



THE MELBOURNE BEIS

פסח תשפ"ד
PESACH 5784

A collection of Divrei Torah and
Divrei Chizzuk from across Melbourne



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Torah Through Talking

The **יום טוב** of **פסח** is the inception of **כלל ישראל** as a nation, in order to receive the **תורה** at **הר סיני**. The name of the **יום טוב** itself **פסח** is a hybrid of two words, **פה-סח** a talking mouth. Why does the name, which contains the essence of the **יום-טוב**, needed to contain this aspect of a “talking mouth”? Furthermore, we see inherent in the **מצוה** of **מגיד** during **ליל-הסדר**, to say over the events of our salvation, once again utilising the power of speech as an essential component to the **יום-טוב**.

‘ה took us out of Egypt for the sole purpose of receiving the **תורה**, this being the essence and the basis of our existence as a nation. At **הר סיני** ‘ה brought the spiritual world down to the physical world, giving us the opportunity to fuse the two worlds together by uplifting the physical world in which we live by bringing down the **תורה** from shomayim and giving it to us.

Rav Yitzchock Hutner in his **פחד יצחק** explains that this is evident in the fact that **משה רבינו** only had a speech impediment before **מתן תורה**. The power of speech is a product of the **נשמה**’s connection to the body, evident in the Targum Onkles (**בראשית ב:ז**) when ‘ה breathes life into **אדם** he says that “**אדם** was a speaking being”. This is the definition of man, that which differentiates him from the animal kingdom. However, after **מתן תורה**, when the connection between the spiritual and physical worlds was renewed, the verse (**דברים א:א**) expresses **משה** talking fluently. This demonstrates the strengthening of **משה**’s connection between the two worlds, manifesting in his renewed ability to speak without any impediment

The ability to speak, the defining character trait of man when utilised in the correct way allows a person to form a connection to both G-d and

man through the fulfilment of מצות as well as speaking through davening, learning with a chavrusa or just being there for someone as a friend.

At The Melbourne Beis we have managed to use this power of speech which lies at the essence of כלל ישראל, to assemble a chevra of בני תורה who might come from a variety of hashkafos. But through the כח הדיבור and the oneness of the Torah, we have been able to create an environment to מקיים both sides of the לוחות through learning Torah. The commitment to Torah, everyone encouraging one another and spending many hours talking in learning, with a zest and excitement to connect to ה'.

We have immensely benefited from the various Rabbonim in town who have come to share their Torah with us. In particular from the Rosh Kollel Horav Binyomin Wurzbarger שליט"א and Horav Aryeh Berlin שליט"א hosting us in their batei midrashim not only providing a physical location for us, but more importantly providing an vibrant environment of Torah learning fostering the learning of The Melbourne Beis.

It is a privilege and an honour to be part of such a חבורה. The דברי תורה produced are a testament to the everyone and their commitment to Torah learning. May we be תורה ועבודה ה to continued growth in ה. Have a גוט יום טוב.

Doniel Saus
Rosh Chabura

THE BEIS



WHO WE ARE

The Melbourne Beis is dedicated to creating a vibrant Torah-learning atmosphere for individuals aged 18-35, regardless of their background. No matter where you're from, everyone is welcome to join in our learning!



ROSH CHABURAH

The Beis is spear-headed by R' Doniel Saus; a young and energetic leader; a true role model.

With his warm and welcoming demeanour, R' Saus actively assists and encourages all who are learning. His Shiurim on the Sugya, Halacha, or Parsha, are thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.



THE LEARNING

Our Night Seder program occurs four times weekly: twice at Kollel Beis HaTalmud and twice at Shaarei Tefillah. The evening begins with Chavrusa learning, which is then followed by a Shiur.

A special highlight of the week is our Thursday night Parsha Shiur, accompanied by delectable Cholent, refreshments, and occasional guest speakers.

We are looking to expand by introducing monthly programs in new venues, with the goal of engaging a larger portion of the community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO ORGANISE A CHAVRUSA,
PLEASE REACH OUT TO **R' SAUS** - 0411 292 391



Kollel Beth HaTalmud Yehuda Fishman Institute

Rosh HaKollel Rabbi B Z Wurzburger
Menahel Rabbi E Saftlas

ת"פ

Dear friends,

When the Egyptian army pursued the Jewish people at the Yam Suf, they were gripped with fear, and many considered surrendering and returning to Egypt as slaves. Since there were 600,000 fully armed, adult males amongst the Jews, why didn't they choose to fight for their lives and the lives of their children by waging war against the Egyptians?

The Ibn Ezra (*Shemos* 14:13) answers that the Egyptians were previously the masters over Israel, and the people were accustomed from their youth to meekly bear the yoke of their oppressors. In the beautiful words of Rabbi S.R. Hirsch: "It was not the sword at their side that was lacking, but the heart underneath that failed... they lacked the spirit of trustfully putting themselves in G-d's hands under any and all circumstances."

Since the generation that left Egypt lacked the courage to fight in battle, Hashem arranged matters in a way that they would perish in the desert, so that a new, bold generation that had never experienced exile, would arise to conquer the land of Israel (Ibn Ezra, *ibid.*).

As we approach Pesach, it is extremely heart-warming and inspiring to see that there is new young cadre of idealistic Torah "warriors" who choose to make the Kollel the "Base" of their operations. Under the guidance and direction of our dear and extremely capable youngman, Rav Daniel Saus, the "Beis" programme adds ruach and chizuk to our "Beis" Hamidrash, and raises the "Base" line of the ruach HaTorah in the Kollel.

I wish all involved with the Beis, much Beracha and Hatzlacha, and that we all merit speedily to **לך בית' ה' נלך** – **שמתי באמרים לי בית' ה' נלך** – "I rejoiced when they said to me, "Let us go to the House of Hashem," with the arrival of Moshiach.

Rabbi Binyomin Wurzburger



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אריה ברלין
ק"ק שערי תפילה
מלבורן אסטרליה

בס"ד

כ"ד אדר ב' תשפ"ד

If gives me great pleasure to be able to share a few דברי ברכה to the members of the 'Melbourne Beis' program and its organizers.

Boruch Hashem over the past 6 months I have been excited and in awe of what Rabbi Saus Shlita and the organisers of the Beis have created.

A place where singles and young professionals can come and learn together in a warm, friendly and welcoming Chaburah was something that was very much needed in Melbourne. It has attracted many young men who until this point did not really feel they had a מקום.

Witnessing the Kol Torah that the Chaburah has created, as well as the wide range of Shiurim and activities that the Beis offers, is truly inspiring and a testimony of the dedication of Rabbi Saus and the dedicated members of the Beis.

Chazal tell us אין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתורה - who is really a free man; someone who engages in the learning of Torah. As we approach the Yom tov of Pesach, a time when Klal Yisroel became a nation and experienced חירות, it is my brocha that the 'Melbourne Beis' should continue to go from strength to strength continuing to fill a much needed space in the Melbourne community.

ברכה והצלחה
Rabbi Ariele Berlin

L'man Tizkor

Shimi Pacanowski

"למען תזכור את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חיך"

Chazal instituted to say the third parsha of קריאת שמע, the parsha of ויאמר, as a remembrance of יציאת מצרים. The ישמה ישראל of Alexander asks why would Chazal specifically choose the parsha of ויאמר that also includes the mitzva of ציצית for this purpose? קריאת שמע is to be recited once each morning and night, yet ציצית is only applicable during the daytime and has no relevance for the nighttime. He notes that the Torah mentions יציאת מצרים fifty times (!) and it would seem logical for Chazal to have rather instituted the recital of any of the other mentions which are not exclusively relevant to either day or night.

To answer this, he brings the זוהר הקדוש (פרשת יתרו) that explains that on the night of יציאת מצרים a miracle occurred, and the sun shone brightly. Accordingly, the ראשונים explain that on the night of יציאת מצרים the Yidden were חייב in all מצוות that are usually reserved for the daytime hours. Indeed, the Yidden even performed the מצוה of ברית מילה as if it were a regular day.

Therefore, explains the ישמה ישראל, Chazal specifically instituted to say the parsha of ויאמר that includes the עניינים of יציאת מצרים and ציצית so that we remember this great נס.

The Seder night is an auspicious time, and every yid has the tremendous opportunity to tap into the kedusha of the night and bring out the best of themselves, the shining sun in a world where we are sometimes surrounded by hate and חושך.

The ישמה ישראל notes that for כרפס we use a potato, a lowly vegetable

that has been taken from the mud in the field, yet we elevate it and serve it on שולחן מלכים, on the royal Seder table. We must be confident that on this night Hashem will lift us to great heights. In contrast the רשע challenges "מה העבודה הזאת לכם" and does not believe in the shining power of this night. We must not give in to the darkness that the רשע represents and take full advantage of the unique potential of this night, filling ourselves and the world around us with the most awesome light.



The Rasha

Daniel Jones

The Four Sons - Is the Rasha really so bad? The number four at the seder is one of the archetypal components of the Haggadah. As we gather with family and friends, drink four cups of wine, and sing the four questions of Mah Nishtana, we continue the four motif and discuss four different sons, three sons that ask direct questions to their father and a fourth without a question. How to define the modern representations of the Chachem, Rasha, Tam, V'sheino Yodea lishol are continually debated at seders the world over.

While these different representations are fascinating this article will focus on the Rasha and what his great sin is to be labelled so harshly. The text is very sharp in its description of the Rasha stating that he is Kofer B'ikar (denies Hashem) and therefore we need to Hakheh et Shinav (blunt his teeth). This seems to be a rather large overreaction to the question posed by the Rasha. First, an understanding of the context of the Rasha's question is essential to understand this reaction. The Rasha is asking his question in the context of where Moshe is telling Bnei Yisrael about the laws relating around the Korban Pesach, that the people have to put the blood of the Korban on their lintel and Hashem will pass their houses and strike down the Egyptian firstborns. Moshe adds that you will continue to do the Korban Pesach when you come into the land of Israel, that they will Ushmartem et ha'avodah ha'zot (That they will keep this service). It is in this context that the child then asks Mah ha'avodah hazot la'chem (What is this service to you(plural)). The Baal Haggadah is particular about this added word of La'chem and notes that this is the word where the child has separated himself from everyone else and that Ilu hayah sham, lo hayah nigal (Had this child been there he would not have been redeemed).

What has led to this harsh reaction to label the Rasha as a non-believer, just because he added in the extra word La'chem? It is an exclusionary term, as the child seems to be observing, and not participating in, the Korban Pesach being done in front of him. If he was a participant of the Korban, he would have used the word Lanu, why are we doing this Korban. Why does his non-participation in this Mitzvah warrant such a derogatory label of being a Kofer B'ikar (Denying Hashem) and that now we have to Hakeh et Shinav (Blunt his teeth)?

In order to understand our harsh response we have to give a slightly broader context of the child's question. The passuk before his question talks about Bnei Yisrael going into Eretz Yisrael, some point in the future when we will live in Eretz Yisrael and do the Korban Pesach. Living in the land of Eretz Yisrael and bringing a Korban Pesach to the Beit Hamikdash is the context of the Rasha's question. This is the time and place of where this question is being asked, his question is not about why are we doing this Korban Pesach in Egypt, but rather why are we doing it after we have left Egypt.

This is the key problem with the Rasha and why what he is asking is such an affront to the Baal Haggadah and why he is labelled so harshly. The Rasha is denying the need for Torah and Mitzvot once we move into our land of Eretz Yisrael. The Rasha believes that the laws that we did in Egypt were necessary as a way to distinguish us between the Egyptians, to keep our identity separate, not that that had any inherent spiritual or religious value. Therefore, once we have moved into our homeland and are not oppressed by another nation, we no longer have any need for Torah and Mitzvot. Torah and Mitzvot according to the Rasha are dispensable and unnecessary in a non-oppressive environment. As we have now migrated to a land of Jewish Sovereignty where we are all Jews, it is no longer necessary to continue to do these 'Exiled Jews' laws. This is what makes the Rasha a Kofer B'ichar he has denied the eternity of Torah and Mitzvot and the

fundamental function they serve throughout our lives. This is also why we must blunt his teeth, we are blunting his teeth to stop him spreading this erroneous perspective to others. The Baal Haggadah is emphasising the centrality that Torah and Mitzvot play in our lives: that Torah and Mitzvot continue with us throughout our life, whatever the place or situation we find ourselves in. We are always learning Torah and performing Mitzvot with diligence, intensity, and vigour.

May we merit to continue to do Torah and Mitzvot so that very soon we can also Tavo'u el Ha'aretz asher yiten Hashem lachem, and be able to build the Beit Hamikdash and bring the Korban Pesach.



THE LEARNING



Lechem Oni

Nushi Gordon

The Shuchan Aruch (OC 472:1) tells us that to fulfill the mitzvah of achilas matzah on the first night of Pesach, we must eat a proper shiur of matzah made only of flour and water, excluding egg matzah which is considered Matza Ashira. A simple explanation is that any additives to the matza would provide it with a better taste, hence, would not be considered lechem oni, a poor man's bread.

The pressing query is: How does the bread of affliction relate to the genuine liberation experienced during yetzias mitzrayim? Why doesn't the Torah refer to it as the bread of freedom or abundance instead?

The Maharal offers an intriguing explanation in his Sefer Gevuros Hashem.

To understand this supposed contradiction we need to explore the deeper essence of Matza and what it represents. Its two core and only permissible ingredients for fulfilling the mitzva are flour and water. This is bread in its simplest possible form. Any ingredient added including yeast, which acts as a catalyst for fermentation, the process of increasing the dough's volume, invalidates it for the Mitzvah. Here too, an extended period of time can be considered an ingredient, as the natural fermentation process of the mixture changes the structure of the dough.

The pasuk tells us (Devarim 16:3):

"לֹא-תֹאכַל עֲלֵיו חֶמֶץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל-עָלָיו מִצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֲנִי כִּי בְּחֶפְזוֹן יֵצֵאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לִמְעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת-יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:"

"Don't eat leavened bread; seven days shall you eat matzah, the bread of poverty, for in haste you left Egypt..."

The bread that remains untainted by external factors, relying solely on its inherent essence. Why must this bread be consumed? Because you departed Egypt hastily. Haste signifies a process devoid of temporal delays. This represents the ideal mode of redemption, as any delay in a process entails an augmentation to its essence. True redemption must occur without any superfluous additions beyond the essential. In this context, we observe a parallel with a person in poverty; they, like the matzah, exist in their simplest form, devoid of excessive material possessions, wealth, or external influences. Most notably, they are not enslaved to any individual or possession.

This is another revelation that we were taken out of Mitzrayim through divine intervention. Everything in the natural world is bound by time and the laws of physics, though the Maharal tells us that we were redeemed from Mitzrayim without the measurement of time.

We must recognise on Pesach that our true essence is not connected to social status, wealth or possessions, and do our best to analyze and reset external influences in our lives. Of course we cannot live without physical possessions, and we eat bread all year round. Just as the Kohen Gadol doesn't wear white and enter the Kadosh Hakadoshim all year, but serves in the Heichal and Ezras Kohanim in gold clothes. When we can be independent of everything except our essence, then all the other resources available to us can be used to enhance that essence, rather than create artificial dependencies and slavery. This is the difference between slavery and dependence on the one hand, and freedom and redemption on the other.



Krias Yam Suf

Rafi Wolf

An idea based on word by Rav Greenberg in his sefer מודריכי הכרם - מועדים

After the incredible נס of קריעת ים סוף, the פסוק says “וַיֹּאמִינוּ ב'ה' וּבִמֹּשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ”. This is said after the Jewish people had witnessed the עשר מצוות, a time in which it was already stated “וַיֹּאמֶן הָעָם” (שמות ה:לז)

What was it that caused this sudden lapse in אמונה by בני ישראל that the Torah needed to stress this re-discovered אמונה in Hashem and Moshe?

The רן explains that בני ישראל were perturbed with the fact that Moshe and Aharon, when asking Pharaoh for three days leave, and when commanding the Jewish people to “borrow” gold and silver from their Egyptian neighbours that they staked out during מכת השח, were allowing seeds of doubt to spread about Hashem's ability to free them. Why wouldn't Moshe and Aharon demand a full release of בני ישראל? Why would they request to borrow items that there was no intention to return? Were they putting in place a loophole in case Hashem did not have the ability to save them? Could this be compared to Moshe's use of כחצות הלילה?

It was through these seeds of doubt that there was a lapse in אמונה both in Hashem, but also in Moshe as our leader, and his אמונה.

We can now understand the lapse in אמונה, but how then did קריעת ים סוף specifically address these concerns and remove any shadow of doubt held by בני ישראל?

The רן ties it together beautifully using a possuk in (כה:א):

“כִּי עָשִׂיתָ פֶּלֶא עֲשׂוֹת מִרְחֹק אֲמוֹנָה אוֹמֵן”

“For You have done wondrously. Plans from afar were kept with firm

faithfulness”

Hashem starts his plans on salvation in advance of our tzorus so that our enemies cause their own downfall. This is seen clearly throughout the purim story and is also apparent with קריעת ים סוף.

Should the Egyptians have known that we were freed the moment we left Egypt, there would have been no benefit of chasing us after we left. The seeds of doubt placed by Hashem, through Moshe, were so that Pharaoh and the Egyptians would feel confident in recapturing the Jewish people, even after suffering through the ten plagues. It was this irrational confidence that turned קריעת ים סוף into the immense event that it was, turning it from an “escape route” into a world renown exaltation of the Jewish people and downfall of the then strongest military power of the world, the Egyptians.

It became clear to בני ישראל that this was Hashem’s plan, delivered through Moshe, from the beginning. Therefore, “ויאמינו ב’ה ובמשה עבדו”!

It is easy for us to be surrounded by the darkness in the world today allowing seeds of doubt to plunge us into a palpable, thick darkness that prevents us from moving, much like the Egyptians during מכת חשך. However, we must choose to be like בני ישראל and see the bits of light that give us clarity, the light that allows us to know “כי עשית פלא עצות מרחוק אומן” “For You have done wondrously. Plans from afar were kept with firm faithfulness”

Iyh, we should see clearly the plans of Hashem being fulfilled כביאת
המשיח במהרה בימינו



Ha Lachma Anya

Benji Jones

We begin the Maggid portion of the Haggadah with the recital of “Ha Lachma Anya” in which we invite whoever is hungry to come and eat - “כל דכמין ייתי ויכול”, and whoever requires a place to eat the Korban Pesach to come and partake - “כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח”. This invitation appears to be presented at the wrong time, as we’ve already started and had Kiddish; in the wrong place, for it is issued in the privacy of our own homes; and in a language, Aramaic, which many people don’t understand. What purpose do these invitations serve?

Rabbi Yosef Dof Soloveitchik zt”l opines that in order to understand these invitations, we must first understand the difference between a slave and a free man.

In his book *Festival of Freedom*, p.22 the Rav explains:

Chessed is the characteristic mark of a free man. The bondsman is not spiritually capable of joining the Chessed community, because he is too concerned with himself...Only free and proud people think of others and share with others. The birth of the chessed community...is symbolized by the paschal sacrifice [Korban Pesach]. God...simply wanted the people - slaves who had just come out of the house of bondage - to emerge from their isolation and insane self-centredness into the chessed community...

According to the Rav the distinction between a slave and a free person is that the slave thinks only about himself, about his own physical survival. A free person on the other hand, is full of vigour and strength, shaking off his personal concerns to think how he can help others. At the beginning of the Seder we proclaim: “Do you want to be free? Think about others!”

Ha Lachma Anya invites people to join in the Korban Pesach, which is a Mitzvah encapsulating inclusion and unity. Many of the mitzvot of the Korban Pesach involve thinking about others and togetherness:

- The entire animal has to be roasted
- The bones have to be left whole
- It is eaten in one group, in one place, at one time.

It seems too late at this stage of the Seder to invite guests to eat with us and enjoy the Korban Pesach, as everyone is, by now, already at their own Seder. However, we begin telling the story of our Exodus of Egypt by announcing for ourselves and our families: We are on a journey to freedom, and the first expression of this is that we are free to look beyond ourselves and to help others. "Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat."

At The Melbourne Beis, the unity and camaraderie of the Chevra is palpable. Under the guidance of Rav Doniel Saus, we have fostered a culture where people of different Hashkafot across the Torah observant communities of Melbourne can connect, care about each other, and ultimately, demonstrate our ultimate freedom: Learning Torah to connect to Hashem.

May our unity through Torah learning continue to inspire Achdut across all Am Yisrael!



Over the last 8 months, we have had the privilege of hearing from Rabbonim, both local and overseas, including:



Many more guest speakers to come!

The Rasha

Matan Kofsky

The four sons and their distinct questions are typically a source of much in-depth discussion at sederim worldwide and by many mefarshim. Some derive from it valuable lessons in relation to chinuch, while others seem to apply its hidden teachings to Klal Yisroel in a broader sense. The Rasha and his question is particularly perplexing and needs more attention. Rabbi Dovid Hoffman in his Torah Tavlin Haggadah asks the following question. It is clear from the Rasha's question that this is not someone of ignorance, why then does he ask at all? What is the deeper meaning that the simplicity of the question is masking?

The Ben Ish Chai offers the following sharp insight into the question's deeper meaning and how the answer is very appropriate in its harsh nature. He says that the Rasha is questioning not only the performance of the Seder and its customs, but rather the performance of all Mitzvos in the Torah. Why can't a person just be a good Jew at heart and have a deep inner connection to Hashem? What benefit is there in the physical performance of Mitzvos and observance of halacha?

To that, we answer "Because of this" meaning our actions, "Hashem did for me when I left Mitzrayim". We are explaining to him that according to his logic just as one should be rewarded simply for inner thoughts and good intentions, so too, one must incur punishment for bad intentions and sinful thoughts as well. This is almost impossible as no human is perfect and able to ensure holy and positive thoughts at all times. Instead, Hashem looks at our actions, our Torah and our Mitzvos, when judging us for salvation or redemption. Therefore, we say, "Me and not him! If he had been

there, he would not have been redeemed!”. The Rasha who does not believe in the physical performance of Mitzvos and active observance of the Torah, would not have qualified for redemption and would still be in slavery today. This insight highlights for us the importance of actively doing all the Mitzvos and the reward we get from not just having good intentions but going through with them.



How Many Years in Egypt?

Simcha Cohen

"וּמֹשֶׁה בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יָשְׁבוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה"

The length of the time Bnei Yisrael lived in Mitzrayim was for 430 years."

As Rashi explains, the 430 began from the Bris Bein Habsarim, when Avram was told that the Yidden would go into a Galus. The 400 years that Hashem told him about at that time began with the birth of Yitzchak.

The Gemara in *סנהדרין דף צא* describes a legal claim that the Egyptians brought before Alexander the Great. They were trying to recoup the vast fortune that the Yidden had taken from Mitzrayim at Moshe behest. Their argument was that the Yidden had only borrowed this great wealth and now it needed to be returned. *בן פסיסא* known for his wisdom, advocated for the Jews. His counterclaim was that there were 600,000 people that left Mitzrayim who had worked for 430 years. *גביהא* demanded, "Pay us wages for that many people working for those many years." After thinking it through over the period of 3 days, the Egyptians realised that whatever was taken from their country, was not adequate compensation for all those years of servitude and merciless labour. Case closed!

However, the Maharsha is bothered by an obvious question. We didn't work in Mitzrayim for 430 years. We were only in the country for 210 years and most of that period we weren't slaves. In fact, quite the opposite. When we first came down we were treated royally. We were the family of Yosef, the savior of Egypt. Only after all the *שבטים* died, did the mistreatment begin. In fact, the Midrash in *Shir Hashirim Rabbah 2:11* says that there were only 86 years of hard work. We know the Gematriah of *אלקים* which is the

Middas Hadin is 86. These years began after the birth of Miriyam. That is why she is called Miriam because מר means bitter and it was an appropriate name as that was when the Jews lives began to be embittered with hard work by the wicked Egyptians.

So how could גביהא בן פסיסא state that we were there for 430 years and claim the wages for all those years when in reality it was only 86 years? The Marhasha answers his own question by saying that the 86 years were so harsh and relentless that it was equivilant to 430 years of labour.

Rav Marcus Lehmann in his Hagaddah explains it differently. While it may be true that we did not work for 430 years, rather only 86. On the other hand, although 600,000 people left Mitzrayim, five times that amount did the actual work. The Possuk says וַיֵּסֶב אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָעָם דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּדְבָּר יָמ־סוּף וַחֲמִשִּׁים עָלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. Simply put this means that כלל ישראל were armed as they left Mitzrayim. However, Rashi famously explains that וַחֲמִשִּׁים in the Possuk doesn't necessarily mean armed rather חמשים comes from the word חמשה which means five; one fifth of כלל ישראל experienced the ultimate miracle of יציאת מצרים while four-fifths died during מכת חשך due to their obstinacy and lack of pure belief in the imminent ישועה that Hashem had promised to provide.

Therefore, 3 million people worked for 86 years which is equivalent to 600,000 people working for 430 years (600 thousand times 5 equals 3 million and 86 times 5 equals 430). This explains why גביהא בן פסיסא did not have to be concerned that the Egyptians may retort and question the validity of his claim as he said the Jews had been in Mitzrayim for 430 years for if they would have argued this point, he could have brought up the aforementioned fact.

Rav Lehmann writes further that based on this, we can bring a רמז as to why we have 4 cups at the Seder. כוס which means cup is the gematriah of

86. We raise our cup 4 times to thank Hashem for the 4 times (86X4) which he took off the calculation. We should have been in servitude for 430 years, 5 periods of 86 years. Hashem in his abundant kindness only had us work for 86 years, one period of כּוֹס. This is as it says in תהילים, the well known Possuk of כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשֶׁר וַיַּשֶּׂם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא. I will raise the cup of salvations and the name of Hashem I will invoke.

This year Bezras Hashem, should be a year filled with many needed יְשׁוּעוֹת for all of כּלל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Gut yom tov



A Shofar, Lulav and Matzah?

Sholom and Chanoch Serebryanski

There exists a well known decree formed by Rabbah, that one may not blow a shofar when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbos lest someone carry their shofar - thus transgressing Shabbos - to a rabbi to learn how to blow it. This decree was extended to include not shaking a Lulav on Shabbos lest one brings it to a rabbi to learn the blessings, as those blessings are also unique to the time and not necessarily known. The question can then be asked, why does this reasoning not also apply to the mitzvah of eating matzah? Surely one could argue that if we are to eat matzah on the night of shabbos, one may take this matzah to the rabbi to learn how to say the brachos.

The Eimak suggests that due to the many complications of the seder, there used to be messengers, well versed in the laws relevant to the seder, sent to the various towns and villages in order to run the sedorim. Consequently, there was no concern that the people at the seder would need to go elsewhere to learn what to do. He also suggests that perhaps, because the mitzvah of matzah is at night, there is less of a concern that someone will be willing to go out to ask a rabbi about the laws as it is a more dangerous time.

Another answer given by the Chemdas Yisroel is that the chachomim do not want to entirely uproot a mitzvah. There is a passuk which teaches 'This is the laws of the olah, this is the olah'. From the seemingly extra words 'this is the olah', it is learnt that one who learns the laws of the korban olah is considered to have brought the korban itself. So too here, we can say that one who learns the laws of the shofar or lulav is considered as

if he actually fulfilled the mitzvah and thus these mitzvos were never entirely uprooted. However, when it comes to the mitzvah of matzah which is also a mitzvah for women, since they do not have the mitzvah to learn Torah, they would not be able to fulfill the mitzvah in any way if eating the matzah was banned on shabbos.

Yet these answers are not entirely satisfactory. The suggestion that the decree was not extended to matzah due to people fluent in the laws of a seder being sent out to run sedorim for everyone is hard to understand considering this incredible novelty is not brought until the acharonim.

In regards to there being less concern of someone going out at night, why would we not be concerned that someone is willing to incur a little more risk than usual in order to do a mitzvah for which he only has the opportunity to do once a year? This question becomes strengthened when taking into account that the first night of Pesach is leil shimurim, a night when we have such a conviction in our protection that it is customary to leave our doors unlocked.

Lastly, if the reason why shofar and lulav were able to be banned in contrast to eating matzah is because they can be fulfilled through learning their laws, then why is there no obligation to learn the halachos of shofar and lulav in lieu of doing them?

Perhaps we can answer this original question based on the fact that when one makes kiddush by the seder night, they need to eat the matzah in the same place to fulfill their obligation of making kiddush in the same place as the meal. Therefore, if someone has already made kiddush, they would not be able to go to a rabbi prior to eating the matzah. If they are still yet to make kiddush, then bringing the matzah would only be beneficial if they take their kiddush and other seder needs as well, which due to the extensive effort required, is not something we are concerned about.

An alternative explanation is that shortly prior to eating matzah, we mention that it is shabbos in kiddush. Thus, we are not concerned that someone will forget it is shabbos and carry their matzos.

As a bonus, there is a chassidic explanation given by the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Mistakes tend to come about through being so focused on oneself that they neglect to take notice of all the responsibilities which stem from beyond themselves. Matzah, as it is a bread that has not risen, represents and brings a sense of humility. When someone has a heightened sense of humility, there is significantly less of a concern that they will make a mistake such as carrying on shabbos. This is perhaps further magnified by the fact that it is, as mentioned earlier, leil shimurim, a night when Hashem protects us not only from physical harm but also from spiritual harm.

A freilich and kosher Pesach.



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Breaking Through Boundaries

Reuvy Havin

The pasuk (Devarim 16:3) “לִמְנוֹן תִּזְכּוֹר אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם” which commands our (twice-)daily remembrance of יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם (Brachos 12b), uses ‘יוֹם’, in the singular.

Michah (7:15) refers to yetzias Mitzrayim when comparing it to the final גְּאוּלָּה, saying ‘כִּימֵי צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲרָאֵנוּ נִפְלְאוֹת’ - ‘Like the days of your exodus from Egypt will I show miracles’. Here, in contrast, the pasuk uses ‘כִּימֵי צֵאתְךָ’, in the plural.

Why the difference?

Chassidus (Torah Ohr Voeira 57b) explains that the name Mitzrayim is related to the word maitzorim - boundaries, or limitations. The spiritual exercise of yetzias mitzrayim, and its constant remembrance nowadays, is the idea of pushing past one’s limitations and obstacles against his service of Hashem.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains (Sefer Hamaamarim 5749) that there are two levels of this service. The first is that which underlies the daily mitzvah of זְכוֹרֵת יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם. That is the exercise of breaking through the boundaries of impurity: the comfort zones of attachment to physical pleasure, which can act as psychological barriers, impeding our commitment to following Torah and Mitzvos. That is why the pasuk referring to this mitzvah uses the singular term ‘יוֹם’, as it symbolises the exodus from only one type of limitation - that of tumah and klipah.

In contrast, the pasuk in Michah uses the plural term ‘כִּימֵי’, because, as the surrounding context is the final redemption, the reference to yetzias mitzrayim is, on a deeper level, about the service of ‘breaking through

boundaries' that will bring about the final Geulah. This service is superior to that of the daily mitzvah, in that it incorporates breaking through an additional boundary: that of kedushah.

A boundary of kedushah can be a comfort zone within mitzvos themselves. Examples include habits of learning for a certain amount of time, or of giving a certain proportion of one's earnings to tzedakah. When one stretches themselves to fulfil a mitzvah beyond their own norm, even by a small measure, this achieves tremendous spiritual refinement both in the person and in the physical world. As the Jewish people continue to push themselves in this regard, the world comes closer to its ultimate level of refinement, manifesting through the final exodus, may it occur imminently.



Daas

Ross Alan

There are three levels of wisdom that a person can acquire: Chochmah, Binah and Da'as - the greatest of which is Da'as - the knowledge of great truths, Emunah and clarity of understanding Hakodosh Baruch Hu's presence and eminence.

The Gemara (Berachos 33a) expounds upon Da'as and the importance and greatness of one attaining it. In Berachos 33a, Rav Ami states "great is Dei'os as it is placed between the two names of Hashem": "גְּדוֹלָה דְּעֵה, שְׁתַּתְּנָה": "בֵּין שְׁתֵּי אוֹתִיּוֹת" as it says: "כִּי קֵל דְּעוֹת ה'". On one side we have Kel and on the other side we have Hashem, and in the middle we have Dei'os. The positioning of such a word indicates it to be something extremely important. A yesod within this Gemara is that if one wants to come closer to Hashem, one should do his utmost to acquire a sense of Da'as and to observe and feel Hashem's hand and presence in our lives and in history.

Da'as and the nes of Krias Yam Suf

As Bnei Yisrael were freed from captivity and about to leave Egypt, Pharoah changed his mind and decided to attack the very people he just released from slavery and chased after them with the most powerful army in the world at the time - seeking revenge for the makkos they had just suffered. Instead of allowing Bnei Yisrael to fall victim to Pharoah's army, Hashem saved Bnei Yisrael in the most miraculous way, splitting the Yam Suf and drowning Pharoah's army, leading to its annihilation.

Rav Avigdor Miller asks, why did Hashem perform this miracle in such a theatrical and sensational fashion? We know that Hashem does not perform nissim without reason, so why was such a pronounced and unmis-

takable nes required? Hashem could have stricken the Egyptians with an epidemic or debilitated them in a less remarkable fashion.

Rav Avigdor Miller answers that Krias Yam Suf was not only intended to rescue Bnei Yisrael from Pharoah, additionally, the tremendous nes was performed to instill in Klal Yisrael an unmistakable recognition of Hashem, ultimately bringing them to a higher level of Da'as and allowing them to attain a higher level of perfection. As it states, "when Klal Yisrael saw the wonderous power Hashem wielded, they feared Hashem and put their faith in Hashem's servant, Moshe" (Shemot 14:31).

It is clear that we are in Olam Hazeh to gain a true understanding of the presence and eminence of Hashem, as and the more we are able to attain this feeling, the more successful our time will be in both Olam Hazeh and Olam Haba.

The Gemara tells us that in Olam Haba, the tzaddikim sit with crowns on their heads enjoying the splendour of the Shechinah (Berachos 17b). The Rambam explains that the crowns on the head of the tzaddikim is the Da'as that they have acquired in their lifetime (Hilchos Teshuva 8:2).

We can now see that although Krias Yam Suf was a tremendous nes, the most important benefit to Klal Yisrael was ultimately the level of awareness they gained from seeing Hashem's presence in this world. The Rambam tells us that our Olam Haba depends on our ability to attain such great awareness "גְּדוּלַּת דַּעַת" (Berachos 33a) and indeed, such an achievement will sit as a crown upon one's head in Olam Haba.



Not Going through the Motions

Eli Kornhauser

This year, פסח falls out on the 22nd of April. Houses will be overturned and cleaned, D'Var Torahs written, and questions selected. But, how long can one go through the motions? Haven't we studied the exodus enough? What are these events trying to teach us?

I believe in order to fully comprehend a subject matter, one needs to look at the context first. Of course, the context of פסח can seem surprisingly simple. We entered מצרים and a number of years later Hashem saved us. Case closed. So what is the context of staying up all night? Why do we need to change our regular habits for a whole week in order to "appease" Hashem. Why do we need the whole thoroughfare?

I will address these questions by proposing my own solution. The context to the פסח episode is that the Jews entered מצרים as a family. 70 souls in total. We ate "הא לחמא עניא" - the bread of affliction. We experienced indoctrination and assimilation that resulted in at least 1/5th of us staying there forever. However, as G-D had promised, He brought us out with "strong hand". A mighty nation made up of six hundred thousand individuals. It is this transition, from a family to a powerful nation, that we find the context to one aspect of Pesach.

To add background to this context, it is crucial to distinguish between a family and a nation. In a family structure, there is a patriarchal figure who is intimately connected to the creation/foundation of the religion. This is someone who is intertwined with the faith. They may be used as a "life-line" in order to "soften" up G-d so that He may accept our heartfelt prayers. Conversely, the framework of a nation consists of various factions and groups

that exist on all different levels. Internal conflicts often arise, resulting in division. Some hold higher positions to the “King”, while others maintain a more distant relationship. This is the dichotomy that illustrates the transformative change from before and after the Exodus of Egypt.

Excluding the Pesach Seder, what should these 7 days mean to use? To answer this, one needs to understand what a Mitzvah is. A mitzvah is defined as a commandment. It is something that is forced upon a person through a higher being or power. Sadly, a possible side effect of this is the resulting resentment of that Being. This could lead us to second guessing what the kindness that Hashem gave to us is.

In order to overcome this dilemma, one must understand the direct side effect of a mitzvah. It is being conscious. This is what it means to have concentration on the things that one does. Without it, one engages their “autopilot”, just going through the motions without thought and/or reason. This is the kindness that G-D has bestowed upon us. To expand this thought further, one must place greater significance on the things that one does.

Staying conscious constantly is incredibly hard for the vast majority of us. We must filter our speech. We must devote time to study Torah. We must become outstanding citizens so that no one can find a fault with us. Yet this is exactly what it means to be a Jew.

As life continues on, actions become habits. By definition, the nature of a habit is destructive and brings about ruin to our relationship with Hashem. Therefore, one day there could be reasoning and purpose. The next, a mind-numbing action that is done for the sake of doing. There no longer is a why, it just is.

This is the reason why we complete Mitzvahs everyday for the sake of bettering ourselves. Everyday we put on our right shoe, then left shoe, left

shoe lace, right shoelace. Everyday we concentrate during שמע ישראל and Shemona Esrei. The commandments make us conscious. This culminates in us serving Hashem properly. This is why there is a need to have כוונה. This is how we align ourselves with G-D.

So what is the common denominator between Mitzvahs, Consciousness, and פסח? It is our re-alignment with G-D. Every year, Pesach is celebrated. This includes many of those whose only relationship to Judaism is their name. This is also a time where we re-align our habits. For many, there is no putting on of tefillin and there are extra stringencies with Chametz. We change up our daily activities. Thereby giving meaning to the ones that we have stopped doing.

The event known as פסח demands that we place emphasis on freeing ourselves mentally from the white noise of society. By the end, the habit of indifference disappears. The actions we do daily, have a “newfound” meaning. We ask ourselves “why?” We become conscious and receive that kindness from Hashem.

As one leaves Mitzrayim, one releases their grip on the things that don't matter. We focus on ourselves, become conscious and find new meaning in life. At the start, opening a Siddur may have been a beginning of the end to some. Now it signifies a proper conversation with Hashem. This is the nation who left Egypt. A nation re-aligned with one's beliefs and new found devotion to Torah.



Vehi She'amda

Davi Kofsky

And it is THIS which has stood [for our Forefathers and us. In every generation they try to destroy us, and G-d saves us]"

What is זה - "this" thing that merits us salvation from destruction?

The meforshim offer a variety of answers. The Ritva says that זה refers to the Bris Bein Habesarim, while the Ari Hakadosh holds that זה refers to the Hashem's Shechina.

There is another beautiful explanation that also answers the following question: Why do we raise the cup of wine specifically just for this part of maggid?

The Yalkut Shemoni and Korban Pesach hold that זה is referring to the cup of wine which we are raising. How does a cup of wine save us from destruction in every generation?

Wine is special in that it is specifically subject to the prohibition of Yayin Nesech. It is our observance of the distinction between us and the rest of the world is what merits us salvation from destruction.

In a similar vein, the Medresh (Vayikra Rabba, Pesikta Zutrosa) says the very reason we were redeemed from Egypt was because we retained our Jewish names, language, and clothing (amongst other things). Again, observing the distinction between us and the rest of the world is shown to be of vital importance.

We are obligated to make this distinction through various halochos. Perhaps this is so we do not forget that are we obligated to hold ourselves to Divine moral standards, as opposed to the ever changing moral standards of general society.



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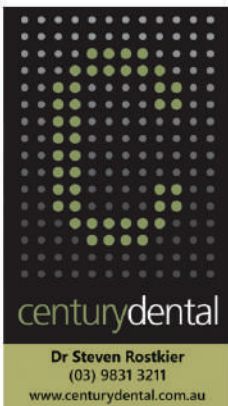
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