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Parshat Tzav (Shabbat Hagadol) 5770

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SECOND NIGHT SEDER: Parents wishing to participate in the Yeshiva seder on the second night of Pesach should please contact [Elisha](#).

Also, any alumni who are planning on staying in Yeshiva during the break and have not contacted Elisha yet should contact him ASAP.

There will be no newsletter next week. Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Tzav

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon



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PARSHAT TZAV (SHABBAT HAGADOL)

THE KORBAN TODAH AND SIPPUR YETZIAT MITZRAYIM

The Torah distinguishes between two categories of korbonot shlamim, peace offerings. The first category is known as Shalmei Todah, offerings of thanksgiving, while the second category is known as Shalmei Neder o Nedava, offerings brought as a result of vows and gifts. The Shalmei Todah could only be consumed during the day

the sacrifice was brought and the following night (a later rabbinic decree limited even further the time one was permitted to eat the sacrifice to no later than midnight rather than the entire night). The Shalmei Todah was accompanied by forty loaves of bread, thirty-six of which were eaten by the one who brought the sacrifice. The Shalmei Neder o Nedava, on the other hand, were able to be eaten during the course of the day the sacrifice was brought, the following night, and the following day after that, thus having an extra day to consume the sacrifice. The Shalmei Neder o Nedava were not accompanied by any loaves of bread.

One reason given for the above distinction is that one who brings a Korban Todah, an offering of thanksgiving, wishes to thank Hashem for the miracles and general good bestowed upon him. This short period of time with which one had the need to consume an entire animal as well as the many loaves of bread, necessitated the inviting of guests to partake in the festivities. Anyone eating from an animal that had been sacrificed had to be ritually pure, requiring much preparation for the day when they would eat from their friend's Korban Todah. The inviting of guests as well as all the preparation resulted in further publicizing the thanks the person was giving to Hashem, announcing to everyone that everything we have is from Hashem.

Today when one wishes to thank Hashem for being saved from danger, one recites the blessing of hagomel. Many of the laws of the recitation of hagomel originate in the way the Korban Todah was brought. For example, the blessing of hagomel must be said in front of ten people, as it says "vayeromemuhu bikhal am" "Let them exalt Him in the assembly of people (Tehillim 107:32) - meaning that the thanks to Hashem must be given in a public setting.

Human nature is such that one feels a greater need to thank Hashem at the outset of the bringing of the sacrifice, when one still feels great elation over the miracle that happened, than on the following day. If the Korban Todah were allowed to be eaten for an additional day, it would be eaten at a time when the feelings are not as strong. For this reason, that the novelty and excitement has worn off, we are much more spiritually uplifted from our davening on the first day of Rosh Hashana than the second, and this is not only because the first day of Rosh Hashana is ordained from the Torah whereas the second one is only rabbinic. Many authorities feel that the daytime reading of the Megilla on Purim is halachically more significant than the reading the night before. Despite this fact, we are much more emotionally drawn to the night reading because it comes first, the story is new to us. Our mind might tell us that the daytime reading is of more significance but our heart and emotions tell us otherwise.

In order to properly fulfill the Mitzvah of "Sippur yetziat Mitzraim", recounting the story of the exodus from Egypt, we must feel as if we ourselves left Egypt. The best way to really tell of the miracles Hashem performed is to actually experience the exodus. In the Haggadah we quote the Mishna which says "bechol dor vador chayav adam LIROT et atzmo keilu hu yatza miMitzraim" "in every generation one is required to view oneself as if one left Egypt". There are those who say that the word LEHAROT, to show, should be substituted for the word LIROT, to view. In either case the message is that one must feel the suffering that existed in Egypt. It is not enough to relate that which took place over three thousand years ago, but we must actually experience it and thus be awakened by the story. The Rambam's version is "keilu hu ATA yatza miMitzraim" "as if he is NOW leaving Egypt". The way one fulfills the Mitzvah of recounting the story of the exodus is surely different for one who has just left Egypt, who has just been beaten by the Egyptian police, than for one who has left many years before.

The mitzvot of the seder night, both the Torah ordained mitzvot as well as the rabbinically ordained ones help us reach this feeling of being slaves in Egypt. For example, we are commanded to eat marror (albeit nowadays without the Korban

Pesach it is only a rabbinic commandment). The marmor causes us to feel the bitterness of the bondage in Egypt. We must also feel that sense of freedom felt by one who was just released. The Gemara explains that one of the reasons we drink four cups of wine at the seder is that a free man drinks lots of wine. We must recline when we eat at the seder, also allowing us to reach this feeling of freedom.

Interestingly enough, even the people of the generation that left Egypt were commanded to eat marmor. Why must they eat marmor? Did they not suffer enough and thus feel the bitterness of the bondage without having to be reminded? The answer is that, according to Chazal, they already ceased to work the previous Rosh Hashana. Enough time has elapsed to not feel the bitterness as much, therefore they too were required to eat marmor to remember the bondage.

Not long after the exodus the Jewish people say "zacharnu et hadaga asher nochal beMitzrayim chinam" "we remember the fish that we ate in Egypt for free" (Bamidbar 11:5), they have already forgotten the bondage and the suffering. Man contains within him a power to easily forget all of his troubles. Little more than a year passes after the exodus and the Torah testifies that the people said "besinat Hashem otanu hotizanu me-eretz Mitzrayim" "Because of Hashem's hatred for us did He take us out of the land of Egypt" (Devarim 1:27). The Jewish people actually forgot all the bondage and suffering and are now accusing Hashem of taking them out of Mitzrayim due to His hatred of them, for this reason even they must eat marmor, to remind them that Pharaoh is the enemy not Hashem.

Man has two strengths: the intellect and the emotions. Although one often forgets what one learns, when one uses one's intellect an impression is left. Out of the two, the intellect leaves a more lasting impression. Emotions require constant renewal. We must constantly work on our emotions to feel our love for Hashem Who took us out of Egypt.

The Gemara says that whoever spends too much time davening at the expense of time that would have been spent learning is referred to as "manichim chayei olam veloskim bechayei shaa" "having put eternal life aside and busies himself with temporary life". Why should tefilla, prayer, be referred to as chayei shaa? Is it not after all a mitzvah, albeit a dispute whether from the Torah or rabbinic in origin, yet nevertheless a mitzvah? In addition to the mitzvah of davening itself, one who davens also fulfills the mitzvah of loving and fearing Hashem? Tefilla, prayer, is referred to as chayei shaa because it is something that requires emotion as opposed to learning that requires intellect. One thinks about what one learns, asks questions, and has new insights and thus it leaves a more lasting impression. What one gains using their emotions can be lost a very short time later.

When we daven, we must feel every day like it is a new experience. Every day we must feel our thanks for the good Hashem does for us and what He gives us. We must, G-d forbid, reach the stage of "vatehi yiratam iti mitzvot anashim melumada" "their fear of Me is like rote learning of human commands" (Yeshayahu 29:13). Rabeinu Yona states that this pasuk is referring to those people who do not awaken anew within themselves an emotional feeling for serving Hashem.

Perhaps we can now explain the expression "nashim daatan kalot" "women's intellect is lighter." The women's strong point is the emotion, emotions come and go easily. Men's strong point is the intellect, things do not switch on and off as easily as it does for women. This is not considered a weakness in women. Chazal tell us "bina yeteira natan Hakodosh Boruch Hu beisha yoter mibeish" "Hashem endowed the woman with more intuitive understanding than the man" (Gemara Nidda 45b). We are told that a woman can size up her visitors and understand them much better than a man can. Why should this be? The answer is that a woman draws conclusions based on her

emotions whereas a man must use his intellect. The emotions can draw their conclusions in much less time than the intellect - the emotions are more like the senses.

Perhaps the above distinction between conclusions drawn based on intellect versus emotions can be used to explain why a woman is an invalid witness. A witness must relate what happened without any conclusions of his own. Perhaps a woman would draw conclusions based on what she saw. If a woman would witness a loan between Reuven and Shimon she would not simply relate that she saw the transaction take place but rather would conclude that Reuven lent Shimon money because Shimon was in need. A court only wishes to hear the facts without any commentary. Perhaps this also can explain the dispute amongst the authorities whether a woman can be a judge, for a judge must work with his logic and intellect, whereas a woman also works with her emotions.

When we recount the story of the exodus from Egypt, we may need our intellect in order to discuss all the facts, yet every year we must use our emotions to feel anew the bondage and suffering in Egypt. When Chazal said "kol hamarbe lesaper biytziat Mitzraim harei zeh meshubach" "and the more one dwells on the story of the Exodus from Egypt, the more praiseworthy is he", it is not simply a matter of spending more time recounting the story, but it is also a matter of awakening, of feeling as much as possible, the bondage in Egypt.

The pasuk states "Haben yakir li Ephraim im yeled shaashuim ki midei dabri bo zachor ezkerenu od" "Is Ephraim, my favorite son or a delightful child, that whenever I speak of him I remember him more and more" (Yirmiyahu 31:19). What does it mean when it says "midei dabri bo zachor ezkerenu od" "whenever I speak of him I remember him more and more"? Is it not obvious that the more I speak of him, the more I remember him? The explanation is that even if I have spoken enough about him, I still continue to mention him and speak of him. If one were to ask a father about the welfare of his son, the father would not simply say thank G-d well, but would go into great detail and even mention things that the one asking is not really interested in. The one asking the question is only doing so because he feels some sense of obligation to ask, the father, on the other hand, enjoys giving details about the welfare of his son. When one recounts the story of the exodus from Egypt it is not only out of obligation but also because one enjoys telling the story.

Although certain parts of the seder must be completed before midnight, there is a dispute as to exactly what parts. Whichever way one rules, one must tell the story in the best way possible. The word mesaper to tell a story, can be thought of as being from the same root as sapir, sapphire. The story should be as shining and clear as a sapphire.

The wise son asks "Ma haedot vehachukim vehamishpatim asher tziva Hashem Elokeinu etchem" "What are the testimonies and the decrees and the ordinances that Hashem our G-d commanded you" (Devarim 6:20). We answer him "af ata emor lo khilchot haPesach ein maftirin achar haPesach afikoman" "You too must tell him all the detailed regulations of the Pesach for instance", that we do not partake of any dessert after eating the paschal lamb. The simple explanation is that we teach the wise son everything in Masechet Pesachim which ends with the Mishna "ein maftirin achar haPesach afikoman".

Perhaps we can give an additional explanation. The wise son is not simply asking what these testimonies are but rather why are there so many things that are specific to Pesach? For seven days we eat Matza, many days beforehand we clean the house, we may not even possess any chometz lest we violate "bal yerae ubal yimatze", we bake matzot, we eat marror, drink four cups of wine, etc. Why so many details and why for seven days? Furthermore, why are we told to remember the exodus from

Egypt every day and night of the year? The Torah tells us that the mitzvot of Shabbat, tzitzit, and tefillin are for us to remember the exodus from Egypt. Why must I remember yetziat Mitzrayim every day, every minute, in every place, and in everything I do?

What do we answer the wise son? All the laws of Pesach until "ein maftirin achar haPesach afikoman". We cannot eat anything after having eaten the Korban Pesach. The sacrifice must be eaten when one is satisfied. In fact, all sacrifices must be eaten when one is satiated, to make sure that one does not leave the table of the King when hungry, thus giving a sense of honor and respect to the eating of the sacrifice. What makes the Korban Pesach unique is that one may not eat anything after partaking of it, not so in other sacrifices.

On Pesach they would eat a special Korban Chagiga prior to the Korban Pesach. In order to fulfill the commandment of not eating anything after the Korban Pesach, we are required to eat the Korban Chagiga prior to eating the Korban Pesach. Why is it so important that the Korban Pesach be eaten last? The Yerushalmi offers an explanation based on a prohibition unique to the Korban Pesach, that of "shvirat etzem", breaking of a bone. When one is hungry there is more chance one may attempt to eat every last drop of meat and thus may break a bone.

Insuring that the person is not hungry to avoid "shvirat etzem" may explain why the Korban Pesach was eaten last, even following the Korban Chagiga. This does not, however, explain why nowadays we eat the afikoman last. What relevance does "ve-etzem lo tishberu bo" "and a bone shall you not break thereof" (Shmot 12:46) have with the kezayit matza we eat at the end of our meal?

One possible explanation is that our eating of the afikoman at the end of the seder is a remembrance of the Korban Pesach that was the last thing eaten. If the Beit Hamikdash were to be rebuilt speedily in our day we would want people to remember that the Pesach is always the last thing eaten.

The Gemara offers another explanation. The afikoman is eaten last because we wish for the taste of the afikoman to remain with us as long as possible. Eating any food following the afikoman would negate the taste of the afikoman. The Torah says "lo tochal alav chametz, shivat yamim tochal alav matzot lechem oni, ki vechipazon yatzata meretz Mitzraim, leman tizkor et yom tzeitcha meretz Mitzraim kol yemei chayecha" "You shall eat no leavened bread with it, seven days shall you eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction: for in haste did you come forth out of the land of Egypt that you may remember the day when you came forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life" (Devarim 16:3), through the "lechem oni" a person remembers the exodus from Egypt his entire life. If the afikoman is the last thing eaten, the taste remains for the entire year. Although the taste will physically be negated, for it is impossible to decree that one not eat the entire year, however, one should try to have this taste last as long as possible, by it being the last thing eaten. With Hashem's help, speedily in our day, we hope we will soon partake in the Korban Pesach and have that taste remain in our mouth.

Just as what one tastes negates what one tasted before that, so too what one hears may negate what one heard before. The Torah requires us to remember the Exodus from Egypt every day and night in order that when one hears on the news what America did or the IDF did, etc. it will not cause us to forget what was spoken about at the seder, about Who took us out of Egypt and Who is the "Ein od milvado" "there is none else beside Him" (Devarim 4:35).

We must constantly remind ourselves of the Exodus, as a way of constantly using our emotions to renew our belief. Belief cannot simply be "veyadata hayom" "You must know today" (ibid. 39), rather it must constantly be "vahashevota el levavecha" "and

bring it back repeatedly to the innermost heart" (ibid). Our daily life causes us to forget our belief, therefore we must constantly renew the belief in our hearts and feel it.

It is not only general current events but even personal matters that cause one to forget the Hand of Hashem. When one goes to the doctor one must remember that it is not the doctor who heals but rather Hashem. "Lo al halechem levado yichye haadam ki al kol motza pi Hashem yichye haadam" "That not by bread only does man live but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Hashem does man live" (Devarim 8:3). Hashem is the One who gives us our bread to eat and heals all our ailments. When Hashem wishes, He gives us manna enough for us to live on. That is our task on the night of Pesach, to awaken within us this feeling that everything is from Hashem, for Hashem provides us with the food and He is the one who frees us from slavery.

We must be prepared for the fact that after the first night our emotions will decline. Although the Gemara provides a reason for not reciting the full Hallel after the first day of Pesach, we can already feel that after the first day we have lost some of that special feeling that comes with the realization of what Hashem has provided for us. Following Pesach are the days of the Omer when Hashem hides his presence from us and we are in mourning for the students of R' Akiva. After Shavuot, we can easily forget the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah. During this period of time one can easily forget that Hashem alone rules the world.

Due to the fact, that shortly after the seder we can forget that Hashem is the ruler of the world, we must gather at the seder enough of the feeling of Hashem ruling the world, to last us the entire year. The seder is not the time for heavy in-depth discussions about intricacies of Pesach. There may exist many nice commentaries and in-depth discussions on different aspects of the Haggadah, however, one must remember that these were not written on the first night of Pesach. At the seder our main purpose is to relate what happened at the time of the exodus from Egypt, to feel the bondage. The Rambam explains that during the bondage in Egypt, the roots that Avraham Avinu planted were nearly uprooted from this world.

We say in the Haggadah that at the time of the exodus "lo hispik betzekam shel avotenu lehachmitz" "there was no time for the dough of our forefathers to rise". The literal meaning is that within eighteen minutes the entire Jewish nation was cleared out of Egypt, thus not leaving time for the dough to rise. The word "lehachmitz", to leaven, can also have a negative connotation of being spoiled. Perhaps one can say that the spiritual dough, thank G-d, did not have a chance "lehachmitz". While in Egypt, the Jewish people descended to the forty-ninth level of impurity and if, G-d forbid, the redemption would have been delayed at all, the Jewish people would have been unable to leave Egypt.

"Ve-avarti beretz Mitzraim balaila hazeh, ani velo malach" "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, I myself and not an angel" - why Hashem and not an angel? The simple answer is that Hashem loves the Jewish people so much that He insisted on being the One to redeem them. Chazal bring another reason and that is that the impurity in Egypt was so great that even an angel would have been unable to enter without becoming defiled, therefore only Hashem Himself could have come to redeem the Jewish people. If even an angel would have been unable to enter there without becoming defiled, how much more so would man have been in danger of becoming defiled? Another possible explanation is that the impurity was so great that an angel would not have been able to distinguish between a Jew and an Egyptian. Although there was blood on the doorposts as a sign of who was Jewish, an Egyptian, however, could also have placed blood on his doorposts. Hashem did not need the blood of the Jewish people, but rather the hearts of the Jewish people.

Rashi explains that when Hashem saw blood being used for the mitzvot of brit milah and Korban Pesach, Hashem felt that the Jewish people were worthy of being redeemed. It is clear from this that not all the Jewish people had sunk to such a low level, certainly not people of the likes of Aharon, Yehoshua, and other righteous people. There were, however, people, who had Hashem not intervened and redeemed the Jewish people, would not have been able to be redeemed, for Hashem knows what is in the hearts of people.

A week after the Jewish people were redeemed, just before the splitting of the Red Sea, the angel protested and asked what makes these people better than the others thus having them merit being saved? This is all going on near the Red Sea, the debate on whether or not to save the Jewish people. After the miracle of the splitting of the Red Sea, the Jewish people go towards the great redemption of receiving the Torah. People who were deeply involved in the terrible bondage are now reaching the level of prophecy. The Ramban says that when the Jewish people had the merit of building the Mishkan, they reached the level of the forefathers. During Pesach we also must ponder the great miracle of how people who had sunk to such a low level are suddenly able to reach the level of the forefathers.

According to the Ramban, the book of Shmot ends with the building of the Mishkan for this signifies the climax of the redemption, the Divine Presence residing among the Jewish people. The physical redemption is the exodus from Egypt, the spiritual one is when they left the forty-nine levels of impurity. We say "vayotzei et amo Yisrael mitocham lecheirut olam" "and He removed His nation Israel from their midst to eternal freedom", (from the weekly Ma'ariv davening). If one looks at history one will see that the Jewish people were enslaved many times throughout history, are we saying lies in our nightly davening? The explanation is that never again did they reach the low level that had been reached during the bondage in Egypt. The eternal freedom we speak about in davening is referring to spiritual freedom, freedom from the forty-nine levels of impurity. We may have been placed into slavery many times following the Exodus from Egypt, but the will to serve Hashem was never lost.

When recounting the story of the Exodus from Egypt, we need only discuss the events that culminated on the first day of Pesach, up until "makat bechorot", the plague in which all the firstborn in Egypt died, strictly speaking one need not discuss the splitting of the Red Sea. It is important to discuss details of the Pesach, matzah, and marror, such as why the Korban Pesach must be roasted, specifically from a lamb, etc. Discussing the laws and details of the mitzvot of the night is also part of the mitzvah of sippur yetziat Mitzraim, recounting the story of the Exodus. The lack of time at the seder does not permit us to do everything but we must do the best we can and remember "kol hamarbe harei ze meshubach" "and the more one dwells on the story of the Exodus from Egypt, the more praiseworthy is he".

It is said of the Steipler zt"l that he was able to understand how people had the ability to eat the kezayit of matzah but could not understand how people could fulfill the shulchan orech, partaking of the festive meal. Eating the matza and partaking in the festive meal are a very important part of the seder, but the main thing is to explain to everyone in their own language and on their level what actually took place in Egypt. When we discuss all the plagues it is important to explain what actually happened in Egypt. If what is written in the Haggadah does not provide one with a sufficient understanding of what took place in Egypt, and of the mitzvot of Pesach, matza, and marror, then one must look in the Chumash or the Gemara.

We must strive that by recounting the story we attempt to glorify the Name of Hashem in this world, and this alone should be a reason for Hashem to bring about the final redemption speedily in our day. We should then be able to continue publicizing the Name of Hashem and then "veyeda kol paul ki ata pe-alto" "let everything that has been made know that You are its Maker" (from the Rosh Hashana

davening). Amen.

Rav Ginsburg's Pesach Special

For those of you who are not able to attend Rav Ginsburg's shiurim in New York, he has graciously shared with us some classic Torah thoughts on Pesach for newsletter publication.

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The Famous Gr"a Everyone Should Know

The Gr"a put great effort into trying to find allusions in the Torah Shebichtav for ideas that are expressed in Torah Shebalpeh (Rav Nebenzahl shli"ta discusses this in his sefer Mitzion Michlal Yofi in parshas Ha'azinu).

One of the more well-known of these allusions is found in Parshas Shemos.

We know that Am Yisroel was supposed to spend 400 years in Mitzrayim - that was the nevuah. Ultimately, we were in Mitzrayim for only 210 years. So, in a sense, we left Mitzrayim 190 years early. Chazal offer one solution to this apparent contradiction (see Pirke D'Rebbe Eliezer 48 and Let My Nation Go page page 314, note 64). They explain that the Mitzrim oppressed Am Yisroel very severely, and in the 210 years we spent in Mitzrayim, the oppression we underwent was equivalent to 400 years under other circumstances. In other words, the Mitzrim went overboard and in 210 years we had received "the correct amount" of oppression which had been destined for us. The prophecy had therefore been fulfilled and we were able to leave Mitzrayim early.

Where do we find that the Mitzrim severely oppressed Am Yisroel? "Va'yemareru es chayehem" they embittered their lives. The Mitzrim made our lives bitter. The notes (te'amim) on this phrase are kadma v'azla. The Gr"a points out that these words 'kadma v'azla' mean to 'go early' (in Aramaic) - the meaning of the notes is to leave early. What a beautiful remez in the Torah for the ideas of Chazal.

This dvar Torah of the Gr"a, however, extends another giant step deeper. It is known the Gr"a would work with gematrias. Time and time again, the Gr"a points out that the chumash and the nach are expressing gematrias. So here, the Gr"a points out that the exact gematria of "Kadma V'azla" is 190. This is absolutely incredible! This phrase, which is one source for the idea of Am Yisroel leaving Mitzrayim early, contains an exact hint to leaving early by 190 years!

This should be a chizuk for our emunah. We see here the complete unity of Torah Shebichtav and Torah Shebalpeh.

Chodesh Nissan

In Parshas Bo we have the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh. The Torah writes, "rishon hu lachem lechodshei hashana"- "it shall be for you the first of the months of the year." The month which we call Nissan is supposed to be the first month of the year.

What is the idea? What is the message? The Ramban (12,1) explains the following idea. The counting of the months should be a remembrance, a *zecher*, for the great miracle of leaving Mitzrayim. There are no names for the months in the Torah. Rather, we say 'in the first month, in the second month, in the third month.' When a person says "it is the eighth day of the fourth month," he will think to himself 'Fourth month' from when? And he will remember it is the fourth month from the first month. And, why is that the first month? Because we left Mitzrayim in that month. So, every time a person mentions the month of the year he is remembering Yetzias Mitzrayim.

The Ramban adds that we find a similar notion regarding shabbos and the days of the week. In the Torah there are no names for the days of the week. The message is that we should remember shabbos every day of the week, and every time we mention a day of the week we are reminded of shabbos.

When we daven *shacharis* each morning, at the end of the davening we say the *shir shel yom*. We introduce the *shir shel yom* by saying "*hayom yom rishon bashabbos*" - "today is the first day of the week to shabbos." Based on this Ramban, when we recite that introductory sentence, we are fulfilling a *mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa* of remembering shabbos.

The Torah says in the *aseres hadibros*, "*zachor es yom hashabbos likadsho*" - "remember shabbos and sanctify it." This *posuk* is the source for saying *kiddush* Friday night. The Ramban maintains that this *posuk* is also the source for a daily *mitzvah* to remember shabbos. Remember shabbos everyday of the week when you mention the day of the week and you say "it is the first day, second day, third day until shabbos." That idea is also being expressed in this *posuk*.

The lesson for us in this Ramban is overwhelming. The Ramban here is saying that we should try to sanctify every aspect of our lives. Even something as "neutral" as the name of the day of the week, or the name of the month, even something like that must be suffused with *kedusha*. When you are talking to your friend and you casually mention the day of the week, you can and should be involved in *avodas Hashem*.

A classic example of this is the *brocha* of *asher yatzar*. This is a very deep idea. This is an activity which is something we have in common with animals. At first glance, it does not seem like an activity which can be injected with *avodas Hashem*. And yet, we recite the *brocha* of *asher yatzar*, and we use this activity as a springboard for *hoda'ah*, thanksgiving, to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. The *seforim* point out that it is striking that the only *brocha* that the *Shulchan Aruch* (Siman 6) translates for us is the *brocha* of *asher yatzar*. This reflects the importance of this *brocha*.

We should try to bring *kedusha* into every aspect of our lives and we should try to say the *brocha* of *asher yatzar* with more *kavanah*. This is one message of the famous Ramban regarding *chodesh Nissan*.

Matzah

Matzah has a dual symbolism. It symbolizes slavery and it symbolizes the *geulah*.

Matzah symbolizes the *shibud*, the slavery. The Torah (Devarim 16:3) refers to matzah as "*lechem oni*" "the bread of affliction." We ate matzah as slaves in Mitzrayim. Matzah does not taste as good as bread. Part of the oppression of the *Mitzrim* was to give us food that we did not enjoy as much (see *HaSeder HaAruch* 142:2). The *Avudraham* offers another explanation. Matzah takes longer to digest than *chometz*. Therefore, if one wants to feed his slaves and give them enough energy to continue to work for a long time, then matzah is more economical than *chometz*. The *Mitzrim* gave us matzah in order to save money. The *Sforno* offers another reason for how matzah symbolizes slavery. The *Mitzrim* would rush us back to

work during our lunch breaks and we were forced to go back to work early, before we were ready. Therefore, the dough which was baked in the oven did not have time to rise, and we were forced to eat matzah instead of chametz. It is quite clear that matzah symbolizes the shibud, the terrible slavery and oppression which we, Am Yisroel, felt in Mitzrayim.

At the same time matzah symbolizes the geulah. The Torah tells us (Shmos perek 12) that we ate matzah because the Mitzrim rushed us out of Mitzrayim. This is what the Sefer HaChinuch (mitzvah 11) writes that matzah reminds us of the nissim, that we left Mitzrayim so quickly. It is interesting that matzah is baked quickly, taking the dough out of the oven before it develops fully. In this way matzah symbolizes our swift geulah. Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim early, before the full, original four hundred years of slavery were completed. The aramaic term for matzah is, 'lachma anya'. The gematriya of 'lachma anya' equals two hundred ten. So on the one hand this symbolizes the slavery; we were in Mitzrayim for 210 years. But at the same time, one reason we left Mitzrayim early is because the slavery was so intense and the oppression was so severe. Therefore, the same gematriya of 'lachma anya' equaling two hundred ten, is also a remez to the geulah. Another example of matzah symbolizing the geulah is that Chazal (Pesachim 115b) interpret "lechem oni" to be "bread of speaking" - the bread over which we say many things. We are supposed to tell the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim over the matzah, in front of the matzah. We see that Chazal already interpreted the posuk to not only refer to matzah as a symbol of slavery, but also as a symbol of the geulah. This is the reason that during most of magid we keep the matzos.

Am Yisroel ate matzah twice when they left Mitzrayim. They ate matzah once at night together with the Korban Pesach; and again the next day when we actually left Mitzrayim- when the Mitzrim rushed us out. The Abarbanel explains that this represents the dual nature of matzah. The matzah we ate during the day clearly represents the matzah of geulah; we ate matzah because the Mitzrim rushed us out. The matzah we ate at night with the Korban Pesach symbolized the shibud. The Torah writes, "eat the Korban Pesach with matzah and maror." Maror clearly symbolizes the slavery. And since the Torah groups the matzah together with the maror, it seems that the matzah we eat with the Korban Pesach has the same theme as the maror- the theme of the shibud. So, the Abarbanel explains, we find the two themes of matzah reflected in the two times we ate matzah when we left Mitzrayim.

Both of these aspects of matzah are mentioned at the seder during magid. We refer to matzah at the beginning of magid as the 'bread of affliction,' "ha lachma anya." And at the end of magid we refer to matzah as the bread of the geulah: 'Why do we eat matzah tonight? Because the Mitzrim rushed us out.' It actually works out very well that we begin magid focusing on matzah as the symbol of slavery, and we end magid focusing on matzah as the symbol of geulah. Exactly! During magid, we are describing and talking about the process of leaving Mitzrayim. We begin magid, in a sense, as slaves. And we end magid free, as a free nation. It works out beautifully that the two themes of matzah become the book ends of magid.

One can raise the following question. Why? Why did Hashem work it out that matzah, which had been the symbol of slavery, also becomes the symbol of geulah? Hashem could have orchestrated Yetzias Mitzrayim in a way that the symbol of geulah would have been, let's say, Brooklyn Bakery brownies. It would have been a lot easier to eat a k'zayis within two minutes if we were eating a k'zayis of brownies instead of matzah. What is the message that the same matzah, which had been the symbol of slavery, suddenly becomes the symbol of the geulah? Rav Soloveitchik zt"l explains as follows. This shows and teaches us Hashem's complete control over world events. On Pesach we experience giluy shechinah. When something completely unexpected happens and this unexpected occurrence is part of the salvation of Am Yisroel, that reflects giluy shechinah. The very same matzah, which for generations, was a

negative symbol- the symbol of slavery, the symbol of oppression- suddenly overnight becomes the symbol of geula, this is something only HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Himself, could bring about. So matzah having this dual symbolism is a further expression of the gilul shechinah which we are experiencing on Pesach.

These are some of the ideas that we can take with us into our lives from the various symbolisms of matzah.

Chometz and Matzah1

The sefarim say that chometz is compared to the yetzer hara and that matzah is compared to the yetzer tov. Let us discuss the different explanations that the mefarshim give for this idea.

The simplest explanation is that chometz tastes better than matzah, it tastes very good. This symbolizes the idea of gashmiyus. A person who is drawn to the physical pleasures of Olam Hazeh often ends up doing more aveiros. So one lesson we should learn, is to work on attaining a proper balance between ruchniyus and gashmiyus on Pesach. For the week of Pesach, we prohibit chometz in order to train ourselves to not overly indulge in gashmiyus and to not lose the proper balance in our avodas Hashem.

On Pesach there is an obligation to remove all the chometz from our homes, to specifically search out, remove and destroy all the chometz. Based on this Zohar, one can explain that the bedikas chometz that one performs in his house is supposed to symbolize one's searching and removing of the yetzer hara from himself. One theme on Pesach is that just as the physical world is renewing itself and starting again during the spring, so too in our spiritual lives, we have to start again and remove any remnants of the yetzer hara from ourselves.

A second explanation is offered by the Sefer Hachinuch (mitzvah 117). How is chometz made? It is made by leaving it in the oven and waiting and relaxing. One can be lazy regarding the baking of the chometz. Matzah on the other hand is made with zrizus and zehirus. One has to be careful, and one has to be quick. So, chometz symbolizes being lazy and relaxed, while matzah symbolizes being careful, quick and enthusiastic. The yetzer tov teaches us to be vigilant in our observance of the mitzvos and careful to avoid aveiros. This is another idea to think about during Pesach. We should be asking ourselves, are we careful to avoid aveiros and are we zealous in our performance of mitzvos?

A third idea is quoted in the name of the Sfas Emes. When bread becomes chometz, it expands and grows larger; it changes significantly from its original state of being low and flat. Matzah on the other hand, remains closer to its original form, it remains low and flat. The Sfas Emes explains that this is a remez to Am Yisroel in Mitzrayim. They did not change their language, their names, or their way of dress. This is one of the reasons that they merited the geulah because they remained close to their original state of Yiddishkeit. The lesson for us is that we should remain true to Jewish identity. We should not copy the non-Jewish way of life. If the non-Jewish society dresses or speaks inappropriately, we have to be very careful to avoid these terrible mistakes. This is another lesson that we can learn from the prohibition of chometz on Pesach.

A fourth idea is that when bread becomes chometz it grows big and tall, which is symbolic of ga'avah, haughtiness. Bread is literally 'full of itself'. Matzah on the other hand reflects simple humility2. We have to remember to be humble in front of Hashem.

It is important to be humble and yet at the same time to have healthy self-esteem. If a person is aware he is intelligent, that is not ga'avah, rather, that is healthy self

awareness. How exactly does one draw the line between healthy self-esteem and haughtiness? How does one define proper humility? I once heard an explanation from Rav Hillel Waxman shli"ta, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Zichron Dovid. He is a close talmid of Rav Henoch Leibowitz zt"l, who was for many years Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim in Queens, NY. Rav Waxman explained that the key is as follows: After one recognizes that he has a certain ability (he is intelligent, or he draws well, or he is particularly well organized, etc) what is his next thought? What happens next? If a person says to himself, 'Since I have this talent I should be treated differently. My friends should give more kavod', then that is ga'avah. But, if on the other hand, a person says to himself 'since Hashem gave me this talent I have to use it in some positive way,' that is healthy self awareness and healthy self esteem. His focus is how he can use the talent to help others, to help his community. That is not ga'avah. If someone is very organized, and because he knows he is organized, he volunteers to run Tomchei Shabbos, that is not ga'avah at all. A'drabah, that is very healthy. If someone knows he learns well, and therefore offers to help others in the Beis Midrash, that is not ga'avah. I think this is a very good definition of the difference between self esteem and ga'avah.

During the week of Pesach we should be focused on working on all of these aspects of our avodas Hashem: Removing the chometz and the yetzer hara from ourselves, and starting our avodas Hashem new and fresh, as the new cycle of Yomim Tovim begins.

Lessons from the four sons

One of the central parts of Maggid is the section of the 'four sons', the arbah banim. I want to develop some ideas in avodas Hashem based on an analysis of the questions and answers of the four sons. In particular, we will be focusing on the differences between the chacham and the rasha.

The rasha asks the question, "mah ha'avodah hazos lachem" "what is all this work for you?" In the Haggadah, the response which is given to the rasha is mussar; we strongly rebuke the rasha. It is interesting that the chacham, at first glance, does something similar. The chacham also seems to exclude himself. The chacham asks the question, "Mah ha'eidos v'hachukim v'hamishpatim asher tzivah Hashem Elokeinu eschem." He says, "what are all these mitzvos which Hashem commanded you?" He also excludes himself, and yet the chacham is given a very pleasant, positive answer. The Haggadah says we teach him the laws of Pesach. One question which the meforshim raise is what exactly is the difference between the chacham and rasha? They both seem to exclude themselves and yet the rasha receives a response of mussar and rebuke, while to the chacham we respond pleasantly. What is the difference?

There are several answers to this question. The most basic answer is offered by the Chida and others. The Chida points to two differences between the chacham and the rasha. Number one, the chacham mentions Hashem's Name. That already is one step that shows he believes in Hashem, that he is talking about Hashem. He feels that basic connection to Am Yisroel. Furthermore, the chacham says "Hashem Elokeinu" "our G-d." The word "Elokeinu" is clearly an inclusive word. The chacham is including himself with the rest of Am Yisroel. Therefore, it is clear that the chacham is in a different category than the rasha and deserves to be treated differently.

The Kli Yakar presents a second approach to explain the difference between the chacham and rasha. The Kli Yakar focuses on the pesukim in the Torah which introduce the questions of the chacham, tam, and rasha. (Obviously, there is no posuk in the Torah to introduce the question of the she'aneh yodea lishol because he does not ask any questions.) The Kli Yakar noticed that in connection with the chacham and the tam the Torah adds in the word "machar." The question of the chacham is introduced with "ki yishalcha bincha machar laimor," and the question of

the tam is introduced "vahaya ki yishalcha bincha machar laimor." In contrast, the rasha's question is introduced, "v'haya ki yomru aleichem beneichem," "machar" is not mentioned. Why? What is the significance of the word "machar" by the chacham and tam as opposed to the rasha? The Kli Yakar explains as follows. The word "machar" means tomorrow. The chacham and the tam ask tomorrow. What is being hinted to here? The hint is that today they do the mitzvah, and tomorrow they ask. The chacham and the tam are following the crucial yesod of na'aseh v'nishma; first they do, and then they ask. And that is hinted to with the word "machar." The chacham and the tam ask tomorrow- today they do, tomorrow they ask. Therefore, since they are asking the right way, they receive a good answer. The rasha, on the other hand, asks today. The implication is that if he does not get a good answer now, he will not do the mitzvah. So the rasha has the wrong approach to how to ask questions, and that is why the rasha receives mussar and rebuke, while the chacham receives a pleasant answer. This is a beautiful approach of the Kli Yakar.

We find a similar idea in the writings of Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l. Rav Moshe points out the following idea. The question of the chacham is mentioned in chumash Devarim (perek 6), while the question of the tam is mentioned in chumash Shemos (perek 13). This is striking. I would have thought to mention the question of the chacham first. The Haggadah mentions the question of the chacham first. He deserves prominence, he deserves to go first. Why does the Torah put the question of the tam before the question of the chacham? Rav Moshe writes that the Torah is teaching us the approach a Jew should have in learning and asking questions. First be a tam, and then be a chacham. First accept things on a simple level; I do what Hashem commands. And then on top of that, we develop into a chacham. We ask questions, we delve into things more deeply, and we try to understand things better and better. This is the correct Torah approach. First be a tam, and then become a chacham. This is similar to the Kli Yakar that we saw above. This is na'aseh v'nishma; first we do because Hashem said so, and then we investigate and analyze and try to search for the deeper meanings and the deeper ideas¹.

I once heard a beautiful vort along these lines from Rav Ahron Soloveitchik zt"l. Rav Ahron pointed out that the word in Hebrew, ta'am, has two meanings. It means reason, and it means taste or flavor. What is the message and significance of this point? Rav Ahron explained as follows. The reason for the mitzvah is not the essence of the mitzvah. Rather, the reason adds flavor to the mitzvah. It makes us appreciate the mitzvah more, and it helps us get more into the mitzvah. But it is not the essence of the mitzvah itself. Mitzvos are like vitamins, they are good for you. When Hashem tells you to do a mitzvah, you do it. When a doctor prescribes vitamins, most people don't understand exactly why this particular vitamin is good for you, and most people don't investigate what exactly is in every vitamin. The doctor says take the vitamin, so we take the vitamin; we trust the doctor. Just like we trust the doctor, then a thousand times over we have to trust Hashem. Mitzvos are good for you. They are healthy religiously, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. So, we do the mitzvah. But when a person understands the reason for the mitzvah, it adds flavor to the mitzvah. When a person understands the mitzvah more, he is more excited about the mitzvah. He will perform the mitzvah with more enthusiasm. Mitzvos are like vitamins, and mitzvos with reasons are like Flinstones vitamins- they taste good, you enjoy them, and you get more into them. This is the vort I heard from Rav Ahron Soloveitchik.

This is a major yesod in Torah hashkafah which we can take from the seder and in particular from the four sons. We believe in na'aseh v'nishma; we believe that we should be a tam first and a chacham later. It is good to ask questions; it is good to delve into things, and it is good to look for the deeper meanings behind the mitzvos. But all of those questions are supposed to come on top of emunah pshuta- a simple acceptance of the Ol Malchus Shamayim. I do what Hashem commands because Hashem said so.

The meforshim noticed other differences between the way the Torah presents the questions of the chacham and the tam versus the rasha. By the chacham and the tam the Torah writes, "ki yishalcha bincha machar laimor," "when your son will ask you tomorrow 'laimor'." By the rasha the Torah writes, "vihaya ki yomru aleichem b'neichem," "when your children will say to you."

There are two striking differences. First, the chacham and the tam are presented as asking questions. The rasha, on the other hand, seems to be making a statement. The Beis HaLevi develops the following idea. The chacham and the tam want an answer, so we answer their question. The rasha is not asking a question; he is not searching for an answer. Rather, the rasha is making an attacking statement in the form of a rhetorical question - "What is all this work you're doing? Why are you doing this?" This is why the chacham and the tam receive the good answer they deserve, while the rasha, on the other hand, receives mussar.

This approach of the Beis HaLevi fits well with the Meshech Chochmoh. The Meshech Chochmoh focuses on the second difference between the chacham and tam as opposed to the rasha. We find the word 'laimor' by the chacham and tam, but not by the rasha. Why? The Meshech Chochmoh quotes the Sifri that the word "laimor" means, "hashiveni teshuva," "respond with an answer to my question." It fits very well that by the chacham and the tam, who were asking questions and want an answer, the Torah writes the word "laimor." But, by the rasha, who, as we explained, is not asking a question, we do not find the word "laimor." The rasha is not looking for an answer. These two mekoros fit together very, very well.

We can learn important lessons from each of the approaches of the meforshim to our original question. What is the difference between the chacham on the one hand and the rasha on the other? First, we have to remember, that if we have questions about things in avodas Hashem, we must always remember that we are part of Am Yisroel. We have our belief in Hashem; we have our commitment to serving Hashem. We have to always remind ourselves, "Hashem Elokeinu." We are included among Am Yisroel as servants of Hashem. This is the lesson from the first difference we discussed above. Second, when a person asks questions he should be sincere, he should be searching for answers. He should not be complaining and attacking the mesorah, chas v'shalom. But rather, he should be asking and delving to figure out and understand the mesorah more deeply. This is the lesson we can learn from the second difference developed above. And finally, a Jew has to remember that when we ask questions, we should always make sure that the basic emunah is there. We have to be a tam first, and then be a chacham. We have to say na'aseh first, and then nishmah. We have to do 'today', and ask 'tomorrow'. This is a crucial lesson in the appropriate way to ask questions regarding avodas Hashem and regarding the mesorah.

These are some important lessons we can take with us from the 'four sons' at the seder.

V'Lakachti

Many seforim point out that the direct goal of Yetzias Mitzrayim was Matan Torah on Har Sinai. The Sefer HaChinuch (mitzvah 306) makes this point. He explains that this is the idea behind Sefiras HaOmer; we want to have a link between Pesach and Shavuos in order to show that Pesach leads up to Shavuos. So the mitzvah of counting the days between Pesach and Shavuos expresses that link that the whole purpose of leaving Mitzrayim was to receive the Torah on Har Sinai. And the Chinuch there quotes that this yesod is already found in the Chumash itself. When Hashem first speaks to Moshe at the sneh, the Torah records (Shmos 3,12) that Hashem says to Moshe, "When you take the people out of Egypt you will worship Hashem on this mountain (referring to Har Sinai)." Based on this, when we discuss Yetzias Mitzrayim

at the seder, there is no question we should also be talking about Matan Torah. The entire goal of Yetzias Mitzrayim was to receive the Torah on Har Sinai.

I wanted to share a beautiful idea I once heard in this regard from my rebbi Rav Doniel Lander shli"ta. We have four cups of wine at the seder. Why? One reason given is that the four cups of wine correspond to the four leshonos of geulah, the four words of geulah, found in our parsha (Shmos 6,6-7)- v'hotzaisi, v'hitzalti, v'ga'alti, v'lakachti. The four cups of wine correspond to these four words. Rav Lander once noted the Ramban on the fourth word of geulah, on the word v'lakachti. The Ramban (Shmos 6, 7) write as follows "v'lakachti eschem li I'am- when you come to Har Sinai and receive the Torah as it says, 'and you shall be to Me segulah-a treasure.'" The Ramban is saying that this word v'lakachti is a reference to Matan Torah on Har Sinai. And, pointed out above, this word is supposed to correspond to the fourth cup of wine at the seder. So Rav Lander said, very simply and very powerfully, that with this Ramban we mamash are bringing Matan Torah into the seder. When we drink the fourth cup of wine, we should be thinking about (and discussing) the fourth word of geulah. And when we think about the fourth word of geulah, v'lakachti, we are thinking about Matan Torah itself. This Ramban highlights this idea of the Chinuch that the goal of Yetzias Mitzrayim was Matan Torah. This is one theme of the seder.

This is a major yesod in life. Freedom in Yahadus means freedom to serve Hashem. Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim in order to give us the opportunity to serve Him fully. A slave does not control his own time. A slave is not free to have full devotion to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. That's one idea of Yetzias Mitzrayim, and that's really what Pesach is all about. We all have to make sure that we use this freedom Hashem gave us in the proper way and live lives based on the Torah which Hashem gave us at Har Sinai. That was the real goal of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

Issru Chag

The Rama (429,2) mentions the idea of issru chag. What is issru chag? Issru chag is the day after yom tov. What does issru mean? Tied up. Issru chag means the day that is bound to yom tov, the day after yom tov. You have more food on issru chag, you don't fast. It is a special day. What is striking (almost strange) about this Rama is the placement. Why does the Ramah mention issru chag at the beginning of hilchos pesach? Issru chag is the day after yom tov. It should be at the end of hilchos yom tov. I once saw¹ a beautiful answer in the name of Rav Sorotzkin zt"l (former Rosh Yeshiva of Telshe). I will present his approach in the context of Rav Hirsch's explanation of atzeres.

Rav Hirsch (Vayikra 23,36) explains the concept of atzeres as follows. The last day of both Succos and Pesach is called atzeres. Atzeres means to hold on, stop, maintain your position. Rav Hirsch writes that when yom tov is ending, you should stop and hold on to what you gained during the yom tov. Rav Hirsch says as follows:

Atzeres designates a day which is not fixed to bring new lessons and new truths..., but which has the mission to keep us still before the Presence of Hashem..., and to strengthen and solidify the impressions and knowledge we have already gained so they remain with us permanently, and do not become lost in the hurly-burly of life.

The atzeres day is not set aside to learn new lessons, but rather it is a time to stop, think, and absorb all that you have learned and gained during yom tov.

Rav Sorotzkin explains issru chag in a similar way. He says as follows. For many people, after yom tov ends, life returns to 'normal'. You have a certain level of avodas Hashem, and then on yom tov you have more mitzvos and ruchniyos, and then

afterwards you are back to normal. No! That is not the way religious life should be. The whole purpose of yom tov is for it to impact on you as a person, and to be a different, better person when yom tov is over. Your religious life should be at a higher level than it used to be. The purpose of the yom tov is that your entire chol life is affected by the yom tov. What halacha reflects this? Issru chag. Yom tov is over; however, the first post-yom tov day is still a special day. You are trying to bring yom tov with you into your regular life. The way you show this is that the first day after yom tov is special. Issru chag captures the theme of what yom tov is supposed to be. You want to symbolically show yourself that you are taking yom tov with you. The first day after yom tov you have a seudah and don't fast. Your life is not back to 'normal'. You are acting special on the first day after yom tov. It is a bridge between yom tov and chol. It is supposed to help bump up your level of your daily avodas Hashem.

Many businesses and organizations often develop a plan which describes the goals of the organization. If you know what your goal is, you have a better chance of achieving it because you plan better. Issru chag is like having a mission plan before yom tov. Learning hilchos issru chag puts us in the proper frame of mind of how to approach the yom tov. You should approach yom tov in a way that when it is over, you will take it with you. That is why issru chag is mentioned at the beginning of hilchos pesach because issru chag is supposed to act as our mission plan of what yom tov is all about. Since issru chag captures exactly the theme of your entire goal for yom tov, therefore it makes sense that we use hilchos issru chag as a mission plan- here is your goal! So, as you are entering the rest of hilchos pesach remember what your goal is- when yom tov is over, take it with you.

Let us all be inspired on Pesach and bring the inspiration with us back into our everyday lives.

Parshas Naso

In Parshas Bamidbar the Torah records the counting of Bnei Yisrael and in Parshas Naso the Torah records the completion of the counting of the Levi'im. I want to quote today a beautiful idea from the Sefer Ozneyim L'Torah of Rav Zalman Sorotzkin from Telshe.¹ The Torah tells us at the end of the first Perek that the total number of men aged 20-60 in was 603,550. The Torah tells us in Perek 3 Passuk 43 that the total number of first born boys in Am Yisrael was 22,273. But, the Torah writes that the first born were counted from the age of 1 month and older, one month and up. So if one wanted to figure out the ratio of first born to all the men in Am Yisrael, one would have to estimate the total number of men aged one month and up. So, if there were approximately 600,000 men aged 20-60, then a fair estimate of the total number from one month and up is 1.2 million. Therefore, there were approximately 1.2 million men in Am Yisrael and approximately 22,000 first born boys. This means that for every bechor there were approximately 55 men in Am Yisrael. Now, the first born is defined as a peter rechem, as the first born from the mother's side. Which means for every first born boy in Am Yisrael, that same mother gave birth to approximately 54 other children.² This is the simple mathematics of the Pessukim in Bamidbar. This is incredible; fifty-five children in a family! That's what the numbers say.

In Shmos3 (1,7), the Torah describes that Am Yisrael multiplied in a tremendous way. The Torah uses six words to describe Am Yisrael's growth, and Rashi quotes there from Chazal that the six words are a remez, a hint, that when the mothers gave birth, they gave birth to six children at a time, that was the norm.

Rav Sorotzkin quotes from his father in law, Rav Eliezer Gordon, the following episode: there was a non-religious Jew (a 'Maskil') who poked fun at these words of Chazal. It's hard to believe that the average Jewish woman gave birth to an average

of six children at a time. It seems like Chazal's comments are far removed from the reality. So Rav Gordon responded by pointing out that if you just learn the statistics⁴ of the Pesukim in the Chumash, the words of Chazal are proven true.

As we explained, for a woman to have 55 children is basically impossible unless she is having many at one time. The only way to explain 55 children is to assume that they had 6 children at one time. If you are having six children at one time, and you have eight or nine birthing cycles, then to arrive at the number 55 is reasonable. So it comes out that the statistics of the counting of Bnei Yisrael prove mathematically this startling comment of Chazal.

Rav Sorotzkin concludes that regarding this idea of his father-in-laws, it is a mitzvah lipharseim, it's a mitzvah to publicize this idea.⁵

The message for us is twofold. First, we have to appreciate the many miracles associated with Am Yisrael's growth in Mitzrayim. We came down to Mitzrayim very few in number and we left with several million people. Second, we have to remind ourselves of the truth of the Divrei Chazal

The Korbon Todah

There are two types of Korbonos which are eaten by the owner. One is the Shlomim and the other is the Todah. The halachah is that the Korbon Shlomim can be eaten for two days and one night in between, while the Korbon Todah may be eaten only for one day and one night. So there is more time available to eat the Korbon Shlomim than the Korban Todah. It's interesting, however, that the Korbon Todah has much more food which needs to be eaten. When a person offers a Korbon Todah, he offers 40 loaves along with the animal- 30 loaves of matzah and 10 loaves of bread. So it's interesting that in comparison with the Korbon Shlomim, the Korbon Todah has much more food that needs to be eaten and less time allotted to eat the Korbon. What's the idea behind these two details of the halachos of the Korbon Todah?

The Netziv (Vayikra 7,13) explains the idea as follows. A person offers a Korban Todah when he wants to thank Hashem for a Neis that Hashem did for the person. He saved him from tzaros, or from the dangers of a long journey, etc.... Therefore, the Netziv writes that when a person is thanking Hashem for a Neis, it is appropriate to thank Hashem in public and talk about it in front of other people. Publicize the miracle! Publicize the Neis! So the Netziv explains that by adding more food and lessening the time limit for eating the food, the owner of the Korbon will be forced to invite others to eat the animal (and 40 loaves) with him. There's a halacha of Nosar that one is not allowed to leave over any food from a Korbon. So the person who brings the Korbon Todah, in order to avoid the problem of Nosar, will have to invite other people to the seudah. He is going to have two seudahs, one during the day and one at night. Each of those seudahs will have other people there. So according to the Netziv, the Korbon Todah becomes the source from the Torah for a seudas hoda'ah, a seudah of thanksgiving.¹ When a Neis happens to a person, or when something special or miraculous happens to a person, it is appropriate to have a seudas hodaah. The Netziv here is pointing out the source in the Torah for seudas hodaah.²

The lesson for us is that if Hashem does something special for us, we should of course thank Him, that is obvious; and also we should publicize these good things and talk about the chasdei Hashem that He has done for us.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- [Zev](#) (5759-60) and Rebecca Feuer on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Yoel](#) (5761) and Esther Preminger on the birth of a baby girl.
- [Yaakov](#) (5762-70) and Sarah Lerner on the birth of a baby girl, Batya Chava.
- [Tzvi](#) (5769-70) (Madrach) Satt on his [marriage](#) to Chaya Rochel Weinstock.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlommo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa
- Temima Adina bat Keren Ronit
- Avraham ben Meela
- Bracha Sara bat Rivka Zelda
- Ita Blima bat Malka Fraidel
- Eliyahu ben Victoria
- Chaya Malka bat Rachel Braindel
- Elnatan Meir ben Devorah Ze'eva
- Yahel Liam Gittel bat Rachel
- Shifra Sheulah bat Chana Sarah
- Dovid Chaim ben Brina
- Natan Zelig ben Leah
- Refoel Chaim Simcha Binyamin ben Devorah Aliza
- Menachem Mendal Halevi ben Tova

- Akiva ben Gittel
- Aharon Dovid ben Elke Shprintza Machla
- Eitan Meir ben Rivka Ora
- Yaacov ben Ester
- Sharona Charna bat Nechama Zvia
- Shaul ben Sulcha
- Ariel Avraham ben Chana
- Chaya Zeesil bat Tzivia Leah
- Batyah Leah bat Sarah
- Ariel Avraham Ben Chana
- Moshe Aharon Yitzchak ben Tova Rachel
- Beila Chana bat Esther
- Shlomo Zalka ben Chana Ruchel Serel
- Meira Mindel bas Chava Golda

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rav Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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