



Starting with Kiddush

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*Our learning is dedicated by Raquel and Jason Goldberg
in memory of their daughter Temima a"h*

1. Taanit 16a

אמר רב אדא בר אבהו אדם שיש בידו עברה ומתנדב ואינו חוזר בה למה הוא דומה? לאדם שתופס שרץ בידו שאפ' טובל בכל מימות שבעולם לא עלתה לו טבילה ורקו מידו כיון שטבל בארבעים סאה מיד עלתה לו טבילה.

Rav Adda bar Ahava said: A person who has a transgression in his hand, and he confesses but does not repent for his sin, to what is he comparable? To a person who holds in his hand a dead creeping animal, which renders one ritually impure by contact. As in this situation, even if he immerses in all the waters of the world, his immersion is ineffective for him, as long as the source of ritual impurity remains in his hand. However, if he has thrown the animal from his hand, once he has immersed in a ritual bath of forty se'ah, the immersion is immediately effective for him (Steinsaltz Translation)

2. Tehillim 34:15

סור מרע ועשה טוב בקש שלום ורדפהו.

Turn away from evil, and do good; seek out peace, and pursue it.

3. Mekhilta DeRabbi Yishmael Bo 12:5

היה רבי מתיה בן חרש אומר: הרי הוא אומר: "ואעבר עליך, ואראך, והנה עתה עת דדים" (יחזקאל ט"ז:ח'), הגיע שבועתו שישבע הקב"ה לאברהם שיגאל את בניו, ולא היה בידם מצוות שייתעסקו בהם כדי שיגאלו, שנאמר: "... ואת ערם ועריה" (יחזקאל ט"ז:ז). ערם מכל מצוות. נתן להם הקב"ה שתי מצוות, דם פסח ודם מילה, שייתעסקו בהם כדי שיגאלו.

R. Matia b. Charash says: It is written (Ezekiel 16:8) "And I passed by you and I saw you, and behold, your time was the time for love": There had arrived the (time for the fulfillment of the) oath that the Holy One Blessed be He had sworn to our father Abraham to redeem his children. But they had no mitzvot to engage in, which would enable their redemption, viz. (Ibid. 7) ... "but you were naked and bare" (of mitzvot). And the Holy One Blessed be He gave them two mitzvot — the blood of the Paschal lamb and the blood of circumcision to engage in for their redemption. (Translation by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein, alhatorah.org)

4. Emet LeYaakov Bo (10:22)

פירש"י וז"ל: ולמה הביא עליהם חשך שהיו בישראל באותו הדור רשעים ולא היו רוצים לצאת ומתו בשלשת ימי אפלה וכו'. הגה אף שבאמת כל בני הדור ההוא לא היו נחשבים כצדיקים, שהרי מצינו שטענו מלאכי השרת הללו עובדי עבודה זרה והללו עבודה זרה, הרי שהמלאכים לא היו יכולים לראות שום הבדל בין ישראל למצרים, וא"כ מדוע מתו דוקא רשעים אלו ולא כל הרשעים. Rashi, may his memory be blessed, said: "Why did G-d bring darkness upon them? Because in that generation, there were wicked people in Israel who did not want to leave [Egypt], and they died during the three days of darkness, etc." Even though in truth, none of the people of that generation were considered righteous, as we find that these ministering angels accused some of them of worshiping foreign gods and others of doing the same. Since the angels were unable to distinguish between Israel and Egypt, why did only these wicked people die and not all the wicked ones?

5. Zohar Trumah 84:814

אלא בזמנא ד'ישראל' אעברו לגבי ימא, וב'עא קודשא בריה' הוא למקרע לון ימא דסוף, א'תא ר'ב' ה'הוא מ'מנא ד'על מ'צרים, וב'עא דינא מקמי קודשא בריה' הוא. אמר קמיה, מאריה ד'עלמא, אמאי את בעי למעבד דינא על מ'צרים, ולמקרע ימא לישראל, הא פ'להו ס'יבין קמיה, ו'כל א'ר'ק' ד'דינא וקשוט. אליון פ'לחי כוכבים ומזלות ואליון פ'לחי כוכבים ומזלות. אליון ב'גלוי ע'ריות, ואליון ב'גלוי ע'ריות. אליון אושדי דמין, ואליון אושדי דמין.

But at the time when the Israelites approached the sea, and the Holy One, blessed be He, wanted to split the Sea of Reeds for them, Rahab, the appointed guardian of Egypt, came and requested justice from the Holy One, blessed be He. He said before Him: Master of the Universe, why do You want to execute judgment on Egypt and split the sea for Israel? Behold, they are all wicked before You, and all Your ways are justice and truth. These worship idols, and these worship idols, these sin with illicit relations, and these sin with illicit relations, these shed blood, and these shed blood (adapted from Sulam translation, Rabbi Yehudah Ashlag)

6. From Bondage to Freedom, page 52-54

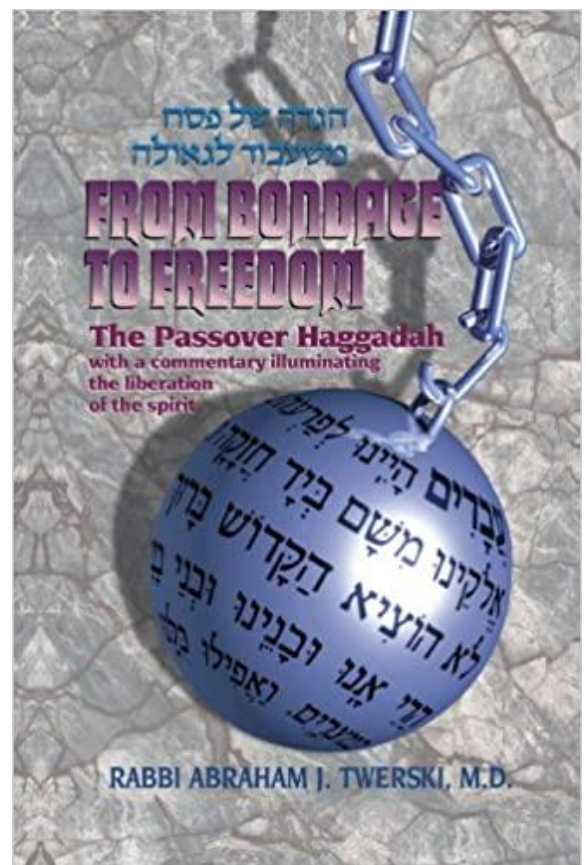
Kaddesh / Urechatz

In addition to dictating the order of the Seder, these words indicate an order that is unique to the Exodus. The word "kaddesh" means to sanctify, and can be taken as an imperative, "Sanctify yourself." Urechatz can also mean, "Cleanse yourself." Usually, cleansing oneself must precede sanctification ...

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!...

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 ...



7. Yoma 38b

אמר ריש לקיש מאי דכתיב {משלי ג':ל"ד} אם ללצים הוא יליץ ולענוים יתן חן בא לטמא פותחין לו בא לטהר מסייעין אותו תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל משל לאדם שהיה מוכר נפט ואפרסמון

Reish Lakish said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "If it concerns the scorners, He scorns them, but to the humble He gives grace" (Proverbs 3:34)? If one comes to impurify, they open before him the opportunity to exercise his free will and do as he pleases. If one comes to purify, they assist him.

יכול מראש חודש

Sarit Anstandig, BMZD Haggadah Night

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1. הגדה של פסח - **Passover Haggadah**

יכול מראש חֲדָשׁ? תלמוד לומר ביום ההוא. אי ביום ההוא יכול מבעוד יום? תלמוד לומר לומר בעבור זה – בעבור זה לא אמרתי, אלא בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מנחים לפניך.

It could be from Rosh Chodesh [that one would have to discuss the Exodus. However] we learn [otherwise, since] it is stated, "on that day." If it is [written] "on that day," it could be from while it is still day [before the night of the fifteenth of Nissan. However] we learn [otherwise, since] it is stated, "for the sake of this." I didn't say 'for the sake of *this*' except [that it be observed] when [*this*] matzah and maror are resting in front of you [meaning, on the night of the fifteenth]. [Sefaria]

2. פסחים ו: - **Pesachim 6b**

שואליו ודורשין בהלכות הפסח קודם הפסח שלשים יום. רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר: שתי שבטות.

One asks about and teaches the *halakhot* of Passover thirty days before Passover. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: One begins studying those *halakhot* two weeks before the Festival. [Sefaria]

3. רמב"ם הלכות חמץ ומצה זא: - **Maimonides, Laws of Chametz and Matzah 7:1**

מצות עשה של תורה לספר בנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים בליל חמשה עשר בניסן שנאמר (שמות יג ג) "זכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים" כמו שנאמר (שמות כ ה) "זכור את יום השבת".

It is a positive commandment of the Torah to relate the miracles and wonders wrought for our ancestors in Egypt on the night of the fifteenth of Nissan, as [Ex. 13:3] states: "Remember this day, on which you left Egypt," just as [Ex. 20:8] states: "Remember the Sabbath day." [Sefaria]

4. שמות יב:א-ב - **Exodus 2-12:1**

ויאמר ה' אלימשה ואליאהרן במצרים לאמר: החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה:

G-d said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of the months; it shall be the first of the months of the year for you. [Sefaria]

5. פירוש ספורנו על שמות יב:ב - **Commentary of Seforno on Exodus 12:2**

החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים. מכאן ואילך יהיו החדשים שלכם, לעשות בהם כרצונכם, אבל בימי השעבוד לא היו ימיכם שלכם, אבל היו לעבודת אחרים ורצונם, לפיכך ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה. כי בו התחיל מציאותכם בבחירי:

"This month shall be for you": from now on these months will be yours, to do with as you like. However, when you were enslaved, your days were not your own, but were for the service of others and their desires. Therefore, this is the beginning for you of the months of the year - because now begins your free existence. [My translation].

6. פרקי אבות ו:ב - 6:2 Ethics of the Fathers

"והלוחות מעשה אלוקים המה והמכתב מכתב אלוקים הוא חרות על הלוחות", אל תקרא חרות אלא חירות, שאין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתלמוד תורה.

"And the tablets were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d, graven upon the tablets" (Ex. 32:16). Read not *haruth* ['graven'] but *heruth* ['freedom']. For there is no free man but one that occupies himself with the study of the Torah. [Sefaria]

7. ברוך שאמר על ההגדה - Baruch She'amar Commentary on the Haggadah

מה ההפסד בזה אם יספרו להבנים מענין יציאת מצרים מראש חודש או מבעוד יום... הדבר מתבלט אך ורק במעשה בפועל... וכן משמע במס' שבת (ס"ט ב') במי שתעה במדבר ושכח איזה יום שבת מונה ששה ימים ושובת יום אחד, ופריך, וההוא יומא במאי מינכר ל' — בקידושא והבדלתא. — הרי... צריך לזה איזו פעולה... וכן כאן, היכר סיפור הדברים הוא רק בשעה שמצה ומרור מונחים על השולחן.

What loss is there if a person retells the exodus story to his children from rosh chodesh or from the day before [Passover] ... the matter only becomes clear with an explicit action... this is also clear in Shabbat 69:b about one who is lost in the desert and forgets what day is shabbat - he counts six days and then rests for one day, and [the Talmud] asks: how will he make [Shabbat] distinct? With kiddush and havdalah. Clearly, it requires a particular action... So too here, the recognition of the telling of the story is only at the time when matzah and maror are placed on the table. [My translation]

8. From Bondage to Freedom, by Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, pp. 84-85

In earlier times it was thought that the approach to solving a behavioral or emotional problem was to analyze it carefully so that one could obtain "insight" into the origin of the problem, how the problem developed, and what particular meaning the symptom had for the individual... The only trouble with this very logical theory is that it frequently does not work. Patients are likely to say, "Doctor, I understand everything thoroughly, but I don't feel any different." Modern psychology has therefore taken a different approach: Change behavior first, and insight will eventually follow. Merely meditating on the meaning of the Exodus may indeed result in attaining intellectual insight, but this may not contribute much to spiritual growth. One must eat the dry matzah, the bread of affliction which was the mainstay of our ancestors' diet because it was the cheapest thing available to fill the slave's stomach and to satiate his hunger. One must eat the bitter herbs and "taste" bitterness, to identify with the bitterness of their oppression. These symbolic acts may sufficiently reinforce the message of the Exodus so that it has an impact on how we feel and consequently on how we behave, rather than being a mental experience which may be intellectually stimulating, but emotionally unproductive.

Haggadah Night II 5783: Yaakov Did Not Intend to Settle in Egypt

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Question

1. Our Haggadah, based on Sifri Devarim 301

...מלמד שלא ירד יעקב אבינו להשתקע במצרים אלא לגור שם, שנאמר: ויאמרו אל־פרעה לגור בארץ באנו...

"And he sojourned there" – This teaches that Yaakov did not descend to settle in Egypt, but to sojourn there, as it says: And he said to Pharaoh, we have come to sojourn in the land...

2. Yeshayahu 52:4

...מְצָרִים יָרַד עַמִּי בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה לְגוֹר שָׁם...

...My nation descended to Egypt at first, to sojourn there...

Question: Why do we emphasize Yaakov's change in plans?

Answer #1: An Ant-Egypt Polemic

3. Sojourning and leaving Bereishit 12:10 (Avraham and Sarah)

4. A Bad Sojourning Yirmiyahu 42:13-22, 44:7-14, 44:24-29, 43:2

Answer #2: Unexpected Reversals, and Destiny

5. Examples in the text of the Haggadah

- Lavan sought to uproot everything
- Yaakov intended to sojourn in Egypt
- Your ancestors descended to Egypt as just 70
- "Let us be wise with him, lest he become many"

6. Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, *Kol Dodi Dofek*, Gordon translation

First, the knock of the Beloved was heard in the political arena. From the point of view of international relations, no one will deny that the rebirth of the State of Israel, in a political sense, was an almost supernatural occurrence... I do not know who the representatives of the press, with their human eyes, saw to be the chairman in that fateful session of the General Assembly in which the creation of the State of Israel was decided, but he who looked carefully with his spiritual eye saw the true Chairman who conducted the proceedings — the Beloved. He knocked with his gavel on the lectern.

7. The conversation that led us down to Egypt Bereishit 15

8. Talmud, Nedarim 32a

א"ר אבהו א"ר אלעזר: מפני מה נענש אברהם אבינו ונשתעבדו בניו למצרים מאתים ועשר שנים? מפני שעשה אנגרייא בת"ח שנאמר "וירק את הניכיו ילידי ביתו." ושמואל אמר מפני שהפריז על מדותיו של הקב"ה שנא' "במה אדע כי אירשנה." ורבי יוחנן אמר שהפריש בני אדם מלהכנס תחת כנפי השכינה שנאמר "תן לי הנפש והרכוש קח לך."

Rabbi Avahu asked, citing Rabbi Elazar: Why was Avraham Avinu punished, and why were his descendants enslaved in Egypt for 210 years? Because he enlisted talmidei chachamim... And Shemuel said: Because he exceeded propriety regarding Divine conduct... And Rabbi Yochanan said: Because he kept people from entering the Divine presence...

9. Beyond the text, the body of the Seder itself emphasizes foiled expectations

- We do things in unusual ways, to inspire questions (Pesachim 108b-109a, 114b, etc.)
- We proclaim, "How different is this night, from all other nights!" (Aruch haShulchan Orach Chaim 473:21)
- The haste of the original Seder (Shemot 12:11)
- We eat matzah to remember that the Jews left in a rush (Devarim 16:3, see Ran Pesachim 25b *b'dapei Rif*)
- This year we are here, next year in Israel! This year we are here, next year we are free!