The Gemara in Eruvin (83a) presents the size of an egg as a criterion to determine Torah measurements. In addition, the Gemara in Pesachim (109a) presents thumbs as a criterion to determine Torah measurements. Accordingly, both thumbs and eggs are viable Halachic standards to determine Torah measurements. Indeed, the Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 324:1) presents both thumbs and eggs as viable options to determine the minimum amount of flour from which Challa must be taken.

Rav Yechezkel Landau, a major eighteenth century authority, in his commentary to the Gemara known as the Tzlach (Pesachim 109a), writes that he carefully measured thumbs and eggs and discovered that the two do not yield equal measurements. In fact, the measurement yielded by thumbs was twice the amount yielded by that of eggs. Rav Landau arrives at an extraordinary conclusion to resolve this problem. He assumes that the size of people's thumbs has not changed since the time of the Talmud. Instead, he concludes that the eggs in his time were half the size of what they were in the time of the Talmud. This ruling has great ramifications. According to Rav Landau, the Kezayit for Matza and other Mitzvot should be regarded as the equivalent of an entire egg and not a half of an egg as had traditionally been assumed. The Reviit should be regarded as the amount of liquid that can be displaced by three eggs instead of an egg and a half as had previously been assumed. The shiur for Challa would now be the volume of 86.4 eggs and not 43.2 eggs as had previously been practiced. In short, Rav Landau ruled that we must eat twice as much Matza as we had been accustomed to consuming in the past in order to fulfill the Mitzva of eating Matza.

Reaction to the Chumra of the Tzlach Rav Landau's extraordinary ruling was met with both support and criticism. The Vilna Gaon (as reported in the Maaseh Rav 74) agreed with Rav Landau's ruling. The Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 168:13, O.C. 372:12 and Y.D. 324:5-10) notes that Rav Landau's ruling is adhered to by those who are especially scrupulous in matters of Halacha. However, he notes that most Jews retained the established practice and did not follow Rav Landau's ruling. The Aruch Hashulchan rules that one may choose to follow the strict opinion but he should not impose this Chumra on others. He notes various difficulties with

Rav Landau's ruling. First, it constitutes a sharp departure from previously accepted practice. Second, the Gemara in Yoma (80a) teaches that one's mouth can hold an amount of food up to the size of an egg. The Aruch Hashulchan argues that according to Rav Landau one should be able to hold up to the size of two of "today's eggs" in his mouth. The Aruch Hashulchan points out that this is simply impossible. The Aruch Hashulchan also suggests that perhaps Rav Landau used small eggs in his determinations. The Aruch Hashulchan notes that egg size varies from area to area. He points out that this fact was already noted centuries earlier by the Tashbetz (3:33). The Aruch Hashulchan notes that the Mishna (Keilim 17:6) states that the egg that the rabbis speak of is neither a large or small egg but an average one. Accordingly, it is very possible that the eggs in the area of Rav Landau were small and thus skewed Rav Landau's findings.

The Chazon Ish (O.C. 39) defends Rav Landau's ruling. He notes that Shiurim are by definition imprecise and vary depending on the measurement of the great Halachic authorities of the time. Thus, Rav Landau's ruling does not call into question the Halachic practice of prior generations because they relied on the measurements of the rabbis of those generations. The Chazon Ish writes that there is no absolute right or wrong regarding the determination of Shiurim. The Chazon Ish argues that we must accept the Shiurim as determined by the great Halachic authorities, which include Rav Yechezkel Landau and the Vilna Gaon. Conclusion The Shaarei Teshuva (O.C. 486) and Mishnah Berura (486:1) adopt a compromising view regarding this issue. They rule that for biblical level obligations we should follow the strict ruling of Rav Landau. Regarding rabbinical level obligations, we may rely on the traditionally accepted smaller Shiurim. Thus, since the first Kezayit of Matza and the Afikoman might be required biblically (see Rashbam Pesachim 119b s.v. Ein Maftirin and Rosh Pesachim 10:34), the larger Shiur of Matza should be consumed for both of these occasions. In addition, by consuming the larger shiur one thereby accommodates the preferred practice of eating two Kezeitim for both the Matza that is eaten at the beginning of the meal and the Afikoman (see Shulchan Aruch 475:1, Mishna Berura 477:1, and Rav Yehoshua Neuwirth cited in Nishmat Avraham 4:68). However, since the Matza eaten for Korech is only a rabbinical requirement, the smaller Shiur suffices. According to Rav Moshe Feinstein, (Kol Dodi 14:11 and 18:3) the Shiur of Matza for Motzi Matza and the Afikoman should be 6.25 by 7 inches and the Matza for Korech need only be 4 by 7 inches (for more sources on this issue see Nishmat Avraham 4:67-70). Since the Mitzva of the four cups is only rabbinical, the smaller Shiur suffices. According to Rav Moshe Feinstein (Kol Dodi 2:6), 3.3 fluid ounces suffices for the four cups of wine. When the Seder falls on Shabbat eve, the larger Shiur is required since Kiddush is a biblical requirement. According to Rav Moshe Feinstein, the larger Shiur is 4.4 fluid ounces. Since some authorities believe that Kiddush for Yom Tov is always a biblical requirement (see Minchat Chinuch 31), it is best to use the larger Shiur for the first cup at the Seder even if the Seder falls on a weeknight

<http://www.tzemachdavid.org/rabbitaubes/index.html>

RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES

PESACH

One of the highlights of the Pesach Seder in many homes occurs when one or more of the youngsters present recites the Mah Nishtanah. It is a moment which provides "Nachas" to parents, grandparents, and relatives. But the asking of these four questions is not mere "child's play". The questions in fact form the basis of the Haggadah and are found, though with certain variations, in the Mishnah in the tenth Perek of Masseches Pesachim. It is clear from the Gemara there that even adults, even great Talmidei Chachomim, are required to ask these questions if no children are at the Seder. Obviously, then, there is a significant point which these questions make that helps set the tone for the entire Seder.

In truth, it must be noted that these four questions are not really questions at all, but exclamations. The true definition of the phrase "Mah Nishtanah HaLayla HaZeh" is not "WHY is this night different?" but "HOW different this night is!". The activities focused upon these four exclamations are by themselves insignificant. What difference does it make whether one eats

chometz and matzah or only matzah? Who cares what types of vegetables one eats or how many times those vegetables are dipped into something? Why is it important what posture one is in when eating? Indeed, all year long, none of these things are especially important. But on Pesach night, everything we do, even the seemingly trivial, becomes very important. And so we exclaim: How different this night is!! Every little detail is significant; every act is done with care and exacting attention. Precisely what we do and what we do not do is of importance and must be carefully considered.

Why is this the case? Rav Shimon Schwab zt'l once explained that it is because Hashem Himself is a guest at every Seder table. Pesach night is His night, as the Torah tells us, "Hu LaShem Layl Shimurim", it is a night of watching FOR HASHEM. And when one is in Hashem's presence, one is, and must be, very exacting and very careful about what he does. Just as, lehavdil, one is nervous and careful to behave properly in the presence of someone he truly respects or fears, so too must one be careful and precise with his behavior in the presence of Hashem. And so, on this night, everything we do, even the seemingly insignificant things, we do with precision and care. How different this night is! And yet, we perhaps ought to consider learning from this night how to serve Hashem with precision and care all the time. We have the opportunity to be in Hashem's presence on a daily basis; perhaps the Pesach Seder should remind us of what it means to be an ev'ed to Hashem (instead of to Pharaoh) at all times.

Pesach

Most of us are familiar with the requirement presented by the Mishnah in Pesachim, recorded as well in the Haggadah, that each Jew is to view himself (or herself) as though he (or she) was personally redeemed from Mitzrayim. It is for this reason that we engage in various activities at the Seder to demonstrate our freedom. For example, we set the table with our finest utensils, we wear fine clothes, we recline, we drink wine which someone else poured for us and do other things designed to remind us that we are free people.

At the same time, however, we engage in other activities which remind us of our enslavement in Mitzrayim. For example, we have salt water at the table to remind us of tears, we break a matzah in half as would a poor person who needs to save food for a later time, we eat Matzah which is known as Lechem Oni, poor man's bread, we eat maror to remind us of our bitter experience, along with charoses which recalls the mortar from which we made bricks as well as the blood which was spilled in Mitzrayim. The question thus is, what is the true theme of the evening? Are we celebrating our freedom or recalling our suffering?

According to the Abarbanel, that is exactly the question raised in the Mah Nishtanah section of the Haggadah. This night is different precisely because, unlike on other days on the Jewish calendar, the theme is unclear. Why do we eat matzah and maror, symbols of suffering and yet dip our vegetables and recline, symbols of wealth and celebration?

The answer is that Pesach, and particularly the seder night, is a time to celebrate freedom and redemption. We truly are kings and queens on the special night. But life in reality is never perfect, even for kings and queens. We all go through bad experiences and suffer through hard times.

And so, even as we celebrate, we recall those hard times, all the more to enjoy what we now have. Pesach is thus a time for us all to look at the positives in our lives, to focus on the good things, and to recognize that even the hardships that we suffer, some times seemingly without a break, are part of HaShem's plan for our ultimate good and success. Let us celebrate this Pesach by thanking HaShem for His kindnesses, even as we recall the

difficulties as well and thus have a truly joyous Pesach, a Chag Kasher V'Sameach.

The Real Haggadah

The text used universally by Jews on Pesach night, which enables them to fulfill the Mitzvah of Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim and guides them through the other Mitzvos associated with the Seder, is of course the Haggadah. Despite some questions as to who actually compiled the Haggadah as we have it, and when it was put together, it is clearly an old text, identified (as a "Haggadah") by the Rambam and other early sources. On its simplest level, the nickname Haggadah derives from the phrase "VeHigadta LeVinchah", "and you shall relate to your children", which serves as the basis for the Mitzvah of retelling the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim each year.

There is, however, another interpretation of the word Haggadah (cited by Rebbeinu Dovid Avudraham). Elsewhere in the Torah, towards the end of Sefer Devarim (26:3), we find the word "Higadti", usually translated as "and I have related" to instead mean "and I have praised". It is this word which in fact introduces the pesukim that are explained in the central portion of the Maggid section of the Haggadah. Evidently, part of the Mitzvah of Haggadah on Pesach night is to praise Hashem. And the Haggadah is then rendered not a history book but a book of praise as well. Indeed, it is critical to bear in mind that on Pesach night we are not merely telling a story, but reliving an event, and part of the reliving includes our expression of gratitude and thanks to Hashem. The Haggadah is thus a book of thanks as well.

For this reason, Hallel is a significant part of the Pesach Seder. In fact, there are some authorities who hold that Hallel too must be recited before midnight, just as certain other Mitzvos of that night are to be completed by that point. Although that view is not accepted by all Poskim, it does illustrate that Hallel is not something extraneous to the Seder night, but an integral part of the evening's program. We should not lose sight of the fact that extending gratitude to Hashem is so central a part of the Pesach experience. And it may be hoped that the experience itself, together with friends and family, will inspire even more gratitude towards Hashem for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us.

From: Yated USA [mailto:yated-usa@yated.com] Sent: April 10, 2003
Subject: 04-11-03

Maran HaRav Shach ZT"L on the Haggadah

... "Rav Shach Haggadah," published by ArtScroll/Mesorah . . . is a collection of the great Rosh Yeshiva's comments, anecdotes, advice, and experiences on a broad array of subjects, which are applied to the contents of the Haggadah. We are grateful to ArtScroll/Mesorah for making it available to the public and for giving Yated Neeman permission to publish these excerpts for the benefit of our readers.

MAH NISHTANAH - WHY IS THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT?

One of Rav Shach's students came to visit him on the first day of Pesach, a few years after he was married. "So where were you for the Seder last night?" asked the Rosh Yeshiva. "We went to my parents' house," he replied. "And did you ask the Mah Nishtanah?" he asked. "No," he answered. "My little daughter did that!" "That's not good," the Rosh Yeshiva told him. "Each generation should ask the one before it. 'Ask your father and he will tell you' (Devarim 32:7). Your daughter should ask you, and you should ask your father."

The procedure for fulfilling the mitzvah of recounting the Exodus at the Seder is done through a question-and-answer format. Rather than just rattling off the facts, the leader of the Seder is presented with specific questions by a child, which are then addressed in the Haggadah. Even when there is no child present, the Gemara teaches that one's wife should ask the questions to her husband. Even if the Seder is being held by a single individual, he is supposed to "ask" himself the questions. The reason that this particular method is employed is that it is specifically

through this sort of dialogue that information is best absorbed and internalized. This principle is not only part of human nature, but is embedded into the natural world as a whole, said the Rosh Yeshiva. As the Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 9) teaches, Hashem created several worlds and destroyed them before deciding to keep the present world that we live in. How can this be understood? Clearly G-d did not need to go through a trial-and-error process until obtaining the desired result, like some kind of research scientist. Rather, explained Rav Shach, the world was created for the sake of the Torah (see Rashi on Bereishis 1:1), and in accordance with the dictates of the Torah. The wisdom of the Torah is transmitted through discussion and dialogue, through questions and answers, through establishing working assumptions and then confirming or eliminating them. It was for this reason that the very creation of the world had to have these processes embedded into it.

HAD NOT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED IS HE, TAKEN OUR FATHERS OUT FROM EGYPT, THEN WE, OUR CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WOULD HAVE REMAINED SUBSERVIENT TO PHARAOH.

This statement seems rather unlikely. The Pharaohs have not ruled Egypt for centuries. Surely over the millennia the Jewish people would have shaken off the yoke of slavery under natural historical circumstances, even if not for the Exodus. There aren't even any slaves anywhere in the civilized world anymore!

The answer to this question, said Rav Shach in the name of the great rabbi of the Mussar movement, is that if G-d had not taken us out of Egypt, but we would have gained our freedom through some political or natural process, taking advantage of Pharaoh's magnanimity, we might not have remained enslaved to Pharaoh, but we would have been subservient to him - that is, we would have been beholden to him with a debt of gratitude, which would remain an encumbrance upon us for all time. There is no greater responsibility than the indebtedness owed to a benefactor for his kindness!

Rav Shach himself exemplified this trait in his personal life, as the following anecdote illustrates.

For many years Rav Shach would visit an elderly woman in Ramat Gan and inquire after her welfare, offering to help her in whatever way he could. The Rosh Yeshiva explained the background to his relationship with this woman:

"When I was a child we lived in a little village called Vabolnik. My mother had the practice of spending the entire Yom Kippur in shul praying, straight from Kol Nidrei until Ne'ilah. One year, when I was about 5 years old, I was playing outside, when a band of Gypsies came along and snatched me, pulling me into their wagon as they continued to ride along. It so happened that several girls saw what had happened, and began to run after the wagon, crying, 'Stop! Thief!' The Gypsies became frightened and threw their 'catch' out of the wagon. Thus I was saved from being kidnapped and from who knows what other forms of calamity. This woman living in Ramat Gan is one of those girls from Vabolnik!"

Many decades had passed since that incident. Rav Shach had gone on to study in Ponevezh, in Slabodka, Slutsk, Kletzk, Luninets, Novohardok and Vilna. He had moved to Eretz Yisrael and lived in Yerushalayim and then in Bnei Brak. But he never forgot his debt of gratitude to that woman!

THESE ARE THE TEN PLAGUES.

One of Rav Shach's grandsons asked at the Seder one year, "Why did G-d have to administer ten plagues to the Egyptians?"

Analyzing and honing the question, as was his customary procedure in dealing with Torah inquiries, Rav Shach recapitulated the problem: "It's a good question. The same set of Mishnayos (Avos, Chapter 5) that speaks of the existence of ten plagues also mentions the fact that the world was created with ten Divine 'utterances.' In that case the Mishnah goes on to ask, 'Why was it necessary for G-d to create the world in ten utterances? Surely He could have created it in one utterance, etc.' So when it comes to the ten plagues, we should contemplate the same question, though the Mishnah itself does not: 'Why did G-d see fit to administer ten plagues? Surely he could have inflicted one plague and allowed it to continue long enough until the Egyptians were brought to their knees and were forced to release the Jews! Why, then, did He keep ending one plague and bringing another, and then another, ten times?'"

The participants at the Seder suggested this answer: The plagues were not merely designed to force Pharaoh to release the Israelites from enslavement. For that purpose G-d could simply have brought temporary

deafness and blindness upon them, long enough for the Jews to escape! Rather, the goal of the ten plagues was to demonstrate the power of G-d and His ability to subdue all the forces of nature in order to have His will done on earth - as the Torah itself testifies (Shemos 9:15-16): "I could have sent My hand against you now and stricken you and your people with pestilence, and you would all have perished from the earth. However, because of this I have allowed you to survive: in order to show you My glory, and in order that people speak of My Name in all the land." Some commentators explain further that G-d wanted to demonstrate His complete mastery over the realms of water, land, air and the luminaries of the heavens. "Nevertheless," Rav Shach demurred, "the question remains. G-d could still have brought about one large plague which simultaneously demonstrated all these powers. Why did He see fit to deliver ten distinct plagues in ten separate stages?"

The people attending the Seder were stumped.

"I'll tell you why," offered the Rosh Yeshiva. "The purpose of the plagues was to instill the awareness of G-d's awesome power within people's hearts, as you yourselves have noted. Now, it is human nature that no new idea can penetrate a person's heart except through a gradual, repetitive process. For instance, it is impossible to jump into a Yom Kippur without first experiencing in preparation the Ten Days of Repentance, including Rosh Hashanah. And it is even impossible to encounter Rosh Hashanah head on, without first going through a period of Elul and Selichos. "Note that during Selichos we open the Ark once, for the Shema Koleinu prayer," Rav Shach continued. "During the Ten Days of Repentance we open it a second time for Avinu Malkeinu. On Yom Kippur it is opened further for Kol Nidrei and Ne'ilah. When Sukkos comes we do more than just open the Ark - we actually take out a Sefer Torah and circle around it as we recite the Hoshanos. On Hoshana Rabbah, more Sifrei Torah are removed from the Ark, and they are encircled seven times.

The climax is reached on Simchas Torah, when all the Sifrei Torah are taken out, and we dance with them for hours at a time! At that point, our hearts are finally opened up to appreciate the beauty of the unity of G-d, Israel and the Torah in all its magnificence. See how lengthy and gradual is the process of the inculcation of a sentiment into the human heart!"

[AND HE] BROUGHT US CLOSE TO MOUNT SINAI.

The Haggadah does not say, "He brought us to Mount Sinai," noted Rav Shach, but "He brought us close to Mount Sinai." It is not sufficient to arrive at Mount Sinai (representing the Torah), and just stand there; one must strive for a closeness and a bond to it!

An illustration of this concept may be seen in the words of the Midrash, which relates that when Avraham took Yitzchak to Mount Moriah, ostensibly to sacrifice him, they were accompanied by Yishmael and Eliezer. After three days of traveling, Avraham "saw the [designated] place from a distance" (Bereishis 22:4). How did he know that the mountain he saw from the distance was indeed the "designated place"? The Midrash tells us that he saw a cloud hovering over that particular spot.

He turned to Yishmael and Eliezer and asked, "Do you see anything over that mountain over there?" They replied in the negative.

"In that case," Avraham told them, "You two stay here with the donkey, while I and the boy go worship over there (ibid., 22:5). The donkey sees nothing, and you see nothing, so you can keep each other company!"

One must totally devote himself to the spirituality represented by Mount Sinai and immerse himself in it. Just "standing there" is not enough to partake of the sanctity of the Torah.

THE COMPASSIONATE ONE! MAY HE SEND US ABUNDANT BLESSING TO THIS HOUSE.

In an address given at the Grodno Yeshiva in Ashdod, Rav Shach cited a story related in the Midrash: A Roman matron asked Rabbi Yosi bar Chalafa, "What has G-d been doing since He finished creating the world?" "He sits and arranges shiduchim," he told her. "That's all?" she marveled. "Even I can do that! I have many male and female servants. With minimum effort I can pair them up!"

She then went and took a thousand male servants and a thousand female servants and lined them up, one row opposite the other. She declared, "Mr. So-and-So will marry Miss So-and-So," until she had all of them paired up by that night.

The next day they came before her. This one had his head split open, that one had his eye poked out, another one had a broken leg. "What happened to all of you?" she demanded.

A female servant said, "I don't want that man," and a male servant said, "I don't want that woman." And so on. She immediately sent for Rabbi Yosi bar Chalaftha, and said to him, "There is no G-d like your G-d!" Rav Shach explained that that Roman matron had expected Rabbi Yosi to answer her question ("What has G-d been doing since He created the world?") by telling her, "He upholds the existence of the heavens and the earth, and arranges the heavenly bodies according to His will," or something along those lines. She understood that G-d is the ruler of the cosmos at large. But she thought that when it came to her own household, it was she who was in charge, and not G-d. This was her mistake, as she later learned. Without G-d's help, not a single household would be able to continue functioning."

http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2002/moadim/rros_pesach.html

TorahWeb.org [from last year]

RABBI MICHAEL ROSENSWEIG

SHEVII SHEL PESACH: THE YOM TOV OF SHIRAH

Shevii Shel Pesach (the seventh day of Passover) is an unusual yom tov (Jewish religious holiday). Though it commemorates the extraordinary miracle of Keriat Yam Suf (splitting of the Red Sea), this theme is omitted in Emor and the other relevant parshiot in the Torah. Notwithstanding the significance of the miracle, this is the only yom tov in which the complete hallel is not recited, as it does not differ from the days of chol ha-moed with respect to its korbanot (sacrifices in the Holy Temple) (Arachin 10b). Indeed, this yom tov is completely subsumed under the broad rubric of Chag ha-Matzot (Holiday of Matzot, i.e. Passover) in parshiot Bo, Mishpatim, Emor, Pinhas, and Re'eh. While the Drishah (Tur, O.C. no. 490) cites the Maharil's view that one should formulate this yom tov in tefillah (prayer), kidush (sanctifying the day over wine), and birkat ha-mazon (grace after meals) as "yom simchatenu" ("the day of our joy") due to keriat yam suf, this position is almost uniformly rejected in favor of the continued emphasis of the exodus from Egypt and "zeman cherutenu" ("the time of our freedom").

There are also some indications that the shirah (song of praise) that followed the miracle may be as central to this yom tov as the event that inspired it. Indeed, the selection of a haftarah reading for this yom tov entirely ignores the specific occurrence of this day. Instead, the portion (Samuel II, 22) reflects the broader theme of shirah, faith, and gratitude. Perhaps, a brief examination of the phenomenon of shirat ha-yam (praise sung to G-d by the Jews after the splitting of the Red Sea) may further illuminate these emphases.

Shirat ha-Yam is written in a special formation in the Torah, underscoring its uniqueness. At the same time, its relevance is attested to by its inclusion in the daily prayers. While it seeks to commemorate a singular event, there are indications that its significance transcends its origins. The fact that a shirah did not follow immediately in the aftermath of the makkot (plagues) or even of yeziat mizrayim (exodus from Egypt) seems to underscore that it was not just a response to a supernatural experience. Moreover, the double introduction to the shirah- "va-yirou ha-am...va-yaminu" ("and the people feared...and they believed") requires clarification. The mention of Moshe Rabbenu in conjunction with Hashem is puzzling, as well. Having articulated their faith in Hashem, is it not superfluous or even inappropriate to affirm their belief in Moshe? The term "az" ("then") - implying a transition from, as well as a connection to, what preceded it suggests that the inspiration to express shirah constitutes an important juncture in the fledgling development of Klal Yisrael. Commenting on the future tense of "yashir" ("will sing"), Chazal view this moment also as a foundation for faith in the future destiny of the nation: "'shar' lo ne'emar ela 'yashir'...mikan le-techiyat ha-meitim min ha-Torah" ("it did not state 'sang', rather 'will sing'...from here we have a source in the Torah for the future resurrection of the dead") Furthermore, there is an interesting debate as to when the shirah begins: Tosafot in Sotah sees "az yashir" as an introductory sentence, while Rambam, hil. Sefer Torah, perceives it as first verse of the shirah itself. Rambam's intriguing perspective implies that Klal Yisrael's state of awareness is an integral aspect of the shirah itself!

Perhaps what differentiates this miracle and the response of shirah that it engendered was precisely the timing, as well as the order and emphasis delineated in the Torah that reflected a moment of spiritual clarity for Am Yisrael. The fact that the nation did not previously respond with shirah although they had frequently encountered supernatural manifestations,

demonstrates that the shirah was more than a reaction to a superficial stimulus. The double introduction in which the theme of yirah (fear) preceded that of emunah (faith), after a period of deliberation and reflection implied by this series of pesukim, projects, at least momentarily, the spiritual maturity of Klal Yisrael. It was indeed, "az", a moment of import, with implications for the application of the concept of emunah for the future- "shar lo neemar". Thus, according to the Rambam, the verse of "az yashir" constitutes not only the introduction but the beginning of the shirah! Moreover, it is consistent with this newly discovered broader perspective that at that moment, the nation finally fully comprehended the subtle critical role of Moshe Rabbenu. An understanding of the relationship between observing the mizvot- "zeh keili ve-anveihu" ("this is my Lord and shall glorify him"), especially as expressed in Chazal's doctrine of hidur miztvah (adorning the miztvah),- and acknowledging Divine intervention- "ashirah la-Hashem ki gaoh gaah" was critical at that special moment of keriat yam suf, but is no less pivotal in daily prayer.

The Torah chose not to formulate a separate yom tov commemorating keriat yam suf since the primary significance of this miracle was its impact on the concept of emunah and yirat Hashem that well transcended the event. The shirah that it engendered was possibly not less important than the physical salvation of Klal Yisrael. It is appropriate, indeed, that the last day of Chag ha-matzot, the anniversary of keriat ha-yam and the shirah, be fully integrated into the celebration of yeziat mizrayim and "zeman cherutenu", as both the miracle of keriat ha-yam and the shirah that it inspired magnificently highlight the theme of emunah and hashgahah (Divine providence) that stand at the core of the significance of the exodus from Egypt (see Ramban, end of parshat Bo) and the integrated holiday of Chag ha-matzot.

From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List [parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2003 3:31 AM To:
Shabbat_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il Subject: Shabbat Shalom: Shabbat Hagadol

BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Shabbat Shalom: Shabbat Hagadol

By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - The Passover Seder is an evening dedicated first and foremost to the relationship between the generations, to parents communicating to their children the agony and the ecstasy of Egyptian enslavement and exodus - that seminal Biblical drama which most profoundly forged our Israeli identity and traditions. Indeed, the masterful booklet which tells the tale and structures (seder, order) the entire evening is called the haggadah (lit. telling), from the Biblical verse "And you shall tell your children on that day" Ve,higadeta (Exodus 13:3). But what if your children- or one of your children - is not interested in hearing? What if he or she is willing to participate in the meal, but is totally tuned out of and turned off to the ritual which surrounds and informs the meal? How are we, the parent teachers and communicators, supposed to respond in such a case? The haggadah is not only a text of the Egyptian experience; it is also a masterful guide to the art of effectively parenting-communicating the message of our mesorah (tradition). By its very premiere place as the center-piece of a much anticipated evening dedicated to the performance of many commandments, commandments which parents are to experience together with their children, we learn that we can only successfully impart a value and a venue which we ourselves believe in and act out; children will learn not by what we say but by how we perform.

Moreover, our children-students must feel that they are the prime focus of the evening, and not mere adjuncts to an adult happening; and the message must be molded in such a way as to respond to their questions and concerns (maggid begins with the "four questions"). And each individual must be given the opportunity to ask his/her questions and to receive answers appropriate to both question and questioner (note the "four children" of the seder). Finally the atmosphere around the table must be more experiential than cerebral, punctuated by familial stories and the fun of games (hide-the-afikoman), and warmed by wine, food, and love. Such is the haggadah's formula for effective communication between parents and children - not just one evening a year, but every single day of every year.

But what of the apathetic, disinterested child? One of the four prototypical children of the seder is the "wicked child", whom the author of the haggadah designates as such because of the Biblical question ascribed to him, "What is this service (avodah) to you?" (Exodus 12:26). Why does the

haggadah assume a negative attitude on the part of this child who is merely seeking a relevant explanation for a ritual he doesn't understand? The haggadah's answer to this child also seems unduly harsh. " (What is this service to you, and not to him. And because he took himself out of the historic Jewish community, he denied the basic principle. And so you must set his teeth on edge (hak'he), and tell him, "It is because of this (ritual) that G-d did for me (so many wonders) in taking me out of Egypt" (Exodus 13:8). 'G-d did for me' and not for him! Had he been there, he would not have been redeemed!")

The seemingly abrasive response of the haggadah seems to be the very opposite of everything we've been positing! "Set his teeth on edge"! - Does this mean (G-d forbid) wrap him in the mouth? And why switch person in the middle of the dialogue? First the haggadah reads, "And you tell him" (second person), and then concludes - as if you aren't even speaking to him - "had he been there, he would not have been redeemed," (third person). Has he been closed out of the family seder?

I believe that the most fundamental message of the Passover seder - indeed, of family dynamics, of classroom management and of national policy as well - is to be inclusive and not exclusive, to make everyone feel wanted and accepted rather than merely tolerated or rejected! Indeed, it is in the context of the response to the wicked child that the haggadah teaches that the most basic principle of our faith is to include oneself - as well as everyone who can possibly be included - within the historical community of Israel, to be part of the eternal chain of Jewish being, to be a member of the family! Therefore, the problem with this child's question is not his search for relevance: that is to be applauded and properly responded to. The problem is the fact that he excluded himself from the familial - national celebration; he saw it as applying to "you" and not to "him".

The author of the haggadah tells the head of the family, when confronted by a child who excludes himself from the family ritual, to "hak'heh" his teeth; not the familiar Hebrew form *haceh*, which means to strike or hit, but rather the unusual Hebrew *hak'heh*, which means to blunt or remove the sharpness by means of the warmth of fire (Ecclesiastes 10:10; B. T. Yevamot 110b). Tell him, says the author of the haggadah, that although we are living thousands of the years after the fact, G-d took me - and him/her as my child - out of Egypt, because we are all one historic family, united by our family celebrations and traditions; tell him that the most important principle of our tradition is to feel oneself an integral part of a family which was once enslaved and is now free - and to re-live this message of the evils of slavery and the glories of freedom because if they happened to our forbears it is as if they happened to us. Since we were formed by them, we are them and they are us! And so is he/she!

And don't tell it to him matter-of-factly by rote or harshly with animus. Tell it to him with the flame and passion of fire which blunts sharp iron, with the warmth and love of a family which is claiming and welcoming its own as one who belongs - no matter what! Encourage him to take part in and feel a part of the familial - national celebration. Then, but only then, will he feel redeemed.

And why the switch in person, from second person to third person?

Perhaps this child asked his question, and left the table. He spoke and ran, leaving you no choice but to address him as a third person no longer in your presence. What do you do then? I would suggest that when we open the door for Elijah, it is not in order to let Elijah the prophet in. After all, anyone who can visit every Jewish seder more-or-less simultaneously will not be obstructed by a closed door. I believe that we open the door - in the spirit of the herald of redemption who will restore the hearts of the children to the parents and the parents to the children - in order for us to go out, to find the "wicked child" and lovingly restore him to the family seder table.

This is the greatest challenge of the seder night!

Shabbat Shalom and Hag Sameach.

You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot on the web at:

<http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm>

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EREV PESACH

14 NISAN, TUESDAY NIGHT, APR. 15 2003

Tuesday night after the appearance of the stars, (the time that the Mishna in Pesachim refers to as the "Light of the Fourteenth"), we search for chometz in all places to which we bring it during the year. According to custom, we have someone who is not participating in the search place ten pieces of chometz in random locations in rooms to which we bring chometz during the year (failure to do so does not invalidate the search, however one must be very careful to find all ten pieces). Before beginning the search we recite the Bracha Asher Kidshanu Bemitzvosav Vezivano Al Beur Chometz - on the removal of chometz (for the search is the beginning of the process of removal).

After the search, one says the declaration Kal Chamira (preferably in a language that he understands) nullifying all chometz and sourdough of which he is unaware. One should take care to place the chometz, which will be eaten in the morning until the end of the fourth hour (see below) and the crumbs from the search in a secured place. Whatever is left over from breakfast, along with the crumbs from the search, must be destroyed or removed by the end of the fifth hour. The chometz that he authorized his Rav to sell must be placed in a reserved area. The sale to the non-Jew is also considered part of the removal (beur) process.

14 NISAN, WED. MORNING, APR. 16

SHACHRIS We rise early to go to Shul. Regular weekday Shachris; we omit Mizmor Lesodeh; Shemonah Esrei; Half-Kaddish; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; (we omit Lamnazeach); Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Psalm of the Day; Mourner's Kaddish.

The first born have a custom to fast, or to redeem themselves with money for Tzedakah, or to participate in a Seudas Mitzvah such as the completion of a Tractate of Talmud.

One may eat chometz until the end of four proportionate hours (see Chanukah for definition of proportionate hour) after Amud Hashachar - seventy-two minutes before sunrise (in extenuating circumstances one may calculate the four hours from sunrise itself). One may sell chometz, give it away to a non-Jewish acquaintance, or feed it to an animal until the end of the fifth proportionate hour after dawn. We burn the chometz before the end of the fifth hour and say the formula of Kal Chamira now nullifying and making free for all, all chometz of which we are both unaware and aware. We do not make any Bracha at this time (one should also have the intention, that if, for some reason, the sale to the non-Jew is invalid, that all of that chometz, too, is nullified and rendered free for all).

[Rav Henkin noted that the Matzah, with which we fulfill our obligation at the Seder and over which we make the Bracha Al Achilas Matzah must be under the strict supervision of a devout Jew, from the time of the harvesting (in extenuating circumstances from the time of the grinding into flour) of the wheat of which it is made up. There are those who make the effort to bake Matzah on Erev Pesach, after noon, in commemoration of the Pesach sacrifice that was offered at this time in the Beis HaMikdash. However, those who do so must take great care to nullify all crumbs before they become chometz, since after the fifth hour ends, we have no ability to nullify chometz. The herb of which we can be most confident that it is indeed one of the five bitter herbs mentioned in the Mishna is (grated) horseradish (chrein). For there are doubts in the minds of certain of the Halachic authorities concerning the status of the various types of lettuce that are available to us today, if they are, indeed, in the category of "lettuce" mentioned in the Mishna and the various Halachic Codes. If one must soak the horseradish in water (so as to soften its pungency) before grating it, he may do so, since many authorities maintain that the problem of Koveish, (the soaking of a food that renders it as cooked) applies only to the leaves of vegetables and not to the stalks.]

It is forbidden to eat Matzah on Erev Pesach.

One washes, (some immerse themselves in a Mikveh) and makes all necessary preparations in honor of Shabbos and Yom Tov. We make an Eruv Tavshilin.

One must complete all of the preparations for the Seder while it is still daytime. The Romaine lettuce must be thoroughly cleansed and then, carefully inspected for bugs. The horseradish must be grated. The Seder table must be completely set and arranged. All this must be done before Yom Tov.

We light candles as usual 20 minutes before sunset. The Brachos are: Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov and Shehecheyanu.

FIRST DAY PESACH 15 NISAN, WED. NIGHT, APRIL 16

MAARIV

Borchu...; Ufros...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov (Nusach Sefard calls for the recitation of the complete Hallel with its Brachos in Shul after Shemonah Esrei); Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam. (We do not make Kiddush in Shul the first two nights of Pesach.)

THE ORDER OF THE NIGHT

After the appearance of the stars, with everything in readiness for the Seder, the head of the household dons a Kittel, and we take our places at the table; we have others pour each of the Four Cups of wine (in the manner of a wealthy man) and we begin the Kiddush of Yom Tov, with Shehecheyanu. We follow all the rituals of the Seder in the order presented in the Haggados; Kadesh; Urechatz; the dipping of the vegetable into salt water, the pouring of the Second Cup; the son asks Mah Nishtanah; the reply to the son: the "telling" of the slavery in and exodus from Egypt, etc.; the eating of one olive's size of Matzah (20-24 grams) and an olive's size of Maror; Korech - the sandwich of Maror and Matzah; the meal; the eating of the Afikomen - the final olive's

size of Matzah after the meal; the pouring of the Third Cup; Blessings after the meal; completion of Hallel recited over the Fourth Cup (all done following the detailed instructions found in the Haggada). All four cups must be full, containing at least a Reviis of (preferably red) wine (a Reviis is a little more than 3 ounces or 86.5 grams, there is a stricter opinion that maintains that a Reviis is 4 ounces or 113.40 grams; one ounce being equal to 28.35 grams). One should try to drink the entire cup, but at the very least the majority of a Reviis. The Four Cups, as well as the eating of the Matzah, Hillel's sandwich, and Afikomen, (women are not obligated to recline) must be done in a position of reclining to one's left side. Women and children are obligated to drink the Four Cups, although children can be given small cups from which to drink, relative to their age and size. (If one is unable to drink wine he must ask a Rav what to do).

During the Recitation of the Shema, before retiring for the night, only the Bracha Hamapi and Shema are said, with all of the Psalms and prayers for protection being omitted, for tonight is a Leil Shemirim – a night of special Divine Protection.

15 NISAN, THURS. MORNING, APR. 17

SHACHRIS Service for Yom Tov: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birchas Yotzer; Hameir Laaretz; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; complete Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; open Aron; we take out two Sifrei Torah; 13 Middos with Ribono Shel Olam of Yom Tov; in the first we have five Aliyahs in Parshas Bo (Exodus 12:21-51) from "Vayikra Moshe Mishcu" until "Al Zivozam"; Half-Kaddish; Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Pinchas: (Numbers 28:16-25) UvaChodesh Harishon; the Haftorah is read from Joshua 3:5-7, 5:2-15, 6:1, and 6:27; Brachos after the Haftorah of Yom Tov, (we omit Kah Keili); Ashrei; Yahalelu; etc.

MUSSAF For Yom Tov; (the Chazzan dons a Kittel); Half-Kaddish in the special melody for the Prayer for Dew; Shemonah Esrei of Mussaf for Yom Tov; we still say Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hagashem. (Those congregations whose custom is to say "Morid Hatal" throughout the summer, someone should announce "Morid Hatal" before Mussaf, and then the congregation should begin to say "Morid Hatal" during this silent Mussaf.)

THE CHAZZAN'S REPETITION Tfilas Hatal (Prayer for Dew); Kedusha; (in his repetition, the Chazzan stops saying Morid Hagashem... The congregation no longer says Morid Hagashem... by Mincha). Retzai; Vesearev; Priestly Blessing; Ribono Shel Olam and Yehi Ratzon; (see above, Priestly Blessing for the First Day of Rosh HaShanah); Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Keilakainu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom (Psalm of the Day); Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; we no longer say Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hagashem. (It is advisable to repeat 101 (or at least 90) times the phrase "Rav Lehoshia Mechalkel Chaim"; so that it becomes fluent and habitual, thereby avoiding any future doubt as to whether one failed to omit Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hagashem or not). The Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

SECOND DAY PESACH 16 NISAN, THURS. NIGHT, APR. 17, FIRST DAY OF THE OMER

We wait seventy-two minutes (under extenuating circumstances, 60 minutes will suffice) before lighting candles or before doing any preparations for the Second Day of Pesach.

MAARIV Among the reasons for which we delay the beginning of Maariv is to insure that Sefira will take place only after the appearance of the stars. Usual Maariv for Yom Tov, Borchu...; Ufros...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov. (Nusach Sefard calls for the recitation of complete Hallel with its Brachos after Shemonah Esrei, just as last night.) Kaddish Tiskabel; we begin to count the Omer (Sefiras HaOmer – tonight is the first night of the Omer); Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam (we do not make Kiddush in Shul).

(Each night, before counting the Omer, we first recite the Bracha "Asher Kidshanu Bamitzvosav Vetzivano Al Sfiras Haomer" and then we proclaim the current day of the Omer. Both the Bracha and the count itself must be done while standing. It is best to count the Omer after the appearance of the stars. If one counted before that time, it is proper for him to count again, after the appearance of the stars, without a Bracha. If one counted earlier than Plag HaMincha – one and one-quarter proportionate hours before sundown (a proportionate hour is one-twelfth of the daytime period), he must count again with a Bracha when the stars appear. If one forgot to count at night, he must count during the day without a Bracha. He may then continue to count again on all of the successive nights with a Bracha. If one failed to count an entire day, he must continue to count the following nights through Shavuot without a Bracha. In such a case one should intend to fulfill his obligation to make a Bracha by hearing the Bracha from the person making it for the congregation. (Some have the custom that every morning the Shammash announces, as a reminder, the current count of the Omer without making any Bracha.)

(On Shabbos and Yom Tov during the Sefira period, we first make Kiddush in Shul before counting the Omer. At the departure of Shabbos or Yom Tov, we count the Omer before making Havdalah.)

At home, the women light Yom Tov lights and make the Brachos Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov and Shehecheyanu.

The same procedures are followed at the Seder as last night.

16 NISAN, FRI. MORNING, APR. 18

SHACHRIS The usual service for Yom Tov: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birchas Yotzer; Hameir Laaretz; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; complete Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; open Aron; we take out two Sifrei Torah; 13 Middos with Ribono Shel Olam of Yom Tov; in the first we have five Aliyahs in Parshas Emor (Levit. 22:26-23:44) "Shor Oh kesev" until "Moadei Hashem

El Bnai Yisroel"; Half-Kaddish; Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Pinchas: (Numbers 28:16-25) UvaChodesh Harishon (the same as yesterday); the Haftorah is read from Kings II 23:1-9 and 23:21-25; Brachos after the Haftorah of Yom Tov; Kah Keili; Ashrei; Yahalelu; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF For Yom Tov: Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf; the Chazzan's Repetition; Priestly Blessing with Ribono Shel Olam and Yehi Ratzon; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Keilakainu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom (Psalm of the Day); Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

THE HOLY SHABBOS

We make all preparations for Shabbos before sunset. We light candles at their proper time 20 minutes before sunset and we make the Bracha Lehadlik Ner Shel Shabbos.

FIRST DAY CHOL HAMOED 17 NISAN, FRIDAY NIGHT, APR. 18 SECOND DAY OF THE OMER

WELCOMING THE SHABBOS

MAARIV We say Mizmor Shir Leyom Shabbos and Hashem Malach followed by Mourner's Kaddish. (We do not say Lechu Neranana and Bameh Madlikin). Borchu...; Ufros...; Vashamru...; Half-Kaddish; Yaale Veyavo in the Shemonah Esrei of Shabbos; after Shemonah Esrei we say Vayachulu and Mogen Avos followed by Kaddish Tiskabel; Kiddush of Shabbos; Sefiras HaOmer; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

17 NISAN, SHABBOS MORNING, APR. 19

SHACHRIS Usual service for Shabbos: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birchas Yozer; Hakol Yoducha; Kel Adon; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Shabbos with Yaale Veyavo the Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel. We read Shir HaShirim (The Song of Songs), followed by Mourner's Kaddish. We take out two Sifrei Torah; in the first we have seven Aliyahs in Parshas Ki Sisah (Exodus 33:12-34:26); Half-Kaddish; Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Pinchas:

(Numbers 28:19-25) "Vehikravtem" the Haftorah is from Ezekiel 37:1-14; Brachos after the Haftorah of Shabbos, concluding with only Mekadesh Hashabbos; Yakum Purkan (no Kah Keili); Ashrei; Yahalelu we return the Sifrei Torah to the Aron HaKodesh.

MUSSAF Half-Kaddish; in Shemonah Esrei of Mussaf for Yom Tov and Shabbos; the additional offerings are Vayom Hashabbos and "Vehikravtem"; Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Keilakainu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom (Psalm of the Day); Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; Veani Sfilasi; Torah Reading: three Aliyahs in Parshas Acharei; (no Half-Kaddish after Mincha Torah Reading); we lift up, rewind the Sefer Torah and return it to the Aron HaKodesh (with Yahalelu); Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Shabbos with Yaale Veyavo; the Chazzan's Repetition; (we omit Tzidkascha Tzedek); Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

SECOND DAY CHOL HAMOED 18 NISAN, MOTZIE SHABBOS, APR. 19, THIRD DAY OF THE OMER

(We wait 72 minutes (under extenuating circumstances, 60 minutes will suffice) after sunset before making Havdalah or doing any of the activities that are prohibited on Shabbos.)

DEPARTURE OF SHABBOS

MAARIV The usual weekday Shemonah Esrei with Ata Chonantanu. We no longer say Vesain Tal Usmator we now say "Vesain Brachah"; Yaale Veyavo Kaddish Tiskabel; (we do not say Vihi Noam and Va-ata Kadosh); Sephiras HaOmer; Vayiten Lecha; Havdalah Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

Havdalah at home as in Shul.

18 NISAN, SUN. MORNING, APR. 23

SHACHRIS

Those who wear Tefillin on Chol HaMoed do not make the Brachos over them (some have the custom to make the Brachos in an inaudible voice). The Tefillin are removed by the congregants before Hallel and by the Chazzan after Hallel (so as not to delay the service). (There is a custom on the First Day of Chol HaMoed Pesach for those who are wearing Tefillin to keep them on until after the Torah Reading, because today's Torah Reading discusses the Mitzvah of Tefillin.

Customary weekday morning service; (we omit Mizmor Lesodeh throughout Chol HaMoed Pesach); Shemonah Esrei with Yaale Veyavo; Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; we take out two Sifrei Torah; in the first we have three Aliyahs from Parshas Bo (Exodus 13:1-16); the fourth Aliyah is read in the second Sefer Torah in Parshas Pinchas (Numbers 28:19-25) from "Vehikravtem" until "Kol M'leches Avodah Lo Saasu"; Half-Kaddish is recited after the second Sefer Torah is read; Yahalelu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF For Yom Tov: Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf (the Additional Offering mentioned is "Vehikravtem"); the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Psalm of the Day; Mourner's Kaddish.

MINCHA For weekdays; Ashrei; Half-Kaddish; weekday Shemonah Esrei with Yaale Veyavo; the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

THIRD DAY CHOL HAMOED 19 NISAN, MON. MORNING, APR. 21 FOURTH DAY OF THE OMER

SHACHRIS For weekday mornings: weekday Shemonah Esrei with Yaale Veyavo; the Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; we take out two Sifrei Torah; in the first we have three Aliyahs from Parshas Mishpatim (Exodus 22:24-23:19); the fourth Aliyah is read in the second Sefer Torah in Parshas Pinchas (Numbers 28:19-25) from "Vehikravtem" until "Kol M'leches Avodah Lo Saasu"; Half-Kaddish is made after the second Sefer Torah is read; Yahalelu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish. MUSSAF The same as yesterday.

FOURTH DAY CHOL HAMOED 20 NISAN, TUES. MORNING, APR. 22 FIFTH DAY OF THE OMER

SHACHRIS For weekday mornings: weekday Shemonah Esrei with Yaale Veyavo; the Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; we take out two Sifrei Torah; in the first we have three Aliyahs from Parshas B'haalosecha (Numbers 9:1-14) regarding Pesach Sheini; the fourth Aliyah is read in the second Sefer Torah in Parshas Pinchas (Numbers 28:19-25) from "Vehikravtem" until "Kal Meches Avodah Lo Saasu"; Half-Kaddish is made after the second Sefer Torah is read; Yahalelu; Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF The same as every weekday Chol Hamoed Pesach Mussaf. All necessary preparations are made for Yom Tov.

The Yom Tov lights are kindled with the Bracha Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov (No Shehecheyanu is made on the last two days of Pesach.)

SEVENTH DAY PESACH 21 NISAN, TUES. NIGHT, APR. 22 SIXTH DAY OF THE OMER

MAARIV Borchu...; Ufros...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; Kaddish Tiskabel; Yom Tov Kiddush (No Shehecheyanu is made on the last two days of Pesach.); Counting of the Omer (6th Day of the Omer); Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam. Kiddush at home as above.

21 NISAN, WED. MORNING, APR. 23

SHACHRIS As is customary for Yom Tov: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birchah Yozer; Hameir Learetz; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel; open Aron; we take out two Sifrei Torah; 13 Middos (with Ribono Shel Olam of Yom Tov); in the first we have five Aliyahs in Parshas Beshalach (Exodus 13:17-15:26); Half-Kaddish; Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Pinchas (Numbers 28:19-25) "Vehikravtem". The Haftarah is read from Samuel II 22:1-51; usual Brachos for Yom Tov are recited after the Haftarah; Kah Keili; Ashrei; Yahalelu; Half-Kaddish.

MUSSAF For Yom Tov: Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov Mussaf (the Additional Offering mentioned is "Vehikravtem"); the Chazzan's Repetition; Priestly Blessing with Ribono Shel Olam and Yehi Ratzon; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Keilakainu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Shir Shel Yom (Psalm of the Day); Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish. We wait seventy-two minutes (under extenuating circumstances, 60 minutes will suffice) before lighting candles or before doing any preparations for the Last Day of Pesach. The Bracha over the candles is: Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov (no Shehecheyanu).

LAST DAY PESACH SEVENTH DAY OF THE OMER 22 NISAN, WED. NIGHT, APR. 23

MAARIV Borchu...; Ufros...; Vayedaber...; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; Kaddish Tiskabel; Kiddush for Yom Tov (no Shehecheyanu); Counting of the Omer (7th Day of the Omer); Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam. Kiddush at home as above.

22 NISAN, THURS. MORNING, APR. 24

SHACHRIS The customary service for Yom Tov: Psukei Dazimra; Nishmas; Birchah Yozer; Hameir Learetz; Ahava Rabba; Shema; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Hallel; Kaddish Tiskabel. Open Aron; We take out two Sifrei Torah. 13 Middos with Ribono Shel Olam for Yom Tov. In the first Sefer Torah we have five Aliyahs in Parshas R'ei (Deut. 15:19-16:17) from Kol Habchor until the end of the Parsha; Half-Kaddish; Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Pinchas: (Numbers 28:19-25) "Vehikravtem"; the Haftarah is read from Isaiah 10:32-12:6; Brachos after the Haftarah, of Yom Tov.

YIZKOR We make pledges to Tzedakah as a means of elevating the souls of the departed (particularly beneficial as a source of merit for both the living and the dead are donations to Ezras Torah, which aids thousands of needy families of Bnei Torah in Israel and throughout the world). Av Harachmim (no Kah Keili) Ashrei; Yahalelu; we return the Sifrei Torah to the Aron HaKodesh.

MUSSAF Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Mussaf for Yom Tov; Chazzan's Repetition; Priestly Blessing with Ribono Shel Olam and Yehi Ratzon; Kaddish Tiskabel; Ein Keilakainu; Aleinu; Anim Zmiros; Psalm of the Day; Mourner's Kaddish; Adon Olam.

MINCHA Ashrei; Uva Letzion; Half-Kaddish; Shemonah Esrei of Yom Tov; the Chazzan's Repetition; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

ISRU CHAG

23 NISAN, THURS. NIGHT, APR. 24, EIGHTH DAY OF THE OMER

AT THE CONCLUSION OF YOM TOV (It is proper to wait 72 minutes after sunset before making Havdalah or doing activities prohibited on Yom Tov.)

MAARIV As is customary for the departure of Yom Tov: Ata Chonantanu in Shemonah Esrei; Kaddish Tiskabel; Counting of the Omer (8th Day of the Omer); Havdalah (with the Brachos Borai Pri Hagafen and Hamavdil – no candle or spices) Aleinu; Mourner's Kaddish.

Havdalah at home as above.

23 NISAN, FRI. MORNING, APR. 25

SHACHRIS As is customary for a weekday morning: Shemonah Esrei; Chazzan's Repetition; Half-Kaddish (We do not say Tachanun until after Rosh Chodesh Iyar); Ashrei; Lamnazeach; Uva Letzion; Kaddish Tiskabel; Aleinu; Psalm of the Day; Mourner's Kaddish.

(We do not make weddings or take haircuts during the period of Sefiras HaOmer on all days on which Tachanun is recited. Those who are very meticulous also refrain from the above on Rosh Chodesh Iyar and on the first two days of Sivan (with the exception of Lag B'Omer, when haircuts and weddings are permitted). There are

those who, besides on the above-mentioned days, also refrain from making weddings and taking haircuts before Rosh Chodesh Iyar.)