



BS"D

To: parsha@parsha.net
From: cshulman@gmail.com

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **PESACH** - 5772

In our 17th year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to subscribe@parsha.net Please also copy me at cshulman@gmail.com A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net> It is also fully searchable.

This week's Internet Parsha Sheet is sponsored anonymously for a Refuah Shleimah for **Yitzchak Yaakov ben Basia Sarah**
Yosef Chaim Yissachar Ben Chaye Mushkit
Henna Sara bat Fayga Malya
b'soch sha'ar cholei yisroel

To sponsor a parsha sheet (proceeds to tzedaka) contact cshulman@parsha.net

YU Pesach to Go 5771

How Much Matza Do You Need to Eat?

Rabbi Mordechai Willig

Rosh Yeshiva, RIETS • Rosh Kollel, Wexner Kollel Elyon
Rabbi, Young Israel of Riverdale

The mitzvah of eating matza at the Seder is greatly cherished. Much effort and significant cost is expended to acquire proper matza shemura.⁹⁷ We limit our food intake on erev Pesach to assure that the matza is eaten with an appetite, in order to beautify the mitzvah.⁹⁸ We place the matzos carefully and lovingly on the seder table, and recite over them the immortal story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.⁹⁹

Finally, the long-anticipated moment arrives. Every man, woman and child eats the matza with physical relish and spiritual excitement. Yet, even after having finished eating, the gnawing question remains: did I eat enough matza to fulfill the mitzvah? The answer seems simple. One must simply judge whether one has eaten an amount equivalent to an average olive: a "k'zayis".

Exactly how large is a k'zayis? Today's olives are quite small. Estimates range from 3 cubic centimeters (slightly more than one tenth of one fluid ounce) to 7.5 cubic centimeters.¹⁰⁰ This is equivalent to less than one fifteenth of the average hand-baked matza, which is the kind that is typically used at the Seder.¹⁰¹ If one is using machine-baked matza, which contains about half the volume and weight of a hand-baked one, the quantity (shiur) is still less than two fifteenths of the matza.¹⁰² Why, then, do many people insist on eating a much larger amount?

The answer lies in a ruling cited in the Shulchan Aruch,¹⁰³ which states that a k'zayis is about half the size of an egg. This startling position emerges from an analysis of several Talmudic passages.¹⁰⁴ The Mishna Brurah¹⁰⁵ recommends complying with this opinion since the

requirement to eat matza on the first night of Pesach is a Torah commandment. He concludes, however, that a sick person may rely on the words of the Rambam,¹⁰⁶ from which it is evident that a k'zayis is less than one third of an egg. Other authorities reduce the shiur to about three tenths of an egg.¹⁰⁷

Now we must determine how large an egg is. The size of today's average egg (with the shell) is about 50 cubic centimeters.¹⁰⁸ Rav A. C. Naeh measured the size as 57.6 cubic centimeters.¹⁰⁹ This would then yield a k'zayis measuring 25-29 cubic centimeters, nearly one fluid ounce, which is much larger than today's olives.

The Tzlach (Pesachim 116) presents a remarkable view that would further increase the size of a k'zayis. He cites the view that today's eggs are half the size of those at the time of the Gemara.

This is based upon seemingly conflicting statements in the Gemara about measuring the size of a mikva by units of thumbs and units of eggs.¹¹⁰

The Mishna Brurah adopts the Tzlach's view when it comes to Torah mitzvos, such as eating matza. If so, one must eat the size of half a contemporary egg doubled, i.e., a whole egg—at least 50 cubic centimeters. This is the equivalent of almost half a hand matza and almost an entire machine-made matza.

Furthermore, the Shulchan Aruch¹¹¹ requires one to eat a k'zayis from each of the top two matzos together. This would result in a shiur of 100 cubic centimeters! However, since this requirement is only rabbinic, we need not double the shiur out of a concern that the eggs today have shrunk from those at the time of the Gemara.

The Mishna Brurah¹¹² rules that one must swallow a k'zayis at once. This, too, is a rabbinic requirement and can be discharged without doubling the k'zayis. However, the entire larger k'zayis must be eaten within the amount of time it takes to eat three eggs. This is about 4 minutes, although estimates vary from 2 until 9 minutes.¹¹³

The language the Shulchan Aruch (486:1), "some say that a k'zayis is about half an egg" indicates that another view exists—a view which may in fact be more authoritative. This implied other view may be the shiur based on the Rambam—one third of an egg.¹¹⁴ The Shulchan Aruch, as usual, follows the opinion of the Rambam, and quotes the shiur of half an egg as "some say"— i.e., a stringency for Torah law only.

This may generate a "s'feik s'feika" (double doubt) necessitating the doubling only of the smaller shiur. This would require eating two thirds of the size of an egg, rather than the size of an entire egg as the Mishna Brurah rules.

Moreover, it is possible that the more accepted view alluded to in the Shulchan Aruch is the simple one, which is that we only need to eat the size of a contemporary olive, independent of the size of an egg. This would require a reevaluation of the Gemara that seems to establish a relationship between the size of eggs and olives. This would also justify what used to be the common custom of eating a much smaller shiur of k'zayis.¹¹⁵

Nonetheless, the accepted stringency of the Shulchan Aruch to eat half the size of an egg must be practiced whenever possible. As mentioned, our eggs are about 50 cubic centimeters in volume. The Chazon Ish rules¹¹⁶ that a k'zayis is half an egg without its shell. According to the precise measurement of Rav C.P. Beinisch,¹¹⁷ a liquid raw egg is about 45 cubic centimeters in volume. Therefore, a k'zayis would equal 22.5 cubic centimeters.

A cubic centimeter of matza, both hand- and machine-made, weighs about half as much as a cubic centimeter of water. A pound of matza contains about 15 machine-made matzos and about 7.5 hand-baked matzos. The volume of 22.5 cubic centimeters, which weighs about 11.25 grams, is less than two fifths of a machine-made matza, and less than one fifth of a hand-baked matza.¹¹⁸ In cases of illness, one may consider eating only a smaller shiur, either one third of an egg in its shell (about 17 cubic centimeters) or the size of today's olives (no more

than 7.5 cubic centimeters).

Preferably, one should double the shiur to less than four fifths of a machine-made matza or less than two fifths of a hand-baked matza. This accounts for the Mishna Brurah's stringency to double the size of the eggs for a mitzvah mid'oraysa, while simultaneously complying with the rabbinic requirement quoted in the Shulchan Aruch to eat two k'zaysim.

The Rambam¹¹⁹ records the mitzvah to eat matza at the Seder and concludes "when one has eaten a k'zayis of matza one has discharged one's obligation." Rav Soloveitchik z"l, echoing the Netziv¹²⁰, interprets that although the k'zayis is the minimum to discharge the obligation, all the matza that one eats on Seder night counts as a fulfillment of a Torah mitzvah.¹²¹ Thus, even if one eats more than is required, he continues to fulfill the cherished and sublime mitzvah m'deoraysa of eating matza. Therefore, a healthy person should eat much more matzah than the minimum shiur, and consequently should not need to be so exacting about the shiurim.

In Nissan we were redeemed and in Nissan we will be redeemed.¹²² When the Sanhedrin reconvenes, the precise shiur of k'zayis will become known. More importantly, when the Beis Hamikdash will be rebuilt, we will fulfill the mitzvah of bringing and eating a k'zayis of the Korban Pesach as well.

97 Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 453-461

98 Pesachim 99b and Rashi there, Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 471

99 Pesachim 36a, Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 473

100 Rav C.P. Beinisch, Midos V'Shiurei Torah [MVT] (2000 ed.) p. 532; Techumin 10 p. 432

101 To ensure compliance with the requirement that the matzah be baked with the express intent that it be used for the mitzvah ("lishmah").

102 Based on the measurements in MVT (p. 277-8) cited in fn 118

103 Orach Chaim 486:1

104 See Magen Avraham (OC 486), Ri in Tosafos Yoma 80a-b

105 486:1

106 Eruvin 1:9

107 R. Tam in Tosafos Yoma 80a-b, GR"A in his commentary on Mishlei 22:9

108 MVT p. 246

109 ibid.

110 It should be noted, however, that archaeological evidence shows that contemporary eggs and olives are the same size as they were in Talmudic times. Also, the measurements for the revi'is given by the Rambam and Geonim correspond to the smaller eggs. See MVT and Midos Umishkalos shel Torah (R. Y.G.Weiss).

111 475:1

112 475:9

113 Shmiras Shabbos Kehilchasa 48:10 and fn 62

114 Eruvin 1:9, OC 368:3

115 See, e.g. the opinion of R. Chaim Volozhiner in the new (Weinreb) edition of Maaseh Rav (p. 218, 337-8, citing Kehillos Yaakov Pesachim 43). Particularly intriguing is the view of the Chazon Ish. A staunch advocate of the Tzlach's doubling of the eggs, he apparently ruled that half a machine matza is more than a k'zayis, coming to this conclusion by grinding up the matza and measuring the volume of the crumbs. HaRav C.P. Beinisch (Midos V'Shiurei HaTorah p. 278) notes that this method of measuring the k'zayis can include more air space between the crumbs and produce a lenient result. He suggests that the Chazon Ish relied on the fact that the 50 cubic centimeter shiur is based on three stringencies in the measuring of a k'zayis that the Mishna Brurah combined: 1) half an egg; 2) with its shell; 3) doubling the k'zayis. The Chazon Ish held that, strictly speaking, the more correct view is that a k'zayis is: 1) one third of an egg; 2) without the shell; 3) without doubling it. Doubling only applies to eggs and its strict derivations, such as the shiur revi'is (1½ eggs) for kiddush, but not the k'zayis, which is never formally linked to the size of an egg. Or, perhaps, only to the

revi'is, which may be measured intrinsically by thumbs and only indexed to the size of eggs. Removing the shell reduces the size of an egg by about 10 percent (MVT p. 239-40). However, this leniency cannot be combined with the opinion of the Rambam whose shiur is less than a third of an egg with its shell. Therefore, one third of an egg, about 17 cubic centimeters, is required.

116 OC 39:17 s.v. b'Mishna Brurah

117 Midos V'Shiurei HaTorah p. 246

118 MVT p. 277 measured the volume of hand and machine-made matzos precisely; they both weigh about half the equivalent volume of water. A machine-made matza weighed 32.2 grams (about 1 1/7 ounces, as an ounce is 28.3 grams) and measured 62 cubic centimeters. Our matzos may be slightly smaller (15 in a 1lb or 453 gram box yields 30 grams per matza). Nonetheless, 2/5 is 12 grams, more than the 22.5 cubic centimeters (11.25 grams) of half an egg without the shell. For the average hand-baked matza, which is twice the weight (about 7.5 matzos per pound) and volume (since both weigh half the equivalent volume of water), 1/5 of a matza is more than 22.5 cubic centimeters, a k'zayis.

More usefully, the approximate measurement of the required matzah can be expressed in the following table: Matzos per Pound Kezayis (22.5 cc)

6 2/13 matzah 7 1/6 matzah 8 1/5 matzah 9 2/9 matzah 10 1/4 matzah

119 Hilchos Chametz UMatza 6:1

120 Ha'emek Sheila 53:4

121 See Kehillas Yaacov Brachos 5

122 Rosh Hashana 11a

YU PESACH TO-GO • NISAN 5771

Eating Matza all Seven Days of Pesach

Rabbi Ezra Schwartz

Faculty, Stone Beit Midrash Program and Bochein, RIETS

Rabbi, Mount Sinai Jewish Center, NYC

The gemara teaches that unlike the first night of Pesach where there is a mitzvah to eat matza, during the rest of the holiday, consuming matza is an option rather than an obligation.

A beraisa supports [the opinion of] Rava: "Six days you shall eat matza and on the seventh day it shall be a resting for Hashem your God" just as on the seventh day [eating matza] is not obligatory, so too the first six days [eating matza] is not obligatory ... Can it be that even the first night [eating matza] is not obligatory? It was learned from "on matzos and maror it shall be eaten" Pesachim 120a

This conventional understanding is challenged by the GRA of Vilna.

Eating matza all seven days is considered a mitzvah, and is only referred to as not obligatory in relation to the first night [of Pesach] on which there is an obligation [to eat matza]. This mitzvah [to eat matza all seven days] is from the Torah. Maaseh Rav 185

The GRA teaches that there is a Biblical mitzvah to eat matza all seven days of Pesach. Even though the gemara limits the obligation to eat matza to the first night of Yom Tov, one who chooses to eat matza all seven days fulfills a mitzvah and will be duly rewarded.⁶⁰ We will endeavor to properly understand this famous comment of the GRA.

Fulfilling Peshuto Shel Mikra

The simplest understanding of the GRA is that the mitzva to eat matza all seven days is simply a restatement of the simple meaning of the passuk.⁶¹ Although Chazal understand the Torah's directive to consume matza for seven days in the passive sense, namely, one should not consume food that is chametz, nevertheless the GRA contends that the pasuk is instructing us that one who eats matza all seven days of Pesach has fulfilled a mitzvah.⁶² If so, the GRA is arguing that the simple meaning of a pasuk, even when that verse is understood differently by Chazal, conveys a mitzvah d'oraisa. There seem to be a number of other instances where there is a mitzvah d'oraisa to follow the simple reading of the pasuk although Chazal understand the pasuk differently. A

case in point is the mitzvah to wear a talis katan on top of one's garments so that he can always see the tzitzis and remember all the mitzvos of Hashem.⁶³ It seems that this is a fulfillment on the level of d'oraisa akin to the GRA's comment regarding matza. Similarly, the Tur (647) cites opinions that one should obtain aravot that grew on the side of a river. This seems to be a fulfillment of the simple meaning of the pasuk. Mitzvos Hareshus In effect, the GRA is teaching that there is an optional mitzvah to eat matza for all seven days of Yom Tov. This notion of an optional mitzvah seems to be puzzling at first glance. Mitzvos are commandments; we are obligated to do them and our reward comes from the fact that we listen to G-d's directive. Earning reward for something that is not required seems to run afoul of some of the fundamental beliefs of Judaism.⁶⁴ Even so, there are a number of instances where we see precisely this idea. Rabbi Schachter in his introduction to the Sefer Mipnenei HaRav lists a number of these cases. This list includes the mitzvah to live in the Land of Israel, the mitzvah to give maser beheima to Kohanim and the mitzvah to separate terumos and maasros from fruits.⁶⁵ In all of these cases there is no Torah obligation yet one who performs these acts will merit the reward for performing a mitzvah d'oraisa.

Source

What remains unclear however is the source for this novel insight of the GRA. The GRA proves his position from the discussion in Rishonim regarding wearing tefillin on Chol haMoed. We know that tefillin are not worn on Shabbos because Shabbos is an "os" and there is, hence, no need for the additional "os" of tefillin. The question of wearing tefillin on Chol haMoed hinges on what the precise definition of the "os" is. If the "os" of Shabbos refers to the prohibition of melacha, it would then seem that on Chol haMoed, when certain melachos are permitted, and many assume that Chizkuni is saying the same as the GRA, it seems to me that they disagree as to whether even those which are forbidden may only be forbidden by rabbinic rather than Torah decree, then tefillin should be worn. However, if the "os" of Shabbos and Yom Tov is the mitzvos that one performs, one should be exempt from tefillin on Chol haMoed since the mitzvah to sit in Sukka and to eat matza extends throughout Chol haMoed as well. GRA assumes that the "os" referred to is the mitzvah of eating matza all seven days of Pesach. Consequently, tefillin are not worn on Chol haMoed.⁶⁶

Bracha

It is interesting to note that the GRA does not cite proof to his position from the extensive literature in the Rishonim as to whether one who eats matza all seven days of Pesach should recite a bracha. Virtually all poskim write that a bracha should not be recited. The primary source cited in this context is the statement of Baal HaMaor at the end of Pesachim. Some ask why we don't make a bracha on eating matza during the seven days of Pesach just as we make a bracha on sitting in the Sukkah all seven days of Sukkos, since we do base the halachos of one on the other, such as the status of the first night being obligatory for both and not obligatory during the rest of the holiday? The answer is that a person can go through the rest of the days of Pesach without eating matza, and be sustained on other food, whereas it's impossible to not sleep all seven days of Sukkos and one is required to sleep in the Sukkah and spend time in the Sukkah. Baal HaMaor Pesachim 26b

Baal HaMaor asks why we do not recite a bracha on matza all seven days while we do recite a bracha on Sukka throughout the Yom Tov. He answers that whereas it is possible to go through the entire Yom Tov of Pesach without eating matza and subsist on other foods, it is impossible to go without sleeping during Sukkos. Avnei Nezer 377 understands Baal HaMaor to mean that eating matza all seven days of Pesach constitutes a mitzvah, albeit not an obligatory one.⁶⁷ Many other Rishonim, however, offer different answers to the question of why no bracha is recited on matza all seven days of Pesach. R' Yitzchak ben Abba Mari of Marsailles explains that in fact there is no mitzvah to eat

matza all seven days of Pesach. The entire mitzvah on the last days of Pesach amounts to refraining from chametz. Consequently a bracha is not recited. It's logical to say that when one needs to eat in the Sukkah one fulfills the positive mitzvah of the Torah "in sukkos you shall dwell" whereas when one eats matza there is no positive mitzvah one fulfills, rather just the fulfilling of not violating the prohibition of eating Chametz, and there is no bracha on [avoiding]

Similar ideas are expressed in the Teshuvos HaRashba (vol 3 no. 287) and in the Orchos Chaim (Hilchos Leil Pesach no. 29). This same idea, that no bracha is recited on matza throughout Pesach, since there is no true mitzvah to consume matza all Yom Tov, finds its way to the page of the Shulchan Aruch.

The reason there is no bracha on eating matza all seven days is because there is no mitzvah to eat it but rather one is not violating the prohibition of eating chametz, which is not the case with Sukkah. Magen Avraham 639

It is clear from the presentation of the Magen Avraham that the reason no bracha is recited on matza after the first nights of Yom Tov is that there is no mitzvah to eat matza throughout the holiday.⁶⁸

Many entertain the notion that according to the GRA perhaps a bracha should be recited whenever one eats matza during the Pesach holiday. In fact, Teshuvos Maharsham (vol 1 no. 209) refers to a "tzadik" who recited a bracha on matza all seven days of Pesach. He notes however that this "tzadik" was actually acting against the halacha and should desist from his practice. Sdei Chemed (vol. 8 chametz umatza no. 14, 10) cites much discussion of this question. The consensus opinion seems to be that a bracha is not recited even according to the GRA.⁶⁹ However the Netziv in his Teshuvos Meishiv Davar (Vol. 2 no. 77) writes that perhaps one who recites a bracha on an optional mitzvah has not violated the prohibition of bracha levatala. He suggests that this may be the reasoning behind the position of Rav Saadia Gaon cited by the Rosh at the end of Yoma that one recites a bracha when immersing in the mikva on erev Yom Kippur. According to the Netziv the practice of immersing in a mikva before Yom Tov is an optional mitzvah and one may recite a bracha when performing such a mitzvah. This position has not been accepted by the poskim.⁷⁰

Proofs From the Gemara

The GRA himself does not bring any proofs from the gemara that one who eats matza all seven days of Pesach performs a mitzvah. However, later seforim locate a number of gemaros that seem to prove the GRA's thesis. The gemara in Pesachim 28b discusses the prohibition to derive benefit from chametz after Pesach. Rabbi Yehuda is of the opinion that this is a Biblical prohibition. However, Rabbi Shimon assumes that the prohibition is only rabbinic in nature.

Rabbi Shimon said [to Rabbi Yehuda]: Can you say this? Does it not already say in the Torah "do not eat chametz, for seven days eat matza", and if so, what is the meaning of "do not eat chametz" – when there is a mitzvah to eat matza there is a prohibition to eat chametz, and when there is no mitzvah to eat matza there is no prohibition of eating chametz. Pesachim 28b

Effectively, Rabbi Shimon is arguing that the prohibition of chametz cannot exist after Pesach since at that time there is no mitzvah to eat matza. What does it mean to say "when there is no mitzvah to eat matza there is no prohibition to eat chametz" for there is no mitzvah to eat matza all seven days? Rather one must assume that even though there is no requirement to eat matza all seven days it's still appropriate to use the terminology of having a mitzvah all seven days to eat matza, since the Torah explicitly writes "you shall eat matza all seven days" Pnei Yehoshua on Pesachim 28b

Pnei Yehoshua asks how Rabbi Shimon can link the prohibition to eat chametz with the mitzvah to eat matza when the mitzvah to consume matza applies only the first night of Pesach, and not throughout the Yom Tov. It would seem from this gemara that Rabbi Shimon maintains,

like the GRA, that one who consumes matza all seven days of Pesach fulfills a mitzvah. 71 Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky, in his Chazon Yechezkel, cites another gemara that indicates that one fulfills a mitzvah by consuming matza all seven days of Pesach. The gemara in Pesachim 38b teaches that one does not fulfill the mitzvah of matza with the matza that was baked for the korban todah. The reason offered is only matza that can be eaten for seven days may be used to fulfill the mitzvah.

If eating matza for the duration of Pesach is an act devoid of spiritual merit, why would the gemara insist on matza that can be eaten for all seven days? Apparently, the gemara is teaching that the status of matza is relevant for all seven days of Yom Tov. This accords nicely with the position of GRA.

Rav Yosef Engel, in his Gilyonei HaShas, (Pesachim 38a) has a beautiful essay where he accumulates sources that eating matza all seven days of Pesach is a mitzvah. Matzos made from maser sheni, according to Rabbi Meir, cannot be used to fulfill the mitzvah on Pesach, and according to the rabbis can be used to fulfill the mitzvah on Pesach. An esrog of maser sheni, according to Rabbi Meir, can be used to fulfill the mitzvah on Yom Tov, and according to the rabbis, can't be used to fulfill the mitzvah on Yom Tov. Pesachim 38a

The gemara teaches that one does not fulfill the mitzvah of matza or esrog with an item of maser sheni. The reason as the gemara explains is both matza and esrog must belong to you, and Rabbi Meir maintains that maser sheni, with its heightened status of kedusha is mammon gavoh, the property of the Divine, rather than your own property. However, R' Yosef Engel notes that in the context of esrog, the gemara uses the expression Yom Tov, whereas in the context of matza the expression Pesach is used. R' Yosef Engel explains that this is because one who eats matza all the days of Pesach fulfills a Biblical mitzvah. However, the Biblical mitzvah of lulav applies only the first day of Yom Tov. Consequently the broader term Pesach is used with respect to matza and the more limited term Yom Tov is used with respect to esrog.⁷²

The Netziv in his Teshuvos Meishiv Davar (vol. 2 #77) cites a fourth gemara that seems to indicate that one who eats matza all seven days of Pesach has fulfilled a mitzvah. The gemara in Pesachim 40a-b teaches that the mother of Mar, the son of Ravina, would fill baskets with wheat to prepare for the matzos of Pesach. The Netziv wonders, what was the need to prepare so much wheat for matzos? Apparently, there was a need for so much matza since the mitzvah to eat matza is not limited to the first night of Yom Tov alone. Rather, any matza consumed for seven days of Pesach fulfills this important mitzvah.⁷³

Extension or Creation

Upon further reflection, the proof text Netziv adduces for the GRA's position sheds much light on this mitzvah. According to Netziv, not only is there a mitzvah to eat matza all seven days of Pesach, but that matza must be shmura matza as well. Effectively, this means that the mitzvah to consume matza all seven days of Pesach is an extension of the mitzvah to eat matza on the Seder night.⁷⁴ As such, the same type of matza, shmura matza, which is required on the Seder night, is needed to fulfill this mitzvah of eating matza all seven days.⁷⁵

This same point was also made by one of the great, though not popular gedolim of the past generation. Rav Michael Forshlager was a student of the Avnei Nezer who settled in Baltimore.⁷⁶ Rav Forshlager in his Sefer Toras Michael chapter 14 addresses a question posed by the Chelkas Yoav. Chelkas Yoav (Vol 1 #21) asks why we need a pasuk to obligate women in the eating of matza. If the GRA is correct that there is a mitzvas hareshus to eat matza all seven days of Pesach, then women should be obligated to eat matza without a special pasuk- since the exemption of women from time bound positive mitzvos applies only to obligatory mitzvos, not to optional ones. Rav Forshlager answers that the mitzvah to eat matza all seven days is an extension of the mitzvah from the Seder night. Consequently, in the absence of a pasuk, women would not have to eat matza the first night and despite the voluntary

nature of the mitzvah the rest of the Yom Tov, they would be exempt all seven days, much as they are exempt from eating the first night. Rav Forshlager is arguing that because women are obligated to eat matza the first night, they fulfill a mitzvah with the matza they consume the rest of Pesach. The argument continues that this can serve to explain, as well, why according to the GRA a bracha is not recited every time one eats matza throughout Pesach. After all, if eating matza is the fulfillment of a mitzvah, shouldn't a bracha be recited? Rav Forshlager explains that the bracha one recites at the Seder pertains to and serves to exempt all the matza consumed during Pesach. This logic has led some modern day poskim to posit that when one recites the bracha on matza at the Seder he should have in mind to exempt all the matza that he will eat throughout the Yom Tov.⁷⁷

However, Rav Forshlager's assumption that the mitzvah to eat matza all Pesach is an extension of the Seder night is not entirely clear. In an article in the journal Torah She'Be'al Peh (vol 39, 1988), Rav Yosef Eliyahu Movshawitz shows that Pesachim 36a indicates that there is no mitzvah to eat the type of matza one eats at the Seder all seven days of Pesach.⁷⁸ The first day don't knead [matza] with honey, from then on, knead [matza] with honey. Pesachim 36a

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi told his sons that on the first day of Pesach they should not knead matzos for him with honey, but the rest of Yom Tov they may do so. This statement may be understood in one of two ways. Either the gemara is taking issue with the statement of the GRA and assumes that there is no mitzvah whatsoever to consume matza all seven days of Pesach. Alternatively, the gemara assumes that there is a mitzvah to consume matza for all seven days of Pesach, but the substance of the matza that is consumed throughout Pesach need not be lechem oni- poor man's bread, and matza ashira would suffice. Rav Movshawitz believes that the second possibility is more correct. There is a mitzvah to consume matza all seven days of Yom Tov; however the matza one consumes the rest of Yom Tov need not be lechem oni. The rationale for this position is the statement of Maharal of Prague cited in Magen Avraham (471:5) that one may not consume matza made with a combination of water and fruit juice on Erev Pesach. Although such matza may not be used for the mitzvah of matza at the seder, as it does not constitute lechem oni, nevertheless it is considered matza and may not be eaten on Erev Pesach. Apparently, the term matza applies to matza ashira as well as to ordinary lechem oni. Consequently, Rav Movshawitz argues the GRA may hold that one fulfills the mitzvah of eating matza throughout Pesach with matza ashira. Others explain that matza represents two opposite notions- freedom and slavery. Slavery is commemorated on the first night of Yom Tov only. Consequently, only on the first night is there a mitzvah to eat lechem oni. The mitzvah that is fulfilled the rest of Pesach is a commemoration of freedom. Therefore, even matza ashira may be eaten.⁷⁹

This position, as intriguing as it sounds, is actually quite difficult. The Torah writes: For seven days you should eat not eat chametz; rather you should consume matza, lechem oni. Devarim 16:3

It seems clear that one does not fulfill his mitzvah with matza ashira.⁸⁰ The question of whether the mitzvah to eat matza all seven days of Pesach is an extension of the mitzvah from the first night or a new mitzvah has a number of applications. Does one need to consume a kzais of matza each day of Pesach to get the mitzvah? Does one merit more reward for each additional drop of matza that he eats?⁸¹ These questions and others are worth pondering as we perform the mitzvah of eating matza all seven days of Pesach.

<http://text.rcarabbis.org/bringing-the-geulah-through-mekhirat-chametz-by-daniel-z-feldman/>

Faculty, Stone Beit Midrash Program

Mekhirat chametz sometimes gets a bad rap. The widespread practice of observant Jews selling their chametz to a non-Jew prior to Pesach, and thus avoiding the prohibitions of bal yeraeh and bal yematze while preserving the chametz for repossession after Pesach, is sometimes seen as a way of (not) having one's cake and eating it too; an evasion that perhaps fulfills the technical imperative of the Torah directive (and perhaps not), yet seems to be artificial and contrived in nature. The ambivalence toward this practice (as well as other "sale" approaches, which are subject to varying degrees of controversy) is reflected in the joke that is told about a rabbinic ban on smoking: the orthodox Jews aren't worried, as they will simply sell their lungs to a non-Jew. This conflicted attitude is played out in the halakhic literature. True, the Tosefta² does speak of a situation in which a Jew, finding himself stuck at sea as Pesach approaches, transfers ownership of his chametz to a non-Jewish fellow traveler, and reclaims it after the holiday. However, the impression is one of an unplanned, non-ideal, and isolated incident; the current reality, where entire communities plan in advance to preserve their stocks of chametz through annually scheduled arrangements with their local rabbi, appears to be a significant expansion of the depicted scenario.

A more commonly heard complaint is that the sale seems like a joke: the chametz does not leave the original owner's residence (something some poskim insisted should happen³); the purchaser does not appear interested in actually taking possession of the chametz;⁴ rarely if ever does the seller have to open his doors and cabinets to the new owner of his food; and the chametz invariably reverts to its original ownership immediately after Pesach.

Rabbenu Yerucham,⁵ commenting on the Tosefta's ruling, asserts that one who utilizes this option should not engage in ha'aramah (evasion of the halakhah). The Beit Yosef⁶ questions this requirement as the entire plan appears to be a ha'aramah, and yet, it is permitted!

Persistent Controversy

Controversy over the sale has persisted over the generations, despite its increasing usage, and while some of the objections focused on the more problem-fraught method of a rabbi purchasing his congregants' chametz in order to sell it to a non-Jew,⁷ it is clear that some great rabbinic authorities⁸ objected even to the more prevalent current practice, where the rabbi does not purchase the chametz but rather acts as an agent to sell it to the purchaser.⁹

The Bekhor Shor¹⁰ asserts that mekhirat chametz is indeed a ha'aramah, and for that reason is ineffective against a biblical prohibition of owning chametz. He assumes, however, that the chametz at hand is only subject to a rabbinical prohibition, because, as the Talmud¹¹ states in the context of bedikat chametz, the bitul of chametz is effective to negate the Torah prohibition.¹²

Thus, while the practice, as a ha'aramah, is improper for addressing a biblical prohibition, it is nevertheless appropriate, as the ownership of chametz, following bitul, is only a rabbinic prohibition.¹³

However, many achronim¹⁴ challenged that premise, noting that the chametz that is negated is not the same chametz as that which is sold, and thus a biblical prohibition would still apply; as such, one who would utilize mekhirat chametz must be comfortable that it is effective on a Torah level.¹⁵

R. Moshe Shternbuch, in his responsa¹⁶, suggests an alternate reason to deem the situation a rabbinical prohibition, noting that the area in which the chametz is located is leased out to the purchaser (presumably with full intent) and that the view of many rishonim is that one is not in violation of bal yiraeh on a Torah level for owning chametz that is physically in the possession of another ("eino b'rshuto").¹⁷ Thus, the Bekhor Shor's premise can be upheld for other reasons. However, R. Shternbuch then proceeds to express reservations of the mekhirah on other grounds, such as a debate among poskim as to whether the area of

the chametz should be sold or leased, and questions as to whether any of the many forms of "kinyan" used are effective between Jews and non-Jews. In a different responsum, R. Shternbuch expresses concern about the methodology of repurchasing the chametz after Pesach, and whether or not the process is carried out appropriately. (Among other considerations, it is vitally important that the chametz is sold back in a new transaction, rather than in a nullification of the original sale; otherwise, it will be determined retroactively that the chametz was never sold, and was in Jewish possession during Pesach.)

Indeed, there are many who have adopted a policy not to sell chametz gamur, presumably reflecting a lack of confidence in the sale's efficacy together with the assumption that the chametz in question is not batel.¹⁸

Nonetheless, the acceptance of mekhirat chametz in all forms is widespread, with Jews purchasing chametz knowing in advance it will be sold, and some poskim even considering the question of whether it should be an obligation to sell one's chametz as part of the appropriate safeguards for Pesach.¹⁹ There is also a view expressed in some of the halakhic literature that even a sale of questionable validity will at least accomplish permitting the chametz after Pesach, because the desire and attempt to sell reflect a mental disconnection from the chametz (along the lines of bitul) that mitigates the transgression.²⁰

In Defense of Mechirat Chametz

Perhaps an explanation can be offered for the embrace by so much of observant Jewry of the embattled mekhirat chametz. It would begin by considering the prohibitions of bal yeraeh and bal yematze that the sale is meant to address. The Ran²¹ asserts that these prohibitions serve as a kind of "syag min haTorah."²² In essence, the Torah is really primarily concerned that we should not eat chametz. However, if chametz is kept in one's possession, there is a great risk that in a distracted moment, or in the course of a semi-awake midnight snack, one might prepare himself a meal of the normally-permitted chametz. To avoid this eventuality, all chametz must be removed from one's possession.

By embracing mekhirat chametz, Klal Yisrael is declaring that there are two things that can prevent them from eating chametz: not having any, and the transgression of gezel. If the chametz is in one's house, but is off-limits because of the prohibition of stealing, that is enough to keep the Jews away from its consumption. Therefore, it doesn't matter whether or not the chametz will ever be picked up by its purchaser, or whether or not the sale will be reversed after Pesach. All that does matter is that during Pesach, the chametz legally belongs to another; that is enough to make sure it will be untouched. In other words, Klal Yisrael is willing to stake its "kareit" on its commitment to avoiding theft.

In this context, it is worth noting the words of the Semag²³ who states that the exile has gone on too long because of deficiencies in honesty and integrity in dealing with the nations of the world. When that problem is present, redemption can not take place; it would be a chilul Hashem for G-d to redeem a nation that is perceived as immoral. As such, perhaps the practice of mekhirat chametz is a conscious decision, at a time when we focus on geulah, to enter into a monetary relationship with a non-Jewish person, and to honor the integrity of that relationship with one's spiritual life. Such an attitude, taken with proper seriousness, might just bring the geulah, one step at a time.

Rabbi Michael Rosensweig The Conjunction of Sippur and Zechirat Mitzrayim

The mitzvah of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim - to publicize the story of the exodus on the first night of Pesach - constitutes an independent mitzvah, and is a central component in the Pesach experience. The Rambam devotes a full chapter (7) of his Hilchot Chametz u-Matzah to the details of this mitzvah. This focus is particularly noteworthy when contrasted with his treatment of the parallel obligation of zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim

- to remember the exodus - that applies daily. The Rambam omits that continuous obligation from the list of 613 commandments, as many mefarshim noted; he subtly integrates that theme with the daily mitzvah of keriat Shema (see Shiurim le-Zecher Abba Mori on this topic). The Rambam's formulation of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim is especially intriguing in light of this stark contrast. In the beginning of chapter 7, he introduces the theme of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim by invoking a verse (Shemot 13:3) that specifically articulates the obligation of zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim. He states as follows: "mizvat aseih shel Torah le-sapper be-nisim ve-niflaot she-naasu le-avoteinu be-Mitzrayim be-leil chamishah asar be-Nissan she-nemar zachor et ha-yom asher yazatem mi-Mitzrayim kemo shenemar zachor et yom haShabbat...."

Indeed, Rashi, citing the Mechilta, explicitly links that verse to the daily obligation to remember the exodus. The Rambam's emphasis of zechirat Mitzrayim in the sippur context is especially puzzling when one considers that in the very next line he cites "vehigadeta la-bincha ba-yom hahu leimor...", a proof text that does refer to sippur yetziat Mitzrayim. The reference in the Rambam's sippur yetziat Mitzrayim presentation of "zachor et yom ha-Shabbat"- the fact that we usher in the Shabbat by means of the kiddush - as an apparent parallel also commands our attention. What did the Rambam seek to convey about sippur yetziat Mitzrayim with these seemingly gratuitous references?

Perhaps the Rambam's linkage to daily zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim and weekly kiddush conveys an important perspective on how the halachah perceives and projects even (and, perhaps, especially) singular themes and unique experiences. Rather than innovate an entirely novel structure to celebrate and commemorate the inimitable event of the exodus, the halachah invariably invokes and applies, in some cases adapts broader existing categories, albeit in singular fashion. This approach accomplishes the dual, yet complementary objectives of sharpening the contrast to highlight particularly novel dimensions, while simultaneously integrating the novel components into the totality of halachic life, also demonstrating its wider relevance and coherence vis-a-vis halachic total halachic commitment. By invoking the pasuk of zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim and by alluding to the parallel role of kiddush, the Rambam provides a wider halachic context, framework, and perspective for the singular manifestation of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim. By reminding us of zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim, the Rambam subtly underscores that the obligation of sippur does not arise in a vacuum, nor is its scope and impact restricted to a single night. Moreover, the coordinating and tone-setting effect of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim on the total commemoration and celebration of the seder night is not unprecedented; the ubiquitous kiddush every Shabbat effectively serves that very function.

The Rambam's carefully crafted articulation of the mitzvah of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim subtly yet artfully conveys that the singular focus of the actual night of Pesach is further enhanced by its wide and pervasive impact, as expressed in daily zechirat Mitzrayim. Moreover, while the emphasis on details, the need to verbalize, perhaps the requirement to engage in a dialectic, and various other components differentiate the sippur of the seder night from the daily zechirah, it is the ubiquitous zechirah, which according to the Rambam is integrated with the tenet of kabbalat ol malchut Shamayim in the context of keriat Shema, that determines sippur's ultimate significance even as a concrete commemoration of the historical event of the exodus. Thus, zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim and sippur yetziat Mitzrayim are mutually enhancing, even mutually dependent. Without the detailed, intense and more concrete sippur practiced once a year, the more amorphous and abstract zechirah would be compromised; absent the continuous outlet and impact provided by daily zechirah, the anniversary of the exodus would be nothing more than a nostalgic memory.

This halachic formula for structuring singular motifs, particularly regarding the Pesach holiday, is typical, as demonstrated by other aspects of the seder night. The korban Pesach constitutes an extraordinary rule-

breaking korban in many respects, reflecting the singular dimensions of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim and the actual experience of Pesach Mitzrayim. It is brought outside of the confines of the regular temidim structure (alecha hashlem). Moreover, the function of shechitah and the eating of the korban, the institution of the minui and chaburah, the application of yotze, and numerous other novelties differentiate Pesach from typical korbanot, as well. Yet, with all of its novelty, korban Pesach retains the fundamental form and structure and status of a korban and is rightly perceived by the Mishnah and Talmud in that context. The adaptations of various principles as they are applied to korban Pesach accommodate its special themes, yet retain the core of the classical korban structure.

The four kosot of the seder certainly represent a novelty. Yet, surely, the utilization of existing halachic structures of kiddush, birkat hamazon, and hallel is significant. This method accentuates the singular facet of the seder night by highlighting sharp contrasts, even as it also establishes a sense of continuity, relevance, and coherence with the totality of halachic life. The Rambam ruled (Hilchot Chametz u-Matzah 8:6) that the typical yom tov requirement of lechem mishneh (2 breads) should include a broken matzah (perusah) on the night of the seder. He explains that while the generic requirement of lechem mishneh is retained, its application on this unique night should reflect the singular motif of Pesach. Refashioning the existing structure subtly further underscores the novel aspects of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim; retaining the classical structures of halachic conduct accentuates the themes of continuity and integration with the totality of halachic life.

While this perspective reflects a general tendency, it is of particular importance and relevance with respect to the celebration of yetziat Mitzrayim. This unique experience literally transformed the Jewish people, paving the way for mattan Torah and a singular relationship with Hashem, reflected by the reference to yetziat Mitzrayim in the introduction of the aseret ha-dibrot. At the same time, as the Ramban (end of parshat Bo) notes, this singular event confirmed and reinforced the very purpose of Creation and Jewish destiny, and became the ultimate expression of the theological tenets of Hashem's existence and special providence that underpin every important dimension of halachic life. [Hence, also the link between zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim and keriat Shema.] Everything we do on the seder night, including some of the general routines of yom tov, cannot help but be refashioned and reformulated to reflect the profound impact of that singular evening and experience. The innovative application of the traditional halachic structures on the seder night highlights this reality, even as the continuity afforded by typical and conventional halachic structure conveys the equally powerful motifs of the general indispensability of halachic structure, as well as of the dual status of yetziat Mitzrayim as a singular event on the one hand, and as a transformative experience that profoundly impacted on and integrated into the totality of halachic life, on the other.

The Rambam's subtle, yet elegant articulation and integration of zechirat and sippur yetziat Mitzrayim truly captures this central theme as the focal point of our national celebration.

Copyright © 2011 by The TorahWeb Foundation. All rights reserved

from TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>
to weeklydt@torahweb2.org,
date Thu, Apr 24, 2008 at 11:41 AM
subject Rabbi Hershel Schachter - It's All One Matza
Rabbi Hershel Schachter
It's All One Matza

On the seder night we do yahatz before we begin magid, i.e. we break the middle matza in half, and put away the larger half for the afikoman, before we tell the story of yetziat Mitzrayim. The Talmud understood that the matza on Pesach night is called ^וlechem oni^ו for two

reasons: 1) the matzas should be on the table while we tell the story of yetzias Mitzrayim (^Ólechেম sheonim alav devarim harbey^Ó) 2) that the matza should be a prusa (broken and not whole). These two reasons combined cause us to have the broken matza (prusa) on the table (^Ólechেম sheonim^Á^Ó) before magid.

We find that the same matza is symbolic of both the slavery of our ancestors as well as their being freed (the geula). Immediately following yachatz we declare ^Óho lachma anya^Ó, that this type of matzalechem oni^Ó. Later on in the hagada we quote the statement of Rabban Gamliel that the matza we eat is reminiscent of the fact that at the time of the geula the Jews left Egypt in such haste that there wasn^Ót enough time for their dough to rise. Why have the matza symbolize two opposite concepts? was eaten by our forefathers in Egypt, and is therefore referred to by the Torah as ^Ó

The mishna (Berachos 54a) tells us that just as one recites a beracha to praise Hashem when something wonderful occurs, so too we ought to recite a beracha praising Hashem when a tragedy occurs. The wording of the mishna (^Ójust like^Áso too^Ó) seems to equate the two berachos. The Talmud (60b) finds this equation difficult, since in fact the beracha we recite on good tidings (hatov vehamaitiv) is different than the beracha we recite when a tragedy occurs (dayan hamemes). This equation seems no more valid than saying that just as one recites a beracha upon eating potato chips (hoadama), so too one should recite a beracha upon putting on tefillin (l^Óhaniach Tefillin) - the two berachos recited on the two occasions have nothing to with each other!

The gemara answers the question by explaining that while the wording of the two berachos is different, they do in fact share something common: both should be recited in a state of joy (simcha). Why should both be recited b^Ósimcha? The Shulchan Aruch quotes from Rabbeinu Yona that we ought to have emunah (faith) that everything that G-d does is really for the good. While the wording (nusach) of the beracha cannot be the same, since according to our perception we experience a tragedy, at the same time we are expected to believe that an awful tragedy is really letova and that G-d would never allow anything that is objectively bad to occur. Therefore we recite the bearcha of dayan haemes in a state of simcha.

At yachatz one matza is broken into two parts. The appearance at first is that the matza represents the pain and suffering that our forefathers experienced while in slavery. But we refer to the afikoman as tzafun (the hidden piece). What was concealed from us during all the years of slavery was that all of that suffering was really letova. The two pieces are from the same matza! Just as the second half-matzageula was clearly letova, so too the first half-matza representing the years of pain and suffering was also letova. representing

Copyright © 2008 by The TorahWeb Foundation. All rights reserved.

--

From TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org> To
weeklydt@torahweb2.org

Rabbi Benjamin Yudin

The TorahWeb Foundation

Guess Who's Coming To Dinner?

The mishnah (Pesachim 116:b) mandates that in every generation a person is obligated to look at himself as though he personally departed from Egypt. The Rambam, (Hilchos Chametz U'matzah7:6,7) cites this command as the reason for our reclining and drinking four cups of wine at the seder. The Alter of Slabodka is purported to have said that this is the most challenging mitzvah of the night of Pesach.

At first glance, the mishnah is teaching that the level of hakoras hatov we must all have at the seder is not simply for what He did for our ancestors and that we would not be where we are today were it not for His kindnesses afforded them, rather, we must look at the exodus and

express a personal hakoras hatov for what He did for us.

The birkas ha-gomel, thanksgiving blessing, is mandated by the Talmud (Berachos 54b) for the following four survivors: (a) one who completed a sea journey (b) one who completed a hazardous land journey such as crossing a dessert, (c) one who recovered from a serious illness (d) one released from captivity. Interestingly, our meal at the seder is upgraded to a seudas ho'da'ah - meal of thanksgiving, as upon leaving Egypt we successfully experienced all four. The Alshich asks, if the motivation and cause for the thanksgiving is appreciation for what Hashem has done, than in reality we should be reciting this blessing constantly, as his kindnesses are with us always. Therefore, he teaches it is not only the salvation from these threatening circumstances, but as the verse in Tehillim (107:24) which is the scriptural source for this blessing states "they have seen the deeds of Hashem". When one hears of the salvation that another experienced, it bolsters their faith in G-D, and His personal involvement in the affairs of man. When however, an individual experiences a personal life-saving situation, they are giving thanks for the privilege of seeing G-D first hand. A miraculous outcome for someone else solidifies my belief intellectually, but when I am the direct recipient of His kindness my Emunah-faith is elevated to a tangible experiential level.

Tehillim (33:1) states: "ranenu tzadikim Ba'Shem - sing joyfully oh righteous because of Hashem." The Medrash Shocheh Tov points out that it does not say "el Hashem" which would mean sing to Hashem, rather Ba'Shem, understood that as soon as they are privileged to see the Devine they sing. Thus, we find immediately prior to the miraculous rescue at Yam Suf, (Shemos 14:31) "Israelsaw the great hand that Hashem inflicted upon Egypt", and immediately thereafter, (15:1) "then Moshe and the children of Israel sang this song". We also find at the opening day ceremony to the inauguration of the Mishkan that the Torah teaches (Vayikra 9:24), "A fire went forth from before Hashem, the people saw, and sang glad song". Similarly, the prophet Micha (7:15) promises "as in the days when you left the land of Egypt, I will show it (Jewish people) wonders". And lastly, we also pray in the daily in every shemoneh esrei, "may our eyes witness Your return to Zion".

The Talmud (Berachos 12a) explains why the Shema in the morning is followed by the blessing of Emes veyatziv, while that of the night is followed by Emes v'emunah, by citing the passuk(Tehillim 92:3) "to relate your kindness in the morning and your faith at night." Why do we focus on "kindness" in the morning but on "faith" at night? Daytime represents clarity, when one can see and comprehend with certainty; things are "clear as day", as the saying goes. This refers to the kindnesses and miracles that He performed for us. Nighttime, however, indicates the doubt and uncertainty we may have as to when and how we will be extricated from our communal and personal challenges. As such, nighttime is a time to draw upon one's faith that redemption- geulah will come.

The majority of mitzvos - shofar, lulav, tefillin, hallel - are all day mitzvos, reflecting the positive and open relationship between Hashem and Israel. Why, asks the Vilna Gaon in his Oros HaGrah, are the mitzvos of Pesach - eating the korban Pesach, matzoh, and marror - all night mitzvos? His answer is that the night of Pesach is philosophically and halachically a day. Similarly the Gaon explains that although the Torah says (Shemos 13:8), "you shall tell your son on that day" when describing the mitzvah of sippur yetzias mitzraim, we fulfill this mitzvah at night since this night is axiologically a day. We experienced on this night His presence with such clarity that the character of this night was forever transformed from a night of faith to a virtual daytime of seeing.

Thus, the charge to "look at oneself as if they personally left Egypt" means not only to attempt to put oneself back in time over three thousand years ago, but rather to know with absolute surety that Hashem, the Honored Guest at our seder, will solve our communal and personal pressing problems.

<http://www.artscroll.com/Chapters/hageh-011.html> 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 IX: The Redemption To Come

“Just as in the days of your going out from Egypt will I show wonders to them.” (Michah 7:15)

“In the night of Pesach all that happened in Egypt renews and bestirs itself; and this itself helps to bring the ultimate redemption.” (Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto)

As we finish retracing the road from bondage to freedom we naturally want to offer praise and homage to God for all that He did for us. We raise our cups to recite Hallel, echoing the songs of praise which the Jews sang at the Exodus. But can we really do so with all the fibers of our heart? Has the process of redemption that started at the Burning Bush really run its course? Very clearly it has not - and so on Seder night, even as we rejoice with the dawn of freedom in Egypt, we look ahead to the full unfolding of the ultimate redemption. In fact, we hope and pray with all our heart that our celebration - nay, our reliving of the momentous events of the Exodus - and our renewed dedication to God who revealed Himself then as the source of all freedom, will help reopen the wellsprings of freedom that are meant to flow in this night, bringing about our speedy final deliverance.

There is, thus, a duality about Pesach: the liberation from Egypt and the redemption to come; occurring at the two extremes of our history, they are inextricably linked at this moment in our lives. At the Burning Bush Moses was told by God, “I will be He who I shall be” (Shemos 3:14). Our Sages explain this as an assurance that “I will be with them in this time of suffering as I will be with them when they are in bondage to other powers.” In the same vein, the Prophet Michah assures the Jewish people that “just as in the days of your going out from Egypt, I will show wonders ...” (7:15). This - it has been suggested - does not tell us that the future redemption will merely be an aftermath of our deliverance from Egypt; rather, that the Exodus must be viewed as the prelude to the Messianic redemption (Rabbi Isaac Hutner).

In the deliverance from Egypt on that Pesach night long ago, lay the seeds of all future salvation: “It is for Hashem a night of keeping watch, to take them out from Egypt - this night remains for Hashem to keep watch for the children of Israel for their generations” (Shemos 12:42). It is up to us, through our, our self-dedication to Hashem on Pesach night, to actualize its potential - to bring about that this dark night of exile should be turned into day by the light of redemption - as happened in Egypt and as it will, please God, happen again very speedily in our days. Meanwhile, we stand as travelers on the road from the Egyptian deliverance to the glorious goals of the Messianic age.

To this duality of Pesach we give expression through an unusual procedure: we divide the Hallel into two parts. The first two psalms, which refer directly to Yetzias Mitzrayim, are recited before the meal, as the fitting conclusion of the recounting of the Exodus; the remaining psalms, with additional praise to God, are said after the Pesach meal, as we look ahead to the future redemption to come - with the taste of the Afikoman, symbol of liberation, in our mouths. The Seder, thus understood, falls logically into two parts: from the Kiddush to the meal it belongs to the past, from the meal to the end it looks to the future. The meal itself, encircled - and sanctified - by the two parts of Hallel, may represent our present, linking past and future.

An Overview - Part X: The Four Cups

“I will lift up the cup of salvations and call upon the name of HASHEM.” (Tehillim 116:13)

This structure of the Seder is highlighted by the arrangement of the four

cups of wine, which according to the Halachah must be drunk at specific points of the evening. Two cups clearly underline the past redemption and the future deliverance, as they are drunk after the narration of the Exodus, and the last part of Hallel, the praise in anticipation of the future redemption (Avudraham).

The other two cups are not unique to Pesach - the cup of Kiddush and that of Birchas Hamazon which concludes the meal, have their counterparts throughout the year. Nevertheless, it is only on Pesach night that everyone at the table must drink a cup after Kiddush, and, again, only on Pesach is the cup after Birchas Hamazon a fixed requirement. Our Sages ordained a specific rule that we must drink four cups on Seder night, as testimony of our deliverance and newly bestowed freedom: “I will lift the cup of salvations” (Tehillim 116:13). They based the requirement of four cups on the passage in the Torah describing the four stages by which the Jews were delivered from bondage: “Therefore say to the Children of Israel: I am Hashem, and I will take you out from beneath the burdens of Egypt, and I will save you from their servitude, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments; and I will take you for Me for a people and I will be God for you ...” (Shemos 6:6-7). Each of these expressions describes yet another joyful stage on the road to the full redemption, worthy of being celebrated with a cup of wine: “wine gladdens the heart of man” (Tehillim 104:15).

In another illustration of the parallel between past and future, we also find four expressions of deliverance in connection with the Messianic redemption: “And I will take them out from the nations, and I will gather them from the countries, and I will bring them to their land, and I will tend them on the mountains of Yisrael ...” (Ezekiel 34:13).

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch points out that the four expressions of deliverance found in Shemos correspond to the deliverance from the three stages of Egyptian bondage, announced to Abraham at the Covenant Between the Portions (exile, slavery, and affliction), and to the final attainment of freedom as God’s people. But the passage in Shemos contains yet a fifth expression of deliverance, “And I will bring you to the land ...” We do not drink a fifth cup to correspond to this expression; but in its honor we place a filled cup called the Cup of Elijah on the Seder table. The Rabbis disagree whether “I will bring you” should be considered a fifth expression of deliverance, requiring that a fifth cup be drunk at the Seder. The question remaining undecided, we put aside a cup until Elijah, who will come preparatory to the coming of Mashiach, answers all such halachic questions (Vilna Gaon). We are meant to understand thereby that the fifth cup belongs to the realm of the future coming of Mashiach and the ultimate redemption, when we shall finally be brought to our land never to depart: the fifth cup points ahead to the final fulfillment of the promise of Pesach.

We have outlined here, in brief - and in the Commentary we will trace in detail - the Seder night pattern that makes us relive Yetzias Mitzrayim and prepare for the redemption to come. But is it realistic to aspire to such spiritual height? Is it not very possible that we may go through the motions of the ritual without being caught up in its spirit? This is indeed a real danger whenever a person is called upon to rise above his petty daily concerns. The Torah has an antidote for it: preparation - not merely a matter of getting ready in a practical sense, but of thoughtful inner concentration on the goals lying ahead.

An Overview - Part XI: Preparation For Pesach

“Just as I remove Chametz from my house and possession, so You, HASHEM, remove the spirit of impurity from the earth, and our evil instinct from within us.” (According to Ari Hakadosh)

All of human life is a preparation. For mankind as a whole, all events prepare the world for the rule of the Almighty - the time of Mashiach and Resurrection of the Dead. For each individual, all of life represents preparation for Olam Habah, the World to Come. Even within our this-worldly existence, every worthwhile step that we take on the road to our ultimate goal demands careful preparation. Before the departure from

Egypt and, again, before the giving of the Torah, the Jews were told to prepare for these great events (Shemos, 12 and 19). And, ever since, the Mitzvos, the signposts on our way through life, have demanded from us preparation; study of their laws, and proper dedication to their punctilious execution.

As a result, the Jew goes through life passing from the pursuit of one Mitzvah to the preparation for the next. He gets up in the morning, washes, and prepares for his daily prayers - enjoined by the words of the Prophet, "Prepare to meet your God, Israel" (Amos 4:12). Every day is a preparation for Shabbos - "whoever labored before Shabbos, will have something to eat on Shabbos." Rising for Selichos gives way to the frantic rush to obtain Lulav and Esrog and to build a Sukkah... and so the Jewish year goes by.

Four weeks in advance of each of the Yomim Tovim we are required to begin to study its laws and make all necessary preparations. In particular, there is the need for proper and early preparation in connection with Pesach - and the duty to "guard the Mitzvos" carefully is actually derived by our Sages from the injunction of the Torah to "guard the Matzos" (Shemos 12:17) and prepare for a Pesach totally free of any Chametz.

Pesach has barely passed when the first steps must be taken to secure wheat suitable for the next year's Matzos and, in particular, for the specially guarded Seder Matzah which must be made from wheat protected from the moment it is harvested in the field against any possibility of becoming Chametz. The preparation of other Pesach foods also starts long before Pesach. But even the Jew who receives Matzos and Pesach provisions delivered to his doorstep is concerned with the Yom Tov long in advance. He may avoid putting books near food all year long so that no Chametz should get into them. Many weeks before Pesach the thorough cleaning of every nook and cranny starts. Slowly the area where Chametz is kept and eaten contracts to a few square yards; finally, on the night before Pesach, all rooms are searched by candle-light, for any last vestiges of Chametz. On the next morning, we burn any remaining Chametz. How are we to understand these extraordinary preparations and precautions?

It has been pointed out that the difference between the letters of Chametz and Matzah, is the difference between the letters heh and ches - a minute point. And in fact, because the slightest amount of yeast or leaven can cause food to become Chametz, the most extreme caution is indicated. Leaven is the symbol of man's evil instinct; as explained before, our avoidance of any trace of Chametz on Pesach is a warning that on this day of our national birth, there is no room for even such slight manifestations of spiritual impurity as might be tolerated at other times. We must remember that only the minutest difference separated the Jews from the impurity of Egyptian life, and only by not tolerating even the slightest further spiritual decline could they be redeemed to become God's people (Ari Hakadosh). Similarly, if we are to enter into the spirit of Pesach, and relive that momentous period of initiation, we too must avoid even the smallest concessions to evil and imperfection.

Now we perceive a further truth: before we can sit down to the Seder table and try to enter into the spirit of Pesach, we must first prepare for it by strenuously removing every speck of Chametz from our homes and, in the same way, remove the characteristics symbolized by Chametz from within ourselves.

"The Talmud derives the obligation to search for Chametz with a light, from the verse, 'The soul of man is like a Divine light, searching all chambers of the body' (Mishlei 20:27). Apparently there is a deeper connection between the search for Chametz and the searching of one's inner self" (Chever Ma'amarim).

An extraordinary degree of caution is needed to remove all Chametz, and an equal degree of zeal to hurry the baking process of Matzos without their rising. Caution and zeal, however, are also presented by Rabbi Pinchas ben Ya'ir as the beginning steps to the attainment of the highest sanctity possible to a human being. Caution in avoiding the

smallest concession to the Yetzer Harah, the evil instinct, and zeal in unrelentingly doing right - characterize the preparation for Pesach. Some may regret that we approach the Seder night so very exhausted from the work done before Pesach; in reality, however, this very work, done with utter devotion and disregard for personal comfort, raises us to the heights of single-minded spirituality, eager and ready to enter into the experience of the Seder night.

Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz explained the statement in Melachim (2, 23:22) that "no Pesach was held like this one [in the time of King Josiah] since the time of the Judges" by pointing out that Josiah first destroyed all pagan altars and places of worship; in other words, he truly removed all "Chametz."

This, then, is the secret of proper preparation for that great moment when we sit down to experience the redemption from Egypt and, hopefully, thereby to prepare the way for the coming of Mashiach.

RABBI BEREL WEIN

Jerusalem Post

THE FIFTH SON

Monday, April 2, 2012 Many of us are aware that there is a detailed discussion amongst the commentators to the Seder night Hagadah regarding the possibility of a fifth cup of wine as part of the Seder service. Some are of the opinion that the cup of wine that is designated as the Cup of Eliyahu serves as this fifth cup. Be that as it may, I wish to discuss another foursome that in our time may have developed into a fivesome. We are taught in the Hagadah that there are four categories of children in the Jewish world. They are: the wise son, the wicked son, the naive and simple son and the son who knows nothing and cannot even begin to ask anything intelligently. We are all acquainted with the wise son. He has had a thorough Jewish education and is intelligently loyal to the Torah and its values system and traditional way of life. We unfortunately are able to clearly identify the evil child amongst us - the apostate, the self-hater, the one who is addicted to anti-Jewish ideologies and practices. The simple son is also known to us. He has no real animus towards God and Torah though he certainly may be repelled by the behavior and statements of those of us who arrogantly claim to represent Him and His Torah. He only asks: "What is this all about?" It is a legitimate if somewhat depressing question. After all, after 3500 years of Jewish life and history, that son should, by now, have an inkling of what it is all about. Nevertheless there is still hope for this son - life and its events and the non-Jewish world will eventually help explain the matter to him. And finally the son who knows nothing, not even what to ask can also be salvaged by education, warmth, direction, role models and proper mentoring. Even the evil son can be corrected and redeemed but apparently not without pain and discomfort. After all it was Stalin that basically cured the Jewish communists of their malignant Marxist disease and made them Jews once again. But there is a fifth child that sits at the Jewish Seder table in our time. He has no qualms about marrying a non-Jew, he is probably liberally pro-Palestinian, he has never visited Israel, though he knows it to be a racist and apartheid place, he considers himself to be part of the intellectual elite, he has no real knowledge of Torah or Judaism and yet considers himself an expert on these matters. He knows the best policy for Jews and Israel to follow and he is so convinced of his rectitude and astuteness that he is willing, nay even demanding, to use all types of force to coerce the Jewish people and its small national state to adopt his will. He is out to fix the world and is willing to sacrifice Israel, Judaism and Jews in the process. He sits on boards of Jewish organizations, he chooses rabbis and proclaims himself to be a faithful Jew. Yet he will contribute generously to general non-Jewish charities but gives only a pittance towards Jewish educational projects. He is not an evil son nor is he a wise one. He certainly will deny that he is somehow simple or naive

and he certainly claims that he knows what questions to pose. Yet he may be the most tragic of all of the sons, for though he is able to pose the questions he is unwilling to hear the answers. In the words of the prophet Isaiah “the heart of the people is overlaid with fat and their ears are stopped up.” It is this hedonistic, intelligent, but very deaf son that troubles us so deeply. For we have developed no plan or method to deal with him – either to exclude him from the Jewish society completely or to somehow redeem him and bring him closer to Jewish reality and positive participation in Jewish life. It is certainly not clear to us how to accomplish this second option. So perhaps we will have to rely on the inspiration represented by the fifth cup of wine – on the miraculous powers of the prophet Eliyahu and on his unfailing faith in the restoration of Jews and the Jewish people generally. Pesach teaches us never to say never. It is the holiday of rebirth and constant renewal. So will it be for all of our different children all of whom we gather and embrace around our Pesach Seder table. Chag kasher v’sameach

from Torah MiTzion <please-rather-send-to--office@torahmitzion.org>
date Jan 2, 2008 4:08 AM subject eBulletin: Parshat Va'era

The Fifth Cup

Rav Moshe Lichtman

Our Sages teach that the four cups of wine we drink at the Seder correspond to the four “expressions of redemption” found in this week’s parashah (see BeReishit Rabbah 88; Yerushalmi, Pesachim 10:1; Rashbam, Pesachim 99b):

Therefore, say to the Children of Israel: “I am the Lord, and I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt, and I will save you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God, and you shall know that I am the Lord, your God, Who takes you out from under the burdens of Egypt.” (6:6-7)

The problem is that the very next verse uses what seems to be a fifth expression of redemption: I will bring you to the Land about which I lifted My hand to give it to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov; and I will give it to you as a heritage, I am the Lord. Why, then, do we not drink five cups of wine on the first night of Pesach? (Actually, according to some versions of the gemara [Pesachim 118a], there are five cups!)

Many commentators deal with this question. Some answer that while the first four “redemptions” were everlasting, the fifth was not (for we were eventually exiled from our Land). They claim that the “Cup of Elijah” corresponds to this fifth redemption, because he will complete and eternalize it. Others say that we do not drink a fifth cup because the fifth redemption did not come to fruition through the Jews who left Egypt. Due to the sin of the spies, only their children entered the Promised Land.

The author of Da’at Zekanim MiBa’alei HaTosafot writes:

Four cups correspond to four redemptions...and the fifth cup – that is, for the one who needs to drink it [an apparent reference to Eliyahu] – corresponds to I will bring [you to the Land]. For that, too, is redemption, as people say: “If a master frees his slave and gives him all that he owns, but he does not bring [the slave] to his dwelling place – what has he accomplished?” Similarly, had the Holy One Blessed be He failed to bring us to Eretz Yisrael, what good would the Exodus from Egypt have been?”

The Kli Yakar also gives a beautiful explanation:

[The four expressions of redemption] correspond to four hardships that [the Jews] underwent, as the verse [from the Brit Bein HaBetarim (BeReishit 15:13)] states: 1) Your seed will be a stranger – this refers to being strangers [in Egypt]. 2) In a land not their own – this refers to being distanced from the Shechinah, for one who dwells in Chutz LaAretz is like one who has no God (Ketuvot 110b). The verse juxtaposes being distanced from the Shechinah and being a stranger

because one depends on the other. Being distanced from the Shechinah is a result of being a stranger outside the Land, in a place that is far from the Shechinah. 3) And they [Avraham’s descendants] will serve them [the Egyptians] – this is an additional [hardship], beyond being a stranger, for a regular stranger is not a slave, at least. 4) And they [the Egyptians] will afflict them [the Jews] – this is an additional [hardship], beyond slavery, for one does not afflict a regular slave for no reason.

So, when it came time to rescue them, HaShem saw fit to save them gradually, little by little. First, He saved them from the most dangerous situation, which is “affliction.” Concerning this it says, I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt, for [the word] burdens refers to affliction... Next, He saved them from slavery, as it says, I will save you from their bondage. Afterwards, He saved them from the least dangerous situation, which is being a stranger. Concerning this it says, I will redeem you etc, for a regular stranger does not have a redeemer... And since the state of being a stranger results in the removal of the Shechinah... it says here that once they are no longer strangers they will be able to cling to the Shechinah. Concerning this it says, I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God. This implies actual “taking,” like a man “takes” [i.e., marries] a young maiden. And since one who dwells in Chutz LaAretz is like one who has no God, it says here, I will be to you a God. And through this closeness [to God], You shall know that I am the Lord, your God, Who takes you out from under the burdens of Egypt – the worst affliction of them all. Then, [the Torah] expounds upon this “taking,” by saying, I will bring you to the Land. This is why our Sages instituted the Four Cups on Pesach – corresponding to the salvation from these four evils.

In other words, the Kli Yakar does not view the verse “I will bring you to the Land” as a separate expression of redemption. Rather, he considers it a continuation of the fourth expression: I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God. How? I will bring you to the Land! For HaShem is truly our God only in Eretz Yisrael.

May we soon be zocheh to witness the final redemption, so that we can all return to our Land and fulfill our ultimate purpose in life – to achieve closeness to God.

From Rav Lichtman’s “Eretz Yisrael In The Parashah”, published by Devora Publishing

<http://www.tzemachdavid.org/klh/kallus.html>

Sippur vs. Zichira David Kallus

There is a classic question that many of the mefarshim have grappled with: what is the difference between the mitzvah of Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim that one performs daily and the special mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim that one is required to fulfill at the seder?

R’ Chaim Soloveitchik asserts that there are three major differences between Zichirah and Sippur :

- 1) While Zichirah requires merely a recitation to oneself, Sippur requires a give and take between narrator and audience in a question-and-answer format. As the p’sukim says, "Vehayah ki yish'alcha bincha..." and "Vehigadta l'bincha..." This is manifested on the seder night by the questions contained in the Mah Nishtana and the answers set forth in Avadim Hayinu.
 - 2) Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim has a specific format (i.e., one must begin with shame and end with praise for Hashem), whereas Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim requires a mere mentioning of Yetziat Mitzrayim.
 - 3) To fulfill the mitzvah of Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim, a mere mentioning of Yetziat Mitzrayim suffices, while to fulfill the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim, one must understand the underlying reasons - the Taamei Mitzvot. We see this in the passage of Raban Gamliel, "Pesach Al Shum Mah..." , which outlines the reasons for the Mitzvot of the seder night.
- These differences between Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim and Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim are apparent from the simple reading of the Rambam in the beginning of the seventh chapter of Hilchot Chametz U'Matzah. The Rambam states that it is a mitzvah on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan to tell the Nissim V'Niflaot that occurred to our forefathers in Egypt. He further states that the mitzvah is to relate

the story of Pesach to one's children. It should be related in accordance with each child's ability to understand. The father should also try to spark the child's curiosity so that he will ask questions. This is the basis for R' Chaim's first halachah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim, namely the need for a question and answer format.

The Rambam then writes that one must begin with shame and end in praise. The narrator must stress how our nation originated from idol worshippers in the time of Terach and ended up with the true faith through Hashem's nurturing. He must also stress the contrast between the Jewish nation as slaves and as freemen. This corresponds to the second difference between Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim and Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim.

Finally, the Rambam cites the passage from Rabban Gamliel, thereby articulating the necessity of understanding as a sine-qua-non to the fulfillment of the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim.

In conclusion, the Rambam writes, "U'dvarim ha'aleh kulon nikra'in Haggadah". In other words, all of these elements make up what is called hagadah and are included in the mitzvah of "vhigadta l'vincha", which is Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim.

The explanation of R' Chaim teaches us the components of the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim. However, we must still explore how the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim is performed. Additionally, what theme emerges from the halachos of this mitzvah?

The Rambam writes that the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim is not merely a formal declaration of what happened on the night of the 15th of Nisan. Rather, the performance of the mitzvah depends on who is involved. He writes "L'fi da'ato shel ben aviv milamdo" and then further writes "Im haya haben gadol v'chacham, modia mah she'ira lanu b'Mitzrayim. V'nisim she'naasu lanu al yidai Moshe Rabbeinu hakol l'fi da'ato shel haben". The Rambam is pointing out that the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim must be performed in a manner that enables the son to get a clear picture of the events of that night. In addition to the need for the son to understand clearly, there is an idea presented in the Sefer Hamitzvot that the father must relate the story as clearly as he possibly can, in the best way possible.

It is very strange for the Rambam to specify that this mitzvah must be done in the best possible way, as opposed to every other mitzvah. One would think that every mitzvah must be done in the best possible way. R' Chaim thus explains that the Rambam is telling us that the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim must be related like a story. The mitzvah is not to hear as much as it is to tell the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim to the listener in a way that it could best be understood. The fulfillment of the mitzvah in its highest form on this night is not the hearing as much as it is the teaching. The mitzvah is thus only properly performed when it is Derech Sippur.

This idea of Derech Sippur is reflected in a minhag cited by the Sefer Kol Bo. After the eating of the karpas, the participants at the seder would remove the table and then take the matzos, wrap them up in a table cloth and carry them over their shoulders around the house. They would only then sit down at the table and say the hagadah. Although the simple understanding of the Rambam's view would lead us to rule that this is insufficient to fulfill Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim [since he says that the Sippur must be "L'fi tzichot lashon ha'misaper", implying the need for speech], the minhag of the Kol Bo is surely still a kiyum on some level of the mitzvah. Acting can be a very effective educational tool.

The Rambam says "Mitzvah l'hodia l'banim" (Chametz U'Matzah 7:2), the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim is to inform the children. To inform a child of a story that is suitable for an adult cannot be considered informing. Conversely, to inform an adult of information suitable for a child is also not informing; what does the adult now know beyond what he knew before? The ability to inform is dependent on the skills of the narrator. He must be able to realize who his audience is and convey the Sippur of Yetziat Mitzrayim appropriately.

We can now understand why even if we are all geniuses, the mitzvah to tell the Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim does not change. It is not only the mitzvah of the listener but the mitzvah of the narrator as well. This explanation also sheds light as to why the Gemara in Pesachim states that even if a person is alone he asks the Mah Nishtana to himself. At first glance it seems ridiculous; according to our understanding of the mitzvah of Sippur, however, it makes perfect sense. We can view this lonely person as both a listener and a narrator. Accordingly, the fact that every year new explanations of the hagadah are published is a beautiful thing; since the mitzvah is to inform, those who are fortunate enough to have the chachamim, nivonim and yodim as guests, need new insights into Yetziat Mitzrayim to relate.

This is all very different than the mitzvah of Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim, which does not require a listener and a narrator. Even the case of one who is sitting alone at the seder asking himself the four questions is different than Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim. At the seder this person has a dual role: that of listener and that of narrator, whereas for the mitzvah of Zichirat Yetziat Mitzrayim we view him as one person reminding himself about Yetziat Mitzrayim. The Mishna in Pesachim

(116b) states that in every generation a Jew must view himself as if he himself left Egypt. The Gemara quotes Rava as stating that one must say "V'anachnu hotzi misham". In other words, we must completely identify with the Jews that left Mitzrayim. Which aspect of Yetziat Mitzrayim does the Gemara demand we identify with? Though there may be more than one, it is possible to say that the experience of emunah is the central theme of Leil HaSeder. The Seder night is therefore the night of the transmission of the mesorah of emunah from father to son.

This theme of the transmission of emunah being central to the hagadah is alluded to by the Rambam's choice of words in our perek. He describes the mitzvah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim as a "Mitzvah l'hodia l'banim". The word "l'hodia" echoes the words of the Rambam in the beginning of Hilchot Yesodai HaTorah. There, the Rambam describes the mitzvah of emunah by saying "Yesod ha'yesodot v'amud ha'chachmot laida she'yaish Shem Matzui". The Rambam's conception of belief is not emunah as faith but rather as knowledge and understanding, "laida." This choice of words implies some sort of connection between Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim and the mitzvah of emunah. The connection between Yetziat Mitzrayim and emunah is already known from the pasuk at the beginning of the Aseret HaDibrot, "Anochi HaShem Elokecha asher hotzaitcha mi'erezt Mitzrayim". On this night, the father must present and transmit the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim in a fashion that will convey the existence of Hashem to his son. Coming away from the seder the son must see himself as one who is Mitzrayim attaining an awareness of the existence and presence of Hashem.

The three aspects of Yetziat Mitzrayim quoted from R' Chaim are all fundamental to the attainment of emunah. The first halachah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim was the need to have a question and answer format. This format imitates the process which a non-believer goes through when he seeks out Hashem. The non-believer probes, with an open mind, the concept of Hashem, an omnipotent and omniscient entity. On the night of the seder we identify ourselves with those who seek out Hashem in the same fashion as those who left Mitzrayim.

The second halachah of Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim is the need to begin with shame and end in praise for Hashem. The Rambam explains that the shame that we describe is that our forefather Terach worshiped idols, and we were kofrim and pursuers of emptiness. It would seem that this shame has nothing to do with Yetziat Mitzrayim. The second shame the Rambam mentions, that we were slaves to Pharaoh, seems far more appropriate for the seder. Yet, with our explanation, we can better understand the Rambam. The purpose of the seder night is to identify with the emunah experience of the Jews who left Mitzrayim. Just as the Jews who left Mitzrayim were reformed idol worshippers, so too do we, at the seder, attempt to gain knowledge of Hashem in the same manner as that of a non-believer turning into a believer. A proof for this idea may be found in the commentary of the Rabbeinu Manoach on the Rambam. He explains that the source for the need to begin with shame and end in praise for Hashem is from the pasuk, "V'tzivanu HaShem la'asot et kol ha'chukim ha'aleh l'yirah", which implies that before Yetziat Mitzrayim the Jews were not G-d fearing since they worshipped idolatry. According to Rabbeinu Manoach, Yetziat Mitzrayim gave the Jews a strong belief in Hashem because of the tremendous miracles that occurred at the time. This belief lasted for generations. On the night of the seder we go through the same process of emunah and our goal is to pass it on to the next generation.

Finally, according to R' Chaim, there is a need to tell the taamei hamitzvos of the seder night. This also reflects the theme of the process of coming closer to emunah. At first glance it would seem that the need for taamei hamitzvos is foreign. Judaism doesn't lend very much credence to the reasons behind the mitzvot. We usually assume that the reason we perform mitzvot is to comply with the will of Hashem. However, if we understand the purpose of the seder to be the transmission of emunah through identification with the Jews who left Mitzrayim, everything becomes clear. The non-believer who is turning into a believer has a hard time accepting emunah on face value. His many doubts and difficulties require the push that a ta'am hamitzvah can provide. The fact is that taamei hamitzvos do have a role within Judaism, as is indicated by the Rambam's dedication of a large section of the Moreh N'vuchim to the notion, and by the Chinuch's devotion of his entire sefer to it. The role of taamei hamitzvos is not fundamental, but it can help serve as an inspiration to perform the mitzvah. On the night of the seder we use taamei hamitzvos to identify with the yotz'ei mizraim, who were newcomers to emunah.

This idea of the Leil HaSeder being the spring-board of emunah helps answer yet another question: why is the name of Moshe not mentioned even once in the hagadah? The hagadah stresses that there was no other savior other than Hashem, "Ani v'lo shaliach", yet there was a shaliach, Moshe! The answer is that the important issue of this night is not how the miracles transpired but the fact that Hashem carried them out. Since on the seder night we stress the idea of coming to emunah, we must focus on the relationship of the believer to the belief, to the

exclusion of all intermediaries.