

BS"D



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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON PESACH - 5766

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Chavrusa

January 1, 2003

PESACH MITZVOT

**A PESACH SHIUR BY HARAV JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK ZT'L**

**Transcribed and summarized by Rabbi Nisson E. Shulman**

(This is the beginning of a much longer shiur that proceeded after these thoughts to elucidate the structure of the Haggadah of Pesach)

On Erev Pesach we are required to perform three Torah commandments and one rabbinic commandment. The three Torah commands are: bringing the korban Pesach; eating matzah; and sippur yetzias Mitzrayim. While the Holy Temple stood, it is possible that moror was a separate, fourth Torah mitzvah. So says Tosfot. Rambam, however, holds that moror was never a separate mitzvah but was always dependent on the korban Pesach. In his Sefer HaMitzvot, he explains: Do not be concerned that I am not counting moror as a separate mitzvah. It does not exist by itself. The mitzvah is to eat the korban Pesach. But there is a law that Pesach should be eaten al matzos umerorim. Consequently, when there is no korban Pesach there is no mitzvah of moror. Thus, if someone could not bring the korban Pesach, whether he was tame, or bederech rechokah, he was also exempt from moror. Tosfot disagrees, and holds that moror, during the time when the korban Pesach was brought, was a separate mitzvah. At that time, if a person were unable to bring a korban Pesach, he would still be required to eat moror. Veazar lo yochal bo - bo einu ochel, aval ochel bematzah umoror. Thus, an arel who was disqualified from eating the korban Pesach would still have to eat moror as well as matzah. The reason moror today is only a rabbinic commandment is because of a separate halakhah that when the

Holy Temple was destroyed, the Torah commandment to eat moror would disappear. Today, the Torah commandments of korban Pesach as well as moror have fallen away. So moror, even according to Tosfot, remains today only a rabbinic commandment. The issue is really the nature of the moror commandment: is it the same kiyum as the korban Pesach, or is there a separate kiyum that is dependent upon the time of the korban Pesach.

Nowadays, since moror according to everyone is only a rabbinic commandment, there remain two Torah mitzvot on the seder night; matzah and sippur yetzias Mitzrayim. For matzah really has two kiyumim; the first, like moror, is dependent upon the korban Pesach, Al matzos umerorim yochluhu. The second is a Torah mitzvah by itself, Baerev tochlu matzot. This latter mitzvah applies nowadays as well.

Let us examine the nature of the mitzvah of sippur yetzias Mitzrayim. Every day we are required to perform the mitzvah of zechiras yetzias Mitzrayim, to remember the deliverance from Egypt. What does sippur yetzias Mitzrayim add? There are several differences between the two mitzvot. Zechirah is fulfilled by a mere mention of the exodus. Sippur must be in detail and at length. Zechirah is fulfilled if a person merely mentions yetzias Mitzrayim to himself. Sippur must be to another, as the Torah states, Vehigadeta lebincha. A third difference is that Zechirah requires no additional performance. Sippur requires praise and thanksgiving, shevach vehodaah. That is why we recite Hallel as part of the Seder, Lefichach ananchnu hayavim lehodot....

How must the mitzvah of sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim be performed?

The principal is stated in the Gemarah, Matchil bignus umesayem bishevach. We must begin with shame and finish with praise. Shmuel holds the shame is the servitude, Avadim hayinu, and the praise is that G-d took us out of Egypt. Rav holds the shame is that our forefathers were idolators, Mitchila ovdey avoda zarah hayu avotenu, and the praise is that now we are in G-d's service, Veachshav kervanu hamakom laavodato.... Apparently Rav held that idolatry is tantamount to spiritual slavery.

Rambam accepted both opinions, holding there was no disagreement between them. One statement compliments the other; we must begin with physical and spiritual shame and finish with praise for freedom as well as service to G-d.

The phrase, Beginning with shame and finishing with praise is, therefore, a statement of the theme. The details must follow. Vedoresh meArami oved avi ad sof kol haparsha; He expounds the entire portion (Devarim 26:5) from Arami oved avi till the end.

When you look carefully at that portion, it appears to mirror Shmuel's opinion of physical shame and freedom, and altogether overlooks Rav's opinion of spiritual transformation. If we examine the portion more closely, however, we see Rav's opinion reflected in the phrase ubemora gadol - zu giluy shechina, so that the revelation on Mount Sinai is indeed mentioned.

It is remarkable that, when the sages wanted to detail the story of the Exodus, they chose a passage in Devarim which deals with bringing bikkurim, and overlooked the whole story told in the book of Shemot. The citations from Shemot are merely to elucidate the declaration found in Ki Tavo. Why?

Apparently the fundamental theme of the mitzvah is not merely to recount what once took place in the Exodus. The requirement is that we should relive the Exodus in such a way that in each generation every Jew should feel that he himself was taken out of Egypt; Bechal dor vadar hayav adam liros es atzmo keilu hu yatza miMitzrayim.

If we were to attempt to fulfill our obligation of sippur yetzias Mitzrayim by citing only the passages from the book of Shemot, we would actually be telling what happened to our forefathers many generations ago. The sages therefore selected the portion from Ki Tavo which is a declaration made by a Jew who was living at peace in the Land of Israel, bringing bikkurim, many generations after the exodus. This Jew is dwelling under his own fig and date tree, declaring his thanks for the land You gave me. This Jew was never in Egypt, and yet he is required to feel as if he himself was redeemed from that land. He himself must feel the Geulah. That is precisely the

feeling that we ourselves must experience. That is why the Hagaddah is not satisfied with the bikkurim portion alone, but illustrates each phrase with the events from the book of Shemot, transporting the Jew back in time as if he actually relived those events.

Furthermore, our sages wanted us to tell the story of the Exodus, not only with the written Torah, but also with the Torah shebeal pe. The citations in the Hagaddah are therefore quotations from the Sifri, expounding the written account together with the oral tradition.

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From: Young Israel Divrei Torah Sent: April 02, 2001 Subject: Rabbi Hochberg Parshat Tzav Shabbat HaGadol Young Israel Divrei Torah <http://www.youngisrael.org>

**RABBI SHLOMO HOCHBERG**

Young Israel of Jamaica Estates, NY

14 Nisan 5761 April 7, 2001

In memory of my beloved father Rabbi Dr. Hillel Hochberg a"h

G-d is known by many distinct names HaShem, Elokim, Shakai, and more. But two words conspicuously used in the Hagada to denote G d, are not names, but descriptors, specifically, "HaKadosh the Holy One" and "HaMakom the Omnipresent One." HaKadosh and HaMakom are terms which were selected by the Baal Hagada because they portray specific ideas about HaShem.

Throughout the Hagada, HaShem is repeatedly referred to as "HaKadosh Baruch Hu" as the Holy One, blessed is He.

But in two places, the Hagada refers to HaShem as HaMakom; first, when the Hagada introduces the "Four Sons" "Baruch HaMakom, Baruch Hu" and once again, when the Hagada contrasts our ancestors' ancient idolatrous practices (Terach, et al) with our later ascent to serving and being drawn closer to HaShem "v'achshav kervanu HaMakom la'avodato."

These two attributes, Kadosh and Makom together comprise the central motif of the prayer of "Kedusha", which we recite daily as an essential component of our tfila b'tzibur. "Kedusha" consists primarily of the response by the congregation of Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh, HaShem Tz'vakot m'lo chol ha'aretz kevodo," and "Baruch kevod HaShem mimkomo," the first expressed in the prophecy of Yeshayahu, and the second in the prophecy of Yechezkel. In each case, the Navi is privileged to witness a special vision of angels uttering HaShem's praises. But the expressions of the malachim in the two visions are quite distinct. Yeshayahu sees the angels focus their attention upon HaShem as holy "Kadosh" and Yechezkel sees them refer to Him in His place from His "Makom."

The Gemara in Masechet Chagiga 13b notes the difference between the prophecies of Yeshayahu and Yechezkel. Whereas Yeshayahu could be compared to a city dweller who constantly sees the king, and thus is accustomed to him, Yechezkel is compared to a villager who rarely, if ever, sees the king, and is thus more expressive when he finally is privileged to meet him. HaRav Joseph B. Soloveitchik, k"mz, explained that Yeshayahu prophesied at a time when the Jewish people inhabited the land of Israel, and HaShem's Kedusha was apparent in the Beit HaMikdash, with the Kohanim b'avodatam u' Levi'im b'duchanan the Kohanim fully performing the service in the Beit HaMikdash with the assistance of the Levi'im, and with the full complement of open miracles as constant reminders of the special relationship between HaShem and Bnei Yisrael.

Thus, the Hagada refers to "HaKadosh Baruch Hu" when describing HaShem's mighty hand and awesome power in redeeming us from Egypt, as HaShem revealed Himself to us clearly and totally, and we could feel His Divine Presence everywhere (melo chol ha'aretz kevodo).

In contrast, Yechezkel prophesied in the throes of the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, when the glory of HaShem and His blessing were hidden; Bnei Yisrael felt the distance and the barriers which separated us from His Makom, behind the hester Panim the hiding of His Face and His Kedusha.

The term HaMakom thus indicates times of difficulty and separation. The contextual use of this term by the Baal Hagada instructs us as to how to respond constructively to these times. On the one hand, HaMakom as it relates to our transformation from idolaters to Ovdei HaShem, reminds us that even if we are in the depths of despair physically and spiritually, HaShem's hand remains outstretched to us from His Place, awaiting, anticipating, encouraging, and facilitating our return to Him.

At the same time, HaMakom introduces the section of the Hagada which instructs us as to the process and technique of Torah Shebaal Peh, based upon our participation in the ongoing Mesora of ChaZaL, as exemplified by the Tannaic Rabbis studying in Bnei Brak, exchanging their views as their students listened, learned, and absorbed, until the break of dawn. The Hagada invites all who are willing, to come and join, to become integrated links in the eternal chain of the Mesorat HaTorah.

The Rav defined the four part passage, "Baruch HaMakom, Baruch Hu. Baruch shenatan Torah l'amo Yisrael, Baruch Hu" as a form of Birchat HaTorah which introduces the learning of the Torah on Pesach night, as the quintessential search for the fulfillment of our Jewish Destiny.

This Torah search is not limited to the formal, intellectual study of Torah. It is at once intellectual and experiential, emotional and spiritual. Jewish Destiny requires that we participate in the search for HaShem, as HaMakom everywhere that He can be found in our search for Torah knowledge in our daily lives and in ourselves, if we but let Him in.

As we do so, HaShem is with us, in our Makom, transforming our relationship so that it ultimately will be restored to one in which His Kedusha will permeate the world, and each of us, again.

At the Seder, indeed, we are invited to participate and facilitate this transformation as we mature from the slaves that we were both physically ("Avadim hayinu") and spiritually ("Mitchila ovdei avoda zara?") to the ultimate "Nishmat kol chai t?varech?HaShem Elokeinu" when every living creature will recognize and bless HaShem as they see His Kedusha permeate and nourish the world.

This dvar Torah is based on a shiur of Moreinu V'Rabbeinu HaRav HaGaon Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik To subscribe, write to yitorah [subscribe@listbot.com](mailto:subscribe@listbot.com)

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From: Aish.com [<mailto:newsletterserver@aish.com>] Sent: Sunday, April 09, 2006 Subject: New @ Aish.com - April 9, 2006 - Special Passover Edition

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**Insights into the Haggadah by Aish.com Staff**

A selection of great Haggadah insights you can use at your Seder.

### **1. SEDER PLATE -- EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS by Rabbi Shraga Simmons**

**KARPAS** Karpas is a vegetable such as celery, parsley, or boiled potato. Passover is the spring festival, when we celebrate the birth of our nation. These vegetables are a symbol of rebirth and rejuvenation.

**MARROR & CHAZERET** These are the bitter herbs, which symbolize the lot of the Hebrew slaves whose lives were embittered by the hard labor. Many people use horseradish for Marror and Romaine lettuce for Chazeret. **CHAROSET** Charoset reminds us of the hard labor the Jews had to perform by making bricks from mortar. Charoset is a pasty mixture of nuts, dates, apples, wine and cinnamon.

**ZERO'AH** During the times of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Korbon Pesach (Pascal Lamb) was brought to the Temple on the eve of Passover. It was roasted, and was the last thing eaten at the Seder meal. To commemorate this offering, we use a roasted meat bone with a little meat remaining.

BEITZAH A second offering, called the "Chagigah," was brought to the Temple and eaten as the main course of the Seder meal. Today, instead of a second piece of meat, we use a roasted egg -- which is traditionally a symbol of mourning -- to remind us of the destruction of the Temple. The Talmud points out that every year, the first day of Passover falls out on the same day of the week as Tisha B'Av, the day of mourning for the destruction of the Temple.

## 2. THE HUNGRY AND NEEDY by Rabbi Tom Meyer

All who are hungry -- come and eat. All who are needy -- come and join the Passover celebration.

It's hard to believe that as you're reciting this on Passover night, any hungry, homeless people will be hanging around outside your door. So what's the point? The message is that we cannot have a relationship with G-d unless we care about other people -- both their physical and psychological needs. Judaism absolutely rejects self-absorbed spirituality.

The Haggadah says: "All who are hungry... All who are needy..." The first one refers to physical hunger -- if you're hungry, come have a bite. The second is psychological -- if you're lonely or depressed, come join us.

The purpose of the Seder is to bring us closer to G-d. Closeness in the physical world is measured by distance. Closeness in the spiritual realm is measured by similarity. We come closer to G-d by becoming more like Him. Since G-d provides food for all creatures and tends to all their needs, at the very beginning of the recitation of the Haggadah we issue an invitation to the poor and needy. Thus we define ourselves as givers, whether or not any poor people rush in to accept our invitation. And don't forget: Next year invite needy guests before Passover.

## 3. THE FOUR QUESTIONS by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

The Seder is centered on asking questions. The youngest child asks the Four Questions; we wash our hands before eating the karpas because it is an unusual activity which prompts the asking of questions; the Four Sons are identified by the type of questions they ask.

Why are questions so important?

The Maharal of Prague (16th century mystic) explains that people generally feel satisfied with their view of life. Thus they are complacent when it comes to assimilating new ideas and growing from them. A question is an admission of some lack. This creates an inner vacuum that now needs to be filled.

At the Seder, we ask questions in order to open ourselves to the depth of the Exodus experience.

Got a good question? Ask it at the Seder!

## 4. THE FOUR SONS by Sara Yoheved Rigler

The Wise Son asks, "What are these statutes?" In the Torah, statutes (chukim) are laws that don't have any apparent rational reason. We do them because G-d asked us to, just like you might run all over town searching for purple roses because your beloved asked you to.

The Seder is a service of love and connection. It connects us to G-d, to the other people at the table, and to the entire Jewish People. The Wise Son doesn't get lost in intellectual sophistry. He asks, "What do I need to do in order to attain this love and connection?"

The Evil Son scoffs: "What's all this Passover stuff to you?" The opposite of love and connection is exclusion and distance. The Evil Son excludes himself from the Jewish People. He distances himself through ridicule, by mocking G-d, the Torah, and the lofty process of the Seder itself.

The Haggadah tells us to respond to him by "breaking his teeth." Teeth break down large pieces of food into smaller, digestible pieces. The Evil Son's propensity to belittle what is great and beyond his ability to digest must be checked.

The third son is the Simple Son. He asks, "What is this?" "Simple" here does not mean stupid. The Simple Son is looking for G-d in a straightforward and direct way. According to Hasidic interpretation, "What"

in his question refers to G-d. In whatever situation he finds himself, the Simple Son looks for G-d's presence.

The Son Who Does Not Know How to Ask is the fourth. His apathy prevents him from asking any questions, thus sabotaging any possibility of learning and growth. In truth, every human being has a question. On Seder night, find your question within and ask it!

## 5. SLAVERY OF THE AIMLESS by Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky

And they oppressed us. "As it says: "They placed taskmasters over them, in order to afflict them with burdens. And for Pharaoh they built store cities named Pitom and Ramses." (Exodus 1:11)

The Torah defines the redemption from Egypt as G-d saving us from slavery. But many other kinds of suffering characterized the Egyptian exile: torture, infanticide, enforced separation of husbands and wives, etc. In the very first of the Ten Commandments, G-d gives us His calling card: "I am the Lord your G-d, who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Exodus 20:2) Why the emphasis on slavery rather than the other afflictions? Hebrew has two words to describe work: avodah and malacha. Maimonides explains that malacha has a finished product as its climax. Avodah describes labor without any real purpose or accomplishment. The term for a slave-eved--is a derivative of this word. A slave works for no goal other than to satisfy his master.

The Talmud teaches that the location of the store cities which the Jewish slaves built was on marsh land. No sooner did they build a layer than it sank into the marsh. The greatest anguish of their labor was that it was purposeless. When G-d saved us from purposeless work, He opened our eyes to the horror of a life that has no sublime purpose. Therefore, G-d at Sinai introduced His commandments to us with the ultimate calling card: "I am the G-d who removed you from the ordeal of life without purpose or meaning. Now I will show you what life is for: to come close to Me by rectifying yourself through the commandments which follow."

## 6. MIRACLES TODAY by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

"And G-d brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with awe and with signs and wonders." (Deut. 26:8)

People often ask: "Why are there no miracles today? If I saw the signs and wonders of the Exodus, I too would believe." The Talmud tells the story of a father who puts his son on his shoulders, and carries him day and night wherever he goes. At mealtime the father reaches up his hands and feeds the boy. Quietly and consistently, the father cares for his son's every need. Then one day as they pass another traveler, the boy shouts out: "Hey, have you seen my father?" We are all prone to take G-d's providence for granted. In truth, miracles abound in our lives. The only difference between the miracles of the Exodus and the miracles of our immune system is frequency. A one-time miracle elicits our awe. A repeated or constant miracle elicits a yawn. Sadly, the more constant G-d's miracles, the more apt we are to ignore them. In the words of Oscar Wilde: "Niagara Falls is nice. But the real excitement would be to see it flowing backwards."

Do we fully appreciate the miracle of trees breathing carbon dioxide so that we can breathe oxygen? Do we recognize the miracle of a one-celled zygote becoming a human being with brain, knees, eyelashes, and taste buds? Passover teaches us to love G-d for the wonder of Niagara Falls flowing forward.

## 7. ASSIMILATION THEN AND NOW by Rabbi Stephen Baars

In each and every generation, a person is obligated to regard himself as though he actually left Egypt.

The Talmud records that in actuality only 20% of the Jewish people left Egypt. The other 80% did not identify strongly enough with the Jewish people's role and goal. They were too assimilated and immersed in Egyptian society. So they stayed behind. The Haggadah is focusing us on the fact that our ancestors were among the group that had the courage and foresight to leave. It is always difficult to make changes. We may feel that we don't have

the drive, stamina, and determination to make bold decisions. The Haggadah reminds us that we are part of the group that left. It is in our blood.

## 8. THE ART OF SAVORING by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf

After the Afikomen, nothing else should be eaten for the remainder of the night -- except for the drinking of water, tea, and the remaining two cups of wine.

Would Disney World be worth the trip if you had to come home with no video or photos? In our rush to preserve every experience on some form of tape or film, we are in fact sacrificing a great deal. As we assume our position behind the camera and begin to stalk the big game of "Kodak moments," are we not also removing ourselves from the picture, becoming detached observers instead of active participants?

The law of the Afikomen -- once it's over, it's over -- is a hint to the lost spiritual art of savoring, a sensitization technique which allows us to become completely immersed in an experience.

It means fine-tuning our senses to consciously engage every day and every moment; to celebrate life and to imbibe the totality of every experiential step we take.

Upon concluding the Seder, Jewish law bids us not to taste anything after the Afikomen. This is a night for savoring: ideas, feelings, and images. Parents teaching, children learning, and all of us growing together. Allow it to become a part of you. Savor this night of connection and freedom. Only then can you leave. Not with souvenirs, not with photos, but as a different person. A different Jew. And this you will never forget.

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EMES LIYAAKOV

Weekly Insights from MOREINU

**HORAV YAAKOV KAMENETZKY** zt'l

[Translated by Ephraim Weiss <[Easykgh@aol.com](mailto:Easykgh@aol.com)>]

"You should know that your children will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will be enslaved and afflicted for four hundred years."

At the bris bein ha'besarim, Avraham was told that Bnei Yisroel would someday suffer for four hundred years in galus. However, we know that in reality Bnei Yisroel only spent two hundred and ten years in Mitzrayim. The miforshim explain that Hashem did a chesed for Klal Yisroel, in calculating the four hundred years from the birth of Yitzchak, rather than from Yaakov's descent to Mitzrayim.

HaRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt'l explains that originally, Hashem intended that Bnei Yisroel spend the full four hundred years of galus as slaves in Mitzrayim. However, Hashem realized that Bnei Yisroel were Bnei Yisroel to spend the full time in Mitzrayim, they would descend to the fiftieth, and lowest level of tumah, from which they would never be able to rise. As such, Hashem recalculated the four hundred years from the birth of Yitzchak, and took us out after only two hundred and ten years in Mitzrayim, four hundred years after the birth of Yitzchak.

Rav Yaakov uses this concept to explain a difficult issue with regard to Moshe's appeal to Pharaoh to release Bnei Yisroel. Moshe first went to Pharaoh, and asked him to let Bnei Yisroel leave for three days to serve Hashem, after which time they would return to Mitzrayim. Clearly, this was a deception on Moshe's part, as Bnei Yisroel had no intention of returning to Mitzrayim at all. Hashem's seal is truth, and Moshe certainly would not have deviated from what Hashem told him. What then was meant by this whole charade?

Rav Yaakov explains that at first, Hashem only intended for Bnei Yisroel to leave Mitzrayim for three days, to serve Hashem. This was intended to serve as a period of spiritual regeneration for Bnei Yisroel, so that they

could return to Mitzrayim, and withstand the next one hundred and ninety years of galus. However, when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let Bnei Yisroel leave even for a few days, Hashem decided that the time had come to show Pharaoh the strength of Hashem, and as such, Hashem recalculated the length of the galus. The Torah teaches us that after Moshe came to Pharaoh, rather than letting Bnei Yisroel go, Pharaoh instead increased the amount of work that Bnei Yisroel were expected to do. In this way, the suffering of the next one hundred and ninety years was compacted into a six month span, so that the geulah could come at once.

This concept can also be used to explain a pasuk found in the beginning of parshas Beshalach. Upon realizing that they are now minus their slaves, the Mitzrim seem to berate themselves for letting Bnei Yisroel leave, saying, "What have we done, for we have released Bnei Yisroel from our servitude." What did the Mitzrim mean by this? They had had no choice but to let Bnei Yisroel go, as they had suffered ten plagues, one more devastating than the next, as a result of their refusal to let Bnei Yisroel go. How could they have chastised themselves for letting Bnei Yisroel leave? What else could they have done?

Rav Yaakov explains that at this point the Mitzrim realized that they should not have been forced to let Bnei Yisroel leave for close to another two centuries. Had they given in to Moshe's first request, Bnei Yisroel would have returned after only three days. However, due to their obstinacy, Bnei Yisroel were now gone for good. Realizing their foolishness, the Mitzrim berated themselves, as it was due to their mistakes that Bnei Yisroel were now gone.

Chazal teach us that "B'Nissan nigalu u'bNissan asidim l'hegal," "We were redeemed from Mitzrayim in Nissan, and we will be redeemed from our galus in the month of Nissan." May we be zocheh that this Nissan represent the month of our final geulah, with the coming of Moshiach, b'mihayra b'yameinu, amen.

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From: [cshulman@gmail.com](mailto:cshulman@gmail.com)

DVAR TORAH ON THE HAGGADAH

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 Devarim (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 (Midrash) in Devarim, 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 Midrash Sifri in Devarim, rather than directly from the verses in Shmos [See shiur from Avi Mori shlit"a at the beginning of the parsha sheet]. It would seem, however, that this does not entirely answer the question, 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, Vihitzalti, 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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An Overview - Part VI: G-d's People from **Haggadah** - Expanded Edition Passover Haggadah with translation and a new commentary based on Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic sources

By **Rabbi Joseph Elias**

An Overview - Part VI: G-d's People

"... I am HASHEM and I will take you out from beneath the burdens of Egypt... and I will take you for Me for a people, and I will be G-d for you (Shemos 6:6-7)"

Our attention is drawn to yet another unique feature of the Seder: the duty to narrate about the Exodus must follow the form of question and answer, wherever feasible between child and father ("If your son will ask you tomorrow, 'What is this?', you shall say to him ..."[Shemos 13:14]). We can well understand the requirement that questions be formulated: after all, only he who is truly bothered by a question will be interested in the answer. But why within the family, rather than in a public forum? And why between father and son?

Of course, celebrating the Seder in the family circle is itself a reliving of the Egyptian experience when the Jews gathered in their homes, around "a lamb for each family, a lamb for each house"(Shemos 12:3). In this very mode of celebration lay a demonstration of their new freedom. As slaves they had been unable to live a normal family life - what a change, then, when they were able to congregate in their homes whilst, outside, judgment was done on the Egyptians! Even more, the father-son relationship does not exist in slavery - a slave's children legally are not his own. Thus, families

sitting together, and fathers passing on to sons the heritage of their people, is in itself a proud demonstration of freedom (Chochmah Im Nachalah).

But there is more than this. That the Jew is charged to tell his children about the redemption is because the Exodus has a meaning for the Jewish people, beyond its message to the rest of the world. (That may be why a non-Jew is forbidden to partake of the Pesach sacrifice.) The deliverance from Egypt marks our miraculous emergence as a nation, linked by a special bond to G-d, charged by Him with special duties, and blessed by Him with indestructibility. Just as G-d created a fully formed world at the beginning of days, so He created His people: not through natural evolutionary processes in the normal manner of nations, but in defiance of all rules of nature and principles of history (Maharal).

"One nation was to be introduced into the ranks of the nations which, in its life and fate, should demonstrate that G-d is the entire foundation of life: that the fulfillment of His will is the only goal of life; and that the expression of His will, the Torah, is the only unifying bond of this nation. Therefore a nation was needed that lacked everything upon which the rest of mankind built its greatness ..." Everything was taken from Jacob's family that makes a people into a people or even man into a man - land, dignity, freedom - in order to receive it all through the Exodus newly from His hands Himself (Rabbi S.R. Hirsch).

Pesach marks our national birthday. This helps explain why the Jewish people is instructed to count its months and begin its festival cycle from Nissan. It also explains the difference between the observance of Pesach and of later crucial and miraculous happenings in Jewish history. On no other occasion are we specifically commanded to recount miracles. No other day in our calendar, no other law in the Torah, brings with it provisions as stringent as Pesach, when forbidden items, such as Chametz, may not even remain in our possession. Pesach represents the actual birth and creation of our people; therefore, according to Rambam, we derive the laws of conversion to Judaism from the events of Pesach, for it was then that we became Jews. Such initiation requires that the meaning of events must be made absolutely clear, and that not even the slightest impurity (represented by Chametz) can be tolerated.

With the Exodus marking the creation of the Jewish people and Pesach its birthday, the Seder night is the national night of Judaism, an affirmation of national continuity - which has its natural roots in the family. Hence the gathering of each family in Egypt; hence the fact that Jews were always counted in family groups, and hence, too, the gathering by families on Seder night when, every year anew, a father has to speak to his children, to make them fully aware of their beginnings and to add them as new links to the unbroken chain of our national tradition. The child is made to experience the happenings of Pesach in stark immediacy - for in retelling what has been passed down through the generations, the father is no purveyor of a legend, but the witness to historical truth and national experience. "He does not speak to his children as an individual, weak and mortal, but as a representative of the nation, demanding from them the loyalty to be expected ..." (Isaac Breuer).

He is called upon to make them sense the special nature of the Jewish people as a Divine creation and as a nation with characteristics peculiarly its own. Like all that G-d has directly created, we enjoy indestructibility. From the moment we came into existence we have defied the forces of "normalcy," represented by the nations of the world; thereby we provoke their hostility - but we forever outlast them: "In every generation a man must see himself as if he himself had gone out of Egypt" and therefore "in every generation they rise against us to destroy us -but G-d saves us from their hand" (Rabbi Avrohom Wolf).

An Overview - Part VII: Our Obligation

Thus said Hakadosh Baruch Hu: You have accepted My kingship - I am Hashem, your G-d - now accept My ordinances - you shall not have other gods. . . (Ramban, Devarim 22:2, from Mechilta)

As G-d's people we carry a special obligation. It is not enough that we acknowledge G-d as the all-powerful Master of the universe who liberated

our people from Egyptian bondage. We owe a debt of gratitude that can only be discharged by acting on our knowledge. Beneficiaries of G-d's blessings, we must dedicate ourselves to His service to carry out the mission for the sake of which we were made into a nation. Our experience taught us that what the world considers "normalcy" is a smoke-screen, an illusion - that "man does not live by bread alone, but by the pronouncement of HASHEM" (Devarim 8:3). Because our very being was and is a miraculous gift of G-d, we must conduct our lives by His word. This obligation is a direct outgrowth of the Exodus; indeed, it was not only to identify Himself to the entire nation but also to establish the authority of His Law that at Mount Sinai G-d began with the words, "I am HASHEM, your G-d, who took you out from Egypt." Many individual commandments, particularly those demanding that we share with others, carry a special reminder of the Exodus when we received everything - existence, freedom, and nationhood - from the hands of G-d Himself.

However, the acknowledgment of G-d's power and rulership is not only demanded from the Jew. Through the Jewish people - its existence as such, as well as its service of G-d - the revelation of G-d is to become the guiding star for all of humanity. That is why the Seder leads up to the prayer for our final and total redemption, the Messianic age when the earth will be full of the knowledge of G-d (Isaiah 11:10).

An Overview - Part VIII: From Bondage to Freedom

"... and we will thank you for our redemption and the deliverance of our soul." (Haggadah)

"Do not read that the Tablets were 'engraved', but that they were 'freedom' - a man is only free if he occupies himself with Torah." (Avos 6:2)

In conveying the message of Pesach to his children, the father is given yet another directive - "begin with the shameful part of our history and conclude with the glorious" (Pesachim 116a). This, too, helps us experience the liberation from Egypt: we must feel bondage and slavery in all their starkness, so that we should be able truly to appreciate our deliverance and take to heart its lessons. The commandments of the Seder symbolize both slavery and freedom; they force upon our consciousness both extremes of this night, and indeed of all our history. The perceptive child is aroused by this twin symbolism to ask, why is this night different from all other nights? Why does it require us to demonstrate both bondage (Maror and Matzah, the bread of affliction) and freedom (repeated dipping of our food, and reclining)? It is this very question of the child which the father answers by stressing that in this night we experienced both extremes - bondage and freedom (Abarbanel).

But what was the meaning of this bondage and freedom - was it simply slavery and emancipation, or was there some deeper significance? Two opinions are expressed by our Sages, Rav and Shemuel. One holds that we begin with the physical slavery of Egypt (based on the passage in Devarim 6:21); the other goes back to the pagan beginnings of our history, when our earliest ancestors were enslaved to idolatry (based on the passage in Joshua 24:2). We follow both opinions - we first answer our children we were slaves in Egypt; then we go back and tell them that our forefathers were idol-worshippers at the dawn of our history. It is unusual for us to follow both of two opposing opinions; the Ritva therefore suggests that Rav and Shemuel disagreed only on which of the two passages should be recited first, but they agreed that both should be recited.

Very obviously, Rav and Shemuel emphasize two aspects of our historical experience. From a purely socio-political perspective, we will recall the physical enslavement and emancipation, but then will wonder why we should be grateful for G-d's liberating hand when it was He Who thrust us into slavery. But this question disappears when we look at our Egyptian bondage from a wider spiritual perspective. From our earliest origins in a pagan society we carried a burden of spiritual imperfection, the most profound and destructive form of bondage, one which would not have permitted us to become G-d's people and to carry His message. Only by being cast into the iron melting pot of Egypt, and then being miraculously withdrawn from it, were we able to achieve insights and to scale spiritual

heights that freed us once and for all from our ancient bondage of the spirit (Maggid of Dubno). The intense suffering made the Jews turn to G-d and this gained their liberation, physical and spiritual, at G-d's hand.

Thus we can speak of a dual slavery and a dual deliverance, clearly described by Rambam:

"He should start by telling that, at first, in the times of Terach and before him, our forefathers were unbelievers who pursued vanities and strayed after idols; and he should end with the true faith, that G-d brought us close to Him, separated us from the nations, and brought us to acknowledge His oneness. Likewise he should start by explaining that we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and all the evil he did us, and end with the miracles and marvels that were done for us, and our liberation...."

Apparently, Rambam meant to emphasize the primary importance of the spiritual redemption achieved through the Exodus. The Sages say that Joseph gave his brethren a sign by which to recognize the ultimate redeemer - he would twice use the term redemption. This would seem to be a poor sign, because it was public knowledge that any impostor could use. Moreover, at the Burning Bush Moses was told, "This shall be the sign for you that I have sent you: when you take the people out from Egypt, you shall serve G-d on this mountain" (Shemos 3:12); and Rabbi Meir Shapiro, the Lubliner Rav, pointed out that this, too, could hardly be an acceptable proof of the redeemer's identity: after all, it could only be verified after the Jews agreed to obey Moses and he actually led them out of Egypt.

In reality, the Lubliner Rav explained, Joseph hardly meant to prophesy the future redeemer's choice of words. Instead he referred to the promise of a twofold redemption - physical and spiritual. That was what G-d told Moses at the Burning Bush: do not promise the Jews only physical redemption from the slave labor of Egypt; tell them also that at Mount Sinai they will be given the Torah, to complete their spiritual redemption.

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<http://www.chaburas.org/pesach12.html>

#### **RABBI AARON ROSS**

V'HI SHE-AMDAH

The Netziv offers an enlightening insight on the placement of the paragraph "v'hi she-amdah" in our haggadah. This paragraph describes how in every generation enemies rise up to destroy the Jewish people, and every generation Hashem saves them from harm. This paragraph comes right after the mentioning of how Lavan HaArami tried to destroy the Jewish people even before they began. The Netziv asks what the connection is between the two? Granted, Lavan fits into the description of one who tried to destroy the Jews, but why is he any different than anyone else, and why should he be "privileged" with being the one who follows our declaration that we always have enemies and Hashem always saves us?

The Netziv answers that in actuality this paragraph refers not to Lavan, who comes afterwards, but rather to what comes before, namely the mentioning of the Brit Bein HaBetarim between Hashem and Avraham. In that covenant, Avraham is told that his children will be "geirim," sojourners in a land that is not there. This is exactly what Yaakov later told Pharaoh - I come to sojourn in the land. Yaakov had no intention of staying in Egypt any longer than the famine would last. This idea is encapsulated in Moshe's final blessing to the Jewish people, when he speaks of "betach badad ein Yaakov" - that Yaakov's intended legacy was that the Jews should be "badad," alone and separate from the nations that surrounded them.

Only after Yaakov passed away did things begin to go sour. Shemot Rabba tells us that the Jews ceased circumcising their sons so as to blend in more with their Egyptian hosts, and only then did the Egyptians actually turn against the Jews. This pattern is one that has been repeated countless times throughout Jewish history. As the gemara in Sanhedrin 104b notes, Hashem intended for the Jews to be "betach badad ein Yaakov," and instead they tried to assimilate and wound up being "[eichah] yashvah badad" - a nation that was forced to sit by itself, destroyed and in mourning.

Trying to become more like the surrounding society has only resulted in further hostilities against us in every age and in every place.

[ed note - Perhaps this can be connected to the fact that no non-Jew is allowed to partake of the Pesach sacrifice, and, by extension, of the Pesach seder. Our survival throughout the ages, which we celebrate on Pesach, is ultimately due to the fact that we remain separate from the other nations.]

#### L'SHANAH HA-BA'AH BIYERUSHALAYIM

The Yerushalmi in Berachot notes that the salvation of the Jews will happen little by little, like the rising of the sun which does not come up all at once but rather gradually makes its ascent. The students of the Vilna Gaon (G"RA) asked him why this has to be so? Why could Hashem not make the redemption happen in one big sound-and-light show? Certainly He is capable of such a feat!

The G"RA replied that this fact that the redemption will come gradually has nothing to do with Hashem and everything to do with us. If the redemption were to happen suddenly and totally, we would be unable to withstand the attribute of justice that would have free reign. Since an immediate redemption would not be due to our merits, our faults would be laid bare and no one would survive. At the same time, we would also not be prepared for the tremendous light of Hashem's glory that would accompany the redemption.

The G"RA also noted that the gemara in Ta'anit says that anyone who mourns for Yerushalayim will merit seeing its joy. What is interesting is that the gemara there speaks in the present tense, as if the individual who mourns is right now witnessing the joy of the rebuilt city. The G"RA noted that, as Rashi writes about Yoseif, a dead person is forgotten, while a person who is still alive is never forgotten. Thus, a person who mourns for Yerushalayim, by doing so bears witness to the fact that the city and all that it stands for is not dead. So long as a person can still actively mourn for Yerushalayim, it remains a vital part of the Jewish spirit, and thus it can be said that even now we are rejoicing, as Yerushalayim has not left us entirely.

#### SHEMA AND THE HAGGADAH

The mishna of Rabi Elazar ben Azariah is a curious addition to the haggadah. On one level, its inclusion in our Pesach seder is simply a technical one - we are speaking about the commandment of remembering the Exodus from Egypt, and thus we include a mishna that discusses our more general obligation to speak about the Exodus. However, as has been noted by many people over the generations, the daily mitzva to mention the Exodus is not the same as the once a year mitzva of telling the story in all of its details. This being so, why bother bringing in Rabi Elazar ben Azariah here?

I would like to suggest that there is a deeper message included here. The paragraph before the mishna of Rabi Elazar ben Azariah is the story of the five sages who stayed up all night one Pesach recounting the story of the Exodus. The story ends with their students telling them that the time of the morning Shema has come, and thus they must adjourn in order to pray. This language of the story is curious - why did the students say that the "time of the morning Shema" had come, and not simply that daybreak had come or the time of prayers had come?

As we know, there are three parts to the Shema, each with its own theme. The third paragraph is that which discusses the Exodus from Egypt, and it is with the daily recital of that paragraph that we fulfill our daily requirement to remember the Exodus. This may only highlight our question more - why would the students interrupt the Rabbis' discussion about the Exodus in order for them to mention the Exodus again? Why not leave them to continue what they were doing?

I believe that this peculiar language of the students, as well as the mishna of Rabi Elazar ben Azariah, points to a very important idea in Judaism in general. While there is a very special commandment to remember the Exodus on the night of Pesach and to discuss every intricacy and detail of

every law of Pesach, there is also the more mundane daily commandment to remember that Hashem saved us from our Egyptian oppressors. While the experience of Pesach is one of the high points in the Jewish calendar, if the enthusiasm that accompanies Pesach cannot be translated into a daily recognition of all that Hashem has done for us, then it is merely a passing fancy - nothing more than an excuse for families to get together and schools to have vacations. Not even the Pesach seder can override the "simple" daily requirement to recite the Shema both in the morning and in the evening (as per Rabi Elazar ben Azariah). Pesach is not a major media event. It is one of the highest forms of expression of praise and gratitude that we give to Hashem. However, failure to make these feelings a regular part of our lives undermines the entire message of Pesach.

<http://www.chaburas.org/pesach16.html>

#### RABBI AARON ROSS

##### THE MAGIC FIFTEEN

The song popularly known as "Dayeinu" enumerates fifteen acts of kindness that Hashem did for the Jewish people from the time that he took them out of Egypt until the time that they built the Beit HaMikdash, 480 years later. Given the fact that numbers are very significant at the Pesach seder (witness the recurring number four, as well as the song "Echad Mi Yode'a" at the end of the seder), it is important for us to ask why the number fifteen is so important - certainly the author of the haggadah could have listed more or less items!

The Kli Yakar connects this number to two other famous fifteens in Judaism. He first notes that the fifteen lines of this song correspond to the fifteen generations from Avraham until Shlomo (Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yehuda, Peretz, Chetron, Ram, Aminadav, Nachson, Salmon, Boaz, Oved, Yishai, David, Shlomo), who built the Beit HaMikdash. As this song traces Jewish history from its roots until its pinnacle, thus the number contained within the song alludes to the historical process as well.

The Kli Yakar then discusses perhaps the most famous fifteen in Judaism, the fifteen steps that led from the women's courtyard to the main courtyard in the Beit HaMikdash. As a result of this connection, he explains the fact that the kindnesses here are described in the haggadah as being "ma'alot," or steps, parallel to the steps in the Beit HaMikdash. While this is a nice parallel, what is its significance? The Kli Yakar explains that the gemara in Sotah 11b says that the Jews were redeemed from Egypt in the merit of the righteous women among them. As such, the first step of the process described in this song is the taking of the Jews out of Egypt, which corresponds to that which was brought about in the merit of the women, which corresponds to the first step in the Beit HaMikdash, which was in the women's section. While all of the Jews merited the entire process of redemption, the foundation of the entire chain of events is rooted in the deeds and merits of the women of the time.

The students of the Vilna Gaon offer a different perspective. They ask why these are called "ma'alot," steps, and not kindnesses. They thus suggest that the Jews are not intrinsically worthy of everything that Hashem does for them (an idea further symbolized by the Vilna Gaon's interpretation that the fifteen levels here correspond to the fifteen levels of heaven and atmosphere that separate Hashem from the earthly creation). Thus, Hashem has to do things slowly, gradually bringing them along, step by step, until they reach the highest level of goodness that He can do, namely coming to rest among them in the house that they build for Him.

Finally, the Peirush Kadmon and the Shibbolei HaLeket note that this section of the haggadah comes after the section where we detail all of Jewish history, noting the greatness of Hashem in bringing us to this point. As such, now that we have reached a point where it seems that there is no more to tell, that we have sufficiently recounted all of the greatness and mercies of Hashem, we sing this song showing that they are always more levels to ascend, always more great deeds that Hashem does for us that we have to thank Him for.

## NOT LIKE THEM

The first paragraph said in the Hallel section of the seder (Tehillim 115) emphasizes the point that our G-d is not like the gods of the other nations. Their idols do not see, do not speak, do not hear, and so on, whereas Hashem is described as doing all of these things. Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch explains in Devarim 4:28 that pagans had two difference concepts of their idols. There were the common, simple people who believed that some divine spirit actually resided in the wood and stone that had been crafted for them by other men. The more educated pagans realized that the idols were but mere representations of some higher forces that existed in the world, and it was those higher forces that they were worshipping.

Either way, our statements here in Hallel refer to both of these groups. Obviously, the dead stone and wood had no sensory powers, but even the forces of nature that were believed to be represented by the graven images were also powerless to help mankind in any way befitting of a true deity.

However, our commentary on these pagans goes even further, as we proclaim that those who make these idols will one day become like the idols themselves. One who believes in nature as being a god lacks true freedom, as he blindly follows his foolish belief to subjugate himself to a force that knows not of their servitude. They abandon all moral and intellectual freedom to pursue this silly endeavor. As such, they themselves become like their gods - morally and intellectually bankrupt creations, completely removed from all of the grandeur that they can achieve as humans.

Not so the Jews. The end of this paragraph of Tehillim notes that there are three types of Jews - Yisrael, the children of Aharon, and those who fear Hashem. The first group refers to all Jews in their role of enlightening the world and teaching mankind about Hashem. The second group, the sons of Aharon, are charged with leading the Jewish people internally in the same manner that the Jewish people lead the rest of the world. Finally, by being people who fear Hashem, we can merit the protection of the only G-d who can truly sense and respond to the needs of His people.

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From: Halacha [<mailto:halacha@yutorah.org>] Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2006 11:07 AM To: Shulman, Charles Subject: Weekly Halacha Overview-  
**BY RABBI JOSH FLUG**  
**The Mitzvah of Haseiba**

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### The Mitzvah of Haseibah

The Mishna, Pesachim 99b, states that there are certain activities at the Seder that must be performed in the reclined position. This is known as the mitzvah of haseibah. This article will discuss the nature of the mitzvah and the practical applications that emerge from this discussion.

#### Which Mitzvot Require Haseibah?

The Gemara, Pesachim 108b, states that the mitzvah of eating matzah requires haseibah and the mitzvah of maror does not require haseibah. With regards to the mitzvah of drinking four cups of wine, there is a dispute as to whether haseibah is required for the first two cups or the last two cups. The Gemara concludes that since there is a dispute, one should recline for all four cups. Rambam, Hilchot Chametz U'Matzah 7:8, states that one who reclines for all other eating and drinking activities of the evening is considered praiseworthy.

Rabbeinu Asher, Pesachim 10:20, rules that if haseibah is omitted from the eating of the matzah or from the drinking of the four cups of wine, the mitzvah must be performed again in a reclined position. Rabbeinu Asher notes that there is a reluctance to require repetition of drinking the third and fourth cups of wine because by doing so, it gives the impression that more than four cups of wine are required. That concern notwithstanding, Rabbeinu Asher concludes that if one omitted haseibah from the third and fourth cups, one should repeat drinking those cups in a reclined position. Rabbeinu Asher's opinion is codified by Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 480:1.

Rama, Orach Chaim 472:7, presents a different approach to the situation where one omitted haseibah from the third or fourth cup of wine. Ra'aviah, no. 525, states that nowadays people do not normally eat in a reclined fashion and therefore the mitzvah of haseibah does not apply. While most Rishonim do not accept the opinion of Ra'aviah, Rama (based on Agudah, Pesachim 10:92) factors in the opinion of Ra'aviah in certain situations. Therefore, in general, if one omits haseibah, that activity must be repeated. However, regarding the third and fourth cups, since there is a concern that repeating the third or fourth cup will give the impression that there is a requirement to drink more than four cups, one may rely on the opinion of Ra'aviah, and one should not repeat drinking the third or fourth cup.

#### Are Women Obligated to Recline?

There is another instance where Rama relies on the opinion of Ra'aviah. Rama, Orach Chaim 472:4, notes that although women should be obligated in the mitzvah of haseibah, the common practice of many women is to refrain from performing haseibah. Rama proposes that women rely on the opinion of Ra'aviah that nowadays the mitzvah of haseibah does not apply. One can question the Rama's ruling. If in fact, one can rely on the opinion of Ra'aviah, men should rely on this opinion as well. If one cannot rely on the Ra'aviah, why should women rely on this opinion?

It has been suggested that the answer lies in the nature of a woman's obligation in the mitzvah of haseibah. [See the article by R. Mordechai Willig in Zichron HaRav pp. 77-78. The suggestion is based on an idea developed by R. Moshe Soloveitchik, but the specific application to haseibah is from an unknown source.] Haseibah, like all other mitzvot performed at the Seder, is a mitzvah aseh shehaz'man gerama (time bound positive mitzvah). Women are normally exempt from mitzvot aseh shehaz'man gerama. However, there is a concept of af hen hayu b'oto hanes (women were also part of miracle, Pesachim 108b) which obligates women to observe all mitzvot that commemorate a miracle that women were a part of. Therefore, women are obligated to observe all of the mitzvot of the Seder. R. Moshe Soloveitchik opines that there are two aspects to the commemoration of a miracle. There is the *pirumei nissa* aspect, which serves to publicize the miracle. Additionally there is the *zecher lanes* aspect which serves to remember the miracle. The concept of *af hen hayu b'oto hanes* only obligates women in the *pirumei nissa* aspect, and not the *zecher lanes* aspect.

One can then explain that the dispute between Ra'aviah and the other Rishonim is based on the nature of haseibah. Ra'aviah is of the opinion that the purpose of haseibah is *pirumei nissa*. Therefore, nowadays, since people do not eat in a reclined fashion, one cannot fulfill *pirumei nissa*. The other Rishonim agree that one can no longer fulfill *pirumei nissa*, but they maintain that there is a *zecher lanes* component to haseibah. By reclining, one remembers the miracle even though nowadays most people don't eat in a reclined fashion.

Now it is possible to understand the basis for women to rely on the opinion of Ra'aviah. A woman's obligation is limited to *pirumei nissa*. She is exempt from the *zecher lanes* aspect of haseibah. Therefore, since nowadays, the *pirumei nissa* aspect cannot be fulfilled, women are exempt from haseibah. However, men - who are still obligated in the *zecher lanes* aspect of haseibah - must still recline in order to remember the miracle.

#### Haseibah for Left-Handed Individuals

The Gemara, *ibid*, states that one cannot fulfill the mitzvah of haseibah by leaning forward or backward. Rather one must lean on one's side. The Gemara states further that if one leans on his right side it is not considered haseibah. Additionally there is a concern that leaning on one's right side may cause choking. Rashbam, *ad loc.*, s.v. Haseibat, explains that the reason why leaning on the right side is not considered haseibah is because it is difficult to eat with one's right hand while leaning to the right. Rashbam *ad loc.*, s.v. Shema, explains that the reason why leaning to the right presents a choking hazard is because leaning to the right causes the epiglottis to open, allowing food to enter the windpipe (see also Rashi, *ad loc.*, s.v. Shema).

R. Yisrael Isserelin, Terumat HaDeshen, 1:136, discusses which side a left-handed individual should lean on. He notes that if the reason why one can't lean to the right is because it is difficult to eat while leaning on one's right, a left-handed individual - who eats with his left hand - should lean to his right. However, based on the concern for choking, it would be equally dangerous for a left-handed individual to lean on his right side. Terumat HaDeshen concludes that the concern for danger overrides the concern that it is difficult to eat while leaning to the left. Therefore, a left handed individual should lean on his left side. This ruling is codified by Rama, Orach Chaim 472:3.

One can question this ruling. A left-handed individual who leans to his left cannot eat comfortably. As such, if he leans to his left, there should be no fulfillment of the mitzvah of haseibah. While there is a concern that leaning to the right presents a danger, leaning to the left ostensibly serves no purpose. If so, why didn't Terumat HaDeshen simply rule that a left-handed individual is exempt from the mitzvah because the method in which he can fulfill the mitzvah presents a danger? [Mishna Berurah, Biur Halacha, 472:3 s.v. V'Ain, applies this logic to an amputee who doesn't have a right arm. The amputee cannot possibly eat while leaning on his left side and he is exempt from haseibah.]

Perhaps the answer is based on the aforementioned suggestion that there are two aspects to the mitzvah of haseibah. A left-handed individual cannot fulfill pirsumei nissa by reclining on his left side because it is uncomfortable for him to eat in that manner. However, reclining on his left side is preferable to eating in the upright position because he can still fulfill the zecher lanes aspect by reclining on his left side.

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From: [ZeitlinShelley@aol.com](mailto:ZeitlinShelley@aol.com) [<mailto:ZeitlinShelley@aol.com>] Sent: Friday, March 24, 2006 6:59 AM To: [ZeitlinShelley@aol.com](mailto:ZeitlinShelley@aol.com) Subject: The Seder and Teshuvah by Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss

### **The Seder and Teshuvah**

**By Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss**

Incredibly, spring is in the air and we getting ready for Pesach. Children are told not to carry around their cookies. The global Daf Yomi community, ironically learning Masechtas Pesachim, is careful not to eat food over its open Gemoras, and everyone is pitching-in to do the yearly chometz purge. But another angle of Pesach – besides choosing the particular vintage of your Seder wine and the shmura matzah bakery from which you plan to buy your matzah – is the preparations we need to make to ensure that our Seder experience is a spiritually inspiring one for the entire family. Especially in today's day and age, when the outside environment is so tempting and inviting, we need to take concrete steps to etch and engrave the important lessons of our tradition and heritage in the minds of our family.

Here is one of the very first steps to take to make a successful Seder. The Haggadah Vayaged Moshe sites the verse, "L'rasha amar Elokim, 'Ma lach lisaper chukai,'" – "Hashem says to the wicked, 'What do I need for you to relate My statute?'" Since Hashem despises the evil person as He is, so to speak, nauseated from the praise of the wicked, it is a good idea to preface our Seder with teshuvah. Thus, we should suggest a moment of silence to our families before starting the Seder in order to accept contrition for past misdeeds and to commit to be better in the future.

This is one of the reasons why the Seder starts off with the declaration, "Kadeish." This is not simply because it indicates the saying of Kiddush. It is also to hint that we should sanctify ourselves with sincere repentance. This is one of the reasons why we don the kittel before the Seder, for the

white garment which serves as the Jewish shroud reminds us of the day of death – which the Gemora in Berachos says is the strongest motivator to do teshuvah.

The Skolya Rebba, Shlit"a, in his excellent new Haggadah, quotes the stanza, "V'hi sh'amdah la-avoseinu v'lonu – It was IT that stood to protect us and our forefathers." He observes that the word "v'hi" [vav-hei-yud-alef] is an abbreviation for "Hashiveinu [hei] Hashem [yud] Eilecha [alef] v'noshuvah [vav]. This points to how the power of teshuvah has saved us throughout the generations. That we should be ready to make our Seder experience as acceptable as possible in the Eyes of Hashem is no small matter for, as the Rebbe points out, in the famous declaration "Ma nishtana," the word 'nishtana' is an acronym for 'tein shana,' which means "Give us a good year," and indicates that in the merit of a worthy Seder, Hashem will give us another good year.

We know that we invite to the Seder all four children; the wise, the wicked, the simple minded, and the one who is too young to even ask a question. The Haggadah discusses how we should treat the impudence of wicked fellow. When he derisively declares, 'What is all of this stuff that you are doing? You're eating enough romaine lettuce to grow a garden in your stomach, and what's all of this prattle? It's late already. Why don't we eat!' the Haggadah says something shocking. We tell him the Passover experience commemorates the Exodus. You should know however, "Ilu hayah sham, lo hayah nigal – If you would have been there, you would not have been redeemed." At first glance this is mystifying. After all, we invited the wicked person to the Seder in order to embrace and rehabilitate him. This rejoinder, it would seem, would only serve to enrage him, or at the very least to turn him off.

The saintly Rebbe from Lininov, Zt"l, Zy"a, gives a wondrously exciting explanation. We tell him, 'If you would have been in Egypt before we received the Torah, you wouldn't have been saved for at that point Hashem had not given us the gift of teshuvah. But now, on the other hand, you can readily turn things around and start fresh with us right here and right now, for Hashem has blessed us with the kind treasure of erasing our past and starting a beautiful new spiritual future at any time, no matter how old we are or how sinful we were.

May it be the will of Hashem that our Seder experience is a powerful one, and in the merit of always trying to improve ourselves, may Hashem bless us with long life, good health, and everything wonderful.

To receive a weekly cassette tape or CD directly from Rabbi Weiss, please write to Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss, P.O. Box 140726, Staten Island, NY 10314 or contact him at [RMMWSI@aol.com](mailto:RMMWSI@aol.com).

Attend Rabbi Weiss's weekly shiur at the Landau Shul, Avenue L and East 9th in Flatbush, Tuesday nights at 9:30 p.m. Rabbi Weiss's Daf Yomi shiurim can be heard LIVE on Kol Haloshon at (718) 906-6400. Write to [KolHaloshon@gmail.com](mailto:KolHaloshon@gmail.com) for details. (Sheldon Zeitlin transcribes Rabbi Weiss' articles. If you wish to receive Rabbi Weiss' articles by email, please send a note to [ZeitlinShelley@aol.com](mailto:ZeitlinShelley@aol.com).)

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Mazal tov to alumnus Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom upon the publishing of his book, Between the Lines of the Bible.

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## Hallel on Pesach Night

By Rav Michael Rosensweig

### I. HOW MANY HALLELS?

The recitation of Hallel as part of the Seder structure is a phenomenon that is both intriguing and problematic. Several issues connected with this obligation require clarification. First, it is important to establish the relationship between this Hallel and the obligation to recite Hallel every Yom Tov, including Pesach, as part of tefilla. Beyond the question of redundancy, there is the issue of inconsistency with the conditions that normally define this obligation. Several halakhic authorities, for example, note that aside from Pesach, Hallel is not said at night, nor is it ever recited without standing.

Two distinct lists enumerating the occasions when Hallel is said further contribute to the confusion surrounding the status of Hallel on the Seder night. In Arakhin 10a, the following instances of reading Hallel are delineated:

For R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Shimon b. Yehotzadak: There are eighteen days on which an individual completes the Hallel: the eight days of the Feast [of Sukkot], the eight days of Chanuka, the first festival day of Pesach, and the festival day of Shavu'ot. In the exile, [an individual completes the Hallel] on twenty-one days...

Hallel on Pesach night is conspicuously missing from this list.

In Massechet Soferim, however, another report expands the list of obligatory Hallels to include Pesach night. We are informed as follows (20:9):

And one must recite a blessing before [the reading], and read it with a melody. For R. Shimon b. Yehotzadak taught: There are eighteen days and one night on which an individual completes the Hallel: the eight days of the Feast [of Sukkot], the eight days of Chanuka, the festival day of Shavu'ot, and the first festival day of Pesach, and its night. In the exile, [an individual completes the Hallel] on twenty-one days and one night. The best manner of performing the mitzva is to read the Hallel on the two nights of the festival celebrated in the exile, to recite a blessing over it, and to read it with a melody, to fulfill that which is stated: "Let us exalt His name together." When he reads it in his home, he is not required to recite a blessing, for he already recited a blessing with the congregation.

It is important not only to resolve the discrepancy between these lists, but to consider the possibility that they relate to different kinds of obligations.

Moreover, the relationship between Hallel during the Seder and during the tefilla on the night of Pesach is ambiguous. Massekhet Soferim implies a dual, yet linked, obligation. This is reflected in the lack of an independent berakha. Some interpretations of Yerushalmi Berakhot (1:5), however, view the readings of Hallel in the synagogue and at the Seder as mutually exclusive.[1] As is well known, there are many communities that do not include Hallel in the evening tefilla of Pesach at all. Other halakhists affirm both recitations, but distinguish between them by requiring separate berakhot for each.[2] Thus, a full range of positions emerges, each requiring explanation. The special treatment accorded Hallel on this night according to Massekhet Soferim – "The best manner of performing the mitzva ... and to read it with a melody, to fulfill that which is stated: 'Let us exalt His name together'" – also demands our attention.

In addition to the precise relationship between the respective Hallels of the Seder and the synagogue, there is considerable discussion in the halakhic sources regarding the possible dual character of Hallel at the Seder itself. The fact that the normally integrated Hallel is divided into two distinct sections on this night engenders a halakhic difficulty, as one must contend with the problem of hefsek (interruption). This is particularly the case if there is only one blessing recited at the very beginning of the Hallel. Moreover, according to one analysis, the Tosefta (Menachot 6:6) specifically targets the demand for an integrated, unfragmented Hallel,

when it declares: "The blessing, the Hallel, and the praise are hindrances to one another." [3] How, then, can the fragmentation be justified in the context of the Seder? The issue transcends the particular difficulty posed by hefsek, as it provokes a more fundamental question: even if the anomaly can be rationalized, why was this unusual Hallel intentionally designed in such an anomalous manner? In analyzing the purpose and form of this Hallel, we should also note that the two halves of Hallel during the Seder are integrated with two distinct cups of wine, the second and fourth of the four cups. This association suggests a representation of two different Hallels corresponding to the two cups.

In brief, several basic issues emerge from a simple scrutiny of the halakhic sources and even from our own practice: Are there one, two, or three Hallels on this unusual night? What distinct motifs do they convey? What relationship exists between these and the routine Hallel that accompanies every Yom Tov?

### II. COMPARISON TO REGULAR HALLEL

An examination of the Rishonim who deal with this topic reveals several points of debate as to whether the Hallel of the Seder conforms with the standard Hallel. Those who question and resolve the discrepancies that appear to distinguish this Hallel are obviously motivated by a desire to demonstrate its relatively conventional character, initial impressions notwithstanding. Others accent the idiosyncratic features of the Seder's Hallel that reflect its distinctive character. Several issues exemplify these perspectives.

Shibbolei ha-Leket records the view that the apparently unusual introduction to this blessing-less Hallel – "Therefore, it is our duty to thank, praise, pay tribute, glorify, exalt, acclaim, bless, esteem, and honor the One who did all these miracles for our fathers and for us... And we, therefore, sing before Him a new song..." – is merely a substitute for the blessing, "to complete the Hallel." This view seeks to cast this Hallel in the universal mode. In sharp contrast, Shibbolei ha-Leket himself dismisses this view. He notes that the themes signified by this introduction do not correspond with the short blessing that normally introduces Hallel. Alternatively, he posits that this section really consists of an introduction to the entire Haggada, in lieu of an Al ha-Nissim-type declaration. Obviously, this identification has important implications of its own, as we shall see in the course of our analysis.

Several debates revolve around the status and significance of the concluding passage of Hallel during the Seder. The Gemara records R. Yehuda's view that identifies Hallel's conclusion, "Yehalelukha Ha-Shem E-lokenu," as Birkat ha-Shir (Pesachim 118a). Rashbam perceives this selection as consistent with the standard conclusion of Hallel. Tosafot, on the other hand, project two different views, each of which underscores the uniqueness of Hallel in the Seder. One position establishes this section as a necessary conclusion to Hallel only on this night. The other opinion declares that the Birkat ha-Shir is standard, but it is necessary for the Gemara to emphasize that it is an important component even in this peculiar night-time Hallel. Thus, even as a standard component is affirmed, the unusual character of the performance is highlighted.[4]

R. Yochanan argues that the proper text for Birkat ha-Shir is "Nishmat kol chai." Rashbam perceives this view, in contrast with that of R. Yehuda, as constituting an important qualitative departure from the conventional Hallel. Shibbolei ha-Leket, on the other hand, depicts R. Yochanan's innovation in less dramatic, quantitative terms. He argues that a more compelling and dramatic redemption should evoke a more intensive rhapsodic praise. The other textual candidates for Birkat ha-Shir also cited in the Gemara suggest other important themes that may set the Hallel of the Seder apart from the regular Yom Tov Hallel, as we shall discuss later.

Ramban and Ran cite the doctrines of some Geonim that both "Asher ge'alanu" and "Yehalelukha," the respective conclusions of the two halves of Hallel on this night, do not relate to the standard Hallel at all.[5] They link the primary function and theme of these blessings to the second and fourth cups respectively. On this basis, they justify the term Birkat ha-

Shir and the double formulation of the Mishna, "Over the fourth cup, he concludes the Hallel and recites Birkat ha-Shir" (Pesachim 117b). In the process, they subordinate Hallel, or at least its concluding flourish, to the mitzva of the four cups, thereby differentiating it further from the standard Hallel.

In sharp contrast, Ramban vehemently rejects this approach, particularly with respect to Birkat ha-Shir, which he perceives as conforming fully with the norms of Hallel. Indeed, he argues that in this context we are exposed to Hallel par excellence. Furthermore, he notes that the theme of redemption is conspicuously absent in the Birkat ha-Shir, making it an unlikely candidate for the function ascribed to it by the Geonim. Underlying these various exchanges is one common theme: the attempt to define the function and status of the Hallel in the Seder vis-a-vis the standard Hallel.

### III. PARTITIONING HALLEL

Though this theme involves several issues, it is most dramatically reflected in the debate regarding the need for one or more blessings for this singular Hallel.

The primary source for investigating this problem is an extremely ambiguous passage in Yerushalmi Berakhot (1:5). As the present context does not allow for a full analysis of the text and its various interpretations, a brief survey of the basic positions and their potential implications will have to suffice.

Tosafot (Berakhot 14a, s.v. yamim) present two opinions. One view asserts the need for distinct blessings – "to read the Hallel" and "to complete the Hallel." Attributing the requirement for two blessings to the interruption of the meal appears to simply beg the question, since the decision to divide this Hallel would still demand explanation. Thus, it is likely that the two blessings reflect independent motifs of Hallel.[6]

The second position cited by Tosafot expresses the opposite view. No blessings are attached to this Hallel, but only because it is disrupted. According to this formulation, there are no grounds to suspect that this Hallel does not conform to the requirements of the standard Hallel. Even in its fragmented state, this Hallel fundamentally represents an integrated entity that, in principle, would have been introduced by the standard blessing if not for the technical consideration of hefsek.

A third perspective, attributed to R. Tzemach Gaon, superficially approximates the view of Tosafot, but differs in one critical aspect.[7] He too rules that no blessing accompanies Hallel of the Seder because of the hefsek between the two sections. However, R. Tzemach's formulation conceives that the very fact that Hallel is partitioned is characteristic of its absolute uniqueness. In his view, the lack of a blessing is not due to the technical inability to link a blessing with the second half of a disrupted Hallel, but results from the fact that this Hallel has been demonstrated by virtue of its partition to constitute a totally different type of Hallel obligation, one that does not conform to the standard Hallel, and therefore does not generate the requirement of a preceding blessing.

While it is not evident if, according to R. Tzemach, the partitioned Hallel of the Seder consists of a single theme or two distinct themes, it is apparent that the fragmentation of the standard Hallel transforms its fundamental character. The unification and balance of diverse themes is evidently an important dimension of the essential make-up of the standard Hallel.[8] This concept is indicated not only by one interpretation of the Tosefta that demands the unification of various strands of Hallel – the blessing, the Hallel, and the praise – but by the very text of the blessing that conventionally introduces Hallel, "to complete the Hallel." Indeed, the Gemara (Arakhin 10b) formulates the obligation to recite Hallel by using the verb *lignor*, "to complete." [9] Thus, while R. Tzemach's view coincides with Tosafot's second approach on a practical level, it actually approximates Tosafot's first perspective conceptually.

A fourth formulation, also designed to justify the view that no blessing is recited, further explicates the uniqueness of Hallel in the context of the Seder. The position of R. Hai Gaon ambitiously, if ambiguously, seeks to crystallize the singular character of the Seder's Hallel by

distinguishing between Hallel that is "read" and Hallel that is "sung." This distinction can be interpreted in various ways.[10] Several of the possible approaches to comprehending this distinction may also underlie the opinions of those who believe in the uniqueness of Hallel at the Seder.

In contrast to the standard Hallel of all Yamim Tovim, which flows from and further accents the unique sanctity of the particular mo'ed as a special calendar day,[11] Hallel on Pesach, particularly at the Seder, relates specifically to the theme of redemption as a concrete event. The Maggid Mishneh (Hilkhos Chanuka 3:6), for example, understands that the Gemara's reference to Hallel's being recited on "every epoch" and "over every trouble that should befall us" reflects two independent factors obligating Hallel, one of which is by rabbinic law, while the other is by received tradition.[12] Along these lines, it is possible to suggest that the Hallel of song represents the reaction to the experience of salvation from crisis, while the Hallel of reading relates to the calendar obligation of "every epoch." Possibly, the significance of Hallel this night during the tefilla (and by extension also at the Seder) is related to the event rather than the calendar day. Furthermore, there may be a special sanctity to the night of Pesach, by virtue of the events of that night, which does not have a parallel in other Yamim Tovim. In this sense, "ke-leil hitkadesh chag," "as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept" (Yeshaya 30:29), focuses exclusively on Pesach night. The different lists projected by Arakhin and Massekhet Soferim may be attributed to these different obligating factors of Hallel.[13]

Perhaps there is an added Pesach dimension, as well. Indeed, a personal sense of salvation, and therefore a dimension of personal thanksgiving, pervades this evening, and by extension this Hallel. At the very least, these elements flow from an evaluation of the past. Thus, the Hallel of reading is primarily an intellectual exercise that strives to formulate a proper response of appreciation to distant events and fosters contemplation of the significance of miracles and Divine intervention for Jewish life. A proper balance of themes and motifs and a proper ordering of various perspectives are critical to this enterprise. Hallel of song, in contrast, constitutes a spontaneous and emotional reaction to personal salvation. It is possible for this Hallel to be partitioned, since the delicate balance of an intellectually oriented appreciation is not attainable or necessarily desirable in this context. Focusing on different extremes is a more natural and appropriate response for an experiential Hallel.

Based on the theme of "Each individual is obligated to think of himself (*lir'ot*) as one of those who came out of Egypt," or Rambam's even more experiential and demonstrative formulation – "to act out the experience (*lehar'ot*) as if he came out of Egypt," one might even perceive the obligation of thanksgiving by means of this Hallel in present terms.[14] As a personal experience and emotional reaction to the redemption from Egypt, Hallel on this night certainly consists of song, not the more intellectual and ritually-oriented reading. In any case, whether one focuses on the event of redemption, the special significance of Pesach night, or the personal response of thanksgiving (past or present), or the primacy of song, the uniqueness of Hallel on this night is compelling.

### IV. HALLEL AS A MEDIUM OF SIPPUR

It is possible to take this a step further. There is abundant evidence that the Hallel of the Seder constitutes a fulfillment of the mitzva of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt, and may be subordinate to it. As such, it is truly specialized and unique in a manner that transcends our previous analysis, justifying many of its anomalies.[15] Both Rambam (*aseh* no. 157) and Sefer ha-Chinukh (no. 21) formulate the obligation of Hallel in terms of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt. Rambam informs us as follows:

In this injunction, we are commanded to recite the story of the exodus from Egypt, with all the eloquence at our command, on the eve of the fifteenth of Nisan. He is to be commended who expands this theme, enlarging on the iniquity of the Egyptians and the sufferings which they inflicted upon us, and on the way in which the Lord wrought his vengeance upon them, and

offering Him thanks (exalted be He) for all the good that He has bestowed upon us.

Interestingly, Ran quotes that R. Hai Gaon, in developing the distinction between Hallel of song and Hallel of reading, notes the suitability of the introduction of the Hallel during the Seder – "Therefore, it is our duty to thank." This passage precisely links Hallel and the mitzva of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt.[16] The idea also proposed by R. Hai, that Birkat ha-Shir and the "Asher ge'alanu" blessing are primarily blessings on the second and fourth cups, also integrates well into the overall scheme of Hallel as a dimension of the mitzva of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt, which includes the four cups as a central component. Indeed, R. Hai comments that these two blessings alone really focus on the unique themes of the evening, since the first and third cups (Kiddush and Birkat ha-Mazon) have a more conventional function. That the concluding sections of both segments of Hallel on this evening accomplish this significant function is probably no coincidence if the Hallel itself is a vehicle for retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt.[17]

The link between Hallel and retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt is reinforced by several other positions taken by various Rishonim. Rashi explains that matza is depicted as "bread over which many things are recited," because one recites the Haggada and Hallel over it.[18] The connection between matza and Hallel, as well as the association with the Haggada, points to a common theme. As previously alluded to, Shiblei ha-Leket asserts that the introduction to Hallel, "Therefore, it is our duty," stands in place of Al ha-Nisim, and constitutes the blessing over the entire Haggada. In the same vein, he identifies the "Asher ge'alanu" blessing, the conclusion of the first part of Hallel, as a critical juncture in the Haggada itself, as it completes the cycle of "commencing with shame and concluding with praise." [19]

#### V. THE FOCUS ON THE EXODUS

If Hallel during the Seder functions as a vehicle of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt, we might further amplify and appreciate its singular character both vis-a-vis the standard Hallel, and in terms of its fragmentation during the Seder itself.

Retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt both sets the tone for and captures the unique essence of Pesach night's particular sanctity.[20] This orientation dictates that one refrain from excessive universalization and even intellectualization of the exodus experience, lest the unique aspects of that experience lose their centrality. Indeed, some characterize the saying of Ma Nishtana, which of course accents precisely the distinctive features of the night, as a central component of the Haggada.

Applying this consideration to Hallel during the Seder illuminates the specific quality of this Hallel, and justifies its differentiation from the standard Hallel obligations. As we noted previously, the conventional Hallel is structured to encompass and balance a range of responses and motifs – past and present; universal and particular; praise and thanksgiving. Hallel of the Seder, cast in the mold of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt, consciously eschews this approach. The partition of Hallel is perhaps designed to de-emphasize the universal message, at least initially, so that the exodus from Egypt can receive its proper attention as the exclusive focus of this part of the evening.

Against this background, the debate between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai regarding the scope of the first Hallel takes on new significance. The Mishna (Pesachim 116b) records: "How far does one recite it? Beit Shammai maintain: Until 'As a joyous mother of children.' Beit Hillel say: Until the flint into a fountain of waters." The Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesachim 10:5) elaborates their positions as follows:

Beit Shammai said to them: Did Israel [already] leave Egypt that he should mention the exodus from Egypt?

Beit Hillel said to them: Even if you wait until the cock's crowing, they would still not have reached half of the redemption. How then do we mention the redemption, when they were not yet redeemed? Surely they only left in the middle of the day, as it is stated: "And it came to pass on that

selfsame day, etc." Rather, since he started the mitzva, we say to him, "Finish."

Both Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel demand that the Hallel prior to the meal relate directly and exclusively to the experience of the exodus from Egypt. The extent to which there should be a temporal correspondence between the actual events and their commemoration and reenactment is a matter of dispute between them. Thus, Beit Shammai argue that only the first chapter of Hallel is appropriate, as it refers obliquely to the liberation of the Jews from bondage – "Give praise, O servants of G-d," and not the servants of Pharaoh – which had already occurred by the beginning of the evening. Since the exodus did not take place until the next day, the emotional-spiritual response to that miracle is not yet appropriate. Beit Hillel, on the other hand, suggest a more flexible commemoration, inasmuch as the destiny of the people of Israel had already begun to unfold. They refuse to lock the commemoration into so strict a timetable, since the entire drama of the exodus from Egypt constitutes a single process.[21] In any case, even Beit Hillel concede that the first segment of Hallel functions as a specific means of celebrating the event of the exodus from Egypt. This presents a striking contrast to the standard, unfragmented Hallel, in which the exodus from Egypt is merely one motif, and in which it is nothing more than an example of the kind of miracle that generates the obligation of thanksgiving.

The Mishna registers a further point of contention between R. Tarfon and R. Akiva:

R. Tarfon used to say, "who redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt," but he did not conclude with a blessing.

R. Akiva said: "So may the Lord our G-d and the G-d of our fathers suffer us to reach other seasons and festivals which come towards us for peace, rejoicing in the rebuilding of Your city and glad in Your service, and there we will partake of the sacrifices and the Paschal offerings ... Blessed are You, O Lord, who have redeemed Israel."

In light of this analysis, one can now view the disagreement between R. Akiva and R. Tarfon in a manner that transcends the laws of blessings. R. Tarfon considers any references to the broader significance of the exodus from Egypt during this stage of commemoration to be a distraction that undermines the integrity of the mitzva of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim/Hallel. This mitzva obligates us to scrutinize every detail of that momentous event and to accent its uniqueness. R. Akiva moderates this view somewhat. As long as the focus remains on the particular event, examining the broader implications of that event is not inconsistent with this single-minded orientation. Indeed, if applications are developed not by watering down the uniqueness of the event to its lowest common denominator in order to more effectively universalize it, but instead by maintaining the spotlight on the singularity of the experience, such an effort immeasurably enhances our appreciation of, and identification with, the exodus from Egypt.

Even within the position of R. Akiva, the propriety of references outside of Pesach proper is a matter of controversy. Shiblei he-Leket cites one interpretation that identifies moadim u-regalim acherim ("other seasons and festivals") as future Pesachs. Another view acknowledges that the allusion is to other Yamim Tovim, but suggests that we are concerned that the observance of other holidays might impact upon the time-table of the future redemption. A third position accepts that other Yamim Tovim are the subject of the conclusion of this blessing.[22]

#### VI. PAST AND FUTURE IN HALLEL

An examination of the language used with respect to the first Hallel of the Seder further confirms the focus on a past event. The contrast not only to the standard Hallel, but to the second half of Hallel recited during the later part of the Seder structure, is striking. The Talmud Yerushalmi (Berakhot 1:5) indicates that the conclusion of the first section of Hallel, "Asher ge'alanu," signifies a past event, while the conclusion of the second segment of Hallel, "Yehalelukha," relates to the present and the future.[23]

It is incumbent upon us to explain the sharp differences in focus and direction that apparently differentiate the two parts of Hallel.

The Gemara in Pesachim (116a) indicates that the standard Hallel really begins from the section of "Lo lanu" ("Not to us"). This suggests that the second half of the Hallel may represent a transition from the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt to the standard Hallel, or at least from a particularistic to a universal perspective of the retelling of the story of the exodus. Indeed, the basic thrust of the second half of Hallel is general praise and thanksgiving, rather than the exodus specifically. In this context, even references to the exodus from Egypt can be viewed as nothing more than examples of broader manifestations. The present and future dominate these sections.

Moreover, an examination of the conclusion of this Hallel, "Yehalelukha," reveals no references to redemption or the exodus from Egypt. If this section constitutes an obligation only on this night, as some Rishonim believe, its non-Pesach orientation is especially puzzling. Ramban's critique of the Geonic view that Birkat ha-Shir is primarily a blessing on the fourth cup of wine, on the basis that there is no reference to redemption, is particularly compelling. Why assign so much significance to something apparently unrelated to the specific celebration at hand? In a similar vein, we should attempt to comprehend some of the other choice candidates for Birkat ha-Shir. R. Yochanan proposes "Nishmat kol chai"; R. Tarfon suggests the Great Hallel (Tehillim 136); others offer "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Each of these accents not only universal, but daily motifs of thanksgiving that do not even accent the miraculous. What message is being transmitted by the selection of one of these as the final word of Hallel during the Seder?[24]

#### VII. TWO STAGES OF HALLEL

Perhaps, however, the answer is to be found in the very contrast between the two stages. Hallel, indeed the Seder, was partitioned intentionally in order to accent two critical if opposite themes, and in a manner that would safeguard the integrity of each by not blurring their respective motifs. The proper progression insures that the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt attains its desired goal. Thus, the first part of the Seder spotlights the exodus from Egypt almost exclusively in an effort to pay full tribute to the magnitude of that event. A premature rush to subject it to parallels, or to attempt to extract its long-term implications for Jewish life, is deliberately frustrated, as it would have trivialized this singular occurrence and reduced its ultimate impact. Once an intensive reenactment and analysis of the exodus from Egypt has been achieved, the second part of Hallel legitimately shifts our attention to the significance of the event on our daily lives as individuals striving to develop a spiritual persona.

At this second stage, the emphasis is no longer on retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt, but on enhancing the daily obligation of remembering the exodus by exploiting the unique opportunity afforded by the previous intensively particularistic retelling. The response to Ramban's critique of the Geonic view of Birkat ha-Shir, and the significance of the other suggestions in the Gemara in terms of what constitutes a proper Birkat ha-Shir, derive from this perspective. It is precisely their mundane and non-redemptive character that qualifies these various texts as the conclusion of the second Hallel.

This second Hallel, though it has its roots in the past and is directed by the perspective gleaned from the first Hallel, looks to the present and future. Ironically, it is Ramban, in various places in his commentary to the Torah, who projects the transcendent significance of the exodus from Egypt to daily life as the ultimate source for belief in Divine providence and intensive involvement in human affairs.[25]

By the time we reach the later stages of the Seder, an important transition has been completed, as the primary preoccupation with Ma Nishtana gives way not only to a consideration of other miraculous manifestations, but to daily life and concern with even such mundane

matters as livelihood,[26] as well as the ongoing struggle to attain spiritual growth.

As the past, present and future converge with their respective integrity intact, Hallel concludes appropriately with a simple, yet comprehensive theme:

May all Your creatures praise You, O Lord our G-d, together with Your pious and righteous ones who do Your will; and may all Your people, the house of Israel, give joyful thanks, and bless, and praise... For it is good to give You thanks, and to Your name it is fitting to sing a melody, for from everlasting to everlasting You are G-d.

#### FOOTNOTES:

[1] See Tosafot, Berakhot 14a, s.v. Yamim.

[2] See Tosafot, op. cit. Rashba also disentangles them, but on the basis of the argument of lo pelug, rather than distinctive obligating factors.

We should also note that even if the two are interconnected, the link may be an artificial one. It is possible that Hallel at the Seder simply assumes a double function, although each function is independent.

[3] This is the reading of Chiddushei ha-Griz al ha-Ramban, Hilkhot Chanuka 3:6. However, one could certainly take issue with this interpretation of the Tosefta. The various commentaries to the Tosefta itself offer alternatives, but this is not the place to discuss them.

[4] It remains to be seen whether the differences reflected in these sources reflect additional elements or an entirely different orientation toward the obligation. The impact of saying "Yehalelukha" on the argument over the need for a blessing prior to Hallel is itself a matter of interest. Rosh (Pesachim 10:32) argues that the conclusion of "Yehalelukha" implies that there is no prior blessing. Ran, however, comes to the exact opposite conclusion on the basis of a comparison with standard Hallel.

[5] Chiddushei ha-Ramban, Pesachim 117a.

[6] It remains to be determined if the uniqueness of this configuration is precisely in the separation of what is normally a fully integrated whole into independent motifs, or whether the partition of Hallel establishes two entirely different concepts of Hallel that cannot be apprehended by adding together the sum of its parts. It is also possible that one Hallel corresponds to the standard Hallel and the other half represents a special Seder obligation. It would then be necessary to identify each segment with its appropriate motif.

[7] See Ramban, Mordekhai and others. See also Chiddushei ha-Griz al ha-Ramban, op. cit.

[8] The balance between the complementary, yet divergent, components of thanksgiving and praise, for example, is one critical aspect of this equation. The significance of other themes – universal and particular thanksgiving and appreciation ("Praise G-d, all you nations ... for His love for us is great") – for instance, is also altered when isolated and unbalanced by certain other values. For an analysis of some of the components that generate the obligation of song and Hallel, see Emek Berakha, pp. 124-125. This theme of balance as a critical component in Hallel requires elaboration that the present essay does not permit.

[9] This is also implied strongly in Ramban's formulation in Hilkhot Chanuka, where the condition of completing the Hallel also dictates whether a blessing will be recited. In other words, the quality of the obligation is directly linked to its scope or comprehensiveness.

[10] R. Velvel, op. cit., initially alludes to the function of Hallel as part of the procedure of the Paschal offering to explain R. Hai Gaon. This view echoes in Ramban's discussion of this issue, as well. However, it appears that the Rishonim understood the theme of Hallel of song more expansively. Ultimately, R. Velvel also opts for a broader interpretation.

[11] The specific relationship between the theme of joy and the bringing of distinctive sacrifices needs clarification. A simple reading of the exchanges in Arakhin 10a-10b regarding Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur's exclusion from the list and Pesach's restriction to one day accents the issue. The discussion among the Rishonim – Ramban, Behag, Ramban, etc. – whether or not Hallel constitutes a biblical obligation and should be enumerated among the 613 mitzvot is relevant to establishing the precise criteria.

[12] R. Velvel develops this theme, as well. One should also note the famous view of Chatam Sofer that Hallel on Chanuka, as the only Hallel relating directly to a miracle, constitutes a biblical obligation, though Chanuka itself is only by rabbinic decree. Rashbam suggests that the reference to "every trouble that should befall us" relates to Chanuka.

[13] Several elements of this approach have strong roots in the positions of Ramban and Ran on this topic. They demand one blessing for both sections of Hallel, while minimizing the significance of the interruption. They perceive the content and theme of this Hallel to be routine. They dismiss the notion that the concluding passage of

this Hallel implies its fundamental uniqueness. At the same time, they acknowledge that this Hallel is generated by and commemorates either the significance of the night, or the mitzva of the Paschal offering, or the redemption as an event, rather than just Pesach as a Yom Tov. It is they who distinguish between the lists of Arakhin and Massekhet Soferim on this basis.

[14] The idea that one is supposed to project the experience of the exodus from Egypt into the present is, of course, a major theme of the entire Seder, as is well-documented. In addition to Rambam's formulation of "as if he came out of Egypt," Maharam Chalawa's comments on "va-anakhu hotzi mi-sham," and Emek Berakha's explanation of the use of the terms "we, therefore, sing before Him a new song," further accent this theme. Rambam's use of "to act out the experience" (lehar'ot), instead of "to think of himself" (lir'ot), relates to the obligation to behave demonstratively in pursuing this goal. It may have a didactic rather than a substantive-experiential intent.

[15] That Hallel is inserted into the mitzva of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt is evident. That it is not just there as the most propitious time to accomplish the independent mitzva of Hallel, or as a result of the experiences generated by the retelling, but also as a vehicle of the narration itself, is the point being advanced here. A similar discussion regarding the mitzva of eating matza during the Seder should highlight the differences between these various options, but this is the subject for another shiur.

[16] Rambam's position is more complicated, as he conveys mixed signals on this matter. The Mishna (166b) connects R. Gamliel's famous statement, "Whoever has not mentioned these three things, etc." and the mitzva of retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt to the "Therefore" passage which then introduces Hallel. Rambam, however, subtly rewrites the Mishna. In Hilkhot Chametz u-Matza (7:6), he connects the "Therefore" of R. Gamliel to reclining and the obligation of the four cups, and omits Hallel altogether in that context. Later (8:5), he introduces Hallel as an independent obligation with the disconnected word "And he says." It is almost as if Rambam intentionally sought to disentangle Hallel from the rest of the retelling of the story of the exodus. His substitution of reclining and the four cups, on the other hand, reflects the natural inclination to view "Therefore" as linked to the retelling of the story of the exodus. In his Haggada, Rambam quotes the Mishna as is.

[17] In this connection, it should be noted that Rambam and Ran cite two views of the two conclusions: "Yehalelukha" and "Asher ge'alanu" represent one theme, and thus, "Yehalelukha" is not a berakha ha-semukha le-chaverta (adjacent blessing) to its opening blessing, but to "Asher ge'alanu"; or whether they represent diverse themes, though neither is connected to its opening blessing either. If so, it is important to try to understand the different message conveyed by each.

[18] Pesachim 36a, s.v. onin alav deverim harbe.

[19] It stands to reason that Shiblei ha-Leket views the second section of the Hallel as unrelated to the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt. The content of these two Hallels suggest this possibility, since the first half focuses on the exodus. Only with respect to the first section of the Hallel does he stress the need to recite it "with song, with joy, and with melody." There are other indications of this, as well. Some Rishonim, including Maharam mi-Rotenberg (Hagahot Maimoniyot), insist that one should raise the wine cup already during the recitation of "Therefore" and maintain that pose until after the first half of the Hallel is completed. The principle that underlies this performance is that there is no song without wine. The theme of song symbolized by the holding of the wine cup only extends to the completion of the first section of Hallel. R. Hai, on the other hand, with his stress on the roles of Birkat ha-Shir, as well as "Asher ge'alanu," probably believes the entire Hallel consists of a kiyyum of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim. Rashi's language (Pesachim 36a), "Gomrin et ha-Hallel," also reflects this view. Other Rishonim stress only the first section of Hallel pertaining directly to the exodus as linked to lechem oni.

Ramban cites on view the Talmud Yerushalmi, according to which the blessing "lignor et ha-Hallel" applies only to the first section of Hallel. The second segment of Hallel is not preceded by a blessing at all, though it concludes with Birkat ha-Shir. Perhaps this view conceives the first part of Hallel as standard Hallel, while the second section is uniquely related to the Seder.

[20] It can be demonstrated that the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt, in addition to constituting an independent mitzva, has a transforming effect on other independent mitzvot of this night, including matza, maror, Kiddush, and Birkat ha-Mazon. This is consistent with the parallel to Kiddush alluded to by Rambam in his introductory remarks to the Seder (Hilkhot Chametz 7:1).

[21] See Emek Berakha, p. 125, who explains the debate in a different manner. He relates it to the issue whether one may react with song once a miraculous event is destined to occur (on the basis of prophecy, or in this case, historical hindsight), or is the actual experience a critical prerequisite for this halakhic obligation. Alternatively, it is possible to see the debate as revolving around the degree to which the different phases of the liberation from Egypt are necessarily interconnected; or, whether the Seder is really a reenactment of the events or merely a commemoration. Several other issues are related to these themes.

[22] It is possible that Rambam also minimizes R. Akiva's ruling. He seems to emphasize that this expanded reference to the celebration of other holidays is appropriate only in our time. Perhaps it is linked to our anguish at not presently having the capacity to celebrate Pesach or any Yom Tov properly in the absence of the Temple. Thus, this dimension, acutely felt on Pesach due to the role of the Paschal offering, etc., is applied to other Yamim Tovim, as well.

[23] Tosafot (Pesachim 116b s.v. ve-nomar) notes that the feminine usage – shira chadasha, used in the introduction to the first section of Hallel – refers to the past, while the masculine usage – shir chadash, found in R. Akiva's conclusion of the "Asher ge'alanu" blessing – relates to the aspiration for the ultimate redemption of the future. This is consistent with the analysis presented above. See, also, the Gemara's distinction between "who redeemed Israel" and "who redeems Israel" (Pesachim 117b).

[24] Other anomalies abound, such as the very phenomenon of a Hallel (and retelling the story or remembering the exodus from Egypt) which may extend beyond midnight according to some halakhists, though retelling the story of the exodus from Egypt may be limited by that time frame. The halakha that one may not drink wine between the third and fourth cups, or after the fourth cup according to some Rishonim, because of concern for interference with the second Hallel and the late retelling of the story of the exodus also requires explanation. Why do these considerations not apply to the earlier retelling of the story of the exodus or Hallel? While the Yerushalmi and some Rishonim relate to these questions, there remains an apparent pattern that points to a characteristic difference between the two Hallels and, for that matter, between the earlier and later retelling/remembrance of the exodus from Egypt. The implication is that freedom, the demonstrative theme associated with drinking the four cups, is inconsistent with these later manifestations, while it integrates well with the earlier performances.

[25] Ramban's explanation of the verse: "I am the Lord your G-d who took you out of the land of Egypt," and his celebrated formulation in the end of Parashat Bo regarding the frequent references to the exodus in connection with other mitzvot, exemplify this approach.

[26] According to the Gemara, therein lies the significance of the Great Hallel as a candidate for Birkat ha-Shir.

(Translation of Hebrew passages by Rav David Strauss)

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From: [owner-weeklydt@torahweb2.org](mailto:owner-weeklydt@torahweb2.org) [mailto:owner-weeklydt@torahweb2.org] On Behalf Of TorahWeb.org Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2006 9:52 PM To: [weeklydt@torahweb2.org](mailto:weeklydt@torahweb2.org) Subject: Rabbi Hershel Schachter - True Simcha  
the HTML version of this dvar Torah can be found at: <http://www.torahweb.org/simcha.html>

### **Rabbi Hershel Schachter True Simcha**

Many misunderstand the minhag (custom) of reciting yizkor as representing a solemn few moments of sadness. There is a universal minhag that one who has both parents alive leaves before yizkor. This too is misunderstood as representing the idea of al tiftach peh lasatan. Since those reciting yizkor are participating in an act of aveilus (mourning), we don't want those whose parents are alive even to be present, so as, cholila, to imply as if they too are in mourning. Whenever yizkor is recited the practice in many shuls is that an appeal is made for some charity or another. This minhag too is usually misunderstood. Many assume that since many more people show up for yizkor than on other days of the year, we have a captive audience which presents a better opportunity for an appeal.

All three assumptions are incorrect! Yizkor is always recited on Yom Tov, when there is a mitzvah of simcha. Aveilus and simcha are mutually exclusive. One may not observe any forms of mourning on yom tov.

In the times of the Baalei haTosafos, when the tfillah of yizkor was instituted, the same number of people would be present in shul on the weekdays as on Shabbos and yom tov[1].

The Yizkor appeal was not instituted "after the fact", because so many people were reciting the yizkor prayer, but rather as an expression of simchas yom tov, an appeal for the poor was introduced on yomim tovim. Rambam writes (Hilchos Yom Tov 6:18) that one who eats and drinks on yom tov and doesn't share with the poor is merely engaging in "simchas kreiso - the rejoicing of his stomach". The Torah defines simcha as one who is mesameach others who are less fortunate, such as orphans, widows,

and converts. The yom tov appeal was always for the poor and needy. Once people were pledging for tzedaka, as a method of fulfilling simchas yom tov, the yizkor prayer was introduced: let this pledge be considered as a zechus (merit) for one's parent(s) who raised a child with proper attitudes and values regarding sharing of their assets with others. And the reason those who didn't recite yizkor leave the shul is because the Talmud mentions[2] that it doesn't look right when everyone in shul is praying and one individual abstains. The mistaken impression conveyed is that perhaps that individual doesn't believe in the power of tfillah.

We just celebrated Purim. Two of the special mitzvos of that holiday are mishloach manos and matanos laevyonim. Rambam writes (Hilchos Megillah 2:17) that if one can afford to go above and beyond the basic obligation of these two mitzvos, it would be preferable to give extra matanos laevyonim as opposed to placing the extra emphasis on the mishloach manos.

"There is no more glorified form of simcha than to cheer up the hearts of the orphans, widows, and converts; the one who cheers up the hearts of these unfortunate individuals is to be compared to G-d Himself" In recent years some have started a new and most meaningful and beautiful minhag: when spending lots of money here in America on our bar mitzvas or weddings, in order to enhance the simcha, they will sponsor a bar mitzvah or wedding on behalf of those who can not afford to make one on their own[3] (or, alternatively, contribute in another way to tzedaka). This is the most glorious method of engaging in simcha. 1 This fact even affected observance of halacha. See Tosaofs Gittin (59b) s.v. aval. 2 Brachos (20b). See Nefesh Horav p.153 3 One of the organizations that facilitates such sponsorships is Yad Eliezer - see <http://www.yadeliezer.org/> for details

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### **Yayin Mevushal and Non-Observant Seder Guests**

**by Rabbi Chaim Jachter**

This week we shall complete our discussion of wine related issues with a review of the status of Yayin Mevushal (cooked wine). This is quite relevant for those of us who invite non-observant relatives and/or friends to the Seder. The question as to whether wine touched by a non-observant Jew is rendered non-kosher is subject to considerable debate and merits a full essay. The commonly accepted approach was articulated by Rav Hershel Schachter, who felt that we should follow Rav Zvi Pesach Frank's strict opinion (Teshuvot Har Zvi Yoreh Deah 105) regarding this issue (for further discussion see Teshuvot Yabia Omer 1:11,2:10, and 5:10 and Techumin 25:381-391). Thus, if non-observant Jews will attend one's Seder, then all the wine served should be Mevushal. Rav Schachter made this comment at a recent Orthodox Union seminar on grape juice and wine that we have been citing in the past few weeks and shall continue to cite in this essay. Many are familiar with the rule that we can be more lenient regarding wine touched by a Nochri or non-observant Jew if the wine is Mevushal. In this essay, we will explore the source of this Halacha, its parameters, and its application to the contemporary setting. We shall particularly stress the vigorous debate among contemporary Poskim as to whether pasteurizing wine renders it Yayin Mevushal.

**Yayin Mevushal – Tamudic Background** The Gemara (Avoda Zara 30a) cites Rava, who believes that the restrictions concerning Nochrin touching wine do not apply if the wine is cooked. The Gemara (ibid.) quotes a striking anecdote that demonstrates the application of this Halacha. The Gemara relates that Shmuel and a Nochri named Avlet were sitting together and cooked wine was served to them. Avlet took his hand away from the wine so as not to render it forbidden to Shmuel. Shmuel thereupon told Avlet that he need not worry, as the wine was Mevushal. Rashi (ad. loc. s.v. Harei Amru) writes that this Gemara teaches that we may drink Yayin Mevushal that was touched by a Nochri. Tosafot (ad. loc. s.v. Yayin Mevushal) add that this constitutes normative Halacha. Rambam (Hilchos Maachalot Asurot 11:9) and Shulchan Aruch (Y.D. 123:3) codify this rule as well.

The Rosh (Avoda Zara 2:13) wonders why the fact that the wine is cooked eliminates the prohibition of wine touched by a Nochri. After all, he explains, the reason Chazal instituted this prohibition was to prevent intermarriage (see Avoda Zara 36b and Tosafot, Avoda Zara 29b s.v. Yayin). Why should cooking the wine eliminate concern for intermarriage? The Rosh suggests that since cooked wine is

relatively uncommon, Chazal did not apply their edict to an unusual circumstance. Indeed, we find in many places in the Gemara that Chazal do not issue edicts regarding highly unusual circumstances (see, for example, Bava Metzia 46b). Not surprisingly, the seemingly ubiquitous nature of Yayin Mevushal today has led many to question whether this leniency continues to apply in the contemporary setting.

**The Parameters of the Yayin Mevushal Leniency** Rav Zvi Pesach Frank (Teshuvot Har Zvi Y.D. 111) notes that the Rambam (ad. loc.), Tur (Y.D. 123), and Shulchan Aruch (ad. loc.) clearly indicate that the leniency of Yayin Mevushal applies only to wine owned by a Jew that is touched by a Nochri. However, this leniency does not apply to wine owned by a Nochri. Thus, Rav Frank forbids drinking cooked wine that was produced by a Nochri owned company, despite the fact that the wine making process is entirely automated and no Nochri ever touches the grapes after they are placed in the machinery. Rav Hershel Schachter stated at the OU grape juice and wine seminar that Rav Frank's ruling is accepted as normative. We should note that Rav Akiva Eiger's comments to Y.D. 123:3 (s.v. DeAf Al Gav) seem to strongly support Rav Frank's ruling. There is considerable debate regarding how much the wine must be cooked in order for it to be categorized as Yayin Mevushal. The Rosh (ad. loc.) writes that once the wine is heated it is classified as Yayin Mevushal. The Rosh cites the Raavad, who writes that this was the opinion of the Geonim. The Rashba (Torat HaBayit 5:3, citing Ramban) and the Ran (Avoda Zara 10a in the pages of the Rif s.v. Yayin Mevushal, also citing the Ramban) write that wine is not considered Mevushal until some of the wine is lost in the heating process. The Encyclopedia Talmudit (24:367) cites a number of other dissenting opinions among the Rishonim regarding this matter. The Shulchan Aruch (ad. loc.) rules in accordance with the Rosh and the Geonim, while the Shach (Y.D. 123:7) rules in accordance with the Rashba and the Ran. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Y.D. 2:52 and see 3:31) and Rav Ovadia Yosef (Teshuvot Yabia Omer 8: Y.D. 15) rule that the wine need not be boiled in order to be defined as Mevushal. They believe that if the wine is heated to 175 degrees Fahrenheit (or 80 degrees Celsius) it is certainly regarded as Mevushal. On the other hand, the Tzelemer Rav is often quoted as requiring wine to be boiled in order to be classified as Mevushal. This ruling seems to be based on the opinions cited in the Darkei Teshuva (123:15) and the Gilyon Maharsha (Y.D. 116:1).

**Is Pasteurized Wine Classified as Yayin Mevushal?** Three major Israeli Poskim argue that pasteurized wine is not considered Mevushal. Rav Yosef Shalom Eliashiv (Kovetz Teshuvot 1:75) rules that, based on the information provided to him, pasteurizing wine is a standard procedure in contemporary winemaking. Accordingly, he rules that the Yayin Mevushal leniency does not apply to pasteurized wine. This is based on the aforementioned comment of the Rosh that the basis of the Yayin Mevushal leniency is the fact that cooked wine is an unusual commodity. Chazal, Rav Eliashiv argues, did not establish the Yayin Mevushal exception when such cooking is common practice. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:25) argues that the cooking involved in the pasteurization process qualitatively differs from the cooking of wine discussed in the Gemara, Rambam, and Shulchan Aruch. In the traditional process, the wine was cooked in open vats, thereby causing alcohol to evaporate and the wine's taste to be noticeably changed. However, pasteurization involves a momentary heating of wine (or grape juice) in sealed pipes that causes little noticeable change in the taste of the product. Seemingly, the sole purpose of the pasteurization is to eliminate bacteria.

Rav Shlomo Zalman argues that although wine that is pasteurized is technically considered cooked, since it is heated and some wine does evaporate (although it returns to the wine since the process occurs in sealed pipes), it cannot be considered Mevushal, because the taste is not noticeably changed. Rav Shlomo Zalman cites the Rashba (Teshuvot 4:149 and Torat HaBayit and Mishmeret HaBayit 5:3), Meiri (Avoda Zara 29b and 30a), Knesset HaGedolah (123, Hagoth Beit Yosef number 16) and Sedei Chemed (Maarechet Yayin Nesech) who all state that the leniency regarding Yayin Mevushal stems from the fact that the taste of the wine is altered by the cooking process. Rav Shlomo Zalman notes that there were those who responded to him that wine experts can in fact tell the difference between pasteurized wines and non-pasteurized wines, which is why wineries in France do not permit their products to be pasteurized (except for wine marketed to Kosher consumers who specifically want Yayin Mevushal). Rav Shlomo Zalman responds that the Halacha regarding this matter is determined by what most people discern, not by experts.

Indeed, we find that in general the Halacha is determined by the perception and abilities of most people and not of experts. For example, the Gemara (Shabbat 74b and see Tosafot ad. loc. s.v. Chochmah Yeteirah) teaches that spinning wool while it is yet on a goat's back constitutes an unusual activity (a Shinui) and therefore does not constitute a Biblical violation, despite the fact that this is a routine activity for a number of extraordinarily talented people. In a more modern application, Rav Hershel Schachter reports that he once told a dentist that his Tefillin were sufficiently square since they appeared square and a simple measurement indicated that they were square. Despite the dentist's protest that based on his experience with fillings that must be perfectly square he knows that his Tefillin are not perfectly square, Rav

Schachter told him that the latter's eyesight is the equivalent of a precision instrument, and the status of Tefillin as square is determined by what most people perceive and measure. Similarly, Rav Shlomo Zalman believes that the inability of non-experts to distinguish between pasteurized and non-pasteurized wine is the only relevant consideration (also see TABC's Bikkurei Shabbat pp.15-16). One might respond, though, that Rav Shlomo Zalman's assertion regarding the perception of non-experts might be valid only regarding Israelis in the 1980's (when Rav Shlomo Zalman published his Teshuva). Today, however, many people have developed sophisticated appreciation for wine and it seems that many "amateur" wine drinkers readily perceive the difference between pasteurized and non-pasteurized wine, and will specifically choose a "non-Mevushal" wine when they wish to drink a fine wine.

A major Sephardic Poseik, Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul (Teshuvot Ohr LeTzion 2:20:19), also rules that pasteurized wine is not considered "Mevushal". He reasons that because the evaporated wine returns to it (since the pasteurization occurs in a sealed vat), it fails to meet the Shach's definition of "Mevushal". Rav Ovadia Yosef responds that the evaporated portion of the wine that returns has lost its status of wine and it is no longer considered wine when it returns. Thus, technically speaking, the quantity of wine has been reduced in the pasteurization process (we noted earlier that even Rav Shlomo Zalman essentially concedes this point).

Defending Common Practice to Regard Pasteurized Wines as Yayin Mevushal Rav Hershel Schachter noted at the OU seminar that the prevailing custom in America is to be lenient about his matter, following the ruling of Rav Moshe Feinstein (ad. loc.) and other major Poskim in America. Indeed, Rav Ovadia Yosef notes that common practice in Israel is also to be lenient about this matter. In fact, even Rav Shlomo Zalman acknowledges that many are lenient regarding this issue. Although he expresses some hesitancy about it, Dayan Weisz (Teshuvot Minchat Yitzchak 7:61) endorses the common practice to be lenient "since this has become the prevailing practice with the consent of eminent Halachic authorities." Dayan Weisz and Rav Ovadia Yosef (Rav Shlomo Zalman also concedes this point) do not share Rav Eliashiv's aforementioned concern that pasteurized wine has become common practice. They believe that even though "cooking" wine today is commonplace, it is irrelevant. When Chazal established these Halachot, they reason, cooking wine was uncommon, and we are not authorized to enact new rules (see Rosh, Shabbat 2:15 and Teshuvot Yechave Daat 2:49) or alter Chazal's edicts. Moreover, Rav Ovadia notes that the Rosh cited by Rav Eliashiv does not appear to constitute normative Halacha, as indicated by the Taz ( Y.D. 123:3) and Rav Akiva Eiger (ad. loc.). Most importantly, Rav Eliashiv specifically writes that his ruling applies only if the information provided to him was accurate. Rav Shmuel David (Techumin 14:421) notes that Rav Eliashiv's ruling needs to be revisited, since many wineries outside of Israel do not pasteurize their wines. Indeed, kosher wine expert Mr. Feivish Herzog of Kedem wines stated at the OU seminar that Rav Eliashiv was indeed provided with inaccurate information. He explained that wine does not have to be pasteurized for health reasons (the alcohol eliminates concern for bacteria), and usually only Kosher wines are pasteurized to create Yayin Mevushal. For example, Mr. Herzog explained, Gallo and Taylor wines (these are popular non-kosher wines) do not pasteurize their wines except in the case of a bad grape harvest. Accordingly, cooking wine appears to be uncommon even today, and even according to the Rosh's explanation of the Yayin Mevushal, the leniency remains applicable.

Conclusion The common practice to regard pasteurized wines as Mevushal is based on the rulings of many of the twentieth century's leading Poskim. Moreover, Rav Shlomo Zalman's strict ruling appears to emerge from a reality that has changed since the time that he wrote his Teshuva, and Rav Eliashiv's strict ruling seems to stem from incorrect information provided to him. Furthermore, Rav Weisz notes, one may be lenient regarding non-observant Jews, since there is considerable debate as to whether a non-observant Jew touching wine renders it non-kosher. Accordingly, it seems that one may invite non-observant relatives and friends to the Seder without concern regarding the wine, as long as the wine is marked as Mevushal.

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This publication contains Torah matter and should be treated accordingly

From: [hamaayan-owner@torah.org](mailto:hamaayan-owner@torah.org) [mailto:[hamaayan-owner@torah.org](mailto:hamaayan-owner@torah.org)] On Behalf Of **Shlomo Katz** Sent: Friday, March 17, 2006 3:06 PM To: [hamaayan@torah.org](mailto:hamaayan@torah.org) Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring Pesach

R' Shlomo Wolbe z"l (famed teacher of mussar, whose first yearzeit falls during Pesach) writes:

Education consists of two parts: First, building a stable human being, and second, enabling the student to continue to grow from within. These two processes are represented by halachah / law and aggadeta / ethical and philosophical teachings, respectively.

Halachah creates structure and stability. Without halachah, the Jewish people would not be a unique people. Furthermore, halachah is universal, applying equally to young and old in their respective circumstances.

Aggadeta, on the other hand, inspires growth and change, not stability. Furthermore, each person's grasp of aggadeta is bound to vary depending on the refinement of his soul.

Our Sages say, "Don't challenge statements of aggadeta." Many people mistakenly take this to mean that Chazal endorsed an "anything goes" attitude toward aggadeta, i.e., nothing a person says in the realm of aggadeta can be "wrong." In fact, says R' Wolbe, that is not at all what our Sages meant. Rather, the statement, "Don't challenge aggadeta," means, "Don't attempt to study the non-halachic sections of Torah in the same analytical question and answer format ("shakla v'taria") with which you study the legal sections of the Talmud. Aggadeta is something one comes to understand through reflection over a long period of time while living his life within the framework of halachah.

For example: A person who bakes matzah is engaged in a process strictly governed by halachah. He must meticulously follow the laws associated with that act, taking care of every minute detail to avoid any possibility that the dough will leaven or come in contact with chametz. There certainly is no time during the matzah-baking for philosophical or ethical reflection. But afterward, the realization sets in that the zerizut / alacrity with which one bakes matzah is a paradigm for all mitzvah observance. The Torah says (Shmot 12:17), "You shall guard the matzot." In Hebrew, the word "matzot" is spelled the same as the word "mitzvot"; thus, our Sages derive from this verse that one must "guard" the mitzvot, i.e., perform them with alacrity. Just as matzah-dough can become chametz if it is not prepared quickly, so any mitzvah can be "spoiled" by laziness or delay.

Another example: One who carefully performs the search for chametz, checking every corner of the house and every pocket of his children's garments, is too busy to reflect on the meaning of the mitzvah. But later, he realizes that chametz is a metaphor for the yetzer hara. Indeed, the Gemara (Pesachim 7b) derives the obligation to use a candle for bedikat chametz from the verse (Mishlei 20:27), "A man's soul is Hashem's candle, which searches the chambers of one's innards." Just as a candle is used to search for physical chametz, so the soul should be used to search inside oneself for spiritual chametz. Furthermore, the physical inspection of the house demonstrates the importance of physical cleanliness. On further reflection, we sense the importance of spiritual cleanliness as well.

(AleI Shur Vol. II p.388)

Thirty Days Before Pesach . . .

"I might think that the obligation to discuss the Exodus commences with the first day of the month of Nissan." (The Pesach Haggadah)

Why might I think this? R' Avraham ben Hagra z"l (died 1808; son of the Vilna Gaon) explains: The ancient Egyptians worshiped the sheep, and to counter this fallacious belief, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to slaughter sheep for the Korban Pesach. Not coincidentally, the sheep (Aries) is the astrological sign for the month of Nissan. Therefore, I might think that the time to speak of the Exodus and of Hashem's mastery over all other forces begins on Rosh Chodesh, when the sign of the sheep first ascends.

For the same reason, the Haggadah states that I might think the time to discuss the Exodus is on the afternoon of Erev Pesach. That is the time when the Korban Pesach was slaughtered.

(Geulat Avraham)

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R' Moshe Feinstein z"l

R' Moshe Feinstein, whose 20th yearzeit will be observed on Ta'anit Esther, stands out as the foremost halachic authority for American Jewry in the 20th century. As the sh'ailot u'teshuvot / responsa collected in his Igrot Moshe attest, his halachic opinion was sought on virtually every significant question that arose as Torah-observant Jews adapted to a new civilization in America and enjoyed the benefits of rapid advances in technology. Among the subjects addressed there are questions of

Shabbat-observance, medicine (for example, halachic issues raised by new procedures and surgeries), business and legal matters, kashrut, and cultural trends.

R' Moshe Feinstein was born on 7 Adar 5655 / 1895 in Uzda, White Russia, and was named after Moshe Rabbeinu, whose birthday he shared. His father, R' David, was the rabbi of Uzda and a great-grandson of R' Avraham, brother of the Vilna Gaon. R' Moshe's mother, Faya Rachel, was a descendant of the author of the Mishnah commentary Tosfot Yom Tov and of the Shelah Ha'kadosh. (Faya Rachel's sister was the maternal grandmother of R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik.)

R' Moshe's first teacher was his father, who taught the boy all of Tanach before he studied his first page of Gemara. R' Moshe's family reports that throughout his life, R' Moshe studied two chapters of Tanach every day. Young Moshe also was an expert chess player until he realized that the game had ceased to relax him and instead demanded his full strength and concentration. At that point he considered the game to be harmful to his growth in Torah study, and he gave it up.

When the future R' Moshe was 12 years old, he was sent to Slutsk to study in the yeshiva of R' Isser Zalman Meltzer. R' Moshe's primary teacher there was R' Pesach Pruskin. In 1908, R' Pruskin decided to take his students and form his own yeshiva, and R' Meltzer called him to a din Torah before R' David Feinstein. R' Feinstein ruled that R' Pruskin was within his rights and, soon after, the new yeshiva opened. The guest of honor at the dedication was none other than R' Meltzer. One of the original students in the new academy was 13-year old Moshe Feinstein.

When World War I broke out, R' Moshe sought the blessing of the Chafetz Chaim that he be spared from the draft. The elder sage told the young rabbi, "I've heard of you." The Chafetz Chaim then told him, "We learn in Pirkei Avot that anyone who accepts the yoke of Torah is spared from the yoke of the king." Soon after, R' Moshe learned that his call-up had been delayed for six months. As further security, R' Moshe accepted his first rabbinic position at that time, in his birthplace Uzda.

Shortly after Purim 5681 (1921), R' Moshe Feinstein was offered the rabbinate of Lyuban, Belarus (White Russia). He assumed the post before Pesach and immediately impressed his congregants by acting firmly in the matters that came before him. Less than two months later, on the night of Lag Ba'omer, the pogroms spawned by the Russian civil war reached Lyuban. One night, the home where R' Moshe was staying was ambushed, apparently with the intent to assassinate the rabbi. Miraculously, R' Moshe escaped into a nearby corn field. Adding to the miracle, R' Moshe noted that the corn stalks were unusually tall for that time of year.

After a hiatus of close to a year, R' Moshe returned to Lyuban and served as its rabbi for 15 years. In R' Moshe's collected responsa, Igrat Moshe, there are halachic decisions written during that period. Throughout the Lyuban years, R' Moshe had to deal with many challenges from the Communist government, including closure of the mikvah and the cheder and repeated confiscations of R' Moshe's own home. Nevertheless, unlike many other Russian citizens, R' Moshe made clear that he recognized the Communists as the legitimate government of Russia. For example, when relatives sent him money from America, a fact that was known to the government, he always asked at the post office to have it converted to rubles, which was the only legal currency. In this way, he was saved from even greater persecution. R' Moshe would also relate that he saw clearly the hand of Hashem in his ability to deal with the authorities. For example, when one of his congregants was caught possessing ten dollars, R' Moshe was asked if he thought the man was concealing more money. R' Moshe answered, "How much money could a worker have saved under the reign of the Czar?" The Communists, who were happy to hear such criticisms of the Czar, who they considered an "enemy of the workers," let the man go.

In 1922, R' Moshe married Sima Kostonowitz, the daughter of one of the leading citizens of Lyuban. They had two sons and two daughters who survived to adulthood. To be continued

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YATED NE'EMAN The Jewish Paper Parshas Tzav & Shemini 13 Nissan 5766

### **Pesach: The Redemption From Beyond by Rav Ahron Rapps**

The Sefer Tamei Haminhagim cites the Taz who says that the reason we wear a Kittel, the white garment of the deceased, at the Seder, is to control the level of simcha that one feels during the Seder on Leil Pesach. In a basic sense, it seems that this represents a specific aspect of the Seder, external to the essence of what is being depicted on the night of the fifteenth of Nissan. In what way could we somewhat understand that perhaps our donning of this garment is in accordance with the actual kedusha that is being represented through our avodah at the Seder? The posuk in Parshas Re'eh states, "You shall slaughter the Pesach offering to Hashem.... Do not eat chometz on it; seven days are you to eat on it matzos, lechem oni - bread of anguish." Chazal explain that lechem oni refers to the bread that is served and relates to an ani, a poor person. The Maharal in Gevuros explains that the reference

of lechem oni is in contrast to matzoh ashira - matzoh that is mixed with other ingredients, such as oil or honey. Lechem oni precludes chometz, leavened bread, for the essence of the pauper is in that he has nothing else besides himself, similar to plain matzoh, which is comprised of flour and water with no added elements or change. We are commanded to eat pure matzoh that has not turned into chometz, for this quality portrays true geulah. During the shibud of Mitzrayim, we were subjected to the external control of the Egyptians. When we were freed, we were totally left to our own devices and in a sense, not connected to anything physical. We were free to become servants of Hashem. This is what is being portrayed in the matzoh. Chometz requires that the elements of flour and water be subject to z'man, time, and matzoh ashira needs oil or honey. Just as the ani is alone and isn't connected to anything, so too, the matzoh portrays the absolute geulah of Klal Yisroel. But there is an additional point represented in the matzoh. The Maharal explains that on Yom Kippur, the Kohein Gadol entered the Kodesh Hakodoshim dressed only in the four white garments usually worn by the Kohein Hedyot. He removed his four golden garments that he usually wore, and looked like a regular Kohain at the moment he stood in the Kodesh Hakodoshim. The posuk tells us that no human was allowed into the Kodesh Hakodoshim. But we know that on Yom Kippur, the Kohein Gadol entered and came out alive. The Maharal explains that, in a sense, the Kohein Gadol shed his humanity and basically left the world we live in and entered the realm of absolute kedusha. The Kodesh Hakodoshim is, as the name implies, the most designated and separated place in the world. It purely relates to the totally spiritual realm, beyond the physical constraints of our world of teva, nature. Thus, he wore the garments that truly portrayed the new world that he was entering, which is beyond teva. He wore white. Our world, the realm of teva, is a world of ribuy, composed of billions of things. Hashem created the worlds of Olam Hazeh and Olam Habah with His Name of "Kuh" (the letters of Yud and of Heh). Olam Habah, the realm that is beyond our world of teva, is created with the letter Yud. The letter Yud is unique in that although it is composed of ten different elements, they all unite together to become "one ten". Nine elements are nine individuals; they don't merge until they acquire a tenth. This is the basic concept as to why a minyan requires "ten" men. Each minyan represents a sense of tzibbur; therefore, there must be at least ten people. The lashon of the Maharal is that white portrays pashtus, a sense of simplicity. White light possesses all the different colors of light. The many colored lights of the spectrum, when joined together, create the color white. In a sense, our world can be considered specific, symbolized by specific colors as the color gold of the Kohein Gadol's garments. Ours is a world of multitudes, each with its own specific flavor and color - the letter Hei. But the world of lemaaleh min ha'teva, beyond teva, is a world united and recognizable as purely and totally existing to serve the One Hashem - the letter Yud. Thus, upon entering the realm of lemaaleh min ha'teva, the Kohein must first shed his connection to our world represented in the gold garments and don the white begadim of the Kohein Hedyot. The Maharal continues to explain that it is this concept which is present with our redemption from Mitzrayim. The geulah from Mitzrayim occurred bechpazon, very quickly. Elements of our world are subject to the restraints of our world, and require z'man, time. But the geulah from Mitzrayim created a nation whose identity doesn't exist in the letter Hei of Olam Hazeh, but rather in the Yud of the realm of Olam Habah. The Vilna Gaon writes a similar idea in the number of times the Torah mentions Yetzias Mitzrayim. The Torah mentions it fifty times, a number which symbolizes the realm of lemaaleh min ha'teva. Our world consists of cycles of seven; eight is beyond seven and fifty is beyond forty nine - seven multiplied by seven. The Torah was given to the world after the counting of the forty-nine days of sefirah, depicting our realm. On the fiftieth, which is not counted together with the rest, Hashem gave the Torah. The realm of lemaaleh min ha'teva was given to the world of teva. Therefore, explains the Maharal, we eat matzoh of lechem oni. Matzoh, which is not chometz and is not mixed with additives, also portrays this. It is composed of the mere basics: flour and water, without z'man and distortion. Pesach is the creation of just such a people whose dimension is the world of lemaaleh min ha'teva - of the world of pashtus. Perhaps, it is in this sense that we wear a Kittel - the white garment of the deceased. Perhaps the Kittel is white because it is the garment of maysim. The care and concern of those who are involved in the great mitzvah of chesed shel emes bears witness that the process is being done to prepare the person for the true existence of Olam Habah. The ultimate future of Hashem's world is Olam Habah, the Yud of the Name of Kuh that in Lashon Hakodesh changes the tense of words from past to the future. The word achal is defined as he ate, in the past tense, but yochal (with a Yud at the beginning) means he will eat, in the future. On the night of the Seder, we wear the white Kittel, for we are eating the lechem of pashtus to portray what, indeed, is our true identity. Our avodah is to establish that although we walk upon the earth of Olam Hazeh, Olam Habah is our true being and realm of existence. Seforim explain that the word "Seder" refers to the hashpa'ah of kedusha a person will glean during the year. According to a person's avodah at the Seder, such will be his lot in ruchniyus during the year. May we be zoche to sit at the Seder, but to truly dwell in

the realm beyond. Chag kosher ve'someach. Rabbi Rapps can be reached at [ahronrapps@yeshivanet.com](mailto:ahronrapps@yeshivanet.com).