

Chag HaPesach

15-22 Nissan 5777 / April 11-18, 2017

Daf Yomi: Bava Basra 79-86; Nach Yomi: Tehillim 102-109

Weekly Dvar Torah

A project of the

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG ISRAEL

SPONSORED BY THE HENRY, BERTHA AND EDWARD ROTHMAN FOUNDATION
ROCHESTER, NY, CLEVELAND, OHIO, CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO

"The Rooftops of Egypt and Yerushalayim"

Rabbi Moshe Greebel

Associate Member, Young Israel Council of Rabbis

Directing the groupings of the B'nai Yisroel in Egypt to acquire their Korban Pesach (Paschal lamb), Moshe stated the following:

"Then Moshe called for all the elders of Yisroel, and said to them, 'Draw out ('Mishchu'), and take a lamb according to your families, and kill the Pesach lamb.'" (Sh'mos 12:21)

Now then, when HaKadosh Baruch Himself commanded that the Korban Pesach be acquired, He stated the following earlier in the Torah:

"Speak to all the congregation of Yisroel, saying, 'In the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house.'" (ibid. 12:3)

As can be clearly seen, nowhere in His statement did HaKadosh Baruch Hu make use of the term 'Mishchu' (draw out) as did Moshe. Why then, did Moshe alter the wording of HaKadosh Baruch Hu? A second question confronts us.

When HaKadosh Baruch Hu commanded the blood of the Korban Pesach to be smeared upon the doors of the B'nai Yisroel, He stated:

"And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the lintel of the houses, in which they shall eat it." (Ibid. 12:7)

Yet, when Moshe issued the same order, he stated the following:

"And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out from the door of his house until the morning." (ibid. 12:22)

Note that Moshe has reversed the order. HaKadosh Baruch Hu stated, "On the two side posts, and on the lintel." Moshe however, reversed the order by stating, "The Lintel and the two side posts." Why would he do such a thing?

Fortunately, we have some very apt answers for these questions, from which a good degree of Torah knowledge may be gleaned, from the text K'hilas Yitzchak by Rav Yitzchak Voloshin (1749- 1821) of blessed memory, who began with the following Gemarah from P'sachim 85b- 86a, which speaks of a time when there was a Bais HaMikdash (Temple) in Y'rushalayim:

"Rav said, 'The roofs and the upper chambers (of Y'rushalayim) were not sanctified (for the eating of the Korban Pesach).' But that is not so, for Rav (also) said on the authority of Rabbi Chiya, 'There was (only) as much as an olive of the Korban Pesach (to eat for each person), yet the (the recitation of) Hallel split the roofs. Does that not mean that they ate on the roof and recited (the Hallel) on the roof....?'"

The Gemarah answers the question in the following manner:

".....No! They ate on the ground floor and recited (Hallel) on the roof....."

But, why may one ask, were the roofs and upper chambers of the houses in Y'rushalayim not sanctified for the eating of the Korban Pesach? The K'hilas Yitzchak offers us a most Lomdish (scholarly) answer.

We commence with the Maharsha (Rav Shmuel Eidels- 1555- 1631) of blessed memory, who explained that the reason they ascended to the roofs and upper chambers to recite Hallel after eating the Korban Pesach on ground level in Y'rushalayim, was in order to publicize the praise and lauding of HaKadosh Baruch Hu in plain sight of everyone. Yet, they still ate the Korban Pesach on ground floor. We shall soon see why.

The K'hilas Yitzchak addresses our first question of why Moshe added the expression 'Mishchu' (draw out). In other locations in Mikra (Scripture), the term M'shicha (drawing out) implies pulling something upwards. When Yosef was sold, we read the following:

"Then there passed by Midianite merchants; and they drew (VaYim'sh'chu) and lifted up Yosef out from the pit, and sold Yosef to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Yosef to Egypt." (B'raishis 37:28)

Clearly, the term M'shicha here means to pull upwards. When Yirmiyahu HaNavi (the prophet) was released from his subterranean dungeon, we read:

"And they pulled up (VaYim'sh'chu) Yirmiyahu with ropes, and took him up out of the pit; and Yirmiyahu remained in the court of the guard." (Yirmiyahu 38:13)

Clearly once again, the language of M'shicha means to pull upwards.

Now then, expounded the K'hilas Yitzchak, it must be understood that when the B'nai Yisroel led their purchased lambs and goats, which would be their Korban Pesach, through the streets of Egypt, they were in terrible danger from the Egyptians who worshipped such livestock. The B'nai Yisroel therefore, put their lives out on the line to accomplish this Mitzvah.

Knowing of this danger, when HaKadosh Baruch Hu directed them, "They shall take every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers," what was meant was to keep the animal, slaughter it, and eventually eat it on ground level, a lot less hazardous than doing this on the roof in public in Egypt.

Along came Moshe, and suggested 'Mishchu', or, pull the animal up to the roof and slaughter it there in any event, so that it would be in plain view of everyone, unable to be missed. Unfortunately, the B'nai Yisroel were too terrified to so publicly slaughter their animals upon their roofs in Egypt, let alone to eat them there.

And, that is why Moshe reversed the order, answered the K'hilas Yitzchak, when it came to the application of the blood upon the door. For, HaKadosh Baruch Hu commanded, "On the two side posts and on the lintel." That is, if the slaughtering and eating took place on the ground floor, the natural progression of applying the blood to the door would have been working one's way up to the lintel.

Nonetheless, had the B'nai possessed the courage to slaughter the Korban on the roof tops, as per the proposition of Moshe, the natural progression of applying blood to the door as they descended from upstairs would have been downwards, as Moshe stated, "The lintel and the two side posts."

And, concluded the K'hilas Yitzchak, because the B'nai Yisroel were not as determined as Moshe to slaughter the Korban Pesach high atop their houses to publicize this Mitzvah to so large an extent, our Rabbanim of blessed memory rendered that the roofs and upper chambers of Y'rushalayim were not sanctified for the eating of the Korban Pesach, in order to memorialize the mercy and compassion of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who did not require our ancestors in Egypt to make use of their roofs and upper chambers there, as per the intention of Moshe.

As can plainly be imagined, there is virtually no end to the inconceivable repository of knowledge which the Torah is. And, there is no better time to discuss such profundities with one's family and friends than Seder night. May we all experience a meaningful Pesach.

A Chag Kosher V'Samai'ach.

In addition to being a M'chaneich, Rabbi Greebel is the part time Rav of Congregation Children of Israel of Youngstown, Ohio,

Pesach, Shalosh Regalim, Shlosa Avos and Our Belief

Rabbi Dovid Sochet

Associate Member, Young Israel Council of Rabbis

The Tur (Orach Chaim 417) (The Arba'ah Turim, often called simply the Tur, is an important Halakhic code, composed by Rabbi Yaakov the son of Rabbi Asher (1270 - c.1340), also referred to as "Ba'al ha-Turim", "Author of the Tur"). The four-part structure of the Tur and its division into chapters (simanim) were adopted by the later code Shulchan Aruch, teaches that the Shalosh Regalim – the three holiday seasons of the year - correspond to the Avos, our three forefathers.

Pesach brings to mind Avraham, Shavuot relates to Yitzchok, and Sukkot to Yaakov. He this explains: The pasuk, when recounting the event when the three malachim –angels - came to visit Avrohom states that Avraham instructed Sarah to bake "cakes" for his celestial guests. (Bereishis 18:6). Our sages tell us that these cakes were Matzohs, for this visit took place on Pesach which Avrohom wished to celebrate with the angels. Shavuot relates to Yitzchok, for on Shavuot, Hashem gave the Torah accompanied by the sound of the Shofar, a ram's horn. Again Chazal tell us that the shofar heard came from the ram sacrificed in on the alter in place of Yitzchok at the time of the akeida. Sukkot connotes the persona of Yaakov, for the Torah (Bereishis 33:17) says that after many years in exile, in the aftermath of his successful encounter with Esav, Yaakov "made sukkot for his sheep".

It remains for us to understand how the Yomim Tovim – the Shalosh Regalim- relate to the distinct personalities of the Avos beyond the fact that each of the Avos had an event occurring in their lives that seemingly coincided with the holiday seasons in some tangential manner. And what message is the Tur conveying to us with his revelation that we might make use of in our lives?

The Mishna (Avos 2:1) teaches that there are three foundations upon which the world stands: Torah, avodah (Divine service) and gemilus chasadim (kind, charitable acts). The three foundations of the world are related to the three Avos, Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, each of whom, as a "forefather" is also considered to be a pillar upon which the world rests.

Gemilus chasadim is the unique trait of Avraham, who is well known for his hospitality towards guests (see Bereishis 21:33 and Rashi) and other deeds of kindness. As the prophet Micha (7:20) tells us "titein emers li'yaakov, vi'chesed li'Avraham- Give [credit for the] truth to Ya'akov and [credit for] kindness to Avraham." Avodah is the unique trait of Yitzchok, who was prepared to have himself sacrificed on the altar, making him the pillar of service to Hashem. (See Midrash Rabbah Vayikra 2:10.) Yaakov represents the pillar of Torah, as we know from the verse (Bereishis 25:27) "V'Yaakov ish tam, yosheiv ohalim" Yaakov residing in the tents of Torah study. The "truth" mentioned in the verse from Micha also refers to Torah study. His unique trait was "emes," truth, which we know is the ultimate Truth – Toras Emes.

The Maharal (Rabbi Yehudah Lowy (1512- 1609),) notes that 'Emunah- faith' is mentioned three times during the process of yetzias mitzrayim, our redemption from Egypt. When Moshe Rabbeinu came to take Klal Yisroel out of Mitzrayim, the pasuk says (Shemos 4:31) says ויאמן העם וישמעו כי פקד ה' את בני ישראל וכי ראה את עניי - "And the people believed, and they heard that Hashem had remembered the Bnei Yisroel." At krias yam suf - the splitting of the sea - the pasuk reads, (Shemos 14:31) says ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו - "and they believed in Hashem, and in His servant Moshe." At Har Sinai the pasuk says (Shemos 19:9) הנה אנכי בא אליך בעב הענן בעבור דמעת העם וגם בך יאמינו - "Behold, I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe in you forever."

The Maharal explains: There are three forms of emunah that were elucidated to Klal Yisroel during the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim. These three categories of Emunah are the basis and foundation of Judaism; they are the pillars that the entire edifice rests upon. If heaven forbid one of them falls, the entire structure collapses.

The first pillar of emunah is *hashgacha*, that is, that Hashem observes and controls everything in the universe. This belief is totally in opposition to those who although might admit that Hashem is indeed the Creator of the Universe, nonetheless argue that He was not and is not involved in the operation of the terrestrial creatures, nor does He have any interest or further say in His Creation. This concept is complete heresy and those who accept this belief that the world runs by itself without the guidance of the One Above do so in order that they might engage in wicked behavior, believing that they will suffer no consequence thereby.

The second pillar is the belief that everything is in the hands of Hashem and there is no other power that can order any event without the express authority granted by Hashem.

The third pillar is the belief that Hashem gave us, the Bnei Yisroel, the Torah as the complete expression of His will and purpose.

Therefore, when Moshe Rabbeinu came to take Klal Yisroel out of Mitzrayim and it says that Hashem saw their suffering and Hashem did not abandon them, the pasuk says "And the people believed, and they heard that Hashem had remembered the Bnei Yisroel", signifying emunah faith that Hashem is mashgiach on all. At Krias Yam Suf, when He changed the Yam Suf to dry land, it became clear to Klal Yisroel that Hashem is all powerful, and therefore it says "and they believed in Hashem, and in His servant Moshe". This corresponds to the second pillar of belief in Hashem. And at Matan Torah, where it is written "and may also believe in you forever.", it is referring to the third pillar of faith, which is the emunah that Hashem gave us His Torah through His servant Moshe., and that the Torah is from Hashem.

At Yetzias Mitzrayim, Hashem wanted to implant in us the true faith. This was the reason that Hashem made the wondrous and awesome miracles in Mitzrayim in order that we should all believe in these three pillars of faith. The three Yomim Tovim - Pesach, Shevuos, and Succos - correspond to these three pillars of emunah. Therefore they are appropriately referred to as *shalosh regalim*, three "legs" as it were, because they are the three legs on which Judaism rests upon.

How is this so?

On Pesach it became known to all that Hashem is all-powerful through His great and mighty miracles. When on the seventh day we crossed the Yam Suf, we were left with no doubt that Hashem is in complete control of everything. On Shavuos we celebrate the giving of the Torah, this is the emunah that the Torah was given to us from Hashem. Succos commemorates the event that Hashem surrounded and protected us with his Ananei HaKavod -clouds of glory, throughout our forty years of wandering in the wilderness. This emphasizes the belief that Hashem continuously observes and actively guides the events of our world.

All three of these types of faith are synergistic –working together as a whole. They were all clarified to us as a result of Yetzias Mitzrayim: from the way that we were redeemed, through our constant protection from Hashem, and with the culmination of the ultimate goal our exodus - to receive the Torah.

The Gemarah teaches (Tractate Rosh Hashana 4A) that the first day of Nisan is considered the New Year's Day for the purpose of ordering the sequence of the Jewish holidays. The month of Nisan is the month in which Pesach falls, and the 1st of Nisan is the anniversary of the founding of the Jewish people when they were rescued from Egypt during the Pesach exodus. This is the reason why Nissan – Pesach is the Rosh Hashana for the Yomim Tovim, it is in the exodus that all three forms of faith were validated.

This can also be used as an insightful understanding of the Tur's words. Pesach which corresponds to Avraham is the basis of our faith for Avraham was the one who proclaimed throughout the world that there was a Creator. It is through Avraham that we have faith that Hashem has created the Universe, that He is Mashgiach over the entire creation and that He is in full control of everything.

Yitzchak fully accepted Avrohom's teachings that and added the element of *pachad* – fear of Hashem, which is the basis of *avodah* - to serve Hashem through prayer and sacrifices. He is symbolic of the pillar of Emunah that there is no other power besides for Hashem and that therefore we must fear only Hashem and serve only Him. Our fear of Hashem is demonstrated by our acceptance of the prohibitions and obligations imposed upon us as detailed in Hashem's Torah. This is why we celebrate Shavuos and how it is related to Yitzchak.

Succos celebrates the fact that Hashem bequeathed us with our most prized possession, His Torah. Because of our acceptance of the Torah, Hashem protected us intimately through his clouds of glory.

On Succos we have the Mitzvah of Esrog. The numerical value of 'Esrog' (610: Aleph=1, Saf=400, Reish =200, Vav=6, Gimel=3) is equivalent to that of Torah (611: Taf=400, Vav=6, Reish=200, Hei=5). The Medrash says that the Esrog resembles the heart. The Torah, which serves as our guide and teacher, ends with a 'Lamed', and begins with a 'Beis', which spells "leiv- heart". This is how Yaakov is associated with the Succos festival.

Our Festivals – which are headed by Pesach – are thus reflective of both our heritage and the cornerstones of our faith.

Please feel free to forward this Torah thought to anyone you feel will take pleasure in reading it. Feel free to contact me at RabbiSochet@gmail.com for any questions and comments. Good Shabbos and May we all merit to a kosher and happy Pesach.

L'shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim

Rabbi Mendel Kaufman

Mara D'asra, Young Israel of Briarwood, NY

The Haggadah asks: "What does the wicked son say... Of what purpose is this work to you?" When the wicked son says to you and not to me, it shows he has excluded himself from the community and has denied the most important tenets of our faith. To that, the Haggadah declares: "Blunt his teeth and tell him, 'it is because of this (the mitzvoh of Pesach) that HaShem performed these miracles for me when I left Egypt'" [Shemot 13:8]. As to the wicked son saying to you and not to me, the Hagaddah proclaims: "had he been there, he would not have been redeemed."

For a long time, I had wondered why the Haggadah changed the language of the verse, "G-d made the miracles when I left Egypt." If the wicked son had been there, he would not have been redeemed. Why didn't it remain consistent with the verse and say: "had he been there he would not have left?"

Then, some years ago, I read about a debate that took place at Queens College between Yitzchak Navon (president of Israel 1978-1983) and a young history professor from Hebrew University. The topic was: "The victory of Israel during the 1948 War of Independence – was it a miracle?" Mr. Navon, who at that time was a key aid to David Ben-Gurion, said he certainly did believe it was a miracle, considering that a relative handful (about 600,000) of poorly-equipped and meagerly-trained Jews were able to withstand the onslaught of the highly-equipped armies of seven Arab nations.

I remembered a joke that was making the rounds in 1948. Two young men, both Holocaust survivors, had come from the D.P. camps to Israel during the War of Independence. They were immediately inducted into the IDF and sent to separate units. One of them, on his first day in an infantry unit, was handed a broom stick and told by his officer: "Take this gun and stand at the post tonight in the field over there." The young man said: "This is not a gun; it is a broom stick!" To which the officer replied: "And I say it is a gun – take it and stand guard in the field tonight. That's an order!"

Well, an order is an order. The fellow took the stick and went to his position in the field. Standing in the dark, he hears a rustling in the bushes. He calls out: "Halt, who goes there?" No answer. The rustling comes closer. He yells: "Halt or I will shoot!" Still no reply, and the rustling gets closer. The young man figured he had nothing to lose so he decided to use all his strength and clobber whoever it was in an attempt to defend himself. As he was ready to swing the broom stick, a light flashed and he noticed the person coming toward him was his friend from the D.P. camp. "Yankel," he says. "Why didn't you answer me, I could have killed you!" Yankel responds with a chuckle: "You can't kill me; I'm a tank."

That young professor at Queens College, on the other hand, argued that the Israeli victory was not a miracle. The IDF was a superior fighting force than the Arab armies. The IDF won on ability alone, he claimed. This debate can help us to understand the reason the Haggadah changed the language of the verse from "going out" to "redeemed."

The wicked son does not want to be beholden to G-d. To him, the mitzvoh are an *avodah* (arduous work). Even if a merciful G-d had permitted him to leave Egypt, he would not have been redeemed; he would have found all kinds of rational explanations as to why the Jewish people were able to leave Egypt.

Moshe was a master diplomat. Pharaoh wanted to be rid of the Jews by any means. The only way they were allowed to leave was through the might of G-d. The Hagaddah is teaching us that Pesach is the holiday of appreciation. We must appreciate that our salvation came from G-d, and the way to show our appreciation is by strengthening our observance of Torah and mitzvoh.

At Pesach, as we express appreciation for our redemption from Egypt, we must also show our appreciation through Torah and mitzvoh for the miracles G-d performs for the Jewish people today – particularly for our brethren in Israel.

True, the redemption today is far from complete. Israel and the Jewish nation still face existential threats – both internally and externally. But we must not let this blind us to the myriad miracles that G-d has already performed on our behalf. Besides the War of Independence, there are countless other examples – the Six-Day War, the raid on Entebbe among them. The more we appreciate modern-day miracles, through Torah and mitzvoh, the closer we will come to the *Geula Shelaima*, the complete redemption we all have been yearning for.

It is no accident that we conclude the Seder with the words *L'shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim* – next year in Jerusalem. We have just read the entire Hagaddah, with its narrative and mitzvoh in remembrance of something that occurred 3,000

years ago. Thus, we must be highly aware that the narrative continues. Just as we went from exile to redemption 3,000 years ago, so today we must go from exile to redemption.

Next year in Jerusalem! Amen.

The Four Sons

Rabbi Chaim Wasserman

Young Israel Council of Rabbis in Israel

The same Torah that mandates that we eat *matzah* and *marror* at the *Seder*, and requires us to recount the story of the Exodus from Egypt in the Haggadah's section of *Maggid*, instructs that on this night of Pesach, we address four different Jewish individuals: the *chacham*, *rasha*, *tam* and *she'eino yodeia lishol* (the wise son, the wicked son, the simple son, and the son unable to ask).

If the *Haggadah's* dominant section of *Maggid* is supposed to serve as the response to some of our unusual behavior at the *Seder* table (as we find in *Mah Nishtanah* – the Four Questions), then where in *Maggid* do we find the various responses to each of these types of individuals?

Clearly, there is no fulfillment of the requisite recounting the details of the Exodus from Egypt (*sippur yetziat Mitzrayim*) until we can discover within the very text of our *Haggadah* an appropriate answer to each of these four sons. This we learn at the very beginning of *Maggid* in the passage (also found in *Mechilta* and *Talmud Yerushalmi Pesachim*) *Keneged arba'ah banim dibrah Torah...*(The Torah speaks to four sons)...the Torah insists that each one of these very different personalities be appropriately addressed on this night.

One does not need an advanced degree in pedagogy to conclude that to motivate any person to internalize something, in order for learning to take place the message must be relevant to that individual. Because of his learning style, the *chacham* cannot be satisfied with what is told to the *rasha*; the material that is presented to the *tam* may not peak the curiosity of the disaffected *eino yodei'a lishol*.

Indeed, there are four distinct answers in *Maggid* – each suited for these very different personalities. To discover them with me, I suggest that before you continue reading, you open a *Haggadah* and consult its text, page by page, as you read on.

ADDRESSING THE CHACHAM

Maggid begins with *Mah Nishtanah*, the four questions trying to understand why this night is so different from all others. The first of four answers immediately follows. The answer begins with *Avadim ha'yinu* ("We were slaves") an address to the wise and educated *chacham*. He is told immediately: regardless of your wisdom and sophistication, on the night of the *Seder*, the more one can elaborate on the saga of *yetziat Mitzrayim*, the more praiseworthy he will be. To underscore this point, the incident with five great *Mishnah* sages in Bnei Brak is presented, who remained in discourse throughout the entire *Seder* night.

The answer to the *chacham* concludes with the singing of *Baruch HaMakom* ("Blessed is the Ever-Present"), a song of praise unto G-d which serves as a pause before the *Haggadah* presents a second answer. However, at this point there is a vital postscript directed at the *chacham*.

In the passage that begins with "*K'neged arba'ah banim dibrah Torah*," the *chacham* learns that, on the *Seder* night, he alone is charged with the responsibility to include any *rasha*, *tam* or *she'eino yodei'a lishol* in his *Seder*. Insularity at the *Seder* is simply unacceptable for the *Torah*. Should he, the *chacham*, want to dispense with this obligation before Pesach, conducting a "model *Seder*" for those inferior in learning, so that his own *Seder* might be conducted among his learned colleagues – doing so will not suffice. The responsibility of the *chacham* towards others in his community applies most specifically on the night of the *Seder*. They, together with him at the appointed time, must observe the *mitzvot* as mandated by the *Torah*.

CONFRONTING THE RASHA

The *Haggadah* then moves on to address the *rasha* beginning with *Mitechila ovdei avodah zarah*. ("Originally our ancestors were idol worshippers"). The object of this answer is to show to the cynical *rasha* that the same way Avraham *Avinu* and his generation were able to make the quantum leap of faith to monotheism from the ubiquitous world order of

polytheism and idol worship, he too, ought to find it within himself to abandon his belittling attitude towards the Torah way of life. And the Haggadah reminds him that, if he does so, he can instantly be redeemed. The *rasha* is one who can be reasoned with and thus have his sharp teeth blunted. *Chacham*: if you succeed in doing that, you will have a capable and worthy partner in Torah study – no longer a *rasha*. *Vehi she-omdah* ("This is the promise")...another song of praise, ends the answer to a *rasha*.

INFORMING A TAM

A *tam* here is not a naïve simpleton. Rather, the *Haggadah* uses the term as it is used in *Tehillim* (Psalms) and the book of *Job*, where the term refers to one who is pure and straightforward (*tam v'yashar*). He is open to the whole lesson from the beginning to the end about the *galut Mitzrayim* experience. And in only four *pesukim* (passages) from the beginning of *Parashat Ki Tavo*, the *Haggadah* will give the *tam* a complete overview of how we arrived in Egypt, our experience there, and the Exodus.

Each of these four *pesukim* are then divided, phrase by phrase, and explained in detail, just as one would be studying four *pesukim* of *Chumash* with Rashi's commentary. *Haggadot* printed these days, what with modern techniques in typesetting and photo-offset, will highlight each of the *pesukim* and also every segment of the *passuk* that the *Haggadah* is about to expound upon, much like studying *Chumash* with Rashi.

When the entire story for the *tam* is complete, once more, we end with a *shir shevah*, a song of praise: *Da'yeinu* ("It would have been enough").

MOTIVATING A SHE-EINO YODEI'A LISHOL

Finally, the *Haggadah* speaks to the disaffected Jew, the one who had no opportunity to learn about their heritage as the others did. The most effective pedagogic manner to motivate understanding on the part of such a person, so removed from his subject that he does not even know which questions to ask, is Rabban Gamliel's insistence on the primary symbols sitting on the table – *Pesach*, *Matzah*, *Marror*. Explain succinctly to any *she-eino yodei'a lishol* what these are meant to symbolize and you have begun to educate him with the message of *Pesach* the way the *Torah* wanted it to be observed in every generation.

THE FINALE

Once we have finished educating all four segments of our community, *Maggid* concludes with the statement that every individual should imagine as if he, personally, was freed from Egypt, and that the redemption experience was shared equally by all. When that occurs, we can conclude with joining together in praise unto G-d with the beginning of *Hallel* and a *berachah* of praise unto Him, *Asher G'alanu* ("Who has redeemed us"); and from there, to two central *mitzvot* of the evening – *matzah* and *marror*.

Chag Samayach!

Chavakkuk

Rabbi Moshe Rabinowitz

Rabbinic Intern, Young Israel of Flatbush

One of the primary mitzvos of Pesach is the mitzvah of *להגדת לבנך*, the commandment to relay to one's children all that occurred upon the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt. Rav Mattisyahu Solomon explains that this mitzvah is the cornerstone of the *חינוך* of a Jewish household in all generations as it is the source from which we draw out foundations in *Emunah* and the ability to recognize HaShem's love for us.

The Ramban explains that part of our task in building our *Emunah* is to understand that HaShem is the creator and we are the created. Accepting and understanding that HaShem is the One in control is an integral part of *Emunah*. The Talmud in Tractate Makkos (24a) tells us that 613 mitzvos were given to Klal Yisroel. However as generations grew weaker certain *Neviim* came along and stressed only specific mitzvos. The final Navi in this chain of *Neviim*, Chavakkuk [1], stressed only one mitzvah.

The Talmud tells us that Chavakkuk relayed one principle "צדיק באמונתו יחיה", *The righteous person shall live through his faith*". One can question how focusing on just one commandment can suffice in place of all 613 mitzvos?

The Maharsha explains that Chavakkuk and the *Neviim* before him were searching for an all encompassing rule to guide the Jewish People. The process began with Dovid Hamelech who emphasized eleven precepts, with each proceeding navi centering more and more on a primary focus, until Chavakkuk who summed it up in three words, *צדיק באמונתו יחיה*. The

Maharsha explains that these three words refer to the first two commandments of [2] 'לא יהיה לך' and 'אנכי ה' [2]. These two commandments form the foundation of our Emunah. The Maharsha explains further that if one has Emunah then his fulfillment of the other mitzvos will fall into place as a righteous person has Emunah and therefore, he wants to do the will of HaShem.

Therefore, upon preparing to perform the mitzvah of והגדת לבנך we can readily understand that this mitzvah isn't just one mitzvah, it is actually the very foundation of all the mitzvos and values we hope to instill in our children. May we all merit to be inspired to ever greater levels of Emunah and through that be zocheh to hear the shofar blast signaling the arrival of Eliyahu Hanavi and the coming of Moshiach. לשנה הבאה בירושלים הבנויה

[1] Chavakkuk was one of three Neviim who prophesized during the reign of the wicked King Menashe. According to the Medrash, Chavakkuk was the boy who was brought back to life by Elisha in Sefer Melochim.

[2] In the first commandment HaShem commands us the "He is HaShem our HaShem", the second commandment is that "We should have no other gods before him".

Be A Chacham

Rabbi Moshe S.

Gorelik

Rabbi Emeritus, Young Israel of North Bellmore

This Dvar Torah will focus on the religious message implied by the Hagadah's definition of the *chacham* (wise son). The Hagadah's author contrasts the first two sons by referring to one as the *chacham* and the second as the *rashah* (wicked son). In the tradition of the Tanach style, one would expect the contrasts to be phrased *tzadik* – the righteous son, and *rashah*. *Chacham* and *rashah* refer to different and unrelated categories of people. *Chacham* defines a person's level of intelligence, while *rashah* defines moral character.

This seemingly inconsistent formulation was addressed by Rav Moshe Avigdor Amiel *z"t*, the former Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv and author of classical works on Halachah and Agadah. He added a significant dimension to the definition of *chacham*. The ideal *tzadik* is both righteous and wise. This model personifies the integration of noble attributes of righteousness and philosophic curiosity.

Thus, the two terms *tzadik* and *chacham* invoke different categories of people. *Tzadik* implies meticulous religious behavior, moral character, devotion to HaShem and ethical obligation to one's fellow man. On the other hand, *chacham* is a lover of wisdom who raises questions and seeks intelligent and logical answers. In the Hagadah, the term *chacham* acquires an additional dimension when it is contrasted with *rashah*. In other words, the *chacham* is the *tzadik* whose religious commitment and religious experience are grounded in reason and intelligence. Rav Amiel's definition is far-reaching; that is, piety requires intelligence. Religious faith and commitment to Torah morality demand understanding and clear thinking.

If intellectual curiosity is discouraged or disapproved of, religious observance will fail to convey the richness and depth of their meaning. Rote learning is unexciting and non-inspirational because it lacks the enriching spiritual quality, and falls short in igniting the *neschama* and lighting up religious enthusiasm. The Talmud declares that, at the time of judgment, a person will be asked a series of questions – the first being: "have you dealt honestly (*b'emunah*) in business?"

A Chassidic master pointed to an alternate interpretation. He translated *emunah* as "faith" rather than "honesty." The complete phrase is thusly translated: "have you grappled (i.e. philosophically) with your faith?" One must come face-to-face with life's spiritual and moral challenges; shying away from the issues is not an enduring solution. They will ultimately come to haunt us. Thus, the Chassidic master and Rav Amiel apparently both agree that, to be a *tzadik*, one must be a *chacham*.

Rabbis, communal leaders, and educators have been coming to grips with a growing phenomenon in our educational institutions. A number of students, both male and female, are being "turned off" and are compromising their religious behavior. One popular Orthodox journal devoted an entire issue to the problem. The writers tackled the challenges through different lenses – including psychological, religious and educational perspectives. For a long time, this developing trend was recognized but received inadequate attention from the leadership because the institutions were immensely successful with the bulk of the student body. Some even advised not to "stir up a hornet's nest" and the hope persisted that the hornets would fly away. Not only has the hope not been realized, the population of the "hornets" have increased.

Several factors have likely contributed to this critical problem. The culture of the day is "do your own thing" or "do whatever makes you happy." And the media glorify the hedonistic extravaganza of American society. It might be unsettling family life that affects the emotional stability of young students, or perhaps an incompetent rebbe has left a negative impact. In addition to the forgoing causes, there may be a need to reassess the educational philosophy: does the learning relate to the reality of life? Does learning stimulate the mind and impassion the heart? Two categories of learning in which knowledge is acquired are passive and active. Passive knowledge signifies absorption of facts and figures, learning and textual skills. But a student may fail to see the relevance of such knowledge to current human conditions, and may compare his years of study to an exercise routine in a mental gym. Active knowledge is a pursuit of reason. The student is encouraged to delve into the body of our *mesorah* (traditions) with an inquiring mind, and is encouraged to ask questions in the spirit of the attitude of the Chassidic master. A hashkafah of *Yahadut* (Jewish philosophy) that is deeply rooted in the bedrock of Torah and does not rule out grappling with current cultural challenges, will convince the student that Torah is an *Eitz HaChayim* (Tree of Life). Furthermore, such a hashkafah can equip the student with the intellectual ability to avoid the pitfalls of contemporary values. Rav Amiel was correct when he claimed that, to be a *tzadik*, one must be a *chacham*.

The *Chiddushei Harim*, commenting on the pasuk, "...understand the years of every generation" (Dvarim 32:7), declared the following: "In every generation, and in every period, there comes from the Heavens a new understanding of the Torah, one that is appropriate for the generation. The *tzadikim* in each generation understand the Torah according to what is required to teach the people of the generation."

Rav Amital, Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivat Har Etzion, added an enlightening footnote to the remarkable statements of the *Chiddushei Harim*. In order for these leaders to struggle and contemplate until they arrive at a new understanding, it is imperative that they be challenged by their generation's problems and questions. Questions will allow one to arrive at answers. If the generations do not raise questions, the leaders will not raise the solutions.

In light of the above, it is crucial that communal leaders and educators possess the courage and determination to assess and re-assess the strengths and weaknesses of the educational programs. Are we imparting passive knowledge or active knowledge? The *Chiddushei Harim* was very wise. One may not rest on past laurels; we are charged to confront the questions of each age and to provide the answers appropriate for the generation to achieve the goals. He was correct... to be a *tzadik*, one must be a *chacham*.

Chag Samayach.

Meafar Kumi

Rabbi Ronen Shaharabany

Graduate, NCYI Rabbinic Training Program

ברכת סיפור יציאת מצרים

מדוע חכמים לא תקנו ברכה על מצות סיפור יציאת מצרים? פירש בהגדה "שמניך טובים", דהנה איתא בגמרא (ברכות יב:), אמר להם באים נאם ה', ולא יאמרו עוד ח' "הנה ימים -בן זומא לחכמים, וכי מזכירים יציאת מצרים לימות המשיח, והלא כבר נאמר (ירמיה כג, ז חי ה' אשר העלה את בני ישראל מארץ מצרים. כי אם חי ה' אשר העלה ואשר הביא את זרע בית ישראל מארץ צפונה ומכל הארצות ע"כ. ואם לו טפל מירצמ תאיציו, עיקר אלא שתהא שעבוד גליות אשר הדחתים שם". אמרו לו, לא שתעקר יציאת מצרים ממקומה, ת המשיח לא יוכלו לברך על סיפור יציאת מצרים, שהרי הוא הטפל, ובכל ברכה מברכין על העיקר ופוטרים את הטפלה (ברכות כן, לימו כרפס יחץ מד). ולכן מעיקרא לא תיקנו ברכה על מצוה זו, באופן שיצטרכו בעתיד לשנות את נוסחתה. ואולי זהו הרמז בסמיכות " מגייד אב הז לעו. (דרפ תדובע ודבע אובר מישש ונייהד) ס' פרך אותיות כרפס -ל מצרים רומז על השיעבוד ש כרפסה יכ, "מגייד לפט מירצמ תאיציו, רקיע תוילג דובעש דיתעל יכ, (יחץ לספר בגאולתן של ישראל ממצרים. אבל מגיד הוא רק מחצית הסיפור (דהיינו לו.

וּם מַה, עַל שׁוּם שִׁפְסַח הַקֵּב"ה עַל בְּתֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם שֶׁהָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אוֹכְלִים בְּזִמְנָן שְׁבִית בְּמִקְדָּשׁ הָיָה קִיָּים עַל שׁ
'ת ירחא, ג' אב 'ב ירחא) "בתי אבותינו במצרים הקב"ה פסח ודילג על "בתי אבותינו במצרים". נראה לי לרמוז, אם נדלג על האותיות "ללמד שבניסן נגאלו ובניסן עתידיים". "ביאת גואל צדק" אירטמיג הזש, 647 בא א', אחרי י' בא כ', וכו'), הגימטריא של האותיות עולים להיגאל (ראש השנה יא). וגאולת מצרים לא היתה בגלל שישאל זכו לכך מצד מעשיהם, אלא רק בגלל שהם יהודים, עם סגולתו של יא דבר ה'. כמו שכתב האדמו"ר מריז'ין (נר ישראל, פר' יתרו) על הפסוק "והייתם לי סגולה מכל העמים" (שמות יט, ה): "סגולה" ה שאין לו טעם, שהרי אין סיבה שסגולה מועילה לדבר מסויים. כך עם ישראל בבחינת "סגולה" להקב"ה, שאין טעם לחיבתו אליהם, אלא

היא חוק, "כך אני רוצה", ע"כ. לכן כמו שה' פסח על בתי אבותינו במצרים והבדיל בינם לבין המצרים ללא שום טעם, ורק מחמת חיבתו יהודים, על אותה דרך יביא ה' את ביאת גואל צדק לגאול אותנו במהרה בימינו אמן! אליהם מצד שהם

החולה מסוג אחר

ימרא נושלב ויכרצ לאושה לכ ונחוי יבר רמאד, תימרא נושלב ויכרצ מדא לאשי לא מלועל (גל הטוס) ארמגב אתיא... **הא לחמא עניא** אכי השרת מכירין בלשון ארמי, ע"כ. אם כן, קשה, למה כאן, כשאנו מתפללים אין מלאכי השרת נזקקין (עוזרים) לו, לפי שאין מל שלשנה הבאה נזכה לגאולה, תיקנו חכמינו לומר זאת בלשון ארמית? פירש בהגדה "שמניך טובים", כתוב בגמרא (שבת יב:), של החולה, ואין המתפלל צריך כשמבקרים את החולה אפשר להתפלל עליו בלשון ארמית, משום שהשכינה נמצאת למעלה מראשותיו שמלאכי השרת יכניסו את תפילתו לפנים מן הפגוד, אלא התפילה הולכת מיד לפני הקב"ה, ע"ש. והרי שורש לילה זו היא מדת אהבה, שבו אנו מתעוררים באהבה עזה להקב"ה, בעבור כל הנסים והנפלאות שעשה ה' עמנו מאז ועד עתה. ואנו יושבין מסובין תחת ידי ריש) **כי חולת אהבה אני** שכינה, "שמאלו תחת לראשי וימינו תחבקני", ואנו קורין אליו "סמכוני באשישות רפדוני בתפוחים, הן וכלו, למלאכים להעלות אמירתנו וכיון שאנו חולים חולת אהבה, הרי השכינה למעלה מראשינו, ואין אנו צריכים השירים)". ושת הלילה, להתעמק באהבת ה' בנסיו ונפלאותיו מתחילין בלשון תרגום, לעורר על גודל קד

Wishing You a Chag Kasher V'samayach

NCYI Divrei Torah Bulletin - a Project of the Young Israel Council of Rabbis