

HAGGADA SHEL PESACH

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Source #1 – R. B. Ginsburg bshem Rav Schachter

We then continue to describe, “חַוְּסַט טַבֵּל לִשְׂוֹן” – Hashem has exalted us above all other tongues. My rebbi, Rav Schachter *shlit”a*, explains that this is a reference not only to our language, but to how Jews speak – how we use our tongues. Jews should speak differently than non-Jews. (The Malbim suggests a similar idea.) A Jew is supposed to be a walking *kiddush Hashem*. His exalted actions and speech should impress those around him and reflect positively on Yiddishkeit. I know people who work in offices with non-Jews, and the non-Jews do not use *nivul peh*, foul language, in their presence. This is the way it’s supposed to be; others should recognize that we are different and act accordingly.²

This point is particularly relevant for Pesach, as the *seforim* teach that the word “פֶּסַח” hints to “פֶּה סָח,” “a mouth that speaks.” On Pesach, we emphasize

the proper use of speech. The name of our enemy, פֶּרֶעָה, contains the letters of the words “פֶּה רָע,” “an evil mouth.” We change the פֶּה רָע of פֶּרֶעָה into פֶּה סָח. This is our goal during the month of Nissan. In fact, the *gematria* of נִסָּן is 170, which is the *gematria* of the two פֶּהַּ together. One of the challenges of Nissan and of Pesach is to raise our speech to a higher, more exalted level.

On every Shabbos and *Yom Tov*, we recite *Kiddush* in our homes before the *seuda*, even though we have already declared the day holy in our *tefillos*. In his commentary on the *siddur*, Rav Hirsch explains that this emphasizes an important point:

The true observance and celebration of the *Yomim Tovim* should take place not in our synagogues, but in our homes, for it is not in our houses of worship and at our Divine services but in the rooms where our family lives unfold and where everyday business activities go on that we must demonstrate that we are indeed serious about [leading lives of *kedusha*].

A Jew is supposed to bring the *kedusha* of the *beis midrash* and the synagogue into his home. This idea is captured by repeating the *Kiddush* in the house, at the table. (See the essay section for a more complete presentation of this idea of Rav Hirsch.)

On Pesach, as we celebrate our freedom to serve Hashem, we should remind ourselves of this point. The goal of a Jew, his challenge in life, is to serve Hashem not only in *shul*, but also at home, at the dinner table with his family.

Source #2 – R. Twerski

Usually, cleansing oneself must precede sanctification, as we read in *Psalms*, “Abstain from evil, and do that which is good” (34:15). There is no point in trying to cleanse someone who is wallowing in mud until he emerges from the mud, and there is no purpose in adorning oneself in fine clothes until the dirt has been washed away. Similarly, one cannot expect to achieve *kedushah* (sanctity) unless one has first abandoned sinful behavior.

According to the Talmudic sages, the Exodus was an exception to this rule. The Jews under Egyptian bondage had lost their spirituality as well as their freedom. Under Egyptian influence, they had degenerated into the idolatry of their environment. Indeed, the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was an *The Exodus thus had the unique feature of enabling a person to be elevated to the ultimate heights of spirituality even prior to divesting himself of objectionable behavior!*

This unique *chesed* (favor) which accompanied the historical Exodus remains available to us at any time. It is ours for the asking, if only we invoke it.

There are some people who become disillusioned with their lifestyle, and might consider adopting a more spiritual mode of living, but are reluctant to do so because they consider spirituality to be beyond their reach. “There is no point in my trying to make a change now,” they may say. “I am too far gone, too set in my habits. My trying to observe any part of the Torah in my present state would be hypocritical.”

This is not true. Observance of any of the many mitzvos which have been designated as representing or being associated with the Exodus carries with it the unique favor of bestowing sanctity even prior to shedding one's depravity.

Source #3 – HaLekach V'halibuv

אמת (חורמה תוליא) שאדם צריך שיהיה לו בטחון במעשיו הטובים ובמצותיו. וזה כונת הפסוק בטח בה' ועשה טוב, שגם לעשיית טוב בעי מדת בטחון. ולכן ההקדמה לליל הסדר שיהיה לו מדת הבטחון, שמעשיו הטובים שעושה כלילה הזה עושים רושם למעלה ועושים תיקונים גדולים. ועוד י"ל שעם בטחון אפשר לרחוץ את המעשים הרעים.	איתא בספר דברי שלום שיש לפרש רחץ מל' בטחון כמו שאומרים בברוך שמיה ב'יה אנה רחיק', כי הרבה פעמים האדם עושה מצות ומעש"ט ואינו מרגיש קדושה בעשייתם, והיינו 'קדש' את עצמך, אתה עשה את שלך לעשות מעשים המביאים קדושה, ואח"כ בטח בה' כי תחול עליך קדושה מלמעלה, כי על האדם מוטל לעשות את שלו. ועיין בדברי השפת
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Source #4 – R. Sacks and Rashi

Dipping *karpas* in salt water or vinegar is one of the things we do on the seder night to arouse the curiosity of children so that they will ask, “Why is this night different?” It is one of the two acts referred to in the question, ‘On all other nights we do not dip even once, but tonight we dip twice.’ The second, just before the meal, is the dipping of *maror* in *charoset*.

There is symbolic significance in these two acts. The Exodus began and ended with acts of dipping. It began when Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. They dipped his robe in the blood of a slaughtered goat (Genesis 37:31) and brought it to Jacob, to persuade him that Joseph had been attacked and killed by a wild animal. The sale of Joseph into slavery in Egypt was the beginning of the long process through which the entire family of Jacob travelled to Egypt and eventually became slaves.

The exile ended with the Israelites taking bunches of hyssop, dipping it in the blood of the paschal offering, and daubing it on the door-frames of their houses (Exodus 12:22). God ‘passed over’ these houses during the final plague, after which they went free.

The two dippings recall these events. The *karpas*, itself sweet, is dipped in salt and becomes sour. The *maror*, itself bitter, is dipped in the sweet *charoset* and has some of the bitterness removed. These two acts remind us that freedom, which is sweet, becomes sour when we use it to mistreat others. Slavery, which is bitter, is sweetened when collective suffering becomes human solidarity and thus a prelude to freedom.

שלו דומה לו פ (שס): פסיים. לשון כלי מלח (שגמ יב)
 כמו פִּרְפֵס וּתְבִלָּה (אסמר א ו) וכמו פְּתִיחַת פְּסִים (שמואל ב
 יג יח) דתמר ואמנון. ומדרש אגדה על שם נרווד

Source #5 – R. Biderman

It is not difficult to believe that all that transpired, throughout history, was for the best. In hindsight, it is clear. It is also simple to accept that whatever will yet be will be perfect, in accord with the precision of His plan.

What we do struggle with is the immediate present, in which things are not always exactly how we would wish them to be. The three matzos correspond to those three stages: *hayah*, *hoveh*, and *yiyeh*, past, present, and future. When we break the middle matzah, we are proclaiming that we “break” ourselves, submitting to His plan for the present as well.

When we say the words in *tefillah*, ה' מִלְךְ ה' מִלְךְ ה' יִמְלֶךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד, we begin with *Hashem reigns*, and then say that *Hashem has reigned* and that *Hashem will reign forever*.

Shouldn't we begin with the past, then go to the present, and finally turn to the future, in correct chronological sequence?

They say a story of a fellow in Communist Russia who is called in by the party officials, who want to gauge his loyalty to the party. They ask what he would do if he suddenly came into money and was able to afford a house.

He answered without hesitation. The house would belong to the party.

They nodded, pleased, and asked him what he would do if he had a sheep.

If he was-able to obtain such an animal, he said, he would certainly give it to the party and let the leaders decide how to best use it.

What if you had a chicken, they asked.

He was silent, unable to answer.

The question was repeated, and he stammered that he could not answer... because he actually had a chicken.

To wax poetic about an ideal is simple, but when it comes to action, it becomes much harder. He owned a chicken, and all the dogma and

pasuk (Tehillim 31:20), זהו רב טובך, most of your good deeds, אשר צפנת לדאך, you should conceal. פעלה לזוסיך כך, but for those who rely on you – נור בני אדם, do your good deeds in front of them, so they can learn from you.

On the words, והגדה לנך, Onkelus writes, וחיוי לנך, "Show your children." It is a night when the parents show their qualities to their children so they can learn from their ways.

This idea is alluded to with *yachatz*. We hide and put away the larger half of the matzah. This implies that we should be humble and conceal most of our good deeds. But the children search and find the *afikomon*. This is because on the Seder night, when we instill *emunah* into the children, it is proper to reveal even that half, which is generally concealed, so the children can learn from their parents.¹¹

Rebbe Meir of Dijkev zy'a (*Imrei No'an*) says that a parent shouldn't conceal his good deeds from his children, so that they can learn from him. This is the meaning of the

Source #6 – R. Eliezer Ashkenazi

כלחמה עיד שכתב אם לא אעלה את ירושלים על ראש שמתו ובאמת צלילה הזה עושים חנו כמה ופרומות לחירות וע"ב וודאי ראוי לעשות מחלה וזכר לחרבן והענין הזכרון דבזמן המקדש לא הי' הפסח נאכל רק למנוי ולא כל דכסין יתי ויכול ועכסיו הוא דומה ממש ללחם של מצרים שלא הי' למנוי וז"ל הא כלחמה עניח די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא למצרים שחינו דומה לזמן המקדש ומפרש במאי ע"כ כל דכסין יתי ויכול ואינו למנוי ע"כ אח"כ פתחו בנחמה ואמר השתח הכו אומרים כן אבל לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל ולא יחי' נאכל לשנה הבאה ג"כ רק למנוי ע"כ בזמן המקדש לא הי' אומרים טעם זה כי לא הי' צריך להעלות החרבן :

Source #7 – R. Rosner

Rav Yerucham Kram in *Talmudo BeYado* (p. 35) suggests that's exactly what we're referencing in the *Ma Nishtana. Sheb'khol haleilot* means that on all other nights, when we bring the *korban toda, anu okhlim hametz u'matza* (both bread and matza are part of the *korban toda*). We're not talking about any *hulin* food we eat during the year. We're making a parallel between *korban toda* and the *korban pesah*. All other nights of the year, we eat the *korban* with *hametz u'matza*. But on *leil haSeder*, this *korban toda* is accompanied solely with matza. This *korban toda* is different.

In relation to this question of why on this night do we not include bread in our *korban toda* – the parent answers that this is a qualitatively different type of *korban toda*, which is to be distinguished from all others. This is matza night.

Source #8 – R. Ginsburg

However, if something is an experience, then you're excited to talk about it. You'll discuss its nuances and aspects and you'll go over it again and again. For example, if a person went on a very exciting roller coaster ride, months later – maybe even years later – he will think about it and relive the experience. Often, there are episodes that are part of a family's joint memory and one enjoys

reviewing and discussing the entire experience. This is what we're supposed to feel about *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. It's not just a story; it was an experience that all of *Am Yisroel* went through and every Jew is supposed to relive every year. That is why one is supposed to talk about it over and over, even if he already knows the facts. Everyone must recapture and relive the experience.

Source #9 – R. Zilberstein

בְּכַמָּה מְקוֹמוֹת מְדוּגְיָשִׁים לָנוּ חֲזו"ל, שְׁגַם בְּמַלְי דְּעֵלְמָא שֶׁל צְדִיק טְמוּנָה חֲכָמָה רַבָּה.

הֵבֵה נֶאֱזִין לְסַפּוֹר שְׁיִלְמַדְנוּ עַל חֲכָמֵי לֶבָם שֶׁל גְּדוּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, חֲכָמָה שְׁבָאָה לְיָדֵי בְטוּי גַם בְּדַבָּרִים שְׁיִצְאוּ מִפִּיהֶם, וּבְמִקְרָה זֶה מְקַלְמוֹסִם.

יְהוּדֵי תַלְמִיד חֲכָם הָיָה בְּתַל אֶבִיב שֶׁל פְּעַם, וּשְׁמוֹ הָרַב זָאב רַבִּינֵר. תַלְמִיד חֲכָם זֶה זָכָה לְצַק מַיִם עַל יָדָיו שֶׁל רַבִּי מֵאִיר שְׁמַחָה זַ"ל מְדוּיָנְסֵק, בְּעַל הָאֹר שְׁמַח', וּלְאַחַר שֶׁעָלָה הָרַב רַבִּינֵר אֶרְצָה הִתְפַּתֵּב עִמּוֹ בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

בְּלִכְתּוֹ פְּעַם בְּרַחוּבוֹת תַל אֶבִיב, פָּגַשׁ הָרַב רַבִּינֵר אֶת הַגָּאוֹן רַבִּי אֶפְרַיִם בּוֹרוּדְיָאָנְסְקִי זַ"ל, וְסִפֵּר לוֹ עַל מִכְתָּב מֵר' מֵאִיר שְׁמַחָה שֶׁהִתְקַבַּל בְּבֵיתוֹ זֶה עֵתָה, וּבִסּוֹכּוֹ יֵשׁ שְׁתֵּי תַבּוֹת שְׂאִין אֲנִי מְצַלִּיחַ לְהַבִּינֵר...

בְּקֹשׁ הַגֵּר"א בּוֹרוּדְיָאָנְסְקִי לְרֵאוֹת אֶת הַמְּכַתֵּב, וְגַם הוּא הִתְפַּלֵּא מְאֹד עַל סִגְנוֹן הַחֲתִימָה שֶׁל הָאֹר שְׁמַח': 'הַחֹתֵם בְּשֵׁמוֹאֵל וּכְרַבְּנֵנוּ, מֵאִיר שְׁמַחָה מְדוּיָנְסְקִי...'

בְּמִשְׁוֹ שְׁעָה אֶרְפָּה הוֹגִיעַ הָרַב בּוֹרוּדְיָאָנְסְקִי אֶת מוֹחוֹ בְּפִתְרוֹן הַחִידָה, עַד שֶׁהֵעֵלָה לָהּ אֶרְוָה, וְכֵן הִסְבִּיר לָרַב רַבִּינֵר:

בְּכָל הַש"ס מְצֵאנוּ רַק מְחֻלְקֵת אַחַת בֵּין שְׁמוֹאֵל לְרַבְּנֵנוּ, וְהִיא גְּמַסְכַּת בְּרִכּוֹת דָּף י"א עֲמוּד ב', וְנִחְלָקוּ שָׁם שְׁמוֹאֵל וְרַבְּנֵנוּ בְּשֵׁאֵלָה הָאֵם אוֹמְרִים 'אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם' אוֹ 'אַהֲבָה רַבָּה'.

Source #10 – Malbim

question of the wise son. Once it has informed us where in the Torah the wise son's question is discussed, the Haggadah has no need to tell us what to answer him. The answer is already there, in the Torah, and we now know where to find it. It is quite obvious that we answer the wise son with the reply that the Torah teaches us to answer. Nevertheless, the Haggadah wishes to emphasize that we must answer the wise son by teaching him all of the laws of the Pesach offering, from the beginning of the service until the end.

ואף אתה אמר לו *And you should even instruct him.* In addition to what the Torah commands you to answer him, you should even tell him...

...like the laws of the Pesach.... Just as you teach him all of the laws of the Pesach sacrifice — which is what he asked for — from the beginning of the service until the end, you should also teach him all of the laws which apply

Source #11 – Griz

ואתן לעשו את הר שעיר לרשת אותו. צ"ב לאיזה צורך מוזכרת ירושת עשו. והנראה, שהנה בנדריים (לא). שנינו שהנודר הנאה מזרע אברהם אסור בישראל ומותר באומות העולם, והרמב"ם בפיה"מ כתב שזרע אברהם בתורה מוכנו זרע יעקב בלבד, לפי שנאמר (בראשית טו, יג) "כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא להם", וזה לא נתקיים אלא בזרע יעקב, ונמצא שהברית של "לזרעך נתתי את הארץ הזאת" (שם פסוק יח) תלוי בהגירות "בארץ לא להם", ולפיכך נאמר "אלה אלופי אדום למושבותם בארץ אחוזתם הוא עשו אבי אדום, וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו" (סוף פרשת וישלח וריש פרשת וישב) כלומר עשו ישב בארץ אחוזתו ויעקב הוא שקיים הגירות, וכ"ה ברמב"ן ר"פ וישב. וכן כתיב (שם כה, טז) אלה הם בני ישמעאל ואלה שמותם בחצריהם ובטירותם וגו' ובא לומר דבני ישמעאל לא סכלו גרות ושעבוד אלא היו בחצריהם ובטירותם. ואף כאן "ואתן לעשו את הר שעיר לרשת אותו", שאנן ושוקט הוא ובגולה לא הלך, ויעקב ובניו ירדו מצרים" הם שקיימו "כי גר יהיה זרעך" והם בלבד בכלל "לזרעך נתתי את הארץ הזאת". (הגר"ז, סטנסיל עה"ת)

Source #12 – Gerrer Rebbe

והיא שעמדה כו' שלא אחד בלבד? אין מובן והיא על מזה קאי, ויש לומר דקאי אלמטה שהיא שעמדה לנו מזה שלא אחד בלבד עמד כו'. כלומר שהקב"ה עשה עמנו חסד בזה שחילק את כל כחות סטרא אחרא שלא יהיה נמצא בהם האחדות. וזה שכתוב שלא אחד בלבד עמד כו'. וכענין שכתוב אתם המעט. וכתבו חו"ל מעט מכל העמים ביחד אבל נגד כל אומה בעצמה בני ישראל מרובין מכל עם. ובה

הכינוס שנתן השם יתברך לבני ישראל והפיזור שנתן להרשעים שפיוזן להרבה דורות בזה הצילנו מידם:

Source #14 – Roshei Yeshiva Haggada (No. 2)

Discerning Lavan's intentions Where is there an indication anywhere in the Torah that Lavan attempted to uproot everything, to completely obliterate Yaakov and all his descendants?

R' Velvel Soloveitchik was once passing through Warsaw at a time when the Chofetz Chaim was staying in that city, and he decided to pay a visit to the venerable Sage. On that occasion he heard the Chofetz Chaim express a profound observation that provides an answer to this question.

The Chofetz Chaim and those who were with him were discussing relations between the Poles and the Jews and the notorious Polish anti-Semitism. The aged Rabbi recounted a true story that had happened with an elderly man whom he knew. (According to another version, it was the Chofetz Chaim himself who was the subject in the story.) The man, who was in his late eighties, went to the Polish authorities to request permission to travel abroad. In order to receive a passport, he was told, he would have to produce a birth certificate. Such documentation was a rarity even in those days, and much more so eighty years previously. In lieu of the birth certificate, the man was told, he could produce two witnesses who would personally attest to his place and date of birth. Of course, witnesses of the birth of an eighty-year-old man would themselves have to be close to a hundred years old, and would be virtually impossible to find. The man pleaded with the government officials to show some understanding of the impossibility of the situation, but to no avail. The passport was not issued.

"What was going through those Polish officials' heads?" asked the Chofetz Chaim rhetorically. "Didn't they realize they were making an impossible demand on the old man?"

"The explanation for such behavior may be provided if we analyze the conduct of Lavan as described in the Torah," the Chofetz Chaim continued. "Yaakov protested before Lavan with a list of grievances (*Bereishis* 31:36ff.): 'What is my sin that you have pursued me? When you rummaged through all my things, what did you find of all your household objects? Set it here before my kinsmen and yours. . . . These twenty years I have been with you, your ewes and she-goats never miscarried. . . . By day scorching heat consumed me, and frost by night; my sleep drifted from my eyes. . . . I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks; and you changed my wage a hundred times. . . . Quite a litany of seemingly legitimate grievances!

"And what was Lavan's response to these accusations? 'The daughters are my

daughters, the children are my children, and the flock is my flock, and all that you see is mine. . . .' (ibid., v. 43). What does this reply have to do with Yaakov's complaints? How was Lavan attempting to relate to Yaakov's statement? The answer is that Lavan was indeed *not* relating to Yaakov's accusations. His reply was merely an expression of his total apathy towards Yaakov's existence. 'The daughters are my daughters.' Everything is mine; you do not even exist as far as I am concerned. I do not have to respond to your complaints, because they are totally devoid of importance.

"The Polish mindset towards the Jews," continued the Chofetz Chaim, "exhibits the same attitude of complete delegitimization. In their eyes we do not deserve to exist; they therefore do not feel the need to consider our rightful grievances or to respond to them. It is hopeless to engage in dialogue with someone who does not recognize the legitimacy of his challenger."

Once a person is delegitimized in the eyes of his antagonist, there is no limit to the cruel and incompassionate treatment that he may exercise towards him. The ignoring of grievances is actually a very small problem, compared to the excesses he is capable of. If someone is deprived of his basic right to exist in his adversary's eyes, monetary damage, bodily harm, and even the taking of life will surely be options that will be considered without the slightest compunction — as our recent history has proven to us so clearly.

Thus, when Lavan said, "The daughters are my daughters. . . and all that you see is mine," it was a far more ominous statement than a mere pronouncement of arrogance and greed; it was a revelation of his deepest thoughts and desire — to uproot everything.

Source #15 – R. Frand

There are two famous comments from Rashi regarding the first three *makkos* that should give us some pause if we examine the depth of what Rashi is telling us.

Regarding *makkas Dam*, the Torah states: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל אַהֲרֹן קַח מַטֵּיךָ וּנְסַח דָּדֶךָ עַל מִיַּמֵּי מִצְרַיִם עַל נְהַרְתֶּם עַל הַיַּרְדֵּן וְעַל אֲגַמְיֵיהֶם וְעַל כָּל מְקוֹמֵי מַיִם וְנִסַּח יָדְךָ עַל הַיַּרְדֵּן וְעַל אֲגַמְיֵיהֶם וְעַל כָּל מְקוֹמֵי מַיִם וְיָחִיז דָם מִן הַיַּרְדֵּן וְעַל הַנְּחָלִים וְעַל הַבְּרוּתִים וְעַל כָּל מְקוֹמֵי מַיִם וְיָחִיז דָם (Shemos 7:19).

Rashi comments that Aharon was the one who hit the water, both in this *makkah* and the next (*Tzefardei'a*, Frogs), because the waters of the Nile River had protected Moshe's life when his mother placed him there to save him from Pharaoh's decree to kill all Jewish males. It was therefore inappropriate for him to be the one to hit the water.

When it came time for the third *makkah*, *Kinnim* (Lice), the Torah states: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל אַהֲרֹן נִטְה אֶת מִסְפֵּי וְהָיָה אֶת צֶפֶר הָאָרֶץ וְהָיָה לְמַעֲרִים לְכָנֹס בְּכֹל אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, *HASHEM said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the land; it shall become lice throughout the land of Egypt'"* (ibid. 8:12).

Once again, Rashi explains that the dust of Mitzrayim had saved Moshe's life when it swallowed the body of the Egyptian who Moshe killed by uttering one of Hashem's Names (see *Shemos* 2:12), and it was therefore inappropriate for him to hit the dust.

The *baalei mussar* famously explain that the *middah* of *hakaras hatov* (gratitude) is so vital that even though the river and the dust of Mitzrayim were inanimate, emotionless entities, Moshe Rabbeinu still had to express his gratitude toward them by not being the one to cause them to change in the first three *makkos*.

We must wonder, however, why, indeed, should we express gratitude to an inanimate, unfeeling object?

The answer is that *hakaras hatov* is not always for the one receiving the expression of appreciation; it's about the person who had received some favor perfecting himself by recognizing the good that was done for him.

Rav Yisroel Zev Gustman, the rosh yeshivah of *Netzach Yisrael*, was a young prodigy who was appointed to the *bels din* of Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski when he was in his 20s. Considering the level of scholarship in Vilna in the 1920s, this speaks volumes about his brilliance in learning.

Rav Gustman spent the last years of his life in Eretz Yisrael, where he reestablished his yeshivah. R' Dovid Mishkovsky noticed that Rav Gustman would personally water the bushes outside the yeshivah building — an atypical pastime for a rosh yeshivah if there ever was one. He asked Rav Gustman why he made a point of doing so.

Obviously, the *hakaras hatov* in this case is illogical if we consider it from the perspective of the recipient. The plants Rav Gustman was watering were not transplanted from Lithuania, and may not have been the same species as those he had eaten in those forests. But Rav Gustman realized that *hakaras hatov* is not about whether the plants feel that he owes them something; it's about him recognizing the good that was granted him, not only by the plants, but by Hashem Who placed them there to save his life.

This explains Rashi's comments regarding Moshe Rabbeinu not hitting the water or dust of Mitzrayim. While it is true that these inanimate objects did not need Moshe Rabbeinu's expression of appreciation, Moshe Rabbeinu became a more complete person by recognizing what was done for him, even by the inanimate objects that served as Hashem's agents for his salvation.

Source #16 – R. Lamm

insinuations. In the Haggadah, we read as part of one of the most popular of our hymns, "If He had given us [the Egyptian's] money, and He had not split for us the Red Sea, that would have been sufficient." What strange words. Is this meant to be an indication of our crass commercialism, our materialism? If only God had given us the money of the Egyptians, then we would have been ready to yield on redemption itself?

According to the Ba'al ha-Turim, however, we now have a new understanding in this verse of the *daiyenu*. If God had given us the money of the Egyptians, then indeed it would have been enough even without the redemption — for then, although we would have been politically unredeemed, we would have been ethically uplifted. For by receiving the gifts of the Egyptians, we learned for all time how to be righteous and compassionate towards all victims of oppression and persecution and adversity. As a result of this act of beneficence by the Egyptians, we learned for all time how to treat the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. A lesson of this sort is greater than any redemption. Indeed, *daiyenu*.

thing" (Deuteronomy 24:17-18). R. Jacob, the famous "Ba'al ha-Turim," tells us that the verse to remember that we were slaves in Egypt does not refer to our suffering and our misery, but rather to one particular incident in the centuries of our unhappy Egyptian exile. Particularly, he maintains that the Torah refers to the time that God enhanced the charm of the Israelites in the eyes of the Egyptian population, so that the Egyptians lent the Israelites their golden and silver vessels. Later, when Egypt was destroyed, it was this which allowed the Israelites to emerge from slavery into freedom with at least the wherewithal to survive.

In other words, the meaning of the verse, according to the Ba'al ha-Turim, is that we must build our righteousness and compassion not upon the element of our suffering but upon our salvation, not upon our unfortunate servitude, but upon our fortuitous assistance by people from whom we least expected it. We help the wretch not because we identify with his misery, but because we remember that we were once the beneficiaries of strangers, and that gratitude — rather than the misery — lingers with us and causes us to bestow our grace and help upon others. You must help not because you are a partner in this man's suffering, but you must make him a partner in your good fortune. You must be good not because you were unlucky, but because you were lucky; not because you too were broken, but because you got a break. You must support the disadvantaged because you, by some quirk, were once the recipient of a stranger's favor — unnatural, unexpected, even irrational! Hence, now you must become a benefactor for these others, even if such benefaction is unnatural, even if it is unexpected, even if it is irrational.

Source #17 – Nesivos

וְנִרְאֵתָּי דוּהַ בָּא לְהוֹרוֹת
 עֵינַי אֲנִי עוֹשֵׂי
 עֵינַי מִהַגְּאוּלָּה מַחֲמַת
 שְׂנִיצְלָנוּ מִהַמְרִירוֹת רַק עֵינַי הַטּוֹבָה וְהַשְּׂבַח אֲצִלְנוּ בְּהַגְּאוּלָּה הוּא מֵהַ שְׂנַקְנִינוּ

מִרְרוֹר זֶה. טִיפְלָא מַכְאֵן
 שְׂמֻקְדָּם הִיָּה רְאוּי
 שְׂתַהִיָּה אַכִּילַת הַמְרִירוֹ
 לְזַכֵּר הַמְרִירוֹת דְּוִימְרִירוֹ אַת
 חִיָּהֶם (שְׂמוֹת א', י"ד)
 שְׂהִיָּה מַקְוֵדָּם וְאַחַר כֵּן
 אַכִּילַת הַפֶּסַח וְהַמְצָה
 שְׂהוּא לְזַכֵּר הַגְּאוּלָּה
 שְׂהִיָּתָה אַחַר כֵּן.

לעבדים לו יתברך ולקח אותנו לו לעם וזה הוא טובה אף אם היינו מלכים ושרים במצרים כי זה נחשב לטובה מכל כל אשר גמלנו ה', מה שאין כן אם היינו עושים תחלה הזכר להמרירות ואחר כך להגאולה היה מורה עשותנו עיקר מה שיצאנו מהמרירות, לכן עושיין קודם זכר לגאולה להורות חשיבות טובת הגאולה שהוא ענין

Source #18 -- *Netziv*

שנאמר "והגדת לבנך וגו' בעבור זה עשה ה' לי" - בלשון יחיד, ולא 'לנו', דאפילו לי לבדי גם כן היה עושה⁸. ועדיין היה מקום לומר שזה אינו אלא בדור הראשון? ולא לדורות עולם, על זה מוסיף ואומר - "לא את אבותינו בלבד גאל הקב"ה אלא אף אותנו גאל עמהם וכו'", ואם כן¹⁰ גם את זה המאמר 'בשבילי היה זה'¹¹ אפשר לומר בכל דור ודור.

Source #19 – *Rabbi Wein*

We want more time for study, contemplation, even for relaxation and especially for our children and grandchildren. But the day is always too short. Life is really the skill of time management. Matzah teaches us that truth.

No human life passes without sadness, disappointment, loss, and tragedy. *Maror* is an unavoidable part of living. It too must be digested with our time-management skills. And sacrifice is inherent in any sense of accomplishment, in the achievement of anything worthwhile and lasting in our lives. "According to the effort and pain and sacrifice is the reward," is the dictum of the rabbis in *Pirkei Avos*. Children, marriage, study, career, nobility of behavior, all require constant sacrifice of personal wants and desires. Hillel, who in his own personal life reflected all of these human experiences, rolled them all into one with his famous sandwich. The taste of the meat of freedom and accom-

plishment, which is the meat of the *pesach* sacrifice — על מצות ומרורים יאכלהו — has to be eaten together with the pressures of time and circumstances in life, with the bitterness of loss and sadness and frustration and with the sacrifices that are inherent in any human achievement. This sandwich of Hillel is the philosophy of realistic and healthy living.

Source #20 – *Beis Halevi*

בֹּא יְבֵא בְרֵנָה נִשְׂא אֶלְמַתְיוֹ :

והכונה בזה, דלע"ל כל הצרות שסבלו ישראל בגלות

לא יהיו נחשבות כמו צרות שעברו ושהיו, רק יהיו משוכחות לגמרי כמו שלא היו מעולם, ולא ישאר מהם רושם וזכרון כלל. וזהו היינו כחולמים, שיהיו נחשבים כמו דברים הנעשים בחלום שאין מהם זכרון ורושם כלל אח"כ בהקיץ, וכן יהיו כל הצרות של עכשיו לע"ל, ולכן גם התקנות והמועדות שנתקנו בשביל הצרות ג"כ יהיו בטלים ולא יהיו להם מקום כלל לע"ל. (הגרי"ז עה"ת, אסתר)

Source #21 – *Rav Schachter*

and there are so many revolutions all over the world. None of the countries remained the same over the past three thousand years!

Yet, that is the mindset that we are supposed to have on Pesach night, and it is precisely this perspective that forms the basis for that which follows immediately in the *Haggadah* – the recitation of *Hallel*. The *Haggadah* highlights this connection with the words, לפיכך אנחנו חייבים להודות להלל וכו' – "Therefore, it is our duty to thank, to praise, etc." We have to praise *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and thank Him because we feel as though we just left *Mitzrayim* tonight. Obviously, on every other day of the year, when we simply mention that *Hashem* took us out of *Egypt*, we do not recite *Hallel*. Uniquely on *sefer* night, due to the nature of the *mitzvah* of *sippur*, we have the concomitant obligation to recite *Hallel*.²³

This idea is related to the statement earlier in the *Haggadah*: "If *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* had not brought our fathers out from *Mitzrayim*, then we, our children, and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in *Mitzrayim*." This is difficult for us to fathom. The world keeps on changing,

The *Hallel* that we recite on *Chanukah*, for example, is a *Hallel* that is a *zecher l'nes*, in commemoration of the *nes* and *yeshu'ah* that occurred two thousand years ago. The *Hallel* on *sefer* night, however, is of a different nature. It is a *Hallel bish'as hanes* and *bish'as hayeshu'ah*, on the occasion of the *nes* itself. Since, as we described above, we must have the attitude that we just left *Mitzrayim* at this very time, the *Hallel* itself is transformed from being merely a *Hallel zecher l'nes* into a *Hallel bish'as hanes*.

However, it seems that an emendation of the text is unnecessary. As we have seen from the *Brisker Rav's* analysis in the previous paragraph of דור דור, we expressed the notion that everyone is required to regard himself as if he himself just left *Mitzrayim*. Since we consider this moment to be the actual *sha'as hanes*, we are currently obligated to recite *Hallel* – לפיכך אנחנו חייבים להודות להלל... The *Hallel* of *sha'as hanes*, as *Rav Hai Gaon* explained, is labeled a *Hallel shel shirah*, and this specific form of *Hallel* is what we refer to with the words נאמר לפני שירה חדשה. The *Brisker Rav* (*Chiddushei HaGri"z MiPi HaShmu'ah al haTorah, siman 144*) notes that one of the unique features of this type of *Hallel* is that it may be recited only by a person who himself experiences a *yeshuah* from his *tzarah*.

It emerges from the explanation of the *Brisker Rav* that נאמר לפני שירה חדשה simply means that we will say *shirah* right now, in the immediate future; we do not refer here to the *shirah* of *le'asid lavo*. The *Hallel* that we will presently recite is, of course, merely a *שירה חדשה*, as we have not yet reached the point of *ge'ulah ha'asidah*. Thus, there is no inconsistency in the phrase נאמר לפני שירה חדשה.

All of this changes in the *berachah* of *Asher Ge'alanu*, in which we offer a *tefillah* that *Hashem* rebuild the *Beis HaMikdash* and bring the *ge'ulah ha'asidah*. Thus, in this *berachah*, we appropriately include our hope to soon sing a *שיר חדש על נאולתנו*: שיר חדש וטרה לך שיר חדש על נאולתנו: שיר חדש נפשית – "Then we shall thank You with a new song for our redemption and for the deliverance of our souls."

Source #22 – Rav Avraham Weinfeld

חקשו הראשונים: למה יתחייבו רשעי אומות העולם עונשים על כל הרעה שעשו לישראל, הלא הם קיימו רצון ההשגחה להעניש את ישראל? עמד על כך

* * *

לא זו בלבד שהרשעים בדרך כלל אינם יודעים שזו גזירת ה', שאז ודאי עליהם להתחייב על מה שעוללו לישראל, אלא אפילו אם ידעו על פי הנביאים, כגון מה שאמר נבזראדן לירמיהו הנביא (ירמיהו מ, ב): "ה' א-לוקיך דיבר את הרעה הזאת אל המקום הזה ויבוא ויעש ה' כאשר דיבר כי חטאתם לה", ומכל מקום ייענשו על מה שעשו, כי הם לא התכוונו לעשות בשם ה' אלא ודון ליבם ורשתתם השיא אותם, לחטא התכוונו ועל כן עבירה היא בידם. והדברים מפורשים בדברי הנביא

* * *

הגויים הוסיפו לעשות רעות לישראל יותר מאשר שהיתה גזירת ה', כמאמר הנביא זכריה (א, יד): "וקנאתי לירושלים ולציון קנאה גדולה וקצף גדול אני קוצף על הגויים השאננים, אשר אני קצפתי מעט והמה עזרו לרעה", וה"אור החיים" הקדוש פירש לפי זה את הפסוק (בראשית טו, יד) "וגם את הגוי אשר יעבודו דן אנוכי", ואלו דבריו: "והוא אומרו 'אנוכי' — כי הוא היודע שיעור הגזירה ושיעור התוספת שעליו יעניש אותם".

ושני טעמים אלו להענשת הגויים על מה שעשו לישראל, נרמזו כאן:

"שפך חמתך אל הגויים אשר לא ידעוך", כלומר: לא ידעו כלל שמקיימים את גזירתך, "ועל ממלכות אשר בשמך לא קראו", דהיינו: אף אם ידעו שזו גזירת ה', אבל הם בשמך לא קראו מלחמה על ישראל, אלא מהמת רשעותם. ועוד: שהם הוסיפו על הגזירות, "כי אכל את יעקב ואת נוח השמו" — ואף שהגזירה היתה רק להחריב את בית המקדש, כמו שאמרו (איכה רבה ד, טו): "שפך הקב"ה על העצים ועל האבנים", אבל הם לא הסתפקו בכך, אלא הוסיפו גם לאכול את יעקב יחד עם זה שאת נוחו השמו, ולכן מגיע להם עונש.

Source #23 –Ksav Sofer

אמר חז"ל: מלך שמחל על כבודו אין כבודו מחול (מנוכח י"ג), וזאת מפני שכבודו אין הוא שלו אלא של כל העם. אולם כל זה הוא במלך בשר ודם, אבל אצל הקב"ה הרי "בטרים כל יציר נברא לבדו ימלוך נורא", לכך יכול למחול על כבודו כי הכבוד שלו הוא. וזה שמצינו: בכל מקום שאתה מוצא גדולתו אתה מוצא ענותנותו (מנוכח י"ג), כי זו גופא גדולתו שיכול למחול על כבודו, כי הכל שלו.

וזת שנאמר: "מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד ה' צבאות הוא מלך הכבוד סלה", כי מלך בשר ודם הכבוד מושל עליו, כי אינו יכול למחול על כבודו, מה שאין כן אצל ה', הוא מלך הכבוד שמושל על כבודו.