



## A seder for the generations

Rabbi Elan Mazer

National Director, Mizrachi Canada

After asking the four questions in the Ma Nishtana, and receiving the concise answer of “עבדים היינו לפרעה”, we begin a section of the Haggadah which seems to veer from our main topic of retelling the story of our redemption from Egypt.

We read the story about a group of sages who discussed the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim all night, then we recall the Halacha about remembering the redemption from Egypt during the night as well as the day, and only after we learn about the four sons do we return to the actual story of Pesach.

One explanation for this strange order is that these paragraphs are here as a kind of guidance, or introduction, of how to approach the story of the Haggadah. Seemingly they are prompted by the last statement in the previous paragraph, where the Haggadah tells us two important parameters about how to tell over the story. Firstly, that the Mitzvah applies equally to everyone: no matter how great a scholar someone is, or how well they know the story, they are

nonetheless obligated to retell the story on this night. This, then, explains why we are told about the great scholars who sat together in Bnei Brak and discussed the redemption, as well as why we contrast this story with the four sons – four children with different learning styles and abilities, who each partake in the Mitzvah of retelling the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim.

They create the appropriate mind-set for us, inspiring us...as we pray and wait for the dawn to break and our full and complete redemption to arrive.

In this way the Haggadah demonstrates that this night is for all: scholar and layman, young and old. Secondly, the Haggadah is telling us that there is no limit regarding how much one should discuss, which we see from the fact that the scholars sat all night discussing the story, until their students had to interrupt them to read the morning Shema.

This understanding of these paragraphs, however, does not explain the need for the specific details that are brought in the story. Undoubtedly there are countless stories about scholars sitting and having a seder, and the author of the Haggadah could have chosen from any of them. Why was this story chosen? What was so important about a group of Rabbanim specifically visiting Rebbe Akiva in his home in Bnei Brak, and learning the entire night, until the morning Shema?

What is even more interesting is that this particular story is an anomaly, and many commentators raise the question of why it was that Rebbe Yehoshua, Rebbe Elazar, and Rebbe Eliezer Ben Azaria, came to the home of their student, Rebbe Akiva, as generally it is the student who honors the Rebbe by going to *his* home?

Furthermore, the next paragraph seems to be very out of place, and begs the question of its relevance to our introduction. In it, Rebbe Eliezer Ben Azaria expresses immense excitement over the idea of remembering Yetziat Mitzrayim at night; “ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות” ►

► “I never merited to say Yetziat Mitzrayim at night”. Why is this so special for him, and why did it need to be included in the Hagaddah, and specifically at this point?

The Chatam Sofer offers a beautiful explanation. In Jewish literature, “night” is often a symbol of despair, epitomized by galut – exile. It is expected that during times of joy, when the nation of Israel joins together for the Korban Pesach at the Beit HaMikdash, we will remember and celebrate this occasion. However, to continue to remember and praise Hashem for the redemption after the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash takes tremendous faith. To realize that the history of Yetziat Mitzrayim is not important only as a means to an end, but that even once the initial redemption is over – the Beit HaMikdash is destroyed and Judaism must reinvent itself to survive – even then, the story of Yetziat Miztrayim stands as a core principal of our nation’s freedom and relationship with Hashem. To understand this is truly a zechut, an honour.

Two of the aforementioned rebbes of

Rebbe Akiva, together with Raban Gamliel appear together with him in another famous story. At the end of Masechet Makot, four men were walking together in Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple, and when came to the ruins of the Beit HaMikdash, they saw a fox running out of the place where the Kodesh Hakodashim once stood. Rebbe Yehoshua, Raban Gamliel, and Rebbe Eliezer Ben Azaria begin to cry, while Rebbe Akiva laughs instead. The three turn to the one and request an explanation for his strange behaviour. Rebbe Akiva replies that he is happy because just as the prophecies about the destruction came true, so, too, he knows that the prophecies about the rebuilding of Jerusalem will also come true. Rebbe Akiva’s rebbes turn to him and say, “עקיבא ניחמתנו עקיבא ניחמתנו” – “Akiva you have consoled us, Akiva you have consoled us”.

It is known that the seder in question took place soon after the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, and that all the Rabbis around the table were alive when

the Beit HaMikdash was the center of Judaism. They knew what it meant to retell the story during the “day”. Of all the rabbis at the time, Rebbe Akiva was unique in demonstrating the hope and faith that was needed to transition into the next chapter of Jewish history, “ואמונתך בלילות” – “our faith in you during the night” – when we are in galut, and Hashem’s presence is more hidden. Therefore, on Pesach these three rebbes, with Rebbe Tarfon, join together in the home of Rebbe Akiva, and demonstrate to us what it means to continue commemorating the story of redemption from Egypt, the symbol of our freedom and bond with Hashem, the entire night.

Thus, these paragraphs are essential preparations for us before we begin telling the story. They create the appropriate mind-set for us, inspiring us to stand strong in our faith, as we pray and wait for the dawn to break and our full and complete redemption to arrive.

!לשנה הבאה בירושלים הבנויה

## The language of exile

Rav Yair Spitz, Menahel, Yeshivat Or Chaim

There is something very odd about הא לחמא עניא, the opening paragraph of the Maggid: it is in the wrong language. The entire rest of the Maggid, even the entire rest of the Haggadah, is in Hebrew, while הא לחמא עניא stands alone as the singular Aramaic paragraph.

Additionally, what sense is there in opening the story of יציאת מצרים by giving away the end, telling us that this is the bread that our forefathers ate in Mitzrayim? Technically, we haven’t reached that part of the story yet. We are just about to have the children ask about the strange behaviors of the night, followed immediately by the response – the story of slavery and redemption.

The answer to these questions is

right back where we started from – language. The fact that this paragraph is in Aramaic tells us it originates from a later time than the rest of the Haggadah. It was written after the final exile, after the destruction of the second Beit HaMikdash, while the rest of the paragraphs of the Maggid are from the Tannaic era, during or immediately after the second Beit HaMikdash, while still living in the Land of Israel.

Imagine living in the generations after the exile and trying to celebrate Pesach. How do you celebrate Hashem’s redemption of Am Yisrael – and everything that followed – while living disgraced, subjugated and persecuted, far from your homeland? Imagine how

depressing it can be to try to celebrate the “holiday of freedom” under such conditions? From where were people supposed to muster the motivation for it?

For this purpose, the הא לחמא עניא was composed, to remind those in exile:

1. “You’re afflicted? So were they; and it turned out great”
2. To believe and accept that השתא – הכא לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל – this year (we are indeed here but we know that), next year (we can/will be) in Israel. השתא עבדי לשנה הבאה בני חורין – this year we are slaves (as we aren’t a sovereign in our land), next year – (we will be) free.



## Rav Kook: The balance of freedom and servitude

עולת ראיה, הגדה של פסח – From Olat Reaya, Pesach Hagaddah

Freedom has two distinct forms. One can be free *from* something; an oppressor or a handicap. Alternatively, freedom can be to *do* something; to accomplish or to create. Rav Kook here explains that Yetziat Mitzrayim was not a removal of our oppressors. Rather, it gave us a grand purpose – a mission. Both types of freedoms are needed to fully internalize the message of Pesach.

Freedom and destroying Chametz are the two symbols of the holiday of redemption, Pesach, the time of our freedom. What message can be learned from these two concepts? What is the connection between them?

The answer is that really there are two parts to redemption:

[Firstly], physical freedom from all foreign persecution. Freedom from all oppression that forces the image of G-d, within man, to be enslaved by any power that reduces its value, the magnificence of its grandeur and splendor of man's sanctity. This freedom though, is only acquired by means of the freedom of the soul, freedom of the spirit, from all entities that cause it to veer from its straight and sturdy path, which is cast in its own intrinsic nature.

The difference between a slave and a free person is not just a matter of social standing. where by chance, one individual is enslaved and another is not.

One may find an educated slave whose spirit is free, and a free person with the mindset of a slave.

What characterizes freedom, is the grand spirit that elevate man, and the nation, to be faithful to their inner selves – to the spiritual nature of the image of G-d that is within them.

When one has this, they see their life as full of purpose, that has true value.

However someone with an enslaved spirit, whose sense of fulfillment and psyche is not enlightened by a sense of self-fulfillment.

Rather they define their lives based on what is good or bad for the one who dominate over him. whether it is de jure or de facto. Everything is dependent on what the "other" finds to be worthy or not.

The freedom, which we acquired by means of the greatest wonders in all of history, that were done to us, at the time when Hashem redeemed or forefathers from Egypt, to eternal freedom.

Come, my brothers, together to the seder, and may it be made clear to us all, that we are the children of kings, the nation, whose eternal destiny is true freedom.

Israel is nor a slave, and will not be disdained, from the time where we were raised up, from this festival of freedom, we shall raise the flag of freedom and destroy all Chametz. ❁

חירותנו וביעור חמץ. אלה השנים המסמנים לנו את חג הגאולה, חג הפסח, זמן חירותנו.

ולדורות מה אנחנו למדים מאלה שני הנושאים הללו התלויים זה בזה?

התשובה הנצחית היא, שתנאי הגאולה שנים המה:

החירות העצמית, חירות הגוף מכל שיעבוד זר, מכל שיעבוד הכופה את צלם אלהים אשר באדם להיות משועבד לכל כח אשר הוא מוריד את ערכו, את תפארת גדולתו והדרת קדשו.

והחירות הזאת אינה נקנית כי-אם על-ידי חירותה של הנשמה, חירות הרוח מכל מה שהוא מטה אותה ממסילתה הישרה והאיתנה היצוקה במהותו העצמית.

ההבדל שבין העבד לבן-החורין איננו רק הבדל מעמדי, מה שבמקרה זה הוא משועבד לאחר וזה הוא בלתי-משועבד.

אנו יכולים למצא עבד משכיל שרוחו הוא מלא חירות, ולהיפך בן-חורין שרוחו הוא רוח של עבד.

החירות הצביונית היא אותו הרוח הנשאה, שהאדם וכן העם בכלל מתרומם על ידה להיות נאמן להעצמיות הפנימית שלו, להתכונה הנפשית של צלם אלהים אשר בקרבו,

ובתכונה כזאת אפשר לו להרגיש את חייו בתור חיים מגמתיים, שהם שווים את ערכם.

מה שאין כן בבעל הרוח של העבדות, שלעולם אין תכן חייו והרגשתו מאירים בתכונתו הנפשית העצמית, כי-אם במה שהוא טוב ויפה אצל האחר השולט עליו איזה שליטה שהיא, בין שהיא רשמית בין שהיא מוסרית, - במה שהאחר מוצא שהוא יפה וטוב.

אותה החירות שקנינו ע"י הפלא הגדול היחיד בעולם, שנעשה עמנו בעת שגאלנו ה' יתברך וגאל את אבותינו ממצרים לחירות עולם.

בואו נא, אחים, אל הסדר כולנו,

יודע לנו שהננו בני-מלכים, ועם שהחירות היא גורלו הנצחי,

לא עבד ישראל ולא יליד-בית ולא יהי לבוז,

מאז אשר נשא ברמה, מיום חג חירותנו,

את דגל החירות וביעור החמץ. ❁



# When Hashem says: “I’m right here!”

Rabbi Effie Kleinberg

Director of Educational Technology and Religious Growth, Bnei Akiva Schools

At the Seder of the Slutsker Rav, Reb Yosef, the discussion during the Maggid section revolved around kriyat yam suf, the miraculous moment where G-d split the sea to enable the Jewish people to pass through unharmed by the advancing Egyptian army. One young boy at the table asked his father, the Rav, why it is that we celebrate the miracle of the splitting of the sea to such an extent. Would it not be a greater celebration to praise and appreciate the daily abundance and flow of water in all of the bodies of water all over the world? Is it not a greater miracle that G-d keeps the water sources running consistently more than merely a single time when He stopped this flow?!

The Rav responded with an analogy: A sculptor once molded a life size model horse and placed it in the front of his house for all to see. The horse was intricately designed with a colourful arrangement. The horse actually looked real! Yet, to the sculptor’s disappointment, no passersby paid any attention to his artwork! One of his wise friends suggested to him that he was too good; he had made such a perfect horse that it did not attract anyone, but if it did not look like an actual horse people would stop by. His advice was to cut the horse in half and display it like that. The sculptor took this advice, and in no time at all the broken model horse had become the talk of the town! The Slutsker Rav turned to his son and said to him that the yam suf is just as big of a miracle as kriyat yam suf was! The sea needed to be split in order for people to appreciate the miracle of the sea in the first place. G-d’s miracles in Egypt were entirely supernatural and because of this, when the sea was split, everyone was able to realize just how miraculous the ongoing bodies of water are in the world. As the Ramban (Shemot 13) famously wrote, “By recalling the great miracles of G-d in the Exodus, a person will come to appreciate the hidden miracles of everyday life which

form the foundation of the entire Torah. On Pesach we take G-d’s “I’m here!” and bring into our everyday lives!

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah #133) in Parashat Tzav comments on the mitzvah of *eish tamid tukad al ha’mizbeach*, a continuous fire shall burn upon the altar (Vayikra 6:6). The performance of this constant mitzvah was fulfilled through the placement of wood on the Mizbeach in the morning and in the afternoon. There is a line in the Gemara (Yoma 21b) that teaches that although a Heavenly fire descended on the Mizbeach to keep the flame going, we were given a special mitzvah to bring our own resources for the fire. The Sefer HaChinuch goes on to say that all the great miracles that G-d performs for us are carried out in a subtle and hidden fashion. They appear to be manifestations of the natural world, similar to kriyat yam suf where the Torah states that G-d stirred up a powerful wind the entire night and only then split the sea (Shemot 14:21), but they are far from mere expressions of nature. Those who are intelligent will realize that these are the ways of G-d in this world. This is the reason that G-d asked us to bring our own wood to the Mizbeach despite the fact that He openly and miraculously kept it going.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook (Orot HaKodesh 3:210) beautifully expressed the depth behind this mitzvah. He wrote that the Mizbeach is the source for the expression of our will and desires—the principle of sacrifice is *l’ratzon lifnei Hashem*. The constant fire on the altar expresses this will. This is because in its essence, to will or not to will is not a question of choice, it is a constant drive that keeps us alive. Nonetheless, we do have the ability and the choice of how to channel these desires, of how to connect them to the reality of our lives. Rav Kook writes that this eternal flame (*eish tamid*) cannot be extinguished (*lo tichbeh*), but

it cannot be fully realized or applied without one putting in their own resources and input. Similarly, there is a constant undertone of the miraculous in our lives, yet it does not do justice for us to not plug into that reality under the surface and internalize G-d’s role on a constant basis.

When the priesthood of Aharon was challenged, G-d orchestrated a test through which Aharon’s right to the position of Kohen Gadol would be indisputable. The Torah states that one staff from each tribe with the name of the leader of that tribe inscribed on the staff was placed in the Mishkan — *u’mateh Aharon b’toch matotam* — and Aharon’s staff was amidst their staffs (Bamidbar 17:21). This detail about the location of Aharon’s staff in the middle of all the others seems unnecessary, although Rashi, quoting the Midrash, notes that this was done in order to remove any doubt that the blossoming of the staff was fixed, that perhaps Aharon’s staff only blossomed because it was closer to the Kodesh Kodashim—the Holy of Holies. What could have been a pure sanctification of G-d in this world was hindered by people who actually believed that the blossoming of the staff was the direct result of its proximity to a holy place. How blind does one have to be to not see the stamp of G-d all over this moment?! It was an unbelievable instance and lesson in G-d’s participation in our world.

In the Modim prayer we say, *al nisecha shebe’chol yom imanu, v’al nifli’otecha shebe’chol et* — we sing praise for the daily miracles that You perform in our lives, and on Your wonders that occur every moment. Although we might not fully internalize the clear signs and miracles all year round, Pesach is an opportunity to draw inspiration from moments in our history where G-d *kivyachol* shouted “I am here!” We relive the clearly miraculous in order to infuse our daily goings on with the hiddenness of G-d’s role in our lives. 🌟

JOIN THOUSANDS ON A

# MEGA MISSION OF A LIFETIME

In the Steps of the  
Six Day War



## SUN TO SUN 21-28 MAY 2017

[YOM YERUSHALAYIM: TUES-WED MAY 23-24]

### JOIN

- **Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, Minister Naftali Bennett, Mayor Nir Barkat, Dr Michael Oren, Yossi Klein Halevi, Yaakov Shwekey** and so many other eminent leaders, authors and performers, as well as some of the famous Paratroopers who liberated Jerusalem



### EXPERIENCE

- **Dazzling opening ceremony** with Jerusalem musical extravaganza
- **The International Jerusalem Conference** - challenges and opportunities facing Israel and Jerusalem in the 21st Century
- **Daven an unforgettable Hallel with all the Yeshivot Hesder at the Kotel on Yom Yerushalayim**
- Multiple **exclusive tours** of Jerusalem
- **Lead the 300,000 person Yom Yerushalayim flag march** to the Old City
- **Moving closing ceremony** on Mount of Olives overlooking the Temple Mount



MIZRACHI WORLD MOVEMENT

**TO REGISTER:** [mizrachi.ca/yy50](http://mizrachi.ca/yy50) OR [yy50@mizrachi.ca](mailto:yy50@mizrachi.ca)

66

events,  
speakers,  
shabbatons  
and  
programs

at 14  
different  
shuls

8  
different  
schools

in 3  
different  
cities

attended  
by over  
14,000  
people

MIZRACHI'S  
YEAR OF RENEWAL  
by the  
numbers

13

high  
quality  
publications  
for the  
chagim

support  
32  
Shlichim  
in the  
city

fund  
& support  
programs  
in Israel for

over 160  
unique institutions

helped  
Moshava  
Ennismore  
raise over  
\$50,000

helped  
Bnei Akiva  
Toronto and  
Montreal raise over  
\$200,000

over \$140,000  
in scholarships for  
students across Canada  
going to Yeshivot and  
Midrashot In Israel





# Pesach She'eilot from Eretz Hemda

- **A traveler selling chametz**

**Question:** *Where does one who is traveling for Pesach sell his chametz?*

**Answer:** All things being equal, it is better to sell chametz in the place where the chametz is found, because it makes it possible for the non-Jew who buys it to claim that chametz. Despite the fact (or, possibly, because of the fact) that the sale is somewhat unrealistic from a commercial perspective, it is proper to make it as practical as we can.

However, other factors are involved. If one is traveling significantly to the east (for example, from New York to Israel) then there is a problem to sell one's NY chametz in NY. The laws of Pesach and other time-based mitzvot are determined by the halachic time at the place where one is at a given time, irrespective of his place of origin. When the time to destroy chametz and the time it is prohibited to possess it occur in Israel, the laws apply to all chametz that one owns, including that in his NY home. Furthermore, once the 6th hour of Erev Pesach comes, the chametz becomes forbidden in benefit and, as a result, halachically impossible to sell (see Pesachim 6b). When that takes place in Israel, it is still the previous night in NY and most chametz has not yet been sold. Therefore, the sale has to be done in Israel at the right time for the person, even though his chametz is

in a place where it would not yet seem to be problematic.

One can solve the problem by approaching a NY rabbi who carries out two sales, the earlier one being called a mechirat yud gimmel. This early sale, done before the time of bedikat chametz (searching for chametz), is primarily intended to exempt those who will be away for all of Pesach from checking their house (see Mishna Berura 436:32). By selling their chametz and renting out their house at that time, the obligation to check the house never starts. This sale also solves the timing issue for our Israel-bound traveler, as it precedes Pesach morning in Israel.

Someone traveling west who leaves chametz in Israel has fewer problems getting rid of his chametz before Pesach. If he sells in Israel, he is covered time-wise. (It is preferable but probably not absolutely necessary to inform the rav as to who will have access to his apartment should the non-Jew want to claim his chametz on Pesach.) Regarding the possibility of selling "Israeli chametz" in NY, the matter is more complicated, as follows. Assuming the sale takes place after it is already too late in Israel, we must decide how to look at chametz in a place where the prohibitions apply that is owned by one for whom the 6th hour of the day before Pesach has not yet arrived. It is agreed that a person violates the prohibition of possessing

chametz only if he himself is in a place where the prohibition applies. However, Igrot Moshe (OC IV, 94) says that we also have to be stringent not to allow chametz to be in Jewish hands when chametz in its place is forbidden, even if, for the owner, there is still time. (He bases this on a precedent that the laws of isur hana'ah and chametz sheavar alav hapesach apply even in cases where there is no personal liability.) Although Rav Moshe presented his position tentatively and the majority opinion that argues on him seems logical, it is hard to discount his opinion (see Mechirat Chametz K'hilchato 3: 14-17). (An early sale in NY could solve this problem, as well.)

The problem of a westward bound traveler selling in Israel is the re-purchase after Pesach. (According to Rav Moshe, the problem exists for one selling NY chametz while in Israel.) When the Rav buys back the chametz after Pesach in Israel, it is still Pesach for the owner in NY. The seller should inform the rav that he will be abroad and the re-purchase should not apply to his chametz until after Pesach is over for him. If the seller forgets to tell the rav and cannot reach him, he should declare that he cancels the Rav's authority to buy back his chametz until later. 🕒

## Spotlight on Eretz Hemdah



Mizrachi Canada is a proud partner of Eretz Hemdah; the foremost institute that is training a new generation of leading Torah Scholars imbued with loyalty to their people and their land, leaders with broad horizons who will work on uniting the nation through active rapprochement. Eretz Hemdah was Founded by Rabbi Shaul Israeli zt"l. The program is made up of an intensive and comprehensive seven-year curriculum. The curriculum prepares students for certification as dayanim (Rabbinic judges) and rabbis of cities, and to serve as Ramim (lecturers) and deans on college level and graduate level yeshivot.

COMMEMORATE AND CELEBRATE

# YOM HAZIKARON & YOM HA'ATZMAUT

## THROUGH THE EYES OF HISTORY

**MONDAY, MAY 1, 2017 AT 6:45 PM**

**SHAAREI SHOMAYIM CONGREGATION,**

**470 GLENCAIRN AVENUE, TORONTO**

FORMAL PROGRAM WILL END AT 9:00 PM,

FOLLOWED BY REFRESHMENTS AND DANCING

HONOURING **JERRY AND BEA ROSENFELD** FOR THEIR  
LONG-STANDING COMMITMENT TO MIZRACHI CANADA

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DR YITZHAK YIFAT**

ONE OF THE FIRST PARATROOPERS

TO REACH THE KOTEL IN 1967

AND PICTURED IN THIS ICONIC PHOTO



**KOLOT HAMIZRACH**

The Kolon of Mizrahi Canada

**MIZRACHI CANADA  
OUR PARTNERS**

**DESIGN & LAYOUT  
COVER PHOTO**

Facebook.com/MizrachiCanada • www.mizrachi.ca • mizrachi@mizrachi.ca • 416-630-9266  
Bnei Akiva of Toronto • Camp Moshava Ennismore • Moshava Ba'ir Toronto  
Bnei Akiva Schools • Emunah Canada • YU/Torah Mitzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov  
Daniel Safran • safran.daniel@gmail.com  
Shutterstock