



1. Exodus 12:26-27

(כו) וה'ה כִּי־אָמְרוּ אֲלֵיכֶם בְּנֵיכֶם מֶה הָעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם: (כז) וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבְחַ־פֶּסַח הוּא לָהּ אֲשֶׁר פָּסַח עַל־בְּתִי בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנֹגְפוֹ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם וְאֶת־בְּתֵינוּ הִצִּיל וַיִּקַּד הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ:

(26) And when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this rite?' (27) you shall say, 'It is the passover sacrifice to the LORD, because He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but saved our houses.'" The people then bowed low in homage.

2. Exodus 13:3

(ג) וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל־הָעָם זָכוֹר אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים כִּי בָחַזַק יָד הוֹצִיאָהּ אֶתְכֶם מִזֶּה וְלֹא יֵאָכֵל חֻמֶּץ:

(3) And Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of bondage, how the LORD freed you from it with a mighty hand: no leavened bread shall be eaten."

3. Exodus 13:8

(ח) וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי בְצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:

(8) And you shall explain to your son on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I went free from Egypt.'

4. Exodus 13:14

(יד) וְהָיָה כִּי־שֶׁאֵלָךְ בֶּנְךָ מִתָּר לֵאמֹר מַה־זֹּאת וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בָּחַזַק יָד הוֹצִיאָנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים:

(14) And when, in time to come, your son asks you, saying, 'What does this mean?' you shall say to him, 'It was with a mighty hand that the LORD brought us out from Egypt, the house of bondage.'

5. Deuteronomy 6:20-21

(כ) כִּי־שֶׁאֵלָךְ בֶּנְךָ מִתָּר לֵאמֹר מַה הָעֲדוּת וְהַחֲקִים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶתְכֶם: (כא) וְאָמַרְתָּ לְבִנְךָ עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיּוֹצִיאָנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה:

(20) When, in time to come, your children ask you, "What mean the decrees, laws, and rules that the LORD our G-d has enjoined upon you?" (21) you shall say to your children, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and the LORD freed us from Egypt with a mighty hand."

6. Deuteronomy 16:3

(ג) לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חֻמֶּץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מִצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֲנִי כִּי בַחֲפוֹז יֵצְאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִמְעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

(3) You shall not eat anything leavened with it; for seven days thereafter you shall eat unleavened bread, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live.

7. Mishneh Torah, Leavened and Unleavened Bread 7:1-6

(א) מִצּוֹת עָשָׂה שֶׁל תוֹרָה לִסְפֵּר בְּנִסִּים וּנְפִלָאוֹת שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּלֵיל חֲמִשָּׁה עֶשֶׂר בְּנִיסָן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שְׁמוֹת יג ג) "זָכוֹר אֶת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם" כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שְׁמוֹת כ ח) "זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת". וּמִנֵּין שֶׁבְּלֵיל חֲמִשָּׁה עֶשֶׂר תִּלְמֹד לֹמֵר (שְׁמוֹת יג ח) "וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בַּעֲבוּר זֶה" בְּשָׁעָה שֵׁשׁ מִצֵּה וּמְרוֹר מִנְחִים לִפְנֵיךְ. וְאָף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ בֵּן. אֶפְלוּ חֲכָמִים גְּדוֹלִים חִבְּבִים לִסְפֹּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם וְכָל הַמֵּאֲרִיד בְּדִבְרֵים שֶׁאֲרָעוּ וְשֶׁהָיוּ הָרִי זֶה מִשְׁבַּח:

(ב) מִצְוָה לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָנִים וְאֶפְלוּ לֹא שָׁאֲלוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שְׁמוֹת יג ח) "וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ". לִפִּי דַעְתּוֹ שֶׁל בֵּן אָבִיו מִלְּמַדּוֹ. כִּי־צַד. אִם הָיָה קָטָן אוֹ טַפֵּשׁ אוֹמֵר לוֹ בְּנִי כָּלֵנוּ הָיִינוּ עֲבָדִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁפָּתַח זוֹ אוֹ כְּמוֹ עֶבֶד זֶה בְּמִצְרַיִם וּבְלֵילָה הַזֶּה פָּדָה אוֹתָנוּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וַיּוֹצִיאָנוּ לְחֵירוֹת. וְאִם הָיָה הֵבֶן גְּדוֹל וְחָכָם מוֹדִיעוֹ מֶה שֶׁאֲרָע לָנוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְנִסִּים שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ לָנוּ עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ הִכָּל לִפִּי דַעְתּוֹ שֶׁל בֵּן:

(ג) וְצִרִיד לַעֲשׂוֹת שְׁנוֵי בְלֵילָה הַזֶּה כְּדִי שֶׁיִּרְאוּ הַבָּנִים וַיִּשְׁאֲלוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֶה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל הַלֵּילוֹת עַד שֶׁיִּשְׁיֵב לָהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם כָּךְ וְכָךְ אֲרָע וְכָךְ הָיָה. וְכִי־צַד מִשְׁנָה. מִחֲלָק לָהֶם קִלְיוֹת וְאֶגְזִיזִים וְעוֹקְרִים הַשְּׁלֶחַן מִלִּפְנֵיהֶם קֵדָם שֶׁיֵּאָכְלוּ וְחוֹטְפִין מִצֵּה זֶה מִיד זֶה וְכִי־צֵא בְּדִבְרֵים הָאֵלּוּ. אֵין לוֹ בֵּן אֲשֶׁתּוֹ שׁוֹאֲלָתוֹ. אֵין לוֹ אִשָּׁה שׁוֹאֲלִין זֶה אֶת זֶה מֶה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה. וְאֶפְלוּ הָיוּ כָּלֵן חֲכָמִים. הָיָה לְבָדוֹ שׁוֹאֵל לַעֲצֹמוֹ מֶה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה:

(ד) וְצִרִיד לְהַתְחִיל בְּגִנוּת וְלִסִּים בְּשִׁבַּח. כִּי־צַד. מִתְחִיל וּמִסְפֵּר שֶׁבִּתְחִלָּה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בִּימֵי תִּרְחַ וּמִלִּפְנֵי כּוֹפְרִים וְטוֹעִין אַחֵר הַהֵבֶל וְרוֹדְפִין אַחֵר עֲבוּדַת אֱלִילִים. וּמִסִּים בְּדַת הָאֱמַת שֶׁקִּרְבָּנוּ הַמָּקוֹם לוֹ וְהַבְדִּילָנוּ מֵהָאֱמוּנוֹת וְקִרְבָּנוּ לִיְחֻדוֹ. וְכֵן מִתְחִיל וּמוֹדִיעַ שֶׁעֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וְכָל הָרָעָה שֶׁגָּמְלָנוּ וּמִסִּים בְּנִסִּים וּבְנִפְלָאוֹת שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ לָנוּ וּבְחֵירוֹתֵנוּ. וְהוּא שֶׁיִּדְרֹשׁ מִ(דְּבָרִים כו ה) "אֲרָמִי אֲבָד אָבִי" עַד שֶׁיִּגְמֹר כָּל הַפְּרָשָׁה. וְכָל הַמוֹסִיף וּמֵאֲרִיד בְּדִרֵּשׁ פְּרָשָׁה זוֹ הָרִי זֶה מִשְׁבַּח:

(ה) כָּל מִי שֶׁלֹּא אָמַר שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ בְּלֵיל חֲמִשָּׁה עֶשֶׂר לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חוּבָתוֹ וְאֵלּוּ הֵן. פֶּסַח מִצֵּה וּמְרוֹר. פֶּסַח עַל שׁוֹם שֶׁפָּסַח הַמָּקוֹם עַל בְּתִי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שְׁמוֹת יב כז) "וְאָמַרְתֶּם זִבְחַ פֶּסַח הוּא לָהּ" וְגו'. מְרוֹר עַל שׁוֹם שֶׁמְרָרוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים אֶת חַיֵּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם. מִצֵּה עַל שֵׁם שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר. וְדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ כָּלֵן נִקְרְאוּן הַגָּדָה:

(ו) בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר חֵיב אָדָם לְהִרְאוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּאֵלּוּ הוּא בְּעַצְמוֹ יֵצֵא עֵתָה מִשְׁעֶבֶד מִצְרַיִם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דְּבָרִים ו כג) "וְאוֹתָנוּ הוֹצִיא מִשֵּׁם" וְגו'. וְעַל דְּבַר זֶה צִוָּה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּתוֹרָה וְזִכְרָתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ כְּלוֹמֵר כְּאֵלּוּ אֶתָּה בְּעַצְמְךָ הָיִיתָ עֶבֶד וַיֵּצֵאתָ לְחֵירוֹת וּנְפִדְתָּ:

(1) According to a biblical positive command, we must tell on the night preceding the fifteenth day of *Nisan* all about the miracles and wonders that were performed for our forefathers in Egypt.— Even great scholars are required to tell about the exodus from Egypt. Anyone who relates at length about the events that occurred deserves praise.

(2) It is one's duty to inform the children even if they ask no questions, as it is written: "You shall tell your son" (Exodus 13:8). The father should instruct his son according to the child's understanding. For example, he should say to one small or foolish: "My son, all of us were slaves in Egypt, like this maidservant or like this manservant, and on this night G-d redeemed and liberated us." If the son is grown up and intelligent, he should inform him about everything that happened to us in Egypt, and about the miracles that were wrought for us by our teacher Moses; all in accordance with the son's understanding.

(3) On the first night of *Pesach*, one should introduce some change at the table, so that the children who will notice it may ask, saying: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" And he in turn will reply: "This is what happened." In what manner, for example, should he introduce a change? He may distribute parched grain or nuts to the children; remove the table from its usual place; snatch the unleavened bread from hand to hand, and so on. If he has no son, his wife should ask the questions; if he has no wife, they should ask one another: "Why is this night different?"—even if they are all scholars. If one is alone, he should ask himself: "Why is this night different?"

(4) And it's necessary to start with degradation and to finish with praise. How? Start by telling that in the beginning our ancestors, in the days of Terach and before him, were heretics and they followed foolishness, and they chased after idol worship. And finish with the truth that G-d brought us close to Him and set us apart from the nations and brought us close to His oneness. And thus start with telling that we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and all of the bad things that he did to us and finish with the miracles and wonders that were done for us in our freedom. And that's why you drash from (Deut 26:5) 'My father was a wandering Aramean...' through that whole section. And anybody who adds and lengthens the drash of this section, that is praiseworthy.

(5) Anybody who does not say these three things on the night of the 15th has not fulfilled his obligation, and these are them: Pesach, matzah, and maror. Pesach because The Place passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt as it is said (Exodus 12:27) "And you shall say 'This is a Pesach offering for G-d'" Maror because the Egyptians embittered (*mer'ru*) the lives of our ancestors in Egypt. Matzah because we were redeemed. And all of these things are called 'Hagadah'

(6) In each and every generation, a man is obligated to show himself as though he himself went out now from the slavery of Egypt as it is said (Deuteronomy 6:23) "And He took us out of there, etc." and on account of this thing, the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded in the Torah "And you shall remember that you were a slave," that is to say as though you yourself were a slave and you went out to freedom and you were redeemed.

8. Shut HaRosh 24:2

וששאלת: למה אין מברכין על ספור ההגדה. הרבה דברים צוה הקדוש ברוך הוא לעשות זכר ליציאת מצרים ואין אנו מברכין עליה; כגון: הפרשת בכורות וכל המועדים. שאין צריך להזכיר בהפרשת בכורות שאנו עושין אותו זכר ליציאת מצרים, אלא שצוה הקדוש ברוך הוא לעשות המעשה ומתוך כך אנו זוכרין יציאת מצרים. ולאו דוקא הגדה בפה, אלא אם ישאל מפרשין לו (וזהו ההגדה לבד שזוכרין יציאת מצרים).

Q: And regarding that which you asked - why don't we make a blessing on the story in the Haggadah?

A. There are many things that the Holy One Blessed be He commanded be done to commemorate leaving Egypt and we do not make blessings on them, such as the separating of the firstborns and all the holidays. For we do not need to mention when we separate the firstborns that we are doing this to commemorate leaving Egypt; rather the Holy One Blessed be He commanded us to perform the action, and because of this we remember leaving Egypt. And this is not necessarily through verbal telling. Rather, if he asks, we explain it to him. (This is the Haggadah, besides for remembering commemorating leaving Egypt.)

9. Alhatorah.org

Era of the Mikdash – The Rosh's understanding of the commandment is very logical for the time of the Mikdash, when the Pesach was the highlight of the evening. Each family, in sacrificing a lamb and eating it with matza and maror, effectively re-enacted the original Pesach offering. As such there was no real necessity to verbally relay the story. That said, it was also very likely that the act itself would have elicited questions and led into a discussion of the Exodus.

Different modes of learning – According to the Rosh, the night is experiential in nature. If "a picture is worth a thousand words," then a dramatic re-enactment might be worth even more.

10. Questions

Does the Rosh mean (1) that this is a wordless story or (2) that the mitzvah is to commemorate rather than remember? While (1) might make more sense for seder night, does it make sense for the examples the Rosh gives? Does (2) explain this, and perhaps all the ethical mitzvot that are "*zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim*"? This also make Rosh more different from Rambam.