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SPECIAL PESACH EDITION

PARSHIOT VAYIKRA-TZAV-SHMINI-TAZRIA-METZORA · NISSAN 5770 / 2010 · VOL. 17 NO. 26

EDITOR'S NOTE

The *Pesach Handbook* a special 20-page booklet with articles, features and information to help make your Pesach an even more unforgettable experience. Available free at www.ohr.edu

A Question About a Question

BY RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH

“Why is this night different from all other nights?” This is how the Pesach Seder begins as the youngster who has practiced so long in school finally gets a chance to ask his father four questions about the distinctive nature of Pesach eve.

The source of course is a *mishna* in *Mesechta Pesachim* (116a) in which these four questions are detailed. But if you take a look at that *mishna* and compare it with what is written in your Hagadah you are bound to have a question about one of those questions.

In addition to asking why on this night we eat only matzah and maror, and why we dip twice, the son following the *mishna's* direction should ask why on all other nights we eat meat cooked or broiled whereas on this night it may only be broiled. In our Hagadah, however, this question does not appear and another is there in its place!

The answer to our question about this question lies in another *mishna* in *Pesachim* (53a) which mentions the custom of refraining from eating broiled meat on the night of Pesach. But how do we reconcile this custom with the Torah command to eat the *korban* Pesach only with a broiled preparation?

When we had the *Beit Hamikdash* and were able to offer the Pesach sacrifice we were required to broil the slaughtered animal and eat it on Pesach night. It was therefore in place for the son to ask why only broiled meat was eaten that night. But we may not offer sacrifices when there is no *Beit Hamikdash* and eating any broiled meat on Pesach night gives the wrong impression that we actually violated the law and offered a sacrifice. All we can do is put a piece of broiled meat (*zeroah*) on the Seder plate as a reminder of the sacrifice, but we refrain from eating it that night — a custom followed by virtually all Jewish communities.

Now that we understand why the question regarding broiled meat is missing, let us try to analyze what lessons we can learn from the fact that in its place the Hagadah has a question about why we recline while eating.

The *Sefer Hachinuch* suggests two possible reasons for the Torah's insistence on our ancestors' broiling the Pesach sacrifice. One is that as they were on the threshold of liberation from bondage it was important for them to internalize the awareness that they were not going to be mere freed slaves, but rather the “princes of the earth” who were destined to receive the Torah and be G-d's chosen people. Only aristocrats can afford the luxury of broiled meat, which may be the most delicious way of preparing meat but the least economical. The other reason is that the quickest way of preparing meat for consumption is broiling, so that the broiled sacrifice would be a reminder of the haste with which the Exodus from Egypt took place.

Although these reasons may seem to apply only to the generation of the Exodus, the command to broil the Pesach sacrifice was in force in later years as well because each Pesach is viewed as an experience of virtually reliving that Exodus in fulfillment of our Sages' instructions that “a person view himself as if he was liberated from Egypt.”

Our inability today to offer a sacrifice and eat its broiled meat is perhaps a reminder that our lack of a *Beit Hamikdash* and our dispersion diminish the sense of aristocracy to which we would be entitled if not for our sins. But despite the lack of respect for our nation in this final exile, we relive aristocracy on Pesach night by reclining in aristocratic fashion when we drink our four cups of wine and eat our matzah. It is therefore fitting that in place of the question regarding broiled meat we substitute a question about reclining.

The other explanation of the *Chinuch* regarding the speed with which our Exodus from Egypt took place also fits in with our situation in exile. How can we eat broiled meat symbolizing the speed of liberation when our final redemption is so long delayed? And yet we call attention to our reclining in royal fashion as an expression of our still special status as G-d's chosen people, confidently concluding our Seder with the singing of “Next year in Yerushalayim.”

The Biggest Bar-B-Q In The World

“When a man among you brings an offering” (1:2)

Imagine you're an intergalactic traveler flying over Jerusalem some two and a half thousand years ago. Your 3D scanner picks up a beautiful building. Opening your intergalactic “Earth on Five Dollars-a-Day”, you read about what you're seeing: “The *Beit Hamikdash* is the most spiritual place on earth.” Something doesn't seem quite accurate about this description because everywhere you aim your scanner all you can see are very physical things.

For a start, animals are being slaughtered, dissected and burned on what looks like the world's biggest barbecue. Wine is being poured down two holes on top of a square monolith on which the meat is being burned. Nearby, bread is being baked. Oil is being mixed with flour and fried in open pans. There are animals in pens, along with birds. Everywhere there are all kinds of cooking utensils. Men are washing their hands and feet. There is a column of black smoke rising perpendicularly into the sky.

This is spirituality?

TZAV

The Importance of Shoelaces

“And raise up the ash...” (6:3)

At first sight, some things in Judaism look pretty weird. I remember someone who wasn't religious discovering the halacha that you should tie your left shoelace before your right. He said to me “I find it hard to believe that G-d cares about which shoe I tie up first.”

I could have explained to him that we tie the left shoelace first as a gesture of respect to the leather strap of the tefillin which is worn on the left arm. However, I decided that what was bothering him was something more fundamental.

Those of us who were born in the West have grown up in a world where religion is a weekend activity. The role of the clergy is, at best, to “hatch, match, and dispatch.” Religion is compartmentalized, and so too is G-d. The Western mindset is that if there is a G-d, He is limited to making guest appearances on the weekend. Any further intrusion into our lives is considered extremely irksome, as Lord Melbourne remarked in 1898 on hearing a sermon: “Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade the sphere of private life.”

SHMINI

Pans and Plans

“And the sons of Aaron, Nadav and Avihu, each man took his fire-pan.” (10:1)

Nadav and Avihu made an error of judgment. They thought it was not only the *Kohen Gadol* who could bring the incense offering in the Holy of Holies, but that even they were permitted to do so.

They were great *tzaddikim*, and no doubt pondered their conclusion before committing themselves to action.

The Midrash comments on the above verse that “each man” used his fire-pan; “each man” by himself, without seeking advice one from the other. The implication here is that if they had taken advice one from the other, if they had talked

You make a mental note to write to the editors of “Earth on Five-Dollars-a-Day” that their description of this tourist spot is way off the mark.

Our intergalactic traveler could be forgiven for mistaking what he saw, for indeed the *Beit Hamikdash* ostensibly was a very physical place. Our fearless voyager, however, failed to notice a key item in the *Beit Hamikdash*: the *Aron*, the Holy Ark. Inside the Ark was the Torah. It was only through the Holy Torah that the Divine Presence rested on the *Beit Hamikdash* and turned the most physical of places into the most spiritual.

The *Beit Hamikdash* is a microcosm of the universe, and a macrocosm of the body of a human. If you look at a person, he seems to be a very physical thing. He consists of sinew and flesh, fluids and membrane. And yet, he is so much more.

Just as the Torah caused the Divine Presence to rest on the *Beit Hamikdash* and the *Mishkan*, similarly the Torah turns flesh and blood into a dwelling place for the Most High.

Judaism, however, doesn't see religion as a weekend leisure activity. It is not just one aspect of life. It is life itself.

Judaism views every single activity in life as an opportunity to bring us closer to G-d. What we eat. What we think. What we say. What we do. What we don't do. Nothing in this world is devoid of the potential for spirituality. Nothing is neutral. If the whole purpose of the world is for us to recognize G-d, then everything in this world must be created to that end. The alternative would be that there are vast areas of this world which have no part in G-d's purpose, and that would be accusing the Master of the World of tremendous sloppiness in His creation.

In the above verse, the word for “ash” is *deshen*. *Deshen* can be read as an acronym for “*davar shelo nechshaw*” — “something without importance”. When the Torah says “And raise up the ash” it is telling us to take everything, even those things that seem to us like ash, insignificant and without value, and place them next to the Altar. To raise up the little, unthought-of parts of our lives and to use them to serve G-d. For there is nothing in this world which cannot be used to serve Him.

Even the humblest shoelace.

it over before they acted, then they would not have erred.

But why should they have arrived at a different conclusion? Seeing as they both did the same thing - they both brought the “strange fire” - it must be that they were both of the same opinion, i.e. that a non-*Kohen Gadol* was permitted to offer the incense. So even if they had consulted with each other, wouldn't they have still come to the same conclusion?

Such is the power of counsel. That even though two people may share an identical opinion, through discussion and mutual counsel they can arrive at the truth, which may be 180 degrees removed from what they both previously believed.

• Source: *Chidushei HaLev*

Who's First?

"When a woman conceives..." (12:2)

If Man is worthy, if he makes his soul the essence of his being, then he precedes all Creation. The spirit of Man that hovered over the depths even before the creation of light. But if he is not worthy, if he glories in his physical dimension, then in terms of the *physical* precedence of Creation, even the mosquito preceded him.

For this reason the Torah deals with the laws of purity in Man after the laws of purity in animals: Just as the *physical* creation of Man follows that of the animals, so too his laws are explained after the laws of the animals. This applies, however, only when Man behaves like nothing more than a sophisticated animal. However, if he relegates his physical side to his soul, if he fulfills the purpose of Creation by recognizing and serving his Creator, then he precedes all Creation.

• Sources: Based on the Midrash and Rashi

Incredibly Humble

"and cedar wood, crimson thread, and hyssop" (14:4)

"For leprous-looking lesions result from conceit and haughtiness. What is the cure? A person should lower himself like the worm and the hyssop." (Rashi)

The Baal Shem Tov once arrived in Polana for Shabbat in a beautiful carriage. In that town was a certain individual who loved to create trouble. He accused the Baal Shem Tov of lording it up and behaving in a conceited fashion.

The Baal Shem replied to him:

"Once there was a king who let it be known that he was

searching for the elixir of eternal life. Hearing about the king's quest, a wise man came to him and said, "I have the elixir of eternal life." "Where is it? Where is it?" said the king in great excitement. "I will pay you anything for it!" Replied the wise man "You need pay me nothing for it. But it will certainly cost you."

The king's brow furrowed. "Where is the potion?" he demanded.

Said the wise man: "If you humble yourself and distance yourself from all conceit, you will have imbibed the elixir of life."

The king took the wise man's words and fulfilled them to the letter. He behaved like the epitome of humility, to the extent that he actually ceased riding in the royal carriage and followed behind it on foot along with his servants.

However, the more he did to humiliate himself, the more he heard this little voice in his head saying, "You are the MOST incredibly HUMBLE person in the whole world. Look at you! You are a great king and yet you walk on foot behind your carriage. You speak in whispers, carefully weighing your each and every word. Your shoulders are hunched unassumingly. Your glance is always downward and diffident. You are truly FANTASTIC!"

He sought out the wise man and told him of his problem. The wise man explained, "Walking behind the royal carriage was not what I had in mind. I meant you to go up and sit in your carriage, that everyone should continue bowing to you and treating you with royal deference, and, in spite of all that, in your heart of hearts, you should still feel humble and small. That's a much more difficult thing to do."

But that is true humility.

PARSHA Overview

Vayikra

The Book of *Vayikra* (Leviticus), also known as *Torat Kohanim* — the Laws of the Priests — deals largely with the *korbanot* (offerings) brought in the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting). The first group of offerings is called *korban olah*, a burnt offering. The animal is brought to the Mishkan's entrance. For cattle, the one bringing the offering sets his hands on the animal. Afterwards it is slaughtered and the *kohen* sprinkles its blood on the altar. The animal is skinned and cut into pieces. The pieces are arranged, washed and burned on the altar. A similar process is described involving burnt offerings of other animals and birds. The various meal offerings are described. Part of the meal offering is burned on the altar, and the remaining part is eaten by the *kohanim*. Mixing leaven or honey into the offerings is prohibited. The peace offering, part of which is burnt on the altar and part eaten, can be either from cattle, sheep or goats. The Torah prohibits eating blood or *chelev* (certain fats in animals). The offerings that atone for inadvertent sins committed by the *Kohen Gadol*, by the entire community, by the prince and by the average citizen are detailed. Laws of the guilt-offering, which atones for certain verbal transgressions and for transgressing laws of ritual purity, are listed. The meal offering for those who cannot afford the normal guilt offering, the offering to atone for misusing sanctified property, laws of the "questionable guilt" offering, and offerings for dishonesty are detailed.

Tzav

The Torah addresses Aharon and his sons to teach them additional laws relating to their service. The ashes of the *korban olah* — the offering burnt on the altar throughout the night —

are to be removed from the area by the *kohen* after he changes his special linen clothing. The *olah* is brought by someone who forgot to perform a positive commandment of the Torah. The *kohen* retains the skin. The fire on the altar must be kept constantly ablaze. The *korban mincha* is a meal offering of flour, oil and spices. A handful is burned on the altar and a *kohen* eats the remainder before it becomes leaven. The Parsha describes the special *korbanot* to be offered by the *Kohen Gadol* each day, and by Aharon's sons and future descendants on the day of their inauguration. The *chatat*, the *korban* brought after an accidental transgression, is described, as are the laws of slaughtering and sprinkling the blood of the *asham* guilt-*korban*. The details of *shelamim*, various peace *korbanot*, are described, including the prohibition against leaving uneaten until morning the remains of the *todah*, the thanks-*korban*. All sacrifices must be burned after they may no longer be eaten. No sacrifice may be eaten if it was slaughtered with the intention of eating it too late. Once they have become ritually impure, *korbanot* may not be eaten and should be burned. One may not eat a *korban* when he is ritually impure. Blood and *chelev*, forbidden animal fats, are prohibited to be eaten. Aharon and his sons are granted the breast and shank of every *korban shelamim*. The inauguration ceremony for Aharon, his sons, the Mishkan and all of its vessels is detailed.

Shmini

On the eighth day of the dedication of the Mishkan, Aharon, his sons, and the entire nation bring various *korbanot* (offerings) as commanded by Moshe. Aharon and Moshe bless the nation. G-d allows the Jewish People to sense His Presence after they complete the Mishkan. Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, innovate

continued on page seven

TALMUDigest

Sanhedrin 37-43

- Seating arrangement of Sanhedrin
- Warning witnesses regarding sanctity of life
- Invalidity of circumstantial evidence
- Creation of Adam – when and how
- Dialogues between Sages and heretics
- The “fox parables” of Rabbi Meir
- The death of Achav and the greatness of Ovadiah
- The interrogation of witnesses
- Torah source for the questions put to them
- The warning given to potential sinner and his response
- The career of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai
- When witnesses contradict each other
- Kiddush Levanah – blessing for the new moon
- Conclusion of trial and execution

The Sun as a Parable

“You Jews say that wherever ten of you pray together the Divine Presence is there. How many Divine Presences are there?”

This was the challenge presented to Rabban Gamliel by a heretic. The Sage’s response was to gently rap the heretic’s servant on the neck and ask him why he let the sun come into his master’s room.

“But the sun is everywhere!” protested the heretic in wonder at the Sage’s statement.

“If the sun, which is but one of the billions of G-d’s servants, can be everywhere at once,” said Rabban Gamliel, “why is it so difficult to understand that the Divine Presence can be wherever ten Jews pray together!”

In one of his halachic responsa, (*Binyan Zion Response 3*) Rabbi Yaakov Ettlinger offers this explanation of Rabban Gamliel’s reply.

Even though the sun is many millions of miles from earth, it is a common figure of speech to say that the “sun came into the room” when the curtain is removed. It is also common to refer to this as a sudden appearance of the sun even though it was always there even before the curtain was removed. The truth is that it is not the sun which has entered but rather its rays, and those rays were always there but only become visible when the curtains are removed.

In similar fashion we speak of the Divine Presence as rays emanating from the Divine Source in Heaven. Those spiritual rays are always there but our physicality serves as a barrier like the curtains against the rays of the sun. When ten Jews pray together, that physical barrier is removed and the rays of Divine Presence can thus be everywhere such a holy gathering takes place.

• *Sanhedrin 39b*

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TALMUDigest

Sanhedrin 44-50

- The sin of Achan and his confession
- Yehoshua and the reprimanding angel
- How penalty of *skilah* was implemented
- Hanging and burial of one thus executed
- The purpose of burial and eulogy for the dead
- Separate burial plots for executed sinners
- When death serves as an atonement
- When something prepared for use of the dead or for a mitzvah becomes forbidden for any other use
- The property of the executed by court or king
- The curse of David and the trial of Yoav
- The four categories of capital punishment
- The degree of severity of these punishments

Scholar and Soldier

The symbiotic relationship between scholar and soldier finds its ultimate expression in these passages (*Shmuel II* 8:15-16):

“And David resigned over all Israel, and David dispensed judgment and justice to all his people. And Yoav, son of Tzuriah, was in charge of the army.”

“If not for David,” explains Rabbi Abba bar Cahana, “Yoav could not succeed in war, and if not for Yoav, David could not study Torah.”

Maharsha calls attention to the fact that rather than mention David’s ability to dispense judgment and justice thanks to Yoav’s military leadership, the Sage deviates from the language of the passage and speaks of David’s

Torah study.

His explanation is that Rabbi Abba bar Cahana was motivated to make this change by the term “to all his people” in the above-mentioned passage. In order to be capable of dispensing judgment and justice to all the people and never err, David had to have a complete mastery of the law, something which was possible only by being free of military responsibility which would interfere with his ability to study Torah.

The other half of this relationship between scholar and soldier is already explained by Rashi who writes that it was the merit of David’s Torah study which made it possible for his general Yoav to succeed in war.

• *Sanhedrin 49a*

What the SAGES Say

“One who makes the blessing for the new moon in its proper time is considered as if he welcomed the Divine Presence.”

• *Rabbi Yochanan - Sanhedrin 42a*

“One who unnecessarily delays the burial of the dead is guilty of violating a Torah law.”

• *Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai - Sanhedrin 46b*

“Why are those distant relatives prohibited for marriage by rabbinic law called ‘mitzvah prohibited’? Because it is a mitzvah to obey the commands of the Sages.”

• *Rabbi Oshya - Sanhedrin 53a*

“It is forbidden to make fun of anything except in regard to idolatry.”

• *Rabbi Nachman - Sanhedrin 63b*

“The tree from which Adam sinfully ate was a grapevine because nothing brings so much weeping to the world as does the consumption of wine.”

• *Rabbi Meir - Sanhedrin 70a*

TALMUDigest

Sanhedrin 51-57

- Punishment of adulterous daughter of a *kohen* and how it is implemented
- The fires that consumed Korach's rebels and the sons of Aharon
- The punishments of the sword and of strangulation
- When the Torah does not stipulate the form of capital punishment
- Which sins are punished with the most severe form of death
- Why the animal is also executed
- Forbidden relations with a minor
- What constitutes blasphemy as a capital sin
- How witnesses to blasphemy testify
- The Noachide Laws – seven or more?
- Justice for an offender of those laws

The Ten Before

Even before they received the Torah at Sinai our ancestors were commanded with ten *mitzvot* – the seven Noachide Laws plus the three *mitzvot* which they received at the scene of the bitter waters of Marah “where there was given statutes and laws.” (*Shmot* 15:25)

Tosefot raises the question as to why there is no mention of the *mitzvah* of circumcision which had already been commanded to the Patriarch Avraham or the prohibition of eating the *gid hanashe* (displaced sinew) commanded to

the Patriarch Yaakov. (*Bereishet* 32:33)

The answer given by Rabbi Yaakov Emden in regard to circumcision is that this list includes only prohibitions and not positive commands, as we find in a later *gemara* (58b). As regards *gid hanashe* the opinion of the Sages (*Mesechta Chullin* 100b) who contest the view of Rabbi Yehuda is that although the source of the *gid hanashe* ban is mentioned early in the Torah, it was not actually prohibited until Sinai. Since there is not a consensus that this was a pre-Sinai *mitzvah*, it is not mentioned in this list of ten.

• *Sanhedrin* 56b

LOVE OF THE LAND

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

Givat Shaul – Gateway to Jerusalem

At the very entrance to Jerusalem is the neighborhood of Givat Shaul. One of the strongholds of the religious community in the nation's capital, this neighborhood is named for Rabbi Shaul Elishar, also



known as “Yissa Bracha”, who was the Rishon Letzion, chief rabbi of the Sephardi community in Eretz Yisrael.

Nearby is Kefar Shaul, which is known for its mental health institution.

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TALMUDigest

Sanhedrin 58 - 64

- Women forbidden under Noachide Law
- The wives of Avraham and Amram
- The non-Jew observing Shabbat or learning Torah
- Flesh or blood from a live animal and other things forbidden by Noachide Law
- Adam's limits regarding eating of meat
- What constitutes blasphemy punishable by death and how must witnesses behave
- Various forms of idol worship punishable by death
- The *meisit* persuading others to worship him
- Worshipping an idol out of love or fear
- Multiple atonement sacrifices for involuntary idol worship and other sins
- Bowing to an idol or declaring acceptance as a deity
- Which forms of service to idols are punishable only with lashes
- Making fun of idolatry and the historic effort to combat the temptations of idolatry and forbidden women
- What was the worship of "Molech"

Humoring a Self-Made Deity

A *meisit* – one who persuades others to worship an idol – is punished by death. What if this false deity is not some object but rather a human being who is being presented as a divine force to be worshipped?

In a case where the *meisit* is persuading another to worship him, it depends on the circumstances. All agree that

if he ends up actually being worshipped he is punished with death because he has violated the second of the Ten Commandments "You shall not make yourself a carved image" (*Shmot* 20:4), which includes presenting himself as an image worthy of worship. But if the one whom he is trying to persuade simply agrees to do so but fails to actually perform an act of worship, there is a difference of opinion.

Rabbi Meir's position regarding the guilt of the *meisit* is that the "yes" which the object of his persuasion says is a genuine acquiescence and therefore renders his persuader a guilty *meisit*. Rabbi Yehuda, however, contends that no human is prepared to worship another human, and his "yes" is only a way of humoring this self-made deity.

This is the way Rashi understands Rabbi Yehuda's position and he therefore concludes that even if the *meisit* tries to persuade someone to worship a human other than himself he will still not be guilty. This is in contrast with what Rambam writes (*Laws of Idol Worship* 5:5). He distinguishes between one consenting to worship the persuader himself or another human, ruling that in the latter case he is guilty.

It seems that Rambam understood that if the *meisit* is championing the worship of another human it would make sense for him to be challenged, and if instead there is consent, it is interpreted as being genuine. When he is, however, asking that he himself be worshipped, it cannot be expected for anyone to challenge him since he thinks he is a god and the "yes" they say is merely a mockery.

• *Sanhedrin* 61a

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PARSHA Overview

an offering not commanded by G-d. A fire comes from before G-d 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. *Bnei Yisrael* are commanded to be separate and holy — like G-d.

Tazria

The Torah commands a woman to bring a *korban* after the birth of a child. A son is to be circumcised on the eighth day of his life. The Torah introduces the phenomenon of *tzara'at* (often mistranslated as leprosy) — a miraculous affliction that attacks people, clothing and buildings to awaken a person to spiritual failures. A

kohen must be consulted to determine whether a particular mark is *tzara'at* or not. The *kohen* isolates the sufferer for a week. If the malady remains unchanged, confinement continues for a second week, after which the *kohen* decides the person's status. The Torah describes the different forms of *tzara'at*. One whose *tzara'at* is confirmed wears torn clothing, does not cut his hair, and must alert others that he is ritually impure. He may not have normal contact with people. The phenomenon of *tzara'at* on clothing is described in detail.

Metzora

The Torah describes the procedure for a *metzora* (a person afflicted with *tzara'at*) upon conclusion of his isolation. This process extends for a week and involves *korbanot* and immersions in the *mikveh*. Then, a *kohen* must pronounce the *metzora* pure. A *metzora* of limited financial means may substitute lesser offerings for the more expensive animals. Before a *kohen* diagnoses that a house has *tzara'at*, household possessions are removed to prevent them from also being declared ritually impure. The *tzara'at* is removed by smashing and rebuilding that section of the house. If it reappears, the entire building must be razed. The Torah details those bodily secretions that render a person spiritually impure, thereby preventing his contact with holy items, and the Torah defines how one regains a state of ritual purity.

TALMUDigest

Sanhedrin 65 - 71

- Sorcerers – their methods and their punishment
- Rabbi Akiva's debate with Turnus Rufus regarding Shabbat
- When is there a death penalty for Shabbat violation or cursing a parent
- The special penalty for violation of a betrothed, twelve-year-old virgin
- Who is considered a *meisit* to be executed by stoning
- The false prophet who incites to idol worship and the inciters of an entire city
- Black magic, demons and the Egyptian sorcerers
- Rabbi Eliezer's encounter with his disciples
- The age limitation on preemptive death for the rebellious son
- Can a minor father a child
- The ages of Biblical figures
- What sort of gluttonous consumption creates the status of a rebellious son
- The dangers of intoxication
- Conditions required for condemning a rebellious son

The Unlearned Lesson

A rebellious youngster who showed a strong tendency towards crime by repeatedly stealing money from his father in order to gluttonously consume meat and wine is put to death as a preemptive measure to ensure that he will not end up as a murderer.

Rabbi Shimon's position is that the implementation

of this Torah law never took place. This thirteen-year-old must be brought to the court by his father and mother for first disciplining him with lashes, and upon his subsequent regression bring him once again for execution. It is therefore unlikely that parents will initiate his execution for the crime of stealing from them to indulge himself. Then why did the Torah provide us with a purely theoretical chapter such as this?

The cryptic answer given is "in order to learn from this and be rewarded."

Maharsha explains that the boy's parents are not capable of appreciating a preemptive death for their son and will delude themselves that he will change his ways. The Torah therefore teaches them that he will inevitably degenerate into a murderer and is deserving of death. This will motivate the parents to discipline this errant child and they will be rewarded for properly training him.

"In our day," added Maharsha centuries ago, "parents pay no attention to this lesson and cover up for their child even when he deserves severe punishment, with the result that delinquent youngsters spend most of their days devoid of Torah."

"The tree from which Adam sinfully ate was a grapevine because nothing brings so much weeping to the world as does the consumption of wine."

• *Sanhedrin* 71a

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Relevant, informative, and thought-provoking answers to contemporary questions on Jewish law, customs, and ethics

The Four Cups

From: Marsha

Dear Rabbi,
Would you please fill me in on the significance of the four cups at the Passover Seder?

Dear Marsha,

It is a mitzvah to drink four cups of wine during the Seder at specific points in the Hagadah: One for kiddush, one for the mitzvah of Hagadah – the retelling of the Exodus, one at the end of the blessing after the meal, and one to mark the end of the Hallel praise. The mitzvah of drinking these four cups applies equally to men, women and children since everyone was redeemed from Egypt (Pesachim 108). Red wine is preferable, but white wine or even grape juice is acceptable. Ashkenazim recite the blessing over wine on each of the four cups; Sefardim do so only for the first and third cups.

The Jerusalem Talmud discusses several opinions of our Sages as to the significance of the four cups:

According to one opinion, the four cups correspond to four different terms or expressions in the Torah regarding four stages of G-d's redeeming the Jewish People from Egyptian bondage: "I am G-d, I 'brought you out' [*hotzeiti*] from the burdens of Egypt" (even if we had remained slaves, but the burden would have been removed, we would have raised a cup of gratitude to G-d). "I will deliver you [*ga'alti*] from their slavery" (we drink another cup because He completely nullified our servitude). "I will redeem you [*paditi*] with an outstretched arm and with great judgments" (because He crushed our wicked pursuers so they could no longer afflict us, we drink the third cup). "I will take you [*lakachti*] unto Me for a people and I will be your G-d" (we raise the fourth cup in honor of the greatest aspect of the redemption – His drawing us near to become His people).

Another opinion explains that the four cups cor-

respond to the four times that the Torah refers to the cup of Pharaoh (Genesis 40): "The cup was in my hand"; "And I squeezed them into the cup of Pharaoh"; "And I put the cup into the hand of Pharaoh"; "And you shall put the cup into the hand of Pharaoh". Since Joseph and the butler described in the narrative here were slaves to Pharaoh, it is as if a hint were being given to Joseph: The slavery is now beginning as the 'cup' is being put into the hand of Pharaoh, but your children are destined to take it out of his hand and they will thank G-d with the cup of salvation four times over.

A third opinion posits that the four cups refer to the four great empires which subjugated Israel after Egypt and whose punishment was portended by a fourfold mention of their drinking from the cup of G-d's fury. This is in counter-distinction to the fourfold mention of Israel drinking from the cup of G-d's redemption. Regarding the nations the verses state: "Take the wine cup of fury from my hand and make all the nations who persecute you drink it" (Yirmiyahu 25); "The nations have drunk [from the wine in the cup of the hand of Babylon], therefore they have become mad" (ibid. 51); "For there is a cup in the hand of G-d...but its dregs, all the wicked of the earth shall drink" (Psalms 75). "Upon the wicked He will rain snares; fire and brimstone and tempestuous winds shall be the portion of their cup" (ibid. 11). However, regarding Israel the verses refer to four cups of redemption: (1) "G-d, You are the portion of my inheritance and of my cup" (ibid. 16); (2) "You anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing" (ibid. 23); and (3,4) "I lift up the cup of salvations" (ibid. 116).

In addition, various commentaries over the ages have suggested other reasons for the four cups:

Abarbanel relates the four cups to four periods of redemption over history. The first took place when G-d chose Abraham as the founder of the Jewish people. The second was from bondage in Egypt. The third is seen in the way G-d preserves us during the long years of exile from those who seek to persecute and destroy us. The fourth redemption awaits us in the future.

The Gaon of Vilna relates the four cups to four

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PARSHA Q&A

VAYIKRA

1. Who does the word “*eilav*” in verse 1:1 exclude?
2. Name all the types of animals and birds mentioned in this week’s Parsha.
3. What two types of sin does an *olah* atone for?
4. Where was the *olah* slaughtered?
5. What procedure of an animal-offering can a non-*kohen* perform?
6. Besides the fire the *kohanim* bring on the altar, where else did the fire come from?
7. At what stage of development are *torim* (turtle-doves) and *bnei yona* (young pigeons) unfit as offerings?
8. What is *melika*?
9. Why are animal innards offered on the altar, while bird innards are not?
10. Why does the Torah describe both the animal and bird offerings as a “satisfying aroma”?
11. Why is the term “*nefesh*” used regarding the flour offering?
12. Which part of the free-will *mincha* offering is burned on the altar?
13. The Torah forbids bringing honey with the *mincha*. What is meant by “honey”?
14. When does the Torah permit bringing a leavened bread offering?
15. Concerning *shelamim*, why does the Torah teach about sheep and goats separately?
16. For most offerings the *kohen* may use a service vessel to apply the blood on the *mizbe’ach*. For which *korban* may he apply the blood using only his finger?
17. Who is obligated to bring a *chatat*?
18. Where were the remains of the bull burnt while in the wilderness? Where were they burnt during the time of the *Beit Hamikdash*?
19. What two things does a voluntary *mincha* have that a *minchat chatat* lacks?
20. What is the minimum value of a *korban asham*?

Answers to Vayikra’s Questions

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

1. 1:1 - Aharon.
 2. 1:2,14, 3:12 - Cattle, sheep, goats, turtledoves (*torim*), and doves (*bnei yona*).
 3. 1:4 - Neglecting a positive command, and violating a negative command which is rectified by a positive command.
 4. 1:5 - In the *Mishkan* Courtyard (*azarah*).
 5. 1:55. - Ritual slaughter.
 6. 1:7 - It descended from Heaven.
 7. 1:14 - When their plumage turns golden. At that stage, *bnei yona* are too old and *torim* are too young.
 8. 1:15 - Slaughtering a bird from the back of the neck using one’s fingernail.
 9. 1:16 - An animal’s food is provided by its owner, so its innards are “kosher.” Birds, however, eat food that they scavenge, so their innards are tainted with “theft.”
 10. 1:17 - To indicate that the size of the offering is irrelevant, provided your heart is directed toward G-d.
 11. 2:1 - Usually, it is a poor person who brings a flour offering. Therefore, G-d regards it as if he had offered his *nefesh* (soul).
 12. 2:1 - The *kometz* (fistful).
 13. 2:11 - Any sweet fruit derivative.
 14. 2:12 - On Shavuot.
 15. 3:7 - Because they differ regarding the *alya* (fat tail). The lamb’s *alya* is burned on the altar but the goat’s is not.
 16. 3:8 - The *chatat*.
 17. 4:2 - One who accidentally transgresses a negative commandment whose willing violation carries the *karet* (excision) penalty.
 18. 4:12 - a) Outside the three camps. b) Outside Jerusalem.
 19. 5:11 - *Levona* and oil.
 20. 5:15 - Two *shekalim*.
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PARSHA Q&A

TZAV

1. What separated the *kohen's* skin from the priestly garments?
2. How often were the ashes removed from upon the *mizbe'ach*? How often were they removed from next to the *mizbe'ach*?
3. If someone extinguishes the fire on the *mizbe'ach*, how many Torah violations has he transgressed?
4. The portion of a flour-offering offered on the *mizbe'ach* may not be *chametz*. But is the *kohen's* portion allowed to be *chametz*?
5. When a *kohen* is inaugurated, what offering must he bring?
6. What three baking processes were used to prepare the *korban* of Aharon and his sons?
7. What is the difference between a *minchat kohen* and a *minchat Yisrael*?
8. When is a *kohen* disqualified from eating from a *chatat*?
9. What is the difference between a copper and earthenware vessel regarding removing absorbed tastes?
10. Can an animal dedicated as an *asham* be replaced with another animal?
11. How does an *asham* differ from all other *korbanot*?
12. Unlike all other *korbanot*, what part of the ram or sheep may be placed on the *mizbe'ach*?
13. What three types of *kohanim* may not eat from the *asham*?
14. In which four instances is a *korban todah* brought?
15. Until when may a *todah* be eaten according to the Torah? Until when according to Rabbinic decree?
16. How does a *korban* become *pigul*?
17. Who may eat from a *shelamim*?
18. What miracle happened at the entrance of the *Ohel Moed*?
19. Other than *Yom Kippur*, what other service requires that the *kohen* separate from his family?
20. What are the 5 categories of *korbanot* listed in this *Parsha*?

Answers to Tzav's Questions

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

1. 6:3 - Nothing.
2. 6:4 -A) Every day. B) Whenever there was a lot.
3. 6:6 - Two.
4. 6:10 - No.
5. 6:13 - A *korban mincha* — A tenth part of an *ephah* of flour.
6. 6:14 - Boiling, baking in an oven and frying in a pan.
7. 6:15 - The *minchat kohen* is burnt completely. Only a handful of the *minchat Yisrael* is burnt, and the remainder is eaten by the *kohanim*.
8. 6:19 - If he is *tamei* (spiritually impure) at the time of the sprinkling of the blood.
9. 6:21 - One can remove an absorbed taste from a copper vessel by scouring and rinsing, whereas such a taste can never be removed from an earthenware vessel.
10. 7:1 - No.
11. 7:3 - It can only be brought from a ram or sheep.
12. 7:3 - The tail.
13. 7:7 - A *t'vul yom* (a *tamei kohen* who immersed in a *mikveh* yet awaits sunset to become *tahor*); a *mechusar kipurim* (a *tamei* person who has gone to the *mikveh* but has yet to bring his required offering); an *onan* (a mourner prior to the burial of the deceased).
14. 7:12 - Upon safe arrival from an ocean voyage; upon safe arrival from a desert journey; upon being freed from prison; upon recovering from illness.
15. 7:15 - a) Until the morning. b) Until midnight.
16. 7:18 - The person slaughters the animal with the intention that it be eaten after the prescribed time.
17. 7:19 - Any uncontaminated person (not only the owner).
18. 8:3 - The entire nation was able to fit in this very small area.
19. 8:34 - The burning of the *parah adumah* (red heifer).
20. *Olah* (6:2); *mincha* (6:7); *chatat* (6:18); *asham* (7:1); *shelamim* (7:11).

PARSHA Q&A

SHMINI

1. What date was “*yom hashemini*”?
2. Which of Aharon’s *korbanot* atoned for the Golden Calf?
3. What *korbanot* did Aharon offer for the Jewish People?
4. What was unique about the *chatat* offered during the induction of the *Mishkan*?
5. When did Aharon bless the people with the *birkat 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 prohibitions apply to a person who is intoxicated?
10. Name the three *chatat* goat offerings that were sacrificed on the day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*.
11. Which he-goat *chatat* 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 *chatat*. Why?
14. Why did G-d choose Moshe, Aharon, Elazar and Itamar as His messengers to tell the Jewish People the laws of *kashrut*?
15. What are the signs of a kosher land animal?
16. How many non-kosher animals display only one sign of *kashrut*? 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?

Answers to Shmini’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 chatat*.
3. 9:3,4 - A he-goat as a *chatat*, a calf and a lamb for an *olah*, an ox and a ram for *shelamim*, and a *mincha*.
4. 9:11 - It’s the only example of a *chatat* offered on the courtyard *mizbe’ach* that was burned.
5. 9:22 - When he finished offering the *korbanot*, 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*.
10. 10:16 - The goat offerings of the inauguration ceremony, of *Rosh Chodesh*, and of Nachshon ben Aminadav.
11. 10:16 - The *Rosh Chodesh chatat*: Either because it became *tamei*, or because the *kohanim* were forbidden to eat from it while in the state of *aninut* (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 *chatat* are the sins of the owners atoned.
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.
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 (i.e., a spring or a cistern).

PARSHA Q&A

TAZRIA

1. When does a woman who has given birth to a son go to the *mikveh*?
2. After a woman gives birth, she is required to offer two types of offerings. Which are they?
3. What animal does the woman offer as a *chatat*?
4. Which of these offerings makes her *tahor* (ritual purity)?
5. Which of the sacrifices does the woman offer first, the *olah* or the *chatat*?
6. Who determines whether a person is a *metzora tamei* (person with ritually impure *tzara'at*) or is *tahor*?
7. If the *kohen* sees that the *tzara'at* has spread after one week, how does he rule?
8. What disqualifies a *kohen* from being able to give a ruling in a case of *tzara'at*?
9. Why is the appearance of *tzara'at* on the tip of one of the 24 "limbs" that project from the body usually unable to be examined?
10. On which days is a *kohen* not permitted to give a ruling on *tzara'at*?

METZORA

1. When may a *metzora* not be pronounced *tahor*?
2. In the *midbar*, where did a *metzora* dwell while he was *tamei*?
3. Why does the *metzora* require birds in the purification process?
4. In the purification process of a *metzora*, what does the cedar wood symbolize?
5. During the purification process, the *metzora* is required to shave his hair. Which hair must he shave?
6. What is unique about the *chatat* and the *asham* offered by the *metzora*?
7. In the *Beit Hamikdash*, when the *metzora* was presented "before G-d" (14:11), where did he stand?
8. Where was the *asham* of the *metzora* slaughtered?
9. How was having *tzara'at* in one's house sometimes advantageous?
10. When a house is suspected as having *tzara'at*, what is its status prior to the inspection by a *kohen*?

Answers to Tazria-Metzora's Questions

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

Tazria

1. 12:2 - At the end of seven days.
2. 12:6 - An *olah* and a *chatat*.
3. 12:6 - A *tor* (turtle dove) or a *ben yona* (young pigeon).
4. 12:7 - The *chatat*.
5. 12:8 - The *chatat*.
6. 13:2 - A *kohen*.
7. 13:5 - The person is *tamei*.
8. 13:12 - Poor vision.
9. 13:14 - The *tzara'at* as a whole must be seen at one time. Since these parts are angular, they cannot be seen at one time.
10. 13:14 - During the festivals; and ruling on a groom during the seven days of feasting after the marriage.

Metzora

1. 14:2 - At night.

2. 14:3 - Outside the three camps.
3. 14:4 - *Tzara'at* comes as a punishment for *lashon hara*. Therefore, the Torah requires the *metzora* to offer birds, who chatter constantly, to atone for his sin of chattering.
4. 14:4 - The cedar is a lofty tree. It alludes to the fact that *tzara'at* comes as a punishment for haughtiness.
5. 14:9 - Any visible collection of hair on the body.
6. 14:10 - They require *n'sachim* (drink offerings).
7. 14:11 - At the gate of Nikanor.
8. 14:13 - On the northern side of the *mizbe'ach*.
9. 14:34 - The Amorites concealed treasures in the walls of their houses. After the conquest of the Land, *tzara'at* would afflict these houses. The Jewish owner would tear down the house and find the treasures.
10. 14:36 - It is *tahor*.

ISRAEL *Forever*

A Sense of Sacrifice

The beginning of a new *chumash* always provides a special challenge to those who strive to connect the Torah to their lives.

When Jews throughout the world hear on Shabbat the reading of the first parsha in *Sefer Vayikra* they are challenged to identify with the sacrifices that were offered in the *Beit Hamikdash*.

The first level of identification is the sense of sorrow that we have no opportunity today to atone for our mistakes with animal sacrifices. But there is another level of identification, one that is a source of comfort for that sorrow. All of us are faced with situations in which we must make sacrifices. Sometimes it is forgoing a luxury in order

to help a needy person or a worthwhile cause. At other times we sacrifice the time we could utilize for business or pleasure in order to pray or study Torah.

For those who live in Israel there is the ongoing sacrifice of the security enjoyed by people in other lands.

Any sort of suffering, say our Talmudic Sages, is accepted by G-d as an atonement sacrifice. The only requirement is that the sacrifice we make must be done out of love for the Creator Who gave us this opportunity to thus clean the slate.

Such is the attitude towards sacrifice which will preserve Israel forever.

What's the *Right Thing* to Do?

Giving Credit

Question: I am aware that it is so important to say something in the name of the person from whom you heard the information that such a selfless act even “brings redemption to the world”. But if I was aware of that information before hearing it from another is there still a point in repeating it in his name?

Answer: The answer to your question lies in the Talmudic statement to which you refer when you men-

tion the impact of such selflessness. Queen Esther, the heroine of Purim, brought about the redemption of her people by telling the king, in the name of her informant Mordechai, about the plot to assassinate him. The commentaries point out that Esther, whom our Sages list as one of the seven prophetesses of history, was aware through prophesy of the plot before hearing about it from Mordechai. She nevertheless gave him credit for it and thus set the stage for the happy end of the Purim story.

The HUMAN SIDE of the Story

The First Carrot Peeler in Jerusalem

There was great excitement in Jerusalem when the first shipment of modern carrot peelers arrived in the city. And who was the first housewife to receive as a gift this new gadget that made the work of the housekeeper a bit easier? The wife of the Torah giant, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zatzal*.

It probably came to his attention as a result of a halachic question regarding the need to immerse such a utensil in a mikveh before use. But once he became aware of its existence he rushed to purchase one for his wife as an expression of his appreciation of her role as his wife.

Pesach Q&A

- Q**
1. What is the holiday of Pesach called in the Torah?
 2. Why did our ancestors carry dough when they left Egypt?
 3. Where is there a hint in the Torah to the four cups of wine we drink at the Seder?
 4. What do we do on Pesach Eve to remember the Korban Pesach?
 5. What do these numbers represent – 10, 50 / 40, 200 / 50, 250?
 6. How many mornings on Pesach do we say the entire Hallel?
 7. How do we refer to Pesach in our *kiddush* and in our *tefillot*?
 8. What are the three prohibitions regarding *chametz*?
 9. When is the eating of matza obligatory according to the Torah?
 10. What was the date of the crossing of Yam Suf?
 11. How many days of Chol Hamo'ed are there in Eretz Israel and elsewhere?
 12. Is there any limit to what may be done during Chol Hamo'ed?
 13. How many times do we wash our hands during the Seder?
 14. What cannot be done after eating the *afikomen*?
 15. Why do we recline when drinking wine and eating matza?
 16. What unusual thing do we do to stimulate children to ask questions?
 17. What is the meaning of *datzach, adash, beachav*?
 18. Who are the four sons alluded to in the Torah as requiring us to inform them regarding Pesach?
 19. What is the meaning of *Dayenu* that we sing?
 20. What is the Torah term on which the word Haggadah is based?
- A**
1. *Chag Hamatzot* (The Festival of Matzot).
 2. They left in such a hurry that there was no time for the dough to rise.
 3. The four expressions of redemption found in *Shemot* / Exodus 6:6-7.
 4. Place a shankbone or other piece of meat on the seder plate.
 5. The number of plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten in Egypt and at the Sea according to three different Sages.
 6. One morning in Eretz Israel and two everywhere else.
 7. *Zman Cheiruteinu* (The Season of Our Freedom).
 8. To eat, to benefit from and to possess.
 9. On the first night of the holiday at the Seder.
 10. The seventh day of Pesach – the 21st day of the month of Nissan.
 11. In Eretz Israel 5 days and elsewhere only 4.
 12. Definitely! Study the laws or consult a rabbi.
 13. Twice - once before dipping *karpas* into salt water and once before eating matza. (A third time is *mayim achronim* before saying *birkat hamazon* – grace after meals.)
 14. We cannot eat nor drink wine.
 15. In order to express our sense of nobility as free men.
 16. We dip a vegetable in salt water before saying the Haggadah.
 17. These are acronyms formed by the first letters of the ten plagues.
 18. The wise son, the wicked one, the simple one and the one who does not know how to ask.
 19. "It would have sufficed for us" – a reference to all the stages of benevolence which G-d granted us.
 20. "*Vehegadeta levinecha* – And you shall relate to your child" (*Shemot* 13:8).

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

ASK! *the Jewish Information Service*

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different worlds. This world; the world of Messiah; the world of the resurrection of the dead and the World-to-Come. One who fulfills the mitzvah of the four cups and the other *mitzvot* of the Seder is assured of all these worlds.

Maharal connects the four cups with Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah, since it was in their merit the Jewish people was born and redeemed; and also in the merit of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in whose merit the *mitzvot* of the Passover offering, matzah and maror were given to the Jewish people.

Bnei Yissachar writes that Israel was given the privilege of the mitzvah of the four cups as a reward for the four virtues they displayed in Egypt. They did not adopt non-Jewish names but rather preserved their distinctly Jewish names; they retained their own Jewish language; they maintained their distinctly Jewish mode of dress; and they did not stoop to the immorality prevalent in ancient Egyptian, but rather maintained their particularly high standard of Jewish morality. Despite being enmeshed in the impurities of Egypt, the fact that they preserved these barriers against total assimilation earned for them the title of “distinguished” in

which merit they were redeemed.

You mention that we drink four cups – yet there is a “fifth” cup as well.

After drinking the last cup concluding Hallel, we fill another cup designated as the “Cup of Elijah”. Regarding the first idea mentioned above that the four cups correspond to the four words or terms used in the Torah referring to the Redemption, the opinion of one Sage is that there are actually five such phrases where the fifth is: “And I will *bring you [heveiti]* to the Land”. Although this opinion was not accepted, nevertheless we pour out a fifth cup, but don’t drink it, since there is a doubt whether it should be included in the mitzvah or not. When Elijah the prophet comes and clarifies all our doubts, he will clarify this one as well. This cup therefore bears his name – The Cup of Eliyahu.

It is also called the Cup of Eliyahu since it symbolizes the final redemption from the threat of Gog and his coalition (which our sources describe as “Paras” – Persia/Iran and its evil allies) where that Great Day will be heralded by Elijah the Prophet who will be the harbinger for Mashiach. May he arrive speedily in our days!

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