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## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **PESACH PART 2** - 5784

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## O Dry Bones, Can You Hear the Word of G-d?

The Historical and Psychological Meaning of Ezekiel's Vision

# By: Rabbi YY Jacobson

Ezekiel's Vision

The haftorah of this coming Shabbos, Chol Hamoed Pesach, is one of the most poignant prophecies in the Tanach—the first fourteen verses of the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, known as the vision of "the dry bones."

A wind lifts Ezekiel and carries him to a valley. The valley is filled with bones, many bones, very dry bones. G-d asks Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones come to life?" Ezekiel responds: "O G-d, only You know."

G-d then commands Ezekiel to speak to the bones: "O dry bones! Hear the word of G-d." He instructs Ezekiel to tell the bones that a spirit will enter them, and they will come back to life; flesh, sinews and skin will grow back on the bones, and they will once again live.

Ezekiel speaks to the dry bones. "And there arose a noise as I prophesized, behold a commotion, as the bones were coming together, bone to bone. And I looked and sinews were upon

them, and flesh came upon them, and skin covered them from above. But there was still no spirit in them."

G-d says to Ezekiel, "Prophesize, son of man, and say to the spirit: So says G-d, from four sides come a spirit, and breathe life into these slain, that they may live."

Ezekiel obeys again, and the spirit came into the lifeless bodies. They came to life and stood on their feet, "a very great and large army of people."

"And G-d said to me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, our bones are dried up, our hope is lost, we are cut off. Therefore, prophesize and tell them, thus says G-d, I will open your graves and lift you out of the graves, my people, and I will bring you to the land of Israel... I will put my spirit into you, and you shall live, and I will set you on your land..."

Why did the sages institute that we read this vision on the Shabbos in middle of the Passover?[1] What's the connection with Pesach?

Also, what is the symbolism behind this haunting vision? The Talmud cites two opinions as to whether this vision was a metaphor, an allegory, or an actual event.[2] What is clear, though, is that "these bones are the whole house of Israel," as G-d tells Ezekiel. This vision, in other words, captures the Jewish story.

Let us explore two possible perspectives, from a historical and psychological vantage point.

Mounds of Dry Bones

It is hard to escape the notion that Ezekiel's prophecy—uttered during the 6th century BCE, following the destruction of the First Temple and the Jewish exile to Babylonia—is so relevant in our own age.

Almost eight decades ago, six million of our brothers and sisters were reduced to ashes mixed with tiny particles of dry bones. Many of the Nazi extermination camps were filled with mounds of dry bones. From the establishment of Auschwitz by the Nazis in January 1940, until its liberation five years later, on January 27, 1945, over 1 million people, including 900,000 of Europe's Jews, were murdered there in the largest massmurder in history.

Across the soil of Europe, Jewish bones were swallowed up by the earth, leaving no trace of millions of glorious lives: Babi Yar—40,000, Treblinka—800,000, Chelmno—150,000, Majdanek—60,000, Sobibor—250,000, Buchenwald—liberated by the US on April 4, 1945—56,000, Bergen Belzen—100,00, Belzec—600,000, Mauthausen—320,000, Dachau—35,000, and the numerous mass graves in the forests of Eastern Europe where Jewish children and their parents were gunned down in a Holocaust of bullets.

Can These Bones Live?

Everyone asked the same question, paraphrasing G-d's words to Ezekiel: "Can these bones live?" Can there be a future for a people singled out by the Third Reich for systematic

destruction and left by the rest of the civilized world to hang from the German gallows? Does this nation still have a place in this cursed world, which barely uttered a protest as one-anda-half million children were gassed, many of them infants in the hands of their mothers?

Where is the quill that can articulate what our people felt like as 1000 years of life in Eastern Europe came to a brutal end, as hundreds of communities were plucked out in just a few years, and a nation full of life and passions was decimated, while even the survivors felt like walking skeletons?

Rudolf Hess, the commandant of Auschwitz, was tried at Nuremberg in 1946. During the trial, he said that Eichmann and Hitler were convinced that if they could succeed in destroying the biological basis of Jewry in the East by complete extermination, then Jewry as a whole would never recover from the blow, and after three millennia, the Jewish nation would finally come to an end.

How about the millions living in America? Hess was asked. "The assimilated Jews of the west," Hess said, "would be in no position and would have no desire to make good this enormous loss of blood and there would therefore be no future generation worth mentioning."

Statistically, Eichman and Hitler were right. After such a blow, despair and assimilation would have been the natural route. What they did not realize was that the Jewish people were governed by different rules—by Ezekiel's vision—in which the dry bones contained the secret of rebirth.

Watching the School Buses

I once read a story that captured this truth.

Every morning, he would stand outdoors for 30 minutes watching the school buses in the Boro Park section of Brooklyn pick up the children and take them to school. Boro Park is home to a few hundred thousand Jews of every Chassidic group and denomination. There are hundreds of Jewish schools in that neighborhood, and there is no shortage of school buses picking up different children. This man stood gazing at these buses every morning.

The onlookers thought he was an old, lonely, and bored man, perhaps half senile, who had nothing better to do but stand outside and watch the traffic. This was his recreation. But one day someone approached him and asked him why he did this daily.

This was his response: I was in Auschwitz. I lost my children there. I watched thousands of transports of Jewish children arrive there. Within the hour, their young, fragile, and adorable bodies were shoved into ovens. I watched it all. I saw it all, and I could say nothing. I could do nothing, besides swear that one day I would take revenge.

Now I take my revenge, every single morning. As I stand outside and watch hundreds of children, with their yarmulkes on their heads, their sidelocks rolling down their cheeks, running on to the buses to take them to yeshiva—I can

celebrate once again. Just to hear the sounds of children laughing and to watch their glowing faces as their mothers kiss them goodbye, is, for me, the greatest victory of good over evil, of purity over despicable profanity.

#### October 7th, 2023

Sadly, six months ago, the Jewish world again watched in horror how so many of our brothers and sisters were burned, slain, and kidnapped. Many of their bodies were burned so badly, that, in some cases, there were only some charred bones left.

The pain is visceral, and the horrors are unfathomable. Though we do not understand, we too take comfort in the vision of Ezekial, that we only see a little part of the larger story of life and history. Each one of these dry bones will yet return to life, that good will prevail over evil, and that Israel shall live forever.

The Fire Lives On

There is also the vision of "dry bones" in our own personal lives. At some point in our lives, each of us dreamed of grand dreams, yearned to scale great mountains, and aspired to accomplish sublime goals. We pined to live and love to the fullest, to maximize our potential, to make a real impact on people's lives, to be ambassadors of love, light, and hope, to challenge ourselves in deep ways.

But as life moves on, sometimes "reality" sets in, the stress of daily life overwhelms us, and the pain and agony accompanying our journeys get the better of us. Our idealism is dulled, if not slain, our ambitions repressed, and our vibrancy snuffed out, as we resign to a life of quiet desperation.

Some of us have been hurt so badly, that parts of our brains shut down. Creativity, curiosity, caring, compassion, confidence, calmness, clarity, and courage turned into a daily struggle for survival. We look in the mirror, and we see emaciated bones, and an emaciated spirit. We suffer from anxiety, confusion, and dissociation. Depression replaced trust; fear replaced passion. We feel lifeless and numb.

Comes Ezekiel and tells us in the name of our loving Creator: "Speak to your dry bones! Tell them, "O, my dear dry bones, can you hear the world of G-d?" No dream ever dies completely; no fire is totally extinguished; no passion can fade completely. Within the dry bones, there is still an invisible, potential life force. There are lurking embers. No life experience and no rotten perpetrator can truly snuff out the authentic self, which is a derivative of the consciousness of infinity. The core self is untethered and unburdened. Speak to it, reach out to it, believe in it, and your dry bones will return to life.

Show Me Your Beautiful Face

This all may be one reason why this haftorah is read on Passover.

The Song of Songs, read by many communities after the Passover seder and on Shabbos Chol Hamoed of Pesach, movingly describes the spring season when we celebrate Passover:[3]

עָנָה דוֹדי, וְאָמֵר לִי: קוּמִי לָּהְ רַעְיָתִי יָפֶּתִי, וּלְכִי-לָּה. כִּי-הַנָּה הּסְּתָוּ, עָבְר; בּגְּשֶׁם, חָלַף הָלָדְּ לוֹ. הַנּצָנִים נִרְאוּ בָאָרֶץ, עַת הַזָּמִיר הִגִּיעַ; וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר, נִשְׁמֵע בָּאַרְצֵנוּ. הַתְּאַנָּה חָנְטָה פּגָּיהָ, וְהַגְּפָנִים סְמָדַר נַתְנוּ רֵים; קוּמִי לָּךְ רַעְיָתִי יָפָתִי, בְּאַרְצֵנוּ. הַתְּאַנָּה הָבְּאַנִי אֶת-בְּרְאַיָּה, הַשְׁמִיענִי אֶת-בְּרְאַיָּה, הַשְׁמִיענִי אָת-בְּרְאַיָּה, הַשְׁמִיענִי אַת-בְּרָאַיָּה, בּשְׁמִיענִי אַת-בְּוֹלְהְּ עַרָב, וּמַרְאֵיִהְ נַאְנָה.

My beloved spoke, and said to me: 'Rise up, my love, my beautiful one, and move on. For the winter has past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appeared on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the dove is heard in our land; the fig tree put forth her green figs, and the vines in blossom have produced their fragrance. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and move on. My dove is hidden in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your countenance, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your countenance is comely.

Does this not describe the story of so many? Our passion, our love, and our ecstasy have become eclipsed in the clefts of the hard rock; our voices have been silenced, maybe from a very young age; our faces have been disguised, perhaps because of the pain and disillusionment we experienced many years ago. We are parched and dry.

Comes Passover and tells us that the long winter has past—the rain, the cold, and the frostbite are now over. The physical change of the season beacons us to change our psychological seasoning as well. The flowers have begun to blossom; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the dove is heard in our land. "Arise, my love, my beautiful one... Show me your face, let me hear your voice," G-d says. Come out of your hibernation, from the clefts of the rocks. I want to see you, and I want to hear you. Your light and love are too precious to be eclipsed any longer. Pesach is the holiday of renewal, from slavery to liberation, from oppression to freedom, from winter's melancholy to spring renewal. From dry bones, let life emerge.

Come out, my love, let me see you. "Let me see your countenance, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your countenance is comely." I have never given up on you; please—G-d begs—do not give up on yourself. Do not allow abuse or neglect in any form to block your light forever. Jewish Renewal

Finally, there is one more vital message embodied in the prophecy of the dry bones for the Jewish world today—and this is an insight I heard from the Lubavitcher Rebbe during his public address on the Shabbos after Passover, 24 Nissan, 5746, May 3, 1986.

I will never forget the passion with which the Rebbe repeated these words from Ezekiel. It felt like the walls of "770" were shaking as the Rebbe thundered: "Dry bones! Hear the word of

G-d." in my imagination, I can still hear the Rebbe, in his sincerity and passion, communicating this prophecy of Ezekiel, and it still ignites hope in my own wounded heart. We sometimes look around us, the Rebbe said, and see an abundance of "dry bones." As we look at the world around us, and the Jewish world, it seems that so many of us are saturated with emotional toxicity. Lies, abuse, cover-ups, corruption, folly, superficiality, and stupidity, have penetrated our communities in ways that most of us do not even realize. Our innocent children displaying despair are simply showing us what is happening beneath the surface.

On a moral and spiritual level, so many of our beloved brothers and sisters seem to have forgotten the melody of intimacy, of oneness, of Divine love, and connectivity. And so many of our people are completely apathetic or even self-hating. It is easy to despair, to become cynical, and to retreat. Comes a wind that forcibly drags Ezekiel from his elevated spiritual cocoon into a valley filled with dry bones. Reach out to them, G-d instructs him, and say to them:

הַעֲצַמוֹת הַיָּבֶשׁוֹת שָׁמְעוּ דְּבַר ה'!

O dry bones, hear the word of G-d!

Do not give up on these dry bones. You never know the power contained in their souls; you will never know the embers lurking beneath the cold surface. Share with them the hope, the promise of G-d that they are capable of rejuvenation, or re-Jew-venation, and the miracle will happen.

Intriguingly and unusually, throughout this prophecy, G-d refers to Ezekiel as "Ben Adam, son of man." G-d is telling him: Ezekiel! If you are only a human being, an Adam, if you have a simple human heart, and even if you are only "the son of a human being," do not let these dry bones remain forsaken and forgotten. Believe in their future, in their destiny, and in their potential, and they will shock you by the depth of life they are capable of absorbing.

And do not think you can only impact one person at a time, one lone gracious soul. No! G-d empowered the prophet to resurrect a nation of bones. We can revolutionize the world! Even if it sometimes seems many of us have become a nation of sleepwalkers, we can bring the word of G-d to ourselves and to an entire generation of dry bones. We can change the paradigms of our culture; we can transform the foundations of our society. We can introduce life instead of death, truth instead of falsehood.

And if we do so, we too will see the miracle occur before our own eyes: the bones will return to life.

[1] See Megilah 31a. Rashi (Megilah ibid.) explains it based on the opinion in Talmud (Sanhedrin 92b) that the dry bones were the children of Ephraim who left Egypt prematurely (30 years before the rest of the Hebrews), and were slain by the Philistines, so their resurrection is also remembered during Passover when we celebrate the Egyptian Exodus. Others explain this custom based on the tradition that the resurrection

of the dead will occur in the month of Nissan (Tur Orach Chaim section 490, in the name of Rav Hei Gaon. Quoted in Shulchan Aruch HaRav Orach Chaim 460:16. Cf. references noted there.) [2] See Talmud Sanhedrim 92b where an argument is cited if the story is a metaphor or a description of reality. Cf. Talmud ibid. where he quotes five opinions on who were these dry bones which brought back to life. Interestingly, it seems, the five opinions represent five categories of Jews which capture the entire spectrum of Jewry. This is beyond the scope of this essay. Cf. Reshimos vol. 7 3] Song of Songs 1:10-14.

https://israel365news.com/389419/leading-rabbis-and-scientists-calling-failure-of-iranian-attack-a-miracle/ Leading rabbis (and scientists) calling defense against Iranian attack "a miracle" Who alone works great marvels, His steadfast love is eternal;

Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz

#### **MIRACLES**

APRIL 18, 2024

# Leading rabbis (and scientists) calling defense against Iranian attack "a miracle"

While many are calling the successful defense against the Iranian attack a technological marvel, others are describing the success as Divine Intervention, God protecting the people of Israel. At least one scientist familiar with the defense systems is joining in, claiming the success of the operation was a "miracle".

Leading Religious Zionist rabbis from the rabbinic Torat Ha'aretz Hatova organization distributed a letter to communities around Israel, calling on them to recite Psalm 136, thanking God for saving the Jews through miraculous intervention during the massive Iranian missile attack on Saturday night.

Israel National News reported the call to prayer, translating the letter as follows from M Abitbol

"This is the day G-d made; we will rejoice and be happy in it." "After a night of missiles and UAVs, together we will thank the Holy One, Blessed be He, for the miracles He did for us, when He took us out of Egypt and also for the miracles He did for us in this year."

"We turn to the worshipers in the synagogues in all communities in Israel, to say during the morning prayers this coming Shabbat (Sabbath), when the Torah portion of 'Metzora' is read, Psalm 136: 'Praise be to G-d, for He is good, for His kindness is everlasting (the long Hallel).'
"The entire public shall say it together, as one, when the Ark is opened, and thus we will all thank the Holy One, Blessed be He, for all the good and kindness that He has done for us," the rabbis concluded.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, the former Chief Rabbi of Israel, also described the event as "a miracle."

In an interview with Arutz Sheva, Rabbi Lau said that the miracle was not only the interception of the missiles and drones, but the fact that so many other countries helped Israel—including Jordan, our enemy.

"It is by Hashem's grace that all these countries joined us in responding to the Iranian attack," said Rabbi Lau, "the USA, England, to a certain extent France, and even Jordan, which on the one hand is our enemy and on the other hand fought with us."

Rabbi Lau added. "I understand why. We all have a common enemy; the Iranian threat, but everything is from heaven and suddenly all of these countries have a common enemy with us, and we are no longer isolated, nor alone in the face of this great danger."

At one point Rabbi Lau said, "...There was only some damage to places, and no harm to people. This whole story was a great miracle, but we still have not appreciated its magnitude. We experienced Hashem's true protection and this connection with the superpowers and our neighbors..."

While the source is unconfirmed, Hillel Fuld posted this response to the attack attributed to Professor of physics, Maximilian Abitbol, who is also an expert on the defense industry.

"I wanted to share something that is much more than a feeling. Something that comes from a real calculation: What happened in Israel on last Motzaei Shabbat was not less than the scale of the splitting of the Red Sea."

"I am a Professor of physics and I worked for several years in the defense industry in Israel, in projects that are still the cutting edge technologies of the defence of the State of Israel." "When I look at what happened on Motzai Shabbat, on a scientific level – it simply cannot happen!! Statistically." The likelihood that everything, but really \*Everything\* works out, does not exist in complex systems Like the defense systems that were used to defend Israel from the massive Iranian attack."

"These systems have never, \*but never\*, not only in the State of Israel, been tried in real time!!"

"I took a pencil and dived into the calculations to check the

statistic probability that such a result would materialize."
"The large number of events that had to be handled, when each missile or UAV is handled independently (that is, human error or some deviation of one operation, is not offset by other successful operations), compounds the chance of making a mistake."

"With all the high technologies, a breach was expected In the defense of the skies of the State of Israel."

"Even if we got 90% protection it would have been a miracle!!"

"What happened is that everyone, but everyone – the pilots, the systems operators and the technology operators acted as one man, at one moment in total unity. If this is not an act of

G-d, then I no longer know what a miracle is."

"It is Greater than the victory of the Six Day War or the War of Independence. Those wars can also be explained through natural events."

"BUT"

"The rescue that took place for the people of Israel on Motzai Shabbat is simply impossible naturally. I believe that this miracle saved the lives of many people from Israel."

"If the defense system had failed to intercept a number of cruise missiles, the result would have dragged us into a very complex war."

"I wouldn't bet that next time it will work like this without Divine supervision."

"The simple proof of what I said is that the managers of the defense industries, who develop and manufacture these systems guarantee no more than 90% success! "

"And we all saw, with our own eyes 99.9%!!!"

"Thank You Hashem!!"

# It was signed, M Abitbol [Professor of Physics, Maximilian Abitbol at Oxford University]

From TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>

I. "The valley was filled with many very dry bones"

date: Apr 22, 2024, 12:55 PM

# Rabbi Mordechai Willig

## **Dry Bones**

(Yechezkel 37:1,2. haftorah of Shabbos Chol HaMoed Pesach). "Hashem said to me 'These bones [represent] all of Bais Yisrael. They say, 'Our bones are dried out, and our hope is lost (avda tikvaseinu)" (37:11). "Tell them 'I will put my spirit into you, and you will come to life, and I will place you on your soil" (37:14). The eternal message in these pesukim refers to the final resurrection of the dead, which will take place in Nissan (Mishna Berurah 490:14). The reality of "many very dry bones" in Auschwitz is seared in the collective memory of "all of Bais Yisrael". The miraculous rebirth of Am Yisrael on its soil just three years later proved that, contrary to our saying "our bones are dried out and our hope is lost", od lo avda tikvaseinu - our hope is not lost at all. Sadly, our enemies continue to try to destroy us. Tragically, on Simchas Torah, they reached our soil and killed hundreds of innocent civilians, violating their bodies, before and after killing them, and burning many beyond recognition. Haman planned, "lehashmid, laharog u'l'abed es kol haYehudim - to destroy, kill and eliminate all the Jews" (Esther 3:13). The Vilna Ga'on teaches that Amalek tries to defile us (see Rashi, Devarim 25:18), as in shmad - spiritual destruction, kill us, and even burn our bodies. The Nazis, who burned our bodies in crematoria, were the Amalek of the 20th century, and Hamas is the Amalek of the 21st century. Haman, Hitler and Hamas all vow to kill us all (Esther 9:24, see Ramban Megillah 2a). The Rav zt"l (whose 31st yohrtzeit

is on erev Shabbos) quoted that his father Rabbi Moshe Soloveitchik zt"l taught that any nation that wants to kill all the Jews is, by definition, Amalek, irrespective of its genealogical roots. The Rambam (Hilchos Melachim 5:4-5) states that we can no longer identify the seven nations that we must eliminate because Sancheirev intermingled all the nations (as described in the mishna, Yadayim 4:4), but this does not apply to Amalek, because any nation that vows to destroy us is considered by halacha to be Amalek (Kol Dodi Dofek, footnote #23). For this reason, the Rav initially opposed German reparations (Nefesh Harav p. 87).

II. Last week, (8 Nissan), I visited Machane Shura, the headquarters of the Chief Rabbinate of Tzahal, accompanied by 5 members of my immediate family. Rav Binyamin Zimmerman, a member of the Rabbinate of the Israeli Army who arranged the visit, introduced us to the head of the halacha department, Harav Avihud Shwartz. His presentation of the complex questions dealt with by the department was scintillating. He demonstrated a depth of knowledge and a finely tuned approach to the halachic system worthy of a posek well beyond his approximately forty years. His reverence for mori v'rabi Harav Aharon Lichtenstein zt"l, with whom he learned for nine years, was remarkable. The combination of broad Talmudic scholarship, halachic mastery and personal sensitivity which permeated Harav Schwartz's brilliant and lengthy shiur reflected his rebbi's unforgettable persona, and is a tribute to both rebbi and talmid.

If Harav Schwartz dazzled our minds, the next presenter, Rav Menachem Wechsler, penetrated our hearts. A twenty-seven-year veteran of the army chevra kadisha, his vast experience in the excruciating holy work of honoring the remains of fallen Israeli soldiers has done nothing to dim the emotional aspect of his virtuous personality and powerful presentation. Speaking in the spacious new (two-year-old) facility, he showed us the rooms used for tahara, cleaning the body. One was designated for female soldiers, another had a mikva.

On October 7, Simchas Torah, hundreds of bodies overwhelmed the facility. Most martyrs were civilians and thus Tzahal did not have the identifying data that they record for all soldiers. There was no record of who was missing, and no knowledge of who was taken hostage. Many bodies were burned beyond recognition.

Rav Wechsler's heart-rending description of the heroic nonstop work of identifying the bodies, often using DNA, was overwhelming and unforgettable. The professionalism, including a trip to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, which is the top DNA lab in the world, matched the idealism of the devoted male and female chevra kadisha, in establishing certain identity, legally and halachically, as quickly as possible. Rav Wechsler's final speech in the "cheder preida", the room where families of the victims bade them farewell, was emotionally overpowering. He called the room "Kodesh Kodashim", the Holy of Holies, and read a letter written by a bereaved father, filled with faith and pathos.

Rav Zimmerman then took us to a room filled with sifrei Torah from all parts of the world, donated to fulfill the needs of the soldiers throughout Eretz Yisrael and in Gaza. Even the ones unfit for use represent the eternity of our people, despite the constant efforts to destroy us. According to Rav Yaakov Emden (Sulam Beis El, p. 8), the unique historical phenomenon of a nation that has outlived all of the powerful empires that sought to destroy it and has survived with the Torah intact, is a greater miracle that those that Hashem performed for our ancestors in Mitzrayim.

III. On motzaei Shabbos (6 Nissan), Hashem again performed a miracle for His people on His soil. Over three hundred missiles, rockets and drones were launched by Iran in an unprecedented attack on Israel. Not one Jew was harmed, a statistical impossibility notwithstanding the Iron Dome and other devices.

We are dutybound to thank and praise Hashem for the incredible miracle. More than one rabbi, citing the Netziv (Sheilta 26:1), opined that there was a Torah commandment to recite Hallel on the day of the miracle.

One of the many miracles that took place on the night of Pesach is described in the Haggadah, citing the opening passuk of the haftorah of the eighth day of Pesach (Yeshaya 10:32), "Today he (Sancheirev) will stand in Nov." His huge army encamped there overnight, ready to enter and destroy Yerushalayim the next day. Hashem had said that the king of Ashur will not enter the city (Melachim 2, 19:32), and indeed, on that Pesach night, Hashem killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers.

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 94a) criticizes Chizkiyahu for not reciting shira immediately upon the miracle of the soldiers' death. The Emek B'racha (Hallel al HaNes p. 124,125), citing Rav Chaim of Brisk, says that Tehillim (13:6) teaches us: "I trust in Your kindness, my heart will exult in Your salvation. I will sing to Hashem because He saved me". Even one who is one hundred percent sure that Hashem will save him must sing to Hashem only after the miracle has occurred.

The medrash (Shir Hashirim Raba 4:19) gives Chizkiyahu's excuse, citing the penultimate passuk of the same haftorah (Yeshayahu 12:5), "Hashem's miracles are known throughout the world." He therefore thought that there was no need for a new shira. This is incorrect, however, and prevented Chizkiyahu from becoming the mashiach. We dare not repeat this mistake; we must thank Hashem for the miracle we experienced.

The Medrash Raba (Shemos 18:5) recounts that on that fateful night of Pesach, while surrounded by enemy forces and impending doom, Chizkiyahu recited Hallel, while the people were frightened. The Yefe To'ar says that they were unaware of Yeshayahu's prophecy that Sancheirev would not reach the

city. In the morning, they arose to recite the Shema and daven Shachris k'vasikin (Etz Yosef). The Eshed Hanechalim says that this demonstrates the greatness of the bitachon of Chizkiyahu. Their Hallel is described by Yeshayahu (30:29), "The song will be yours like the night of the holiday's consecration." The Ra'avad (Hilchos Chanukah 3:6) states that this is the source for our obligation to recite Hallel. Presumably, Chizkiyahu's tremendous faith diminished his realization of the obligation to recite Hallel immediately. He expected all along to be saved. Similarly, Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael is "melumad b'nissim", accustomed to miracles. However, we must not allow ourselves, in Israel or in the diaspora, to fail to recognize the great miracle that occured. We must, on Pesach, thank and sing to Hashem for it. The Malbim (Yeshayahu 30:29) writes that as the simcha of Yisrael increased when they recited Hallel and thanked Hashem when they offered the korban Pesach, the destruction of the encampment of Ashur increased correspondingly. In Tehillim (118:14,15) the Malbim interprets the phrase, "kol rena v'yeshua" to mean when the rejoicing of Hallel began, the sound of salvation came; as they began to sing and to thank Hashem, so came the salvation. We hope and pray that our Hallel will save us from our foes.

We approach Pesach, still horrified by the pogrom of Simchas Torah, still praying for the safe return of the hostages, still heartbroken after all the suffering of the last seven months since the last chag. Yet, at the same time, we thank Hashem for saving us from the much worse fate that our enemies planned, and for the amazing faith of Am Yisrael.

The haftorahs of Shabbos Chol Hamoed and acharon shel Pesach teach us that the dry bones of Yechezkel's prophecy will come to life on our soil. The partial fulfillment of that prophecy via the remnants of Auschwitz establishing a State which belies the doomsday predictions of then and now that avda tikvaseinu and that sings od lo avda tikvaseinu, has occurred. We fervently pray and await the fulfillment of the prophecy of Yeshayahu (11:1-16), i.e. the arrival of Mashiach, a descendant of David and Yishai, which will usher in an era of peace. He will gather in our dispersed people, and the world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem. May it happen speedily in our days.

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https://www.jewishpress.com/judaism/torah/essentials-of-judaism-the-hashkafa-of-pirkei-avot/2024/04/25/

Essentials Of Judaism: The Hashkafa Of Pirkei Avot By Rabbi Reuven Taragin - 17 Nisan 5784 – April 25, 2024 "Hashkafa"

In Tanach, the root "shakaf" means "to look" (Bereishit 19:28, Shemot 14:24) or "to be seen" (Melachim I 6:4, Shir HaShirim

6:10). Recently, the term "hashkafa" has been used to refer to our outlook on life.

As opposed to the term "machshava," which we use to refer to philosophical studies (such as metaphysics), hashkafa refers to how we understand our world's workings and how we are meant to live within it.

Hashkafa has become an area of significant interest. Unlike the rishonim, whose philosophical discussions focused mainly on issues of machshava, recent generations have concentrated more on understanding the nature and goals of our existence. The Central Agreed Tenets

Often, people use hashkafa to refer to what distinguishes between different hashkafot (Litvish, Chassidish, Modern Orthodox, Religious Zionist, etc.). People are eager to understand and appreciate their unique approach.

That said, most hashkafic issues, including most central ones, are things all Torah Jews agree upon.

#### Essentials of Judaism

Though how we view our lives is an integral part of our identity, these issues are generally not studied in an organized way. They are addressed often, especially at times of meaningful reflection (sichot, divrei Torah over Shabbat, tisches, etc.), but not with any comprehensive curriculum that presents the full range of these topics with relevant sources. This is where the idea for the Essentials of Judaism series comes from. The series identifies and addresses Judaism's hashkafic topics in a comprehensive, systematic, organized, and source-based manner.

We begin with the ideas discussed in Pirkei Avot. Though Chazal addressed hashkafic issues in many places, Masechet Avot is the central Tannaitic repository of hashkafic material. Avot as Ancestors

Masechet Avot's name seems rooted in the list of the ba'alei mesorah – our ancestors (avos) who transmitted the Torah She'baal Peh from Sinai – with which the masechet opens. Why does this list appear here – at the end of the third seder of the mishnayot? Why not at the beginning of Shas, as the opening to Masechet Berachot?

The Meiri explains that the list appears in Masechet Avot to emphasize the importance of its topics (Beit Habechira, Peticha to Masechet Avot). Since Avot focuses (mainly) on issues that are neither halachic nor derived from pesukim, one might view the content as less important. As the masechet contains neither mitzvot nor aveirot, people might not be diligent about observing its directives. To stress the importance of its content, Masechet Avot begins by linking itself to (those who transmitted the Torah to us from) Sinai.

### Avot as Principles

After translating avot as ancestors, the Meiri presents a second explanation that equates the term's meaning here to its meaning in the context of melachot Shabbat (forbidden modes of work) and nezikin (damages). Just as avot melacha and avot

nezikin are the categories from which other forms of melacha and nezikin originate, the teachings of Masechet Avot are the root principles for Jewish philosophy, hashkafa (outlook), and conduct. Most of these ideas are rooted in Tanach's mitzvot and history, but not explicitly stated; Avot fills in the details by formulating the principles.

Masechet Avot's teachings facilitate living a proper and meaningful life. The middot taught by Masechet Avot are the precondition for Torah itself – "Derech eretz kadma la'Torah" (Pesachim 118a). Pirkei Avot also addresses matters of faith and hashkafa. It teaches us how to view the world and our role within it. Living a proper Jewish life hinges on knowing and internalizing Judaism's outlook on the world and human life and behaving accordingly.

These two components – middot and hashkafa – are inextricably linked. We are meant to express our hashkafa in our behavior and root our behavior in our hashkafa. The Gemara teaches that one becomes pious by studying Masechet Avot (Bava Kama 30a). The combination of hashkafic ideas and behavioral guidance develops piety.

## **Parent Principles**

The Meiri presents these two explanations of Avot as a continuation of one another. The two are not in conflict; they complement one another. Our avot principles come from our avot ancestors. This is not only because it makes sense to learn from earlier generations, but also because Judaism is a religion of continuity.

Judaism is not just about individuals understanding and worshipping G-d. It is about belonging to a people who descend from and still identify with their avot and imahot. Though all ancient peoples have living descendants, Jews are the only ones who, on principle, name children after their ancient ancestors. This is because we emulate them and their relationship with Hashem.

Despite our spiritual decline in Mitzrayim, Hashem redeemed us because we continued using our ancestral names (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 4:25). Upon heralding redemption, Hashem identified Himself as the G-d of our ancestors (Shemot 2:24), and at the Yam Suf, the climax of the redemption, we related to Hashem as "Elokei avi (my father's G-d)" (Shemot 15:2). Understandably, we begin our Shemoneh Esrei by describing Hashem as not only our G-d, but also as the G-d of our ancestors. This is because we know that our relationship with Him is a continuation of theirs.

By leaving the areas of middot and hashkafa (mostly) unstated clearly by the Torah, Hashem created the need to learn these avot of faith from our ancestral avot. Like the halachot of Torah She'baal Peh, we learn our principles of faith, hashkafa, and middot from our biological parents and spiritual avot. Over the next weeks, we will, iy"H, study some of Pirkei Avot's central hashkafic ideas.

May our learning to live by avot hashkafot and up to avot

standards reinforce our place as links in our people's avot – banim mesorah chain and make us worthy of redemption. Biglal Avot, toshi'a banim – Because of Avot, children are redeemed.

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## Rabbi Reisman's Chol HaMoed Pesach Shiur

Esplanade Capital <jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com> Fri, Apr 14, 2017 at 3:33 PM Reply-To: jeisenstadt@esplanadecap.com

Rabbi Reisman - **Shabbos Chol Hamoed Pesach 5777**As we prepare for an absolutely beautiful Shabbos Chol Hamoed. HKB"H has given us beautiful weather for our Chol Hamoed here. It is certainly a sign of a Hischadshus, a renewal in the Zman to come.

Topic - A Lomdushe Thought from Rav Pam Regarding Pesach

Let me share one of Rav Pam's favorite Pesach Divrei Torah. It is an Inyan of Halacha more than an Inyan of Machshava but an absolutely beautiful topic that Rav Pam often said this time of the year. We begin with an Ohr Sameach and as a matter of fact, the whole Vort comes from the Ohr Sameach in Hilchos Chometz Umatzah, Perek 1 Halacha 3 which is the third piece in the Ohr Sameach in Hilchos Chometz Umatzah and he deals with a very technical question.

The Rambam says that if someone violates the Issur of Baal Yei'ra'eh U'baal Yai'matz'ai, the Issur of owning Chometz on Pesach, naturally you normally do not get Malkus because it is a Lav Sh'ain Bo Maaseh, it is an Aveira that a person does without an action. Pesach comes and he owns Chometz. But if he buys Chometz on Pesach, then he gets Malkus because he violated the Issur of Baal Yei'ra'eh U'baal Yai'matz'ai, of owning Chometz by doing an action. So one who buys Chometz on Pesach, says the Rambam he gets Malkus. Says the Ohr Sameach, Hikshu L'michabrim, many have asked, how could that be? We have a basic idea in Halacha that something that is Assur B'hana'a, something that one may not derive pleasure from, is considered worthless and is considered as if it has no value. After all, you can derive no pleasure from it. Something that has no value cannot change ownership, cannot take on ownership. A person can't be Koneh something of no value. Therefore, the Rambam says that if you buy Chometz on Pesach you are Over Baal Yei'ra'eh U'baal Yai'matz'ai, but it doesn't become your Chometz because it has no value. This is the Kasha that Hikshu Hamichabrim. The Ohr Sameach to answer this brings a Ran in Avodah Zorah who asks the identical question in another example of Issurei Hana'a. The discussion there is about a golden or a silver Avodah Zorah that has value. The Halacha is that when

it belongs to a non-Jew, it is Assur B'hana'a, it has no value but the non-Jew can be Mevateil it by saying I no longer believe in it and do something to the Avodah Zora to show that, then it becomes permissible. However, if a Yid acquires this Avodah Zorah, a Jew's Avodah Zora has no Bittul and therefore, it remains worthless forever. The identical question is asked there by the Ran that when a person acquires an Avodah Zora it has no value. If it has no value you can't acquire it, you can't own it. The Ohr Sameach says the same question that we are asking on the Rambam and the same Teretz will answer both. He explains the Ran's Teretz as follows. Let's think about it. Let's take the example of Chometz. When the non-Jew owns the Chometz it has value. The Torah doesn't forbid the non-Jew from having benefit or even income. When the Yid acquires it, it becomes valueless. So the minute the Jew acquires it it becomes valueless. If it becomes valueless it means that he could not acquire it. If he could not acquire it then it remains the Chometz of the non-Jew. If it remained the Chometz of a non-Jew then it does have value and it definitively does have a value. If it has a value then the Jew can be Koneh it. What is happening here is that we are creating a cycle which is an impossible cycle. In other words, we are saying that if it has value the Jew can be Koneh it, but if a Jew can be Koneh it then it has no value. If it has no value then a Jew can't be Koneh it and it reverts back to being a non-Jews in which case it once again has value.

Let me give you another example of this type of cycle which is easier to understand. The following example which comes from the Minchas Chinuch Mitzvah Daled. Let us say that two witnesses walk into Beis Din on the 30th day of the month of Adar. They say that we saw the new moon last night. Bais Din says that if that is the case then today is not the 30th day of Adar because the Jewish month does not necessarily have 30 days. If the new moon was visible then it is not the 30th day. So Bais Din says Mekudash Mekudash, today is the first day of Nissan. The month of Adar has only 29 days because the new moon was seen, today is Rosh Chodesh Nissan. After that, in walks a young man (a boy) together with a second witness and the two of them say those witnesses are liars as they were with us in a different place at the time that they are saying that they saw the moon. Two witnesses come to contradict the first witnesses.

Well Bais Din says to this young boy who is a witness, how old are you? He says well today is my Bar Mitzvah. When were you born? Rosh Chodesh Nissan 13 years ago. Your Bar Mitzvah today, if the first Aidim are telling the truth that today is Rosh Chodesh Nissan then you are a 13 year old and we accept your testimony together with the other witness and we invalidate the first witnesses.

One second, as soon as we invalidate the first witnesses then today reverts back to being the 30th day of Adar. The consequence of that is that this young boy is no longer Bar

Mitzvah as he is a day shy of his Bar Mitzvah. If that is the case, then the Hazamah doesn't stand and he can't say testimony and if he can't say testimony then the first witnesses are reinstated. Of course if the first witnesses are reinstated it once again becomes Rosh Chodesh Nissan and then this boy becomes once again a Bar Mitzvah. If he becomes Bar Mitzvah then we have to accept his testimony. In which case, the first witnesses are considered Aidim Zomemim and their testimony is thrown out. In which case, it reverts back to being the 29th of Adar. You see what happens here is that we create a cycle which cannot end. When we say that the boy is a Bar Mitzvah we invalidate the witnesses in which case he reverts back to being a Kotton. Once he reverts back to being a Kotton we accept the first witnesses in which case he becomes a Gadol. This is a cycle that just keeps on going. What do we do?

Another example. A person has a Sukkah that is exactly 7 Tefachim by 7 Tefachim in size which is perfectly Kosher. Then he puts a picture on the wall, it is a big picture with a frame. Having put the picture on a wall he has now made the Sukkah less than 7 by 7 which invalidates it. Does the picture invalidate the Sukkah? He can just take it off. One second, if the picture is Noy Sukkah, something which beautifies the Sukkah then you are not allowed to take it off of the wall because it is Muktzah. Therefore, if you have a Sukkah that is a 7 x 7 and you put up a picture with a decoration, it invalidates the Sukkah because now the useable area of the Sukkah is no longer the required size.

But hold on a minute. If it is no longer the required size then the Sukkah is not a Sukkah. If that is the case, then the picture is not Muktzeh and it can be removed. If you are allowed to remove it the room reverts back to being a 7 x 7 and useable space. In which case again it becomes a Kosher Sukkah. In which case the picture is Muktzah. It which case the Sukkah is less than 7 by 7 and it becomes Posul. You see, it is a cycle. You can't stop. Every time you tell me it is a Kosher Sukkah the picture becomes Muktzeh and the size of the Sukkah becomes too small and the result is that the Sukkah is Posul. Every time you say that the Sukkah is Posul, the picture becomes non-Muktzeh and the size reverts back to 7 by 7. So you see that there are cases in Din where a cycle is created. The same thing here with a Jew who buys Chometz on Pesach. Before he buys it it has value to non- Jews. The moment he buys it it becomes valueless. If it is valueless, he can't own it. If he doesn't own it, then it once again has value. If it once again has value then he could acquire it. The cycle continues. So Rav Pam would say adopting the language of the Ohr Sameach that we have a rule. Ain Hamisoveiv Yachol Levateil Es Hasibah. A result cannot invalidate its cause. You go with a logical sequence of events. When you get to a result that invalidates its cause then you have to stop. Everything that took place until then stands.

This is sort of like the science fiction question of a person who goes back in time and kills his own mother before he was born. If a person goes back in time and kills his mother before he was born then he was never born, a contradiction. That is what this cycle creates, that type of contradiction. We say in Halacha, Ain Hamisoveiv Yachol Levateil Es Hasibah. We start with Chometz that has value. The Jew acquires it, the result of his acquisition is that it becomes valueless. Once it becomes valueless you want to say that now he can't acquire it. The result is destroying the cause and the result can't destroy the cause. That is what the Rambam is saying that he gets Malkus.

From there we learn it to all such cycles that you go in order until you have a contradiction at which point you stop. A Shtickel Lomdus in honor of Pesach. I hope you followed. You can apply it to more cases and have a really Geshmake Oneg Yom Toy.

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Blog Will The Coming Of Moshiach Affect Passover? By RABBI JACK ABRAMOWITZ April 15, 2024 Will The Coming Of Moshiach Affect Passover?

Dear Jew in the City,

How will we celebrate Pesach after Moshiach comes? Sincerely, Isaac

Dear Isaac,

Thanks for your question, though I wonder exactly what prompts it. I have two hypotheses, which I'll address separately. It could be that you're asking whether Pesach will still be a holiday when Moshiach comes.

This is something we addressed a while back, though not regarding Pesach specifically. There is an idea – let's tentatively call it a misconception – that the holidays will mostly be abolished in the Messianic era. The exception is Purim, because the Megillah says "these days of Purim will never cease among the Jews…" (9:28). Yalkut Shimoni (Remez 944) opines that this means to the exclusion of other holidays in Messianic times. (In the 20th century, Rav Moshe Feinstein ztz''l explained that "except for Purim" includes Chanukah, as the two are holidays of the same kind – Mesoras Moshe).

However, the Bnei Yissaschar and many other authorities don't take literally the idea that the Torah's holidays could ever be abolished. After all, it's quite counter-intuitive that Moshiach's arrival should cause us to do away with actual Torah mitzvos! Rather, the idea is that holidays commemorating the Exodus and the giving of the Torah will seem trivial when compared with the everyday wonders of life in the Messianic era.

So, if you ask me, Pesach (and Succos, Shavuos, etc.) will indeed continue to be holidays after Moshiach comes. (This is not just me taking sides in a debate – if it is in fact a debate – that would be above my pay grade. I have a reason to feel this way, which we'll come to shortly.)

It could be that you're asking whether there will be animal

sacrifices in the rebuilt Temple.

People attribute to the Rambam (and also to Rav Kook) the idea that there won't be animal sacrifices in the third Temple. In fact, I have been misquoted as ascribing this idea to the Rambam, but I don't believe that he says that at all.

The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim (Guide for the Perplexed, 3:32) gives the following rationale behind animal sacrifices in the first two Temples: the practice was so firmly ingrained in the people as a form of worship that they wouldn't be able to accept the idea of a religion without it. Therefore, rather than abolish the practice altogether, God severely curtailed it, only permitting sacrifices in the Temple and limiting them in numerous other ways.

Hearing this, one might logically conclude that, in the Messianic era, when animal sacrifices are thousands of years away from our experience and religious concessions are unnecessary, there would be no need of such offerings. This conclusion is in error for several reasons; I'll give you two of them.

The Rambam, in his Mishneh Torah (Hilchos Melachim 11:1), describes what Moshiach will accomplish. He writes:

The King Messiah is destined to arise and restore the Davidic dynasty... rebuild the Temple, gather the scattered of Israel, and return all the laws as they were originally. We will offer sacrifices and observe shemittah and yoveil (sabbatical and Jubilee years) like all the mitzvos stated in the Torah.

So Rambam is pretty explicit that, in the Messianic era, things will be as they used to be, including sacrifices. After that, we really shouldn't need a second proof, but I'll give you one anyway.

The Rambam authored a list of thirteen principles of faith, which he maintains are the things one must accept in order to be considered a Jew "in good standing." The ninth principle is that the Torah simply does not change. Full stop. No ifs, ands or buts. So, if sacrifices were the rule in the first two Temples, they'll be the rule in the third Temple. Even if the reason for sacrifices was a concession to human nature, once a mitzvah, always a mitzvah. People likewise believe that Rav Kook didn't believe that there would be animal sacrifices in the Messianic era. This is based on a statement he made in his commentary on the siddur, but as with the Rambam, it ignores the majority of things that he wrote on the subject elsewhere, which suggest the opposite. It also ignores the fact that Rav Kook – a kohein – participated in classes that trained kohanim how to offer sacrifices when the Temple would be rebuilt.

Now, I promised you that I'd explain why I believe like the Bnei Yissaschar and others that Pesach will still be a holiday when Moshiach comes, despite a simple Midrashic reading that suggests otherwise. It's because of Pesach Sheini (literally, "second Passover").

"Second Passover" sounds like it's Passover for Hobbits, but that's not it. Pesach Sheini is a mitzvah in the Torah that those who were unable to offer the Passover offering in its proper time get a "make-up" date one month later. The ninth chapter of tractate Pesachim discusses the cases in which one might be entitled to offer the make-up sacrifice. In the Talmud Yerushalmi

(Pesachim 9:1), one of the reasons given is if the Temple should happen to be rebuilt after Pesach but before Pesach Sheini. This is actually codified into law by the Minchas Chinuch (mitzvah 380) and others. The last Lubavitcher Rebbe mentioned this law several times (Likkutei Sichos vol. 12; Parshas Emor 5738). So, if the Pesach Sheini will be offered should Moshiach come after Pesach, it's pretty clear that (a) Pesach will still be a holiday and (b) there will still be animal sacrifices.

So, to answer your question (at long last!), when Moshiach comes, we'll celebrate Pesach the way God intended: by offering the korban Pesach (the Passover offering) and eating it with matzah and maror.

I'd just like to mention a few more connections between Pesach and the Messianic era. After crossing the Red Sea, the Jews sang the Shirah (the Song at the Sea), which begins "Az Yashir Moshe uv'nei Yisroel es hashirah hazos laShem...." Typically translated "Then Moshe and the children of Israel sang this song to God...," it actually says, "Then Moshe and the children of Israel will sing this song to God...!" Rashi on this verse cites the Talmud (Sanhedrin 91b) that this refers to the future resurrection of the dead, when Moshe and the children of Israel will again sing this song to God. (The resurrection of the dead is an event separate from the arrival of Moshiach, but it is part of the greater Messianic era scenario.)

Finally, many Chasidim celebrate the last day of Pesach with a meal called "Moshiach seudah." This is a practice instituted by the Baal Shem Tov (the founder of Chasidism). The reason for this custom is explained by the Tzemach Tzedek as follows: the last day of Pesach concludes what started on the first night of Pesach. The first night celebrates the Jews' salvation from Egypt, which God carried out through Moshe. That was the beginning of our redemption. The last day of Pesach anticipates our ultimate redemption, which Hashem will carry out through the Moshiach. Just as the first day of Pesach recognizes Moshe's contribution, the last day of Pesach anticipates Moshiach's contribution. So, in short, the arrival of Moshiach will only enhance of observance of Pesach. Not only will the holiday not be stricken from the calendar, the korban Pesach will be restored to us so that we might celebrate the holiday in the optimum fashion.

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