

OHR NET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

The Four Sons and DEVOLUTION

Transcribed from the Lectures of
Rabbi Uziel Milevsky, *zatzal*

As any student of Jewish history knows, the Egyptian exile marked only the beginning of Israel's three-thousand-year odyssey through a never-ending gauntlet of persecution and torture at the hands of one nation after the next. An oft-repeated question, therefore, is why does the commemoration of the Exodus occupy such a central position in the Jewish calendar? Since the Jewish People have been cast from one exile to the next, why is Passover still referred to as "the time of our freedom?" What kind of freedom is this?

The answer is that the miracles of the Exodus which culminated on Passover comprise the prototype of the Jewish People's ultimate Redemption. In a sense, the miracles which took place in Egypt set a historical precedent which will sooner or later repeat itself. Prior to the Exodus from Egypt, there was no practical indication that Israel would ever be redeemed; perhaps exile would become an integral component of the Jewish psyche for all eternity. With the miracles of Passover, it became clear to all the inhabitants of

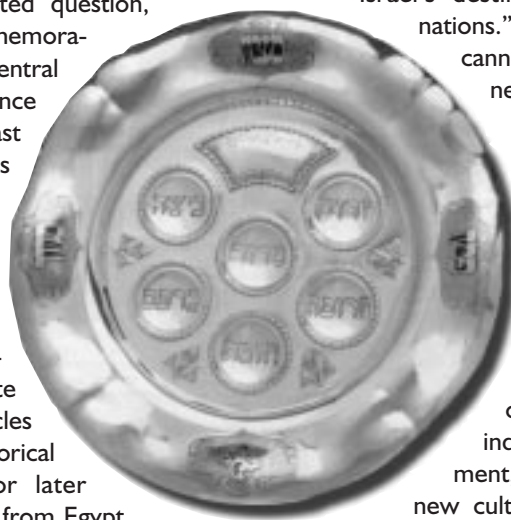
the earth that the Jewish People were not destined for a permanent state of exile; our identity is thus characterized by a state of redemption.

Yet more often than not, the Jewish historical cycle has consisted not of a transition from exile to freedom, but rather from exile to exile. This movement of our People from one culture to another has too often proven fatal to large segments of the Jewish Nation, which bears the scars to this very day, as we see from the recurring cycle of Jewish Exile.

The Jewish Drive to Excel

Typically, when Jews make their entrance into a nation, they tend immediately to feel a tremendous drive to "fit in" and excel in those very same pursuits which the host society considers their own unique specialty. If the locals take pride in their superior business skills, then the first-generation Jewish immigrants strive to become superb businessmen; if the locals take pride in their scientific achievements, then the Jews strive to become superb scientists. The Jews' innate ambition to excel stems from Israel's destiny to become a "light unto the nations." This enormous spiritual potential cannot be suppressed — if it is not channeled towards spiritual endeavors, it manifests itself on the corporeal plane as a consuming ambition to excel in every field of worldly endeavor. Soon, the all-consuming yearning to excel can become so overwhelming that the Jew may be willing to sacrifice anything — including his heritage — in order to attain his goal. In a matter of a few generations, the Jew does indeed excel, but this time, to his detriment, he becomes so well-adjusted to his new culture that he totally assimilates and essentially fades away as a Jew.

Who remains in exile? Only the descendants of those Jews who have resisted the temptation of assimilating and have remained faithful to the Torah. This is the only guarantee of Jewish survival. Those who embraced Torah still



Continued on page six

ASK the RABBI

Ask the Rabbi receives via e-mail more than one hundred questions daily which pour in from all over the globe.

Ask the Rabbi replies to each and every person who writes in. Most people receive a personal answer to their question **within 48 hours**. Often, you will be answered the same day!

Besides answering everyone personally, we select a few questions and publish them in our weekly **Ask the Rabbi** column in **Ohrnet** magazine.

Kenneth Broodo
<broke@gardere.com>
sent us the following:

Bernie decides to become an aeronautical engineer. He goes to the best schools, studies hard and finally graduates. Soon he gains a reputation as the finest aeronautical engineer in all the land and starts his own company.

His company is such a hit that the President of the United States calls Bernie into his office. "Bernie," says the president, "we want to commission your company to build an advanced jet fighter for the United States Air Force. Go out and design the best jet fighter ever made."

Bernie is tremendously excited. The entire resources of his company go into

building the most advanced jet fighter in history. But at the first test flight, disaster strikes:

The wings can't take the strain and they break clean off of the fuselage! Bernie's company redesigns the jet, but again the wings break off. They try a third time, but the same thing happens.

Beside himself with worry, Bernie goes to the synagogue to pray. The rabbi sees Bernie and asks what's the matter. Bernie pours his heart out to the rabbi.

After hearing the problem, the rabbi put his arm on Bernie's shoulder and says, "I can solve your problem. Just drill a row of holes directly above and below where the wing meets the fuselage. If you do this I guarantee the wings won't fall off."

Bernie just smiles and thanks the rabbi for his simple advice. But the more he thinks about it, the more he realizes he has nothing to lose. So, Bernie does exactly as the rabbi said. On the next design of the jet, they drill a row of holes directly above and below where the wings meet the fuselage. And the test flight goes perfectly! The wings don't fall off!

Brimming with joy, Bernie goes to the synagogue to tell the rabbi that his advice worked.

"Naturally," says the rabbi.

"But Rabbi, how did you know that drilling the holes would prevent the wings from falling off?"

"Bernie," the rabbi says, "I'm an old man. I've celebrated Passover many, many times. And in all those years, not once — not once! — has the matzah ever broken along the perforation."

Fred from Tennessee
<Fred4@centuryinter.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
What is the Haggadah?

Dear Fred,

The Haggadah is a book that Jews read on the first night of Passover. It tells about our slavery in Egypt and the miracles G-d did for us when freeing us. The word *haggadah* means "telling," which comes from the Biblical command: "And you shall **tell** your child on that day, saying: 'G-d did (miracles) for me when I left Egypt so that I would fulfill the Torah's commandment.'" (Exodus 13:8 and Rashi)

Joseph Cohen
<jbcohen@webtv.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
My wife and I are kashering are home for Passover for the first time this year. We are now purchasing Passover dishes, utensils, etc. My question is, when we remove the everyday dishes, where do they go? May we put them in the boxes that held the Passover dishes? Is it better for the Passover dishes to not come in contact with any surface that was touched by everyday dishes? Do we change the plastic containers in our kitchen drawers? Do we cover the inside of the cabinets?

Dear Joseph Cohen,

First of all, congratulations on you first "Kosher for Passover" home. Many happy returns.

You can store clean everyday utensils in the Passover containers. After Passover, you can put the Passover dishes back into the same containers. Just be careful not to get them mixed up.

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לע"נ
ר' נחום ב"ר אברהם אשר ז"ל

MR. NATHAN STARK ז"ל

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

ASK the RABBI

It is customary to cover cupboards and utensil holders that were used during the year and will be used on Passover. If you can't do this or can't obtain new utensil holders, then remove the inserts, clean the drawers completely and put the Passover cutlery directly into the drawer.

And by the way, I must warn you about one of the mysteries of Passover: The Passover utensils come out of a specific amount of storage space, and yet they never seem to all fit back in again! I have never found a rational explanation for this phenomenon!

Roger Harper
from Walsall, United Kingdom
<roger.harper@virgin.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
When and why did the tradition begin of reclining at the Passover meal? In the book of Exodus it seems that the people were instructed for all time to eat the Passover meal with sandals on their feet and staffs in hand as if ready to move on. So why do we lean, which seems to indicate a lack of readiness to move on?

Dear Roger Harper,

Rather than a tradition, reclining while eating the matzah and drinking the four cups of wine is a halacha. Leaning symbolizes freedom and aristocracy. It is first recorded in the *Mishnah* (c. 200 CE), but it dates back much farther than that.

Only the Jews in Egypt were commanded to eat in a state of readiness to leave; they were indeed getting ready to leave Egypt. But that command was specific for those people and for that year alone.

Sources:

- Tractate Pesachim 99b, 108a

Name@Withheld wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
If I marry someone who once ate bread on Pesach, do my children get "karet" (lit. "cut off")?

Dear Name@Withheld,

The Torah says that eating bread on Passover is a serious sin and carries the

punishment of karet. Your question assumes that this punishment of karet affects a person's children.

Without going into whether this is true or not, it's important to point out that karet only applies to someone who intentionally transgresses with full knowledge that the act is forbidden by the Torah. Furthermore, sincere repentance can atone for such acts.

So, if the person you intend to marry was not fully aware of the sin of eating bread on Passover, or has since repented, you need not worry.

Jacob <tailer@dc.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
Why do you think a Yizkor (memorial) service is traditionally held to remember our deceased loved ones even on some joyous holidays such as Passover and Sukkot?

Dear Jacob,

We mention our deceased on the holy days because remembering them and pledging charity on their behalf, particularly on these holy days, helps elevate their souls.

I would like to suggest that remembering the deceased can actually bring a certain sense of joy. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and we anticipate a time when we will all be celebrating together once again.

Sharon Kramer Loew
<loew@worldnet.att.net>
from NY, NY wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
My brother asks on behalf of his two small sons, age 6 and almost 3, (my darling nephews) is it permissible to begin the Pesach Seder early; that is, before sundown, so that the children will be able to stay up for its entirety?

Dear Sharon Kramer Loew,

Unfortunately for your darling nephews it is not possible to begin the Seder before nightfall. But have everything ready so you can begin right at nightfall. Don't rush the proceedings, but do move through them efficiently without wasting time. I also suggest you give the children a nap in the afternoon so that they will be fully awake and able to participate!

Source:

- Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 472

Naomi Kolberg
<kolberggroup@pikeonline.net>
from Milford, Pennsylvania wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
Is there such thing as kosher dog food?

Dear Naomi Kolberg,

Dogs don't need to "keep kosher." However, there are kashrut considerations when feeding your dog.

For example, it's forbidden to own or derive benefit from chametz during Passover. Therefore, if a dog food contains chametz, it's forbidden to own it or give it to your dog during Passover.

Another consideration: It is forbidden to derive benefit from milk and meat that were cooked together. Therefore, if a dog food contains such a mixture, it's forbidden to give it to your dog.

There are brands of dog food certified as Kosher for Passover, not because they are kosher for humans, but because they contain no chametz!

Saul "The Maven" Caplan from beautiful, politically correct, Safety Harbor, Florida
<maven@IntNet.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
I deliver pizzas 2-3 evenings a week. Do I have to take the entire week of Pesach off?

Dear Saul "The Maven" Caplan,

On Pesach, it's forbidden to eat, own or derive any benefit from chametz. I asked a renowned halachic authority here in Jerusalem about your case. He said that you are not allowed to deliver pizza during Passover. Since you earn wages by doing so, you are thereby considered to be deriving benefit from the chametz.

By the way: This pizza shop probably puts meat on some of their pizzas. If so, you may have to find another job. You see, milk and meat that is cooked together is similar to chametz in that you are not allowed to derive benefit from it. You should consult with the nearest Orthodox Rabbi about this issue, or get back to us.

FREEDOM

by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

If there's a top-ten list for the most abused words in the English language, "freedom" must be up there near the top. To us, freedom means driving a Porsche with the top down along a gently curving coast road on an endless summer day with no other cars for five miles in either direction. Freedom to us means flying around the world on an open air ticket first class; turning up at the airport and looking at the departure board and thinking where shall I go today, Machu Picchu or Nepal; Easter Island or the Outer Hebrides?

Our definition of freedom has become indivisible from escapism.

The archetype of freedom is the Exodus from Egypt which we commemorate in the festival of Pesach. The name for "Egypt" in Hebrew is "Mitzrayim" which is from the Hebrew word "metzar" meaning "narrow," or "constriction." Egypt was the ultimate place of constriction. No slave had ever escaped from there, let alone an entire nation.

When the Torah talks about freedom it always connects it to a clear idea of the purpose of that freedom. Freedom without a purpose is slavery. When Moshe asks Pharaoh to let the Jews leave Mitzrayim, he says "Thus says Hashem: Let My people go — *and they will serve Me.*" The second part of the statement is

the reason for the first. The only reason we were redeemed from Egypt was so that we could serve Hashem.

But why does Hashem need to be served? What does He get out of it? The answer is — nothing. We can give nothing to Hashem that He doesn't already have, because everything we have is His. However, when we serve Hashem it is we who benefit. When we serve Hashem we establish a relationship with Him. We connect ourselves to the only Reality that there is. True freedom is being yoked to the truth. To the extent that we connect ourselves to Hashem, we are connected to reality. This is the definition of freedom. To the extent that we allow ourselves to be drawn into the myriad of mental arcade games of escapism we disconnect ourselves from the Real World.

Every Pesach we have a golden opportunity — a launch window — to connect with this reality, the reality of freedom.

We tend to think of ourselves as being static in time and that time passes around and over us. We talk of someone as "time has passed him by." In reality, we are the time trav-

elers. Time is fixed and we pass through it.

Time has fixed points. Stations, if you like. I remember as a child my father once bought me a train set. It was the most beautiful train set in the world. (I think he spent half the night putting it together in time for my birthday.) It came complete with drivers and guards, and people waiting at stations with suitcases reading little miniature newspapers. But the train always ran in a circle. Over the bridge, through the tunnel, through the first station, across the level crossing with the cattle grid to the second station. Round and round, round and round.

Time is like that toy train. We are passengers on a train which travels in an eternal circle. Every seven days, we go through a station called Shabbos. It's the same station. It's the same Shabbos. It's the same temporal landscape as last week; the same Shabbos as the first Shabbos of Creation.

Similarly, every spring we revisit the train station called Pesach. It's the same Pesach as last year. It's the same as the first Pesach. Thus it contains all the power of freedom of that first Pesach. Its power is undiluted by the years. Because in reality, the years have not passed by. The same reality that existed then exists now.

The Exodus from Egypt created a spiritual landscape which is the essence of this time of the year. It's in the air. All we need to do is to hook into it.

We do this by fulfilling the *mitzvos* of the Seder. These are our tools by which we can hook into the power of freedom which is all around us.

Look outside. The trees are blooming. The call of the dove is heard in our land. We must heed that call. That call of freedom. Each one of us has our own pressures, our own constrictions, our own little "portable Egypt" that we carry around inside ourselves. The message of Pesach is that we can escape from our narrow constriction. We can be free. We can start again. All we need to do is to hear the voice of the dove. To start anew. The word for spring in Hebrew is *Aviv*. The first two letters of the word *Aviv* are *Aleph* and *Beis*. We can go back to *Aleph Beis*. We can renew ourselves as before.

As it says in the Haggadah: "*Each person is obliged to see himself as if he actually came out of Egypt.*"

Sources:

- *Yesod VeShoresh Ha'emuna, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, as heard from Rabbi Mordechai Fishberg*

Insights, explanations and comments for the seven pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle.

A Psychological Emergency

A woman during childbirth is considered as being in a situation where her life is in danger and it is therefore permitted to attend to all her needs on Shabbos even if this involves violating the Shabbos. This includes not only her obvious medical needs but also her psychological ones as well because they too can have an impact on her survival.

This finds expression in the statement of our *gemara* that if she is giving birth at night her friend may light a candle for her. This rule, explains the *gemara*, extends even to a blind woman giving birth. Even though she will not be any more aware of what is happening as a result of this illumination we may light the candle in order to provide her with the reassurance that in case she needs something, her friends will be able to see the need and take care of it.

The light in this case, explain the commentaries, is not necessary for medical purposes, because the midwife can easily make the delivery without the light of the candle. Its purpose is simply to save the woman from the anxiety which can endanger her life. It is for this reason, points out Tosefos, that there is no need for a doctor to rule that she is in need of such reassurance, as is required in deciding whether a sick person must eat on Yom Kippur. The danger to a woman in childbirth from the fear that she is not being properly treated is greater than the possibility of fasting adversely affecting someone ill.

A practical application of this concept of psychological assistance is the rule that a woman giving birth, or any other person in need of emergency medical attention to save his life, may be accompanied in the ambulance taking them to the hospital by a family member or friend who will provide them with the reassurance they require in order to prevent their situation from deteriorating due to panic.

• Shabbos 128b

Near and Far

A mitzvah which Jews accepted upon themselves with joy, such as the mitzvah of *milah*, is still celebrated by them with joy (with a festive meal — Rashi). But a mitzvah which they accepted in a spirit of discord, such as the prohibition of marrying close relatives, is still marked by discord, for there is no marriage contract which is free of some bickering.

Why did Jews react with such resentment to the ban on marrying close relatives?

Human logic dictates that two people who come from the same source are more likely to form a harmonious couple and to produce children who do not have the conflicting traits which can result from a blending of genes. The Torah, however, overruled this approach and insisted that marriage take place only between two parties who are not closely related to each other.

Such a union may indeed spark an initial collision between disparate personalities insisting on different things. The marriage contract which is the first meeting of these two different minds may therefore prove to be the “battleground” for their minor skirmish. The Divine wisdom in prescribing such a union is only

fully appreciated after the wedding takes place and the seemingly incompatible partners form a solid bond which will not easily be dissolved.

As to an understanding of the Torah ban on relatives, Rambam in his *Guide for the Perplexed* offers one approach that there was a need to safeguard the respect due to certain relatives, a respect which would be undermined by intimate relations. This approach and another one put forward by Rambam are rejected by Ramban who hints at a mystical basis. He nevertheless offers a logical explanation as well — that a child born of related parents tends to be physically weaker. His comment that this is a well known medical fact is understood to be a reference to the hemophilia prevalent amongst royal inbreeding families.

• Shabbos 130a

A Blessing in Time

The long-awaited moment has come. The *mohel* has performed the *bris milah* and both he and the father of the circumcised child have made their blessings. Now it is time for the assembled guests to joyously burst forth with their own blessing for the child's future:

“Just as he entered the *bris*, so shall he enter into Torah, marriage and good deeds.”

This is the text of the blessing as it appears in our *gemara* editions. It is also the form customarily used in the Ashkenazic community. In the Sephardic community the text, based on the ruling of the Beis Yosef, is directed towards the father: “Just as you brought him into the *bris* so may you bring him into Torah, marriage and good deeds.”

Even though it would seem logical to thus directly bless the father rather than to offer an indirect blessing, the Sifsei Kohen (*Yoreh Deah* 265:3) provides an explanation for the Ashkenazic custom. Since there are situations in which the father is not alive or not present at the *bris*, thus rendering it impossible to offer him a direct blessing, it is preferable to have a standard, indirect text of a blessing which suits all occasions.

No matter if it is direct or indirect, the text of this blessing demands analysis in regard to the chronology it maps for the child's future. The common denominator of Torah, marriage and good deeds is that they, like *bris milah*, are all obligations which the father has in regard to his son (*Kiddushin* 29a). Torah study, our Sages point out, must precede marriage, and is therefore mentioned first.

But what about the good deeds of mitzvah performance? Isn't the Bar Mitzvah age of thirteen the point where this is achieved by the father and should it therefore not come first? Rabbi David Avudraham reminds us that even though a boy becomes responsible for the fulfillment of *mitzvos* at the age of thirteen, he is not held accountable for Heavenly judgment until he is twenty. Since the ideal age for marriage is at age eighteen (*Avos* 5:21) — before one reaches the age of twenty (*Kiddushin* 29b) — we therefore express our wish that the little baby will reach this milestone in his life even before he reaches the age of Heavenly responsibility for good deeds.

• Shabbos 137b

Continued on page seven

have Jewish descendants today; those who shunned it in the past are no longer a part of Israel.

Let us now analyze the inner workings of each cycle of exile. What type of person immigrates to a new country from the previous locale of exile? As has been explained above, it is a person who adhered to his traditions, since it stands to reason that all those who discarded their heritage assimilated completely and disappeared from the Jewish map.

The Generation of the Chacham

These new immigrants are committed to their heritage. They know what *mitzvos* are, and how to perform most of them; they can pray in Hebrew, and can study Torah. We could safely refer to this first generation of exiles as the generation of the *chacham*, the Wise Son. It is for this reason that the author of the Haggadah mentions the Wise Son first — this “Son” is representative of the first immigrants who enter Israel’s latest exile.

The Generation of the Rasha

What happens to the children of the *chacham*, the second generation of the new exile? They are in the greatest danger, for they find themselves walking a tightrope between two very different cultures. It is extremely difficult for them to live in both of these worlds at once. They perceive their parents’ world as old and primitive in comparison to the fast and exciting world in which they have grown up. They are liable to abandon the old ways of their parents and embrace the trappings of the modern world, thinking, “These ancient laws are not for us! ‘What is this service to you?’ It means nothing to me!” This is the generation of the *rasha*, the Wicked Son. For this reason, the author of the Haggadah lists him as the second son — he represents the second generation of Jews in exile.

The Generation of the Simple Son

What becomes of the third generation? The children of the Wicked Son have nothing to rebel against — their parents have left no stone unturned. For the most part, they simply do what their parents tell them. From a religious perspective, the most one can expect from them is to ask, “What is this?” They may have faint memories of their grandfather opening up a Jewish book once in a while, or performing some other mitzvah. Out of curiosity they will ask, “What is this? What is the Torah all about?” This third generation of immigrants is defined as the Simple Son. It is for this reason that the author of the Haggadah lists him as the third of the four sons.

The Last Generation

If the Simple Son receives a Torah education, he still has a chance. If he does not, then his children will become the generation of the Son Who Does Not Know to Ask. Indeed, what have they to ask? Their father knows next to nothing, their grandfather is the rebel, and they don’t remember their great-grandfather. All they know is that they are Jewish, but they have no inkling of what it means to be a Jew. The Haggadah warns that this fourth generation is the last generation — there is no Fifth Son, for the children of the Son Who Does Not Know to Ask no longer exist from a Jewish perspective. If a Jew knows nothing more than that he is Jewish, his children will not know even that.

Interestingly, people often remark that almost every Jew they know has at least a great-grandfather who was religious. They are correct — it is rare to find a Jew who has been disconnected from his heritage for five generations. This is precisely what the Haggadah teaches.

The Ohr Somayach Haggadah

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“You shall tell it to your son” is the Torah’s formula for linking one Jewish generation to another.

Haggadah means telling the story of the Exodus from Egyptian bondage which we celebrate on Passover.

The Haggadah is the ultimate curriculum for a crash course in Jewish history. But it takes a master teacher to direct the use of this curriculum.

Rabbi Uziel Milevsky, of blessed memory, was indeed a master teacher of our generation. Whether it was as a Rosh Mesivta in Toronto, Chief Rabbi of Mexico or a lecturer in Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem and Toronto, Rabbi Milevsky was unparalleled in his ability to relate the Torah he

taught to the lives of his congregants and students.

This *Ohr Somayach Haggadah* represents the classes on the Haggadah which Rabbi Milevsky gave at Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem during the years he taught here. His insights have influenced a generation of Jews who did not have the opportunity of studying the Haggadah in their youth. We are confident that they will also enrich the understanding of those who return each year to the Seder table hoping to find another dimension of freedom from all the bondages of their existence which they can tell to their children and grandchildren.

The Ohr Somayach Haggadah is available wherever Jewish books are sold.



YIDDLE RIDDLE

One Shabbat, Reuven invites Shimon's family for dinner. After the meal, Reuven and Shimon say *birkat hamazon* (the blessings after the meal) but they do not say exactly the same words when doing so. The next Shabbat, Shimon invites Reuven's family for dinner. When they say *birkat hamazon*, this time Reuven says exactly the same words that Shimon said last week and Shimon says exactly what Reuven said last week.

A few days later, Reuven invites Shimon's family over for another meal. This time, *birkat hamazon* is even more dissimilar between the two of them. The next day Shimon invites Reuven's family for a meal, and once again, Shimon says the exact words that Reuven said the previous day, and Reuven says the exact words that Shimon said.

Levi thinks that this is due to increasing tensions between the families, so he gets his wife to invite the two families over for meals the next month. During the first dinner, Reuven and Shimon say *birkat hamazon* the same way. "Shalom al Yisrael — peace upon Israel," Levi thinks. But the following dinner, they again say *birkat hamazon* differently!

What is going on here?

ANSWER:

The first Shabbat, the differences between Reuven and Shimon are as follows: Shimon, the guest, adds the blessing for the host into his *birkat hamazon*, but the host does not. This procedure is reversed the next Shabbat.

A few days later it is the 14th of Adar, which is Purim for everyone except those who reside in an ancient walled city like Jerusalem. Reuven, who resides outside Jerusalem, invites Shimon, who resides in Jerusalem, to his home for a meal. Since it is Purim for Reuven but not for Shimon, Reuven adds the Purim addition of *al hanisim* to his *birkat hamazon* while Shimon does not. The next day, the 15th of Adar, Shimon reciprocates. The 15th of Adar is Purim for those in Jerusalem, but not for those outside. This time, Shimon says *al hanisim* while Reuven does not.

The next month is Pesach. They are invited to Levi's house on the 7th day of Pesach, and they say the normal *birkat hamazon*, including the holiday addition of *ya'ale v'yavo*. The next day, however, is the 8th day of Pesach for Reuven, who is still a *chutznik* — a person visiting the Land of Israel. Therefore, he says *ya'ale v'yavo*. Shimon, who resides permanently in the Land of Israel, celebrates only 7 days of Pesach, and does not say *ya'ale v'yavo*.

• Submitted by Lev Seltzer, Jerusalem, Israel

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Re: Yiddle Riddle: In what situation could two people in the same place be obligated to say *kiddush* on

different nights? That is, the night the first one is obligated, the second one is not, and the night the second one is obligated, the first one is not? (Ohrnet Tetzaveh):

My 10 year old son, David Rosen, had a different possible answer. Could it not occur in Israel where there is a visiting non-Israeli 12-year old who is required to keep two days of Yom Tov? He actually turns *bar mitzvah* on the second day and thus is then obligated for *kiddush*, whereas he wasn't obligated on the first day (when a resident would have been).

• Martin Rosen, Thornhill, Canada <mrosen@passport.ca>

I once heard a ruling that if one crosses the international time line, he continues to count *sefirat ha-omer* as before and does not go with where he is now. He also will celebrate Shavuot according to his count which will be a day off of everyone else there. Hence, he would be obligated to make *kiddush* on "his" Shavuot while everyone else would be exempt, while the next/previous night the reverse would be the case. (PS I believe most *poskim* don't rule this way.)

• Micha Kushner <micha.kushner@telrad.co.il>

WEEKLY Daf

Continued from page five

The Happy Heart

“Your brother Aharon, the levite, is going forth to meet you,” said Hashem to Moshe when he ordered him to return to Egypt as the prophet who would initiate the process of the Exodus, “and he shall see you and rejoice in his heart.” (*Shmos* 4:14)

As a reward for this nobility of heart, declares Rabbi Malai, Aharon merited to wear the *choshen mishpat* (breastplate of justice) upon his heart.

A bit of historical background will help us better understand the connection between Aharon's joy and his reward.

Aharon was a prophet long before his younger brother Moshe. This is indicated in the statement of Hashem's messenger to Aharon's descendant, the *Kohen Gadol* Eli, in which he reminds him that Hashem appeared to his ancestor Aharon back in Egypt (*Shmuel* 1 2:77). (Aharon's prophecy is contained in *Yechezkel* 20:7-12). Moshe was hesitant to assume the role of prophet in place of his older brother lest he hurt his feelings, and therefore suggested that Hashem “send the one who had hitherto been sent” (*Shmos* 4:13). Hashem was angered by this hesitation and assured Moshe that Aharon would not bear the slightest grudge and would even rejoice in his younger brother's elevation.

This Divine anger found expression, says Rabbi Yossi, in Moshe losing the privilege of being a *kohen*. His brother Aharon, who is identified in the opening passage as a levite because of the status initially assigned to him, was now destined to be the *kohen* while Moshe would only be a levite. The *choshen mishpat* which is worn by the *Kohen Gadol* was the symbol of this elevated status.

Now the pieces come together. Aharon was so noble in spirit that he was capable of overcoming the natural temptation to envy a younger brother's superiority and could even wholeheartedly rejoice in seeing the prophetic role taken from him and given to Moshe. As a reward he was given the opportunity to rejoice when the exalted status of *kohen* was taken from Moshe and given to him.

This is what is meant by our Sages in the Midrash (*Shmos Rabbah* 3:17) when they state:

“The heart which rejoiced in the greatness of his brother shall wear the *urim vetumim* (the *choshen mishpat's* supernatural adornments).”

• Shabbos 139a

Is A Spade Still A Spade?

**“But this is what you shall not eat ...
it is unclean to you.” (11:4)**

I confess. I have something to be very proud of. I’m *follically challenged*. I used to be just plain old bald, but overnight my life has changed. Now I’m a part of a sensitive minority whose feelings demand to be taken into account. Follically challenged of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your wigs!

It’s ironic that as society becomes more and more insensitive to mindless *physical* violence (be it on the silver screen or the less-than-silver screen of life) that there is a concomitant new sensitivity to the “violence of language.”

Even the religious world is not exempt from this phenomenon.

In the new Oxford University Press publication “*The New Testament and Psalms - An Inclusive Version*,” G-d loses gender to become “Our Father-Mother in Heaven.” (We don’t have this problem in Hebrew because Hashem is referred to by nouns of both genders: e.g., *Shechina* — the Divine Presence — is a feminine noun.)

The publishers say the translation is designed to “respond to the new climate of language.”

It deletes references to “the right hand of G-d” to avoid stigmatizing the left-handed, and avoids equating “darkness” with evil out of racial sensitivity.

The 23rd Psalm no longer begins “The Lord is my shepherd,” because the word “*lord*” implies “old-fashioned and inappropriate social status.” Instead, the line has been changed to “G-d is my shepherd.” Children should now “heed” their parents rather than “obey” them.

The team of authors stopped short of using the term “differently-abled,” in favor of referring to “the person who has leprosy.”

Actually, the idea of Political Correctness (PC) goes back more than 4,000 years. When Noach brought the animals into the ark the Torah describes an animal which is *tameh* (spiritually polluted and not kosher) as “*lo tahor*”

(not pure). The Torah never writes two words where one will do. The lesson of the Torah writing the longer phrase “*lo tahor*” is to teach us to be sensitive to the feelings of others: If the Torah goes out of its way to call an animal, who presumably isn’t too concerned with the niceties of language, “not pure” rather than calling it “polluted,” how much more should we be careful not to hurt the feelings of our fellow humans.

But there is a big difference between this and PC.

It’s true that the Torah never stints to avoid upsetting feelings, provided that the meaning and clarity of the law will suffer in no way. If there is the slightest doubt that a “nicer” word will not convey the same power in communicating the Law, then there is no place for euphemism. A spade has to be called a spade. In the Torah there is a place for the most explicit terminology in the appropriate context.


This is more than just concern for the accurate transmission of the Law. It implies that language has an *absolute value*.

PC is a distortion of language because it is “*political*.” It subtly invokes its own value judgments which are at least as biased as those it seeks to replace. More insidious than this, though, it destroys the integrity of the connection between the thing and the word; between the world of ideas and the world of concrete reality.

This connection is fundamental and vital: Hashem created existence with words. “And G-d said ‘Let there be light.’” Words are the bridge between the metaphysical and the physical. In Hebrew, *davar* means both “word” and “thing.”

In George Orwell’s book *1984*, Winston Smith worked in the Ministry of Truth, editing history to suit the current political complexion of the government. His job was to defraud history. Every book, every newspaper archive had to be constantly rewritten so that it expressed the dogma that there had never been any other political policy except the current policy that all alliances were as they had always been; today’s friends had always been friends, and last week’s enemies were just as loathsome today.

Parsha Overview

 On the eighth day of the dedication of the *Mishkan*, Aharon, his sons, and the entire nation bring various *korbanos* (sacrifices) as commanded by Moshe. Aharon and Moshe bless the nation. Hashem allows the Jewish People to sense His Presence after they complete the *Mishkan* and draw closer to Him through their *mitzvos* there. Aharon’s sons, Nadav and Avihu, innovate an original offering that was not commanded by Hashem. A fire comes from before Hashem and consumes them, stressing the need to perform the commandments only as Moshe directs. Moshe consoles Aharon, who grieves in silence. Moshe directs the *kohanim* as to their behavior during the mourning period, and warns them that they must not drink intoxicating beverages before serving in the *Mishkan*. The Torah lists the two characteristics of a kosher animal: It has split hooves, and it chews, regurgitates, and re-chews its food. The Torah specifies by name those non-kosher animals which have only one of these two signs. A kosher fish has fins and easily removable scales. All birds not included in the list of forbidden families are permitted. The Torah forbids all types of insects except for four species of locusts. Details are given of the purification process after coming in contact with ritually-impure species. The Jewish People are commanded to be separate and holy – like Hashem.

PARSHA Insights

Smith was changing reality.

When we politicize the words that describe the world, we limit the palette of our perception. We limit the colors of our sensitivity. We interpose a gray mask of euphemism. In the end we change reality and we find ourselves inhabiting a self-made world of politically correct illusion.

If we change words, the building blocks of thought and cognition, let us not be surprised if our mental landscape begins to reflect a terminal blandness and lack of color.

You know, I always kind of liked being bald.

“DOCTOR LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME.”

“*And the swine ... it is impure for you.*” (11:7)

Moshe may have been the greatest teacher in the world, but he was no global explorer. His entire experience as a naturalist must have been quite limited. He never ventured out of a rather small part of the Middle East. Which makes it all the more strange then that the Torah makes predictions about animal life which it would have been impossible for Moshe to know about.

The Torah defines a kosher animal as having split hooves and chewing the cud. However it singles out the pig as the *only* animal that that has a true split hoof and yet does not chew its cud.

No person living in such a small part of this vast world could have known such a fact. More so, no prudent individual would have stated so definitively that there are absolutely *no* creatures alive that break this classification.

The Torah tells us that any fish that has fins and scales is kosher. If Moshe was no globetrotter, he was even less a deep-sea diver. Yet the Oral Law states that any fish that has scales will *always* have fins. How could such a

fact be known to someone who lived some 3,300 years ago and was more familiar with splitting the sea than diving into it?

The Talmud teaches that Hashem inserted subtle reminders of His authorship in the Torah. Only the Creator of the universe could have, and would have, stated so dramatically and so accurately such definitive rules of the natural world.

PUTTING A TIGER IN THE TANK

“*Neither shall you defile yourselves with any swarming thing that moves on the earth, because I am the Lord that brought you up from the land of Egypt.*” (11:44-5)

You pull into the gas station in your Ferrari Berlinetta, the fenders barely clearing the tarmac by two inches. You bring it to a halt and get out. There it sits, purring, a large expensive beast waiting to be fed. You say to the attendant “Fill it up with *Cheapo* gasoline.” The attendant does a double take. He looks at you as if you were a serial murderer. And he’s right.

An advanced machine requires highly refined fuel. A simpler machine can get by on something much more basic.

The Jewish People received the laws of *kashrus* only after they had been raised from the pits of slavery to the status of a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

The Torah normally refers to the Exodus with the expression “*to take out of Egypt.*” Here, however, the expression is “*to bring up.*”

Only after the Jewish People have been *brought up*, only after they have been elevated to their new status, do they become sensitive to the spiritual damage which non-kosher food causes.

From now on, non-kosher food for a Jew becomes worse than *Cheapo* gasoline in the tank of a Ferrari.

Sources:

- “*Doctor Livingstone, I Presume.*” - Tractate Chullin
- *Putting A Tiger In The Tank* - Rabbi Simcha Zissel from Kelm

Haftorah

Shmuel II 6-7:17

This week’s *Parsha* describes the dedication ceremony of the *Mishkan*. The Haftorah continues this theme by describing the arrival of the Ark in Jerusalem. In the *Parsha*, two of Aharon’s sons die on the first day of the *Mishkan*’s inauguration. This will be a permanent warning that good intentions can never replace strict obedience in our service of Hashem.

Similarly, in the Haftorah, Uzah died by Hashem’s hand when he tried to protect the Ark from falling. In a moment of thoughtlessness he forgot that Hashem Himself transports the Ark, and He would never let it fall.

Although Uzah’s intentions were good, he forgot the awe which is due to the One whose word lay in the Ark.

When King David finally brought the Ark to Jerusalem, he danced in front of it with all his might. From this we see that he was a true servant of the Torah. King David saw kingship as a responsibility rather than a privilege. This is exactly what displeased his wife, Michal. She thought David had debased himself by dancing like a commoner before the Ark.

However, David’s dancing was the stamp of a true Jewish King. Because of his loyalty, David was rewarded that the Temple to be built by his son would carry his name.

• Rabbi S.R. Hirsch

PARSHA Q&A

1. What date was “Yom Hashemini”?
2. Which of Aharon’s *korbanos* atoned for the golden calf?
3. What *korbanos* did Aharon offer for the Jewish People?
4. What was unique about the *chatas* offered during the induction of the *Mishkan*?
5. When did Aharon bless the people with the *Birkas Kohanim*?
6. Why did Moshe go into the *Ohel Mo’ed* with Aharon?
7. Why did Nadav and Avihu die?
8. Aharon quietly accepted his sons’ death. What reward did he receive for this?
9. What specific prohibitions apply to a person who is intoxicated?
10. Name the three *chatas* goat offerings that were sacrificed on the day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*.
11. Which he-goat *chatas* did Aharon burn completely and why?
12. Why did Moshe direct his harsh words at Aharon’s sons?
13. Moshe was upset that Aharon and his sons did not eat the *Chatas*. Why?
14. Why did Hashem choose Moshe, Aharon, Elazar, and Isamar as His messengers to tell the Jewish People the laws of *kashrus*?
15. What are the signs of a kosher land animal?
16. How many non-kosher animals display only *one* sign of *kashrus*? What are they?
17. If a fish sheds its fins and scales when out of the water is it kosher?
18. Why is a stork called *chasida* in Hebrew?
19. The *chagav* is a kosher insect. Why don’t we eat it?
20. What requirements must be met in order for water to maintain its status of purity?

I Did Not Know That!

“But this is what you shall not eat from...” (11:4-6)

The phrase for “dividing the hoof” is stated in three different forms in the above verses. They are: “*mafris*,” “*yafris*” and “*hifrisah*” which are, respectively, the present, future and past tenses. This is to teach us that if we wish to determine whether a person is *tamei* (i.e., unworthy), one cannot base the decision only on the present, but must consider the past and future as well. Sometimes, the past may help prevent us from deciding that a person is unworthy; and even if the past and the present show the person to be unworthy, one must still consider the future before determining one’s verdict about another person. The Torah is showing us how careful one must be before passing judgment on others.

• *Mayanah Shel Torah*

Answers to this Week’s Questions

All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary, unless otherwise stated

1. 9:1 - First of Nissan.
2. 9:2 - The calf offered as a *korban chatas*.
3. 9:3,4 - A he-goat as a *chatas*, a calf and a lamb for an *olah*, an ox and a ram for *shlamim*, and a *minchah*.
4. 9:11 - It’s the only example of a *chatas* offered on the courtyard *mizbe’ach* that was burned.
5. 9:22 - When he finished offering the *korbanos*, before descending from the *mizbe’ach*.
6. 9:23 - For one of two reasons: Either to teach Aharon about the service of the incense, or to pray for the *Shechina* to dwell with Israel.
7. 10:2 - Rashi offers two reasons: Either because they gave a halachic ruling in Moshe’s presence, or because they entered the *Mishkan* after drinking intoxicating wine.
8. 10:3 - A portion of the Torah was given solely through Aharon.
9. 10:9-11 - He may not give a *halachic* ruling. Also, a *kohen* is forbidden to enter the *Ohel Mo’ed*, approach the *mizbe’ach*, or perform the *avoda* service.
10. 10:16 - The goat offerings of the inauguration ceremony, of *Rosh Chodesh*, and of Nachshon ben Aminadav.
11. 10:16 - The *Rosh Chodesh chatas*: Either because it became *tamei*, or because the *kohanim* were forbidden to eat from it while in the state of *aninus* (mourning).
12. 10:16 - Out of respect for Aharon, Moshe directed his anger at his sons and not directly at Aharon.
13. 10:17 - Because only when the *kohanim* eat the *chatas* are the sins of the owners atoned for.
14. 11:2 - Because they accepted the deaths of Nadav and Avihu in silence.
15. 11:3 - An animal whose hooves are completely split and who chews its cud.
16. 11:4,5,6,7 - Four: Camel, shafan, hare, and pig.
17. 11:12 - Yes.
18. 11:19 - Because it acts with *chesed* (kindness) toward other storks regarding food.
19. 11:21 - We have lost the tradition and are not able to identify the kosher *chagav*.
20. 11:36 - It must be connected to the ground (e.g., a spring or a cistern).

BONUS Question

Rashi never “just” comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi answers unspoken questions arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah text. Anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi’s classic Torah commentary must always ask: **“What’s Bothering Rashi?”**

“Moshe said to Aharon: Draw close to the altar and offer your *chatas* offering and your *olah* offering (Vayikra 9:7) Rashi: Because Aharon was ashamed to approach (the altar), Moshe said to him: “Why are you ashamed? This is why you were chosen.”

Why isn’t Rashi satisfied with the seemingly simple meaning of the verse, that Moshe simply told Aharon to approach the altar and perform the service? What’s bothering Rashi?

Bonus Answer

If Moshe were merely telling Aharon to perform the service, there would be no need for him to say “Approach the altar.” The Torah has already specified the procedure for offering a *chatas* and an *olah*, so Moshe could merely have said “Offer your *chatas* offering and your *olah* offering.” Therefore, the directive for Aharon to approach the altar seems superfluous and needs Rashi’s explanation.

• Concept based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek’s new book “What’s Bothering Rashi?” Feldheim Publishers

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

Giving People the Benefit of the Doubt

Pesach comes from the word “to skip” or “jump.” G-d “skipped” over our houses in Egypt when smiting the first-born. But the Pesach season does not give us the right to “jump” to conclusions when judging others. Take the case of ...

The Crummy Guests

The countdown was on. One more week until the Seder. Our cleaning and searching for *chametz* was right on schedule. We had been working hard for two weeks — cleaning closets, pockets of clothes etc. We were going to my in-laws’ for *Shabbos Hagadol* to avoid the danger of spreading *challah* all over the house. My in-laws would be spending *Yom Tov* with us and wouldn’t need to do as thorough a cleaning.

As I was contemplating how everything was running so smoothly, the phone rang. It was a close friend from out of town. “We’ve been invited to your area for all the *Shabbos* meals, but we need a place to sleep.” This

was a big test for me. Everything was going so smoothly! Why take a chance on someone bringing *chametz* into my home? Then I remembered a lecture I heard about *Pesach*, that one of the reasons that the Jewish People went out of Egypt was because they made a covenant to perform *chesed* (kindness) to others. I said yes, but on condition that they not bring in any *chametz*. Before *Shabbos* I reminded them again: “No *chametz*!”

We left Friday and returned Sunday night. Entering the house, we noticed crumbs on the floor. It wasn’t coconut macaroons. It was bread crumbs. How could they do such a thing!

Suddenly I remembered! Our next door neighbors left the country that day, and I had told them that if they had any food left, they could leave it in a certain closet in our house. I told them to please be careful to put it in a bag. I went straight to that closet and sure enough, there was a bag of *chametz*. I noticed a little hole in the bag.

When we judge favorably, we protect the innocent.

• Concept based on “The Other Side of the Story” by Yehudis Samet, ArtScroll Series

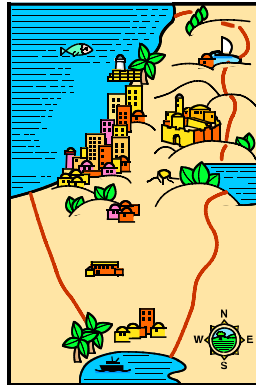
LOVE_{OF THE} LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach

Enough To Be Thankful For “Dayenu!”

This is the title of the most popular song of the Passover Seder, in which we enumerate the historical kindness bestowed on our people by our Creator. After mentioning each kindness — from the Exodus from Egypt to the building of the *Beis Hamikdash* — we declare in melodic fashion that any one of them would have been enough for us (*Dayenu*) to be thankful for. The final pair of this long list is arranged in a pattern which teaches an important lesson in our scale of values: “Had He given us the Torah and not brought us into *Eretz Yisrael* — it would have been enough.” Torah without *Eretz Yisrael* is a viable formula for the fulfillment of our identity as a chosen people. For thousands of years Jews



have preserved their identity in lands not their own. *Eretz Yisrael* without Torah, on the other hand, can degenerate into the empty nationalism of other peoples. Once we have the Torah, however, *Eretz Yisrael* becomes the ideal setting for the development of our spiritual potential, and the *Beis Hachochim* — the house in Jerusalem chosen by Hashem as the dwelling place for His presence — becomes the sacred shrine for facilitating total development of our human potential to connect with our Creator. Today, when all Jews have the Torah and the opportunity to come to *Eretz Yisrael* — even if we have not yet merited having the *Beis Hachochim* in our midst — we can joyously sing: *Dayenu!*

Rabbi Pinchas Kantrowitz

CREATION OF UNITY

“Rabban Gamliel used to say: “Whoever does not explain the following three things at the Pesach festival, has not fulfilled his duty, namely: the Pesach offering, matzah, and *maror*.”

Matzah represents freedom. Just as our ancestors did not have time for the bread to rise when they were leaving Egypt, we relive the Exodus by eating the bread of redemption.

Maror represents servitude. The preferred type of *maror* is one which begins sweet and becomes bitter, just as the lives of the Jews in Egypt commenced in comfort and sweetness, but terminated in bitterness and servitude.

What is the significance of the Pesach offering, and why must it be eaten together with the matzah and *maror*? The Maharal of Prague teaches that the Pesach offering represents oneness, unity. The Paschal lamb or sheep is a “groupee,” an animal

which associates with its flock. It may only be eaten by one who assigns himself to a group, and only in a single house or location. Even the structure of the meat must be retained, as the meat must be eaten roasted (roasting shrinks and unifies the meat, as opposed to stewing which breaks the meat apart), and a bone must not be broken in the meat, to retain bone structure.

The exodus from Egypt occurred in a generation when Jews were identified with the nation. Our Sages teach us that the final redemption will parallel the exodus from Egypt, and necessitates the unification of the Jewish nation.

Why must the Pesach offering be eaten together with matzah and *maror*? Because it represents the offering to the One G-d who is capable of decreeing servitude (*maror*) and redemption (matzah) for one ultimately beneficial purpose, the creation of a unified nation, loyal to the One G-d.

The Ohr Somayach family wishes you a Chag Kasher v'Somayach.

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