

אבל בשעה שהגיע הזמן הנשגב הלז, כשיצאו ישראל מצרים, אז הבינו למפרע, שכל היסורים והמכאובים שעברו על ראשם עד עתה בארץ מצרים, היה הכל על פי סדר נכון ומדויקדק, בכדי שלבסוף יגיעו אל התכלית הנרצה להיות במזעלת 'בני בכורי ישראל' (שמות ה, כב), ולא היה סבלם להבל ולרדיק. על פי זה יתכן לתת טעם נוסף למה נקרא שמו 'ליל הסדר', כי בלילה הזה התגלה שאי מקרה בעולם כלל, אלא הכל מתנהג על פי סדר מיוחד שנסדר על ידי קורא הדידות מראש, אפילו המאורעות שלעניי בשך נראים כמקרים רעים גם הם אינם אלא חלק קטן מתוך מהלך וחשבון גדול אשר אין אתנו יודע עד מה, ומי יבוא בסודם של דברים העומדים בכבשוננו של עולם.

עדותיך אתבונן

כל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים היה זה משובח ... (הגדה של פסח) - בענין מקמא של מצות סיפור יציאת מצרים ויסוד ויורש האמונה
ה'ספר הוידוּך כתב בביאור מצות סיפור יציאת מצרים (מצוה כ"א) וז"ל, "משרשי מצוה זו, מה שכתוב בקרבן הפסח ואין מן היתמיה אם באו לנו מצוות רבות על זה, מצוות עשה ומצוות לא תעשה, כי הוא יסוד גדול ועמוד חזק בתורתנו ובאמונתנו. ועל כן אנו אומרים לעולם בברכותינו ובתפלותינו וזכר ליציאת מצרים, לפי שהוא לנו אות ומופת גמור בחידוש העולם, וכי אי אלוך קדמון חפץ ויכול, פועל כל הנמצאות אל הים שהם עליו, ובידו לשנומם אל הים שיחפוץ בכל זמן מן הזמנים כמו שעשה במצרים ששינה טבעי העולם שבבילגו, ועשה לנו אותות מחודשים גדולים ועצומים, הלא זה משתק כל כופר בחידוש העולם, ומקיים האמונה בידיעת השם יתברך, וכי השגחתו ויכלתו בכללים ובפרטים כולם," עכ"ל.

הרי מבואר מדבריו שהתכלית במצות סיפור יציאת מצרים הוא לחזק והשרש בלבנו עיקרי יסודות האמונה בהש"ת. וזהו התכלית בכל הו"ט של פסח, ובאמת כבר האריך **הרמב"ן** (סוף פרשת בא) בענין זה, שכל הנסים שנעשו בגאולת מצרים, היה לתכלית הוה, להשריש האמונה בתוך לבבו של כל אחד ואחד. שמתוך הנסים הגלויים אדם מודה גם על הנסים הנסתרים. וכל זה איכילל בכלל האמונה "אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים", ולא כתיב: "אשר בראתי שמים וארץ?" ותידעו, דאפשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים, ומלות, וכדומה: ואינו נוהג בהשגחת הש"ת. ועל זה נאמר: "אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים" - ר"ל, דמעיקרי האמונה הוא להאמין בהשגחה פרטית, שהעולם נוהג לגמרי בהשגחת הקב"ה, ואינו נוהג כלל על פי דרך הטבע, ואין שום כח לכוחות הטבע. וזה נתגלה ביציאת מצרים, שהקב"ה גילה השגחתו לעיני כל, שאין שום טבע בעולם, והש"ת הוא המנהיג את כל עניני הטבע, וברצונו הוא 'כל יכול' לשנות את הטבע כרצונו.

ובאמת, מצינו יסוד זה, בדברי **הרמב"ם** (הל' הו"מ פ"ו, הל' א') שכתב לבאר זה שיש חובת סיפור יציאת מצרים בליל פסח וז"ל, "מצות עשה של תורה לספר בנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים בליל חמשה עשר בניסן, שנאמר: וזכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם מצרים, כמו שנאמר: וזכור את יום השבת", עכ"ל. הרי הרמב"ם

דרגה יתירה

Everyone is obligated to see themselves as if they left over." Our holiday is named after the fact that the Jewish people put blood on the inside of their doorposts during Makas Bechoros and Hashem passed over their houses and only killed the firstborn Egyptians. The blood was put there not for Hashem, but for the Yidden themselves to see that they are Jews. To be happy and proud that they are not like them. We are truly so lucky to be Hashem's chosen nation. In fact the first words that Moshe said to Pharaoh is that Hashem calls *Am Yisroel*, "Bni Bechori Yisroel." My beloved firstborn son. Pharaoh represents the *yetzer hara*. The very

סדר לכל השנת אף יתכן להעמיס הארה זאת בכוננת דבריו של **דהה"ק בעל הבית אהרן יודע** (פו. ד"ה חסל סידור פסח), שאמר בשם אביו **דהה"ק רבי אשר מסטאלין יודע**: "שמעטעם זה נקרא ספור הגדה סדר, כי זהו סדר על כל השנה", ואולי כוונת קדשו לומר שעתה בליל הסדר נעשה סדר ובהידות המחשבה לכל השנה כולה, כי בהגיע הלילה הקדוש הזה אשר בו מאיר אור האמונה הטוהרה, וע"י סיפור גלות ויציאת האדם נוכח לראות שכל הצער וכל היסורים שבאים על האדם, וכן גם כל הישועות והנחמות, אינם בדרך מקרה כלל, אלא הכל מתנהג בהשבון וסדר מופלא ע"י הקב"ה שהוא מקור הטוב והרחמים, וידיעה זו משפיע סדר לאדם, שגם כל השנה כולה יוכל לחיות עם הדיעה וההכרה הזאת שיידע שיש סדר בעולם.

דימה החובה בליל פסח לספר ביציאת מצרים - לחובת זכירת יום השבת, כמו שנאמר וזכור את יום השבת לקדשו. ודבריו תמוהים מאוד, דמהו השייכות בין זכירת שבת למצות סיפור יציאת מצרים?

ויש לבאר דברי הרמב"ם בהקדם קו' המפרשים על שבת הגדול. רהנה **המחבר** כתב (ס' ת"ל): "שבת שלפני הפסח קורין אותו שבת הגדול, מפני הנס שנעשה בו", ע"כ. הרי השבת קודם פסח נקרא "שבת הגדול". וביאור המשנה בירדה כתב לבאר דברי המחבר "לפני הנס שנעשה בו" וז"ל: "שבשנה שיצאו מצרים היה עשרה בניסן ביום שבת, ולקחו כל אחד מישראל שה לפסחו, וקשרו בכרעי המטה... והמצרים ראו זה ושאלום למה זה לכם? והשיבו לחשוטו לשם פסח במצות ה' עליו. והיו שנידים קרות על ששוחטין את אלהיהם ולא היו רשאים לומר לום דבר. ומפני שאז היה עשירי בחודש בשבת, ע"כ קבעו לקרות שבת שלפני הפסח לעולם שבת הגדול", עכ"ל. המפרשים הק' על טעם זה, שנס זה נעשה בעשירי בניסן, א"כ מדוע קבעו חז"ל זכר לנס זה דוקא בשבת שלפני חג הפסח, הרי היה לקבוע הזכר ביום שנעשה בו הנס, והיינו בעשירי בניסן? ות' **הערך השלח** (שם) ת"י באופן אור מדוע קבעו זכר הנס דוקא ביום השבת וז"ל: "יעוד י"ל, דהאמת רשבת תלוי בפסח, ופסח בשבת, רשבת הוא אות על חידוש העולם, ופסח הוא אות על השגחה וחיבת ישראל, וזה בלא זה לאו כלום הוא, כמוכן. ולכן יתיכן ביציאת מצרים נתן הקב"ה לנו את השבת, ולא המתין על מתן תורה, לפי שפסח הכרח לשבת, ושבת הכרח לפסח, לפיכך שבת זה נקרא 'הגדול' שבו נתגדל הקב"ה, שלכך חידוש העולם, נתבררה השגחתו יתברך, וגם אנתנו נתגדלנו שבהו בנו מכל עם, ולכן באמת קורין אותו הגדול", עכ"ל.

הרי מבואר מדבריו, שייסוד בשבת הגדול, הוא ענין גדול שמקושר עם פסח, ששבת מורה על חידוש העולם, שהש"ת ברא את העולם, ופסח מורה על השגחת וחיבת הש"ת, שהוא השליט על כל העולם כולו, ואינו נוהג בחוקי הטבע, וכיון שהם תלוי זה בזה, קבעו חז"ל זכר להנס דוקא ביום השבת.

וא"כ לפי זה יש לבאר דברי הרב"ם בטוב טעם ודעת, שכל יהודי חייב להאמין שהש"ת ברא את העולם, וגם שהוא המנהיג את העולם, והוא השליט, ואין שום כח אחרת. וזה נתגלה לנו בשעת יציאת מצרים ע"י כל הנסים גלויים, וא"כ מובן היטב, ששבת ופסח שנינים הם לתכלית אחת, והיינו לקבוע בלבנו של כל יהודי האמונה בהש"ת, ואין עוד מלבדו. ושבת מורה שהש"ת הוא הבורא עולם, ופסח מורה שהוא השליט על הכל, וזהו כוונת הרב"ם, שזכירת יציאת מצרים הוא כמו זכירת ששבת, שהם שני עניני שמשלימים זה את זה.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא מצרים ... (סדר הגדה של פסח)

Everyone is obligated to see themselves as if they left *Mitzrayim*. There are three ideas that we actually say at the *seder* that can help us get out of *Mitzrayim*. "Rabbi Gamliel says, "Whoever does not say these three words has not fulfilled his obligation: PESACH, MATZAH, and MAROR."

Which obligation? Well, since one is OBLIGATED to see himself as if he came out of *Mitzrayim*, these three words must be said, in order for a person to leave his own personal enslavement. Let us explain. Step 1 to getting out of *Mitzrayim* is PESACH. The word *Pesach* means to "Pass

Yiddishkeit; unless faced with extenuating circumstances, there is no compromising or changing the will of *Hashem*. This basic tenant is what has allowed us to survive for so many thousands of years, and it is this important concept that we reiterate year after year at this special time of year.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

וערבה לה' מנחת יהודה וירושלם כימי עולם וכשנים קדמוניות ... (מלאכי ג-ד) - הפטרה לשבת הגדול
 without any ulterior motives. Until one day, when the two friends' children decided to marry. Suddenly, the two began making calculations about how much each side was going to pledge as support for the new couple. The *Dubno Maggid* explains that before the new connection, there was no obligation and so the gifts were appreciated simply out of goodwill, but now that an obligation had been created between them, suddenly the goodwill evaporates, and each side begins to make extensive calculations.

So too, the special relationship that *Hashem* has with the *Avos* was one without calculations. He gave and gave without question. But then *Klal Yisroel* accepted the *Torah*, and suddenly there were obligations between the Jewish Nation and *Hashem*, and when the Jews don't fulfill their obligations, *Hashem* "doesn't want" to fulfill His obligations either. Thus, Malachi was pining for the days of yore when the relationship between *Hashem* and *Klal Yisroel* was one where the Almighty was all too happy to continue giving to us, His beloved Nation, without reservation.

ויאמר ה' אל יהושע היום גלותי את הרפת מצרים מעליכם ... (יהושע ה-ט) - הפטרה ליום ראשון של פסח

people's *mazel* was full of misfortune. They were persecuted relentlessly and endured untold suffering. And even after *Hashem* began punishing the Egyptians, *Klal Yisroel's* lot in life may have improved slightly, but it remained pretty much the same. They were still slaves for Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

But that all changed by *Yetzias Mitzrayim* when the Egyptians saw "the star of blood" in the clouds. Suddenly, their whole world began to rapidly fall apart and in only a matter of hours the once mighty Egyptian nation sunk to the bottom of the ocean, never to be heard from again. That "star of blood" was symbolic of the blood of the *mitzvah* of *Bris Milah* that *Klal Yisroel* were going to perform in the near future, as well as a drastic change in the Jewish national *mazel*. They were now free people! לשנה הבאה בירושלם הבטיח

avoid offending anyone or mixing into politics!"
נמשל' The most famous reason for the name "*Shabbos Hagadol*" as quoted in the *Shulchan Aruch*, is to remember how the *Yidden* in *Mitzrayim* fearlessly took the Gods of the Egyptians and tied it to their beds. This forms the basis of

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN

Contrary to the other *HafTOROS* read throughout the year – including the four special *HafTOROS* of the "*Arba Parshiyos*", the *HafTORah* of *Shabbos HaGadol* is unique in the fact that it is one of only two *HafTOROS* that is not linked to any *Parsha*.

Malachi HaNavi opens the *HafTORah* with the statement; "*And the offerings of Yehuda and Yerushalayim shall be pleasing to Hashem as in the days and years of old ...*" This is a continuation of an earlier prophecy in which Malachi predicts that a time will come when *Hashem* sends an angel to cleanse *Bnei Yisroel*. The wicked Jews will be purged and those who remain will then be able to serve *Hashem* with the proper respect and devotion. But how can we say that the *korbanos* will be pleasing as in the days of old when in fact those days the Jewish people's observance was not up to par?

The *Dubno Maggid, R' Yaakov Kranz z"l* explains that *Hashem* has a special love reserved for the *Avos* which has never been replicated ever again despite the many great people who came after them. It is analogous to two friends who would give each other gifts as a token of their friendship

מקליכם ... (יהושע ה-ט) - הפטרה ליום ראשון של פסח

The *HafTORah* for the first day of *Pesach* describes the preparations in Gilgul of the first *Pesach* celebration outside of Egypt under the leadership of *Yehoshua Bin Nun*. *Hashem* tells *Yehoshua* "היום גלותי את חרפת מצרים" – "*today I have rolled away ... the disgrace of Mitzrayim*." *Chazal* say that this was a reference to a vision of "the star of blood" which the Egyptians saw hovering over the Jewish people at the time of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. What does this all mean and what did this star symbolize?

R' Yonason Eibenschutz z"l (Ahavas Yonason) explains that a person is born with a certain "*mazel*" which sets the tone for his life, both for good or bad. There is also something known as a "national fortune" which sets the general tone of a nation as a whole. In Egypt, the Jewish

בין הריחים - תבלין מדף היוכמי - נזר סו:

Rav told his son חייא try to get the ברכה and make the ברכה. [רש"י ברכות נג:]. The **רא"ש** learns that by all one should be יודי and recite the ברכה. The *Gemara* asks from a ברייתא that says "גדול העונה אמן יותר מן המברך" which implies that answering is better than reciting the ברכה. The *Gemara* explains the reason is that often the one listening and being יוצא has more *kavana* than the one מוציא (who is focused on making the ברכה properly). The **תוס' הראש** explains that the ברכה is greater because he is the מוציא and the מברך and the מברך ואחד העונה אמן, במשמע One חנה holds holds both, meaning both the מברך and the מוציא are referring to the אמן and both receive the same משמע in the pasuk. - גדלו לה' אתי. referring to the מברך and the words "ונרוממה שמו יחדיו" are referring to the אמן and both receive the same משמע, except the מברך gets his שכר first. So רב in our *Gemara* holds like this שיטה that the מברך is עדיף because he receives שכר first.

The **רא"ש** says that when one is עולה לתורה and makes a ברכה the ציבור should be מכון and answer אמן and this could even be counted towards his ברכות for the day. The **מש"ב** says that by answering אמן it's like he made the ברכה himself. **רע"א** [בהגהרות] points out

first thing that every one of us must tell his *yetzer hara* is this. "Do you know who I am? I am a Jew. I am a precious beloved child of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. I cannot go there, wear that, talk like that. I am a *Yid* and *Yidden* are different." This is one of the greatest tactics to get out of the slavery that the *yetzer hara* puts us into. He tells us, "It's okay. Everyone is going there, everyone eats that, everyone dresses like that, so you can too." Tell him, "I am a YID who understands what it means to be a *Yid*. I cannot act like that, even if everyone is doing it, because I know where I come from."

Step 2 is MATZAH. *Matzah* is *Emunah*. It is called the bread of faith. With real *Emunah* a person can truly be free. Because if you think about it, what makes us feel stuck? It is the feeling that this is not the way it should be. I want to be married already. I want to have kids. I want a better job, a different place to live. I cannot get along with my sister, my spouse, or my friend. My medical situation is making me depressed. When we get down because we want things to be different, we are enslaved by our own emotions. We need to remind ourselves that everything is exactly the way it is supposed to be right now. Of course, I should *daven* to improve my situation, but if this is the way it is, then this is best for me. We have to remember that everything is under control, just not ours! *Hashem* has a plan, and if you would know what *Hashem* knows, you would do exactly the same thing. But we don't know the whole story, and that is why we must have *Emunah*. We must believe that *Hashem* is

אם על תודה יקריבנו ... (ויקרא א-יא)

The *Medrash* on this *posuk* quotes the verse in *Tehillim* "זבח תודה יכבדני" and expounds. It doesn't say "כבדני" rather "כבדני" - כבד אחר כבד. What is the *Medrash* trying to convey? The **Ksav Sofer ז"ל** explains that typically a person brings a *korban todah* on the salvation from a צרה but in reality one must thank *Hashem* for the plight and predicament as well. As *Chazal* teach us על "כשם שמברכים על הרעה" הטוב כך מברכים על הרעה. We are required to do so, even if not privy to the reason. We must believe it was for a good purpose. Hence when one brings a *todah*, and thanks *Hashem* for the *tzara* too, he is being *mechabed Hashem* twofold. Thus, "זבח תודה יכבדני" - *kavod achar kavod*.

The **Ksav Sofer** goes on to explain the end of the *posuk* based on the above. The *posuk* closes בישע ארואנו ושם דרך ארואנו בישע ארואנו, which is hard to understand. He explains that most people customarily don't see the ultimate good in the "bad." But if a person nevertheless strives to thank *Hashem* regardless, with *emunah* that all is for the good, he carves a path - ושם דרך - that, ארואנו - will show him בישע ארואנו, how all was indeed orchestrated for a purpose.

We have a *minhag* to recite a portion of the *haggadah* on *Shabbos Hagadol*. The **Vilna Gaon ז"ל** did not, because *Chazal* say "יכול מבעוד יום ת"ל אלא בשעה שיש מצה ומרור לפניך". Perhaps, a deeper *machshava* into the *Gra's* reasoning as

truly doing what is best for us and then we can go free, and get out of our enslavement of the *Mitzrayim* of our lives.

And step 3 is MARROR. *Marror* means Bitter. It is the bitterness in life that pulls us down. When looking back at a difficult time in life, a person will say, wow, I really grew from that difficulty. Had I not gone through that challenge, I would never be the person I am today. The bitterness in life is not an entity unto itself. It is part of a bigger picture.

The **Chiddushei HaRim** says that the word NES which means miracle, is comprised of 2 letters. A *nun* which stands for *nefila*, falling down, and *samech* which stands for *smicha*, which means support. The miracles that *Hashem* does for us are not only when He saves us. It is also the fact that we fell. If we would never experience falling down or darkness, we would never appreciate light. It is all one thing.

Bitterness is also an attitude. Some people can see the bitterness in a good situation and others see good in something bitter. Life is what we choose to see. The way to free ourselves from our slavery is by choosing to see the good in the bitter. On *Leil HaSeder* we don't eat *marror* alone. We dip it in *charoses*. *Charoses* is made up of all the sweet things that *Am Yisroel* is compared to in *Shir HaShirim* - nuts, wine, apples. Slavery is when we are drowning in bitterness. Freedom means focusing on the sweet. Let us not only say these words at the *seder*. Let us say them every day and internalize their message, so that we can truly get out of *Mitzrayim* this year and truly be free to be the best *Yidden* that we can be.

לעגלו נשמת אבנו מורנו ורבינו הרב חיים

וסף בן ר' ישראל אברהם קויפמאן זצ"ל

מחשבת הלב

Perhaps, a deeper *machshava* into the *Gra's* reasoning as follows. To be able to really tap into and experience the power of מצרים, the *matza* - the good, and the *marror* - the bad; the *tzara* and the salvation, have to be right in front of you. *Pesach* teaches us that directly from tough times sprouts forth a miraculous turn of events. But it was only after we left *Mitzrayim* that we saw it.

Chazal say that the night *Klal Yisroel* left *Mitzrayim* was bright as day. Based on the above, it fits beautifully. They saw even during the darkness, that there was a master plan and was therefore illuminated יום. כאור יום. May we be *zoche* to see the salvation of *Hashem*, not only with our faith, but ונאכל שם מן הובחים ומן הפסחים במהרה. אראנו בישע ארואנו!

כנגד ד' בנים דברה תורה - חכם מה הוא אומר ... (הגדה של פסח)

One of the most anticipated moments on the Jewish calendar is the הסדר לבנך. The *mitzvah* of לבנך plays a vital role on this night. **R' Avrohom Erlanger ז"ל** notes that the *trop* on the words "הגדת לבנך" is זקף קטן, which can loosely translate to "straighten a child", helping him to stand. This as we know, is the focal point of the *seder* and all year round; nurturing our children and enabling them to stand firm and erect, on their own, as *ehrlliche yidden*.

This excerpt of the *haggadah* evokes a hodgepodge of

returned to the *shul* and R' Sholom happily collected his guest. Together, the three walked to the Schwadron home.

As R' Sholom led his guest inside, the *Rebbetzin* and her daughters moved quickly away. The girls whispered among themselves in agitation. "Who is he?" "Where did *Abba* find him?" "Look out, that chair is going to be full of fleas!" "The smell is unbearable!" The *Rebbetzin* stepped forward with a pleasant smile, offering the man a seat. R' Sholom, as usual, seated the guest at the head of the table. The person at the man's other side surreptitiously moved his chair until a full meter separated the two. The stench was truly unbearable. Tiny creatures were already beginning to crawl around under the guest's chair. *Kaddish. Urchatz. Karpas. Yachatz. Maggid*. This was where R' Sholom ascertained that his guest's interior was indeed of far finer quality than his exterior: He was a learned man. Enthusiastically, R' Sholom engaged the man in a spirited dialogue on various aspects of the *Haggadah* and its commentary. The animated talk continued all through the *Seder*.

At midnight, R' Sholom and his son-in-law went out into the dark street to accompany the guest to his hotel, where they parted warmly. After that night, the hotelier was forced to dispose of the mattress that the man had used, along with all the bedclothes. (At that time, there were few means of exterminating the bugs.) True to his word, R' Sholom paid for all the damages.

ואף אתה אמור לו כהלכות הפסח אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן ... (פרד מגיד)

There is a *minhag* to "steal" the *afikomen*. It reminds us of the *chessed* of the *Ribbono shel Olam* that none of the dogs barked on the night *Klal Yisroel* left *Mitzrayim*. **R' Shimon Sofer ז"ל (Michtav Sofer)** writes that *Chazal* tell us (*Pesachim* 113a) how one should not live in a city without dogs. **Rashi** explains that the dogs protect people from robbers. The *afikomen* is "stolen" to signify that the dogs did not bark on the night of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, which meant that robbers had free reign.

The story is told of someone who once came to R' Shimon and asked him what the source is for the "ridiculous" practice of children "stealing" the *afikomen*. The *Michtav Sofer* told him to come back the next day, and he would answer the question then. His own family was surprised as R' Shimon could have explained to him the reason right there on the spot, but he didn't

When the person returned the next day, the *Michtav Sofer* told him, "I did not answer you yesterday because I wanted you to know that, even without an answer, the *minhag* of children stealing the *afikomen* is a valid *minhag* in *Klal Yisrael*, whether or not we understand it."

He then explained another one of the many reasons for this *minhag*. The *Yom Tov* of *Pesach* is filled with *minhagim*. We must attach ourselves to our forefathers and honor their *minhagim*, even when the reason for performing them may be unclear. Still, one must not confuse these *minhagim* with authentic, true *minhagim* that are considered more obligatory.

או ישר משה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת לה' ויאמרו לאמר ... (שמות מו-א)

Late one Friday night, **Chacham Rabbeinu Avraham Tzorfati ז"ל** dozed off in the middle of his learning and he saw, in his dream, a vision of an old man with a long flowing white beard coming towards him.

The man was clearly *Eliyahu HaNavi* and he spoke to the *Chacham*. "My son, who was the greatest prophet in history?" "*Moshe Rabbeinu*, of course," was the quick reply.

"If so," replied *Eliyahu HaNavi*, "Why didn't *Moshe Rabbeinu* sing *Shirah* (songs of praise) even before the Egyptians drowned? Shouldn't the greatest of prophets have known beforehand that his enemies would drown in the sea and his nation would be saved? If so, why didn't he trust in this miracle and begin to sing before?"

The *Chacham* realized that this was no ordinary question and certainly coming from no ordinary individual. He understood immediately that he was being tested. He chose his words carefully.

"Surely, *Moshe Rabbeinu* could have sung before the Egyptians drowned," said *Rabbeinu Avraham*. "But as a dedicated shepherd to his flock, he understood that his people were not fully convinced and were as yet afraid. Thus, they were not prepared to sing *Shirah* and *Moshe* did not want to sing without his people."

Eliyahu HaNavi beamed. "This is the correct response and the manner in which a true leader must lead."

משל למה הדבר דומה

משל: There was once a notable prince, Graf Gumprecht von Hartz Losser Gesellschaft, who was known as a vicious anti-Semite and leader of the so-called "Progressive" party.

Once, he accosted the famous *Rav* of Prague, **R' Yonason Eibsheschutz ז"ל** and demanded: "Rabbi, how is it that fashions have changed with you Jews so much? Your great Moses and his wife rode on a donkey from Midian to Egypt, and you say the Messiah will come riding in similar style, yet we never see a Jew nowadays ride any animal but a horse?"

R' Yonason looked the imposing man straight in the eye and replied with a smirk, "It is because we wish to refrain from offending anybody," he answered.

Confused by the answer coming from the renowned brilliant Rabbi, the Graf asked for an explanation. R' Yonason was more than eager to complete his thought.

"You know," he began, "people used to pride themselves on the way they act. But now that donkeys are calling themselves 'Progressives' we have given up riding on donkeys in order to

were unable to attract any “takers”. No one wanted to commit to purchasing a plot in the new cemetery, and the old cemetery kept right on filling up. What did they do? The *chevra kadisha* announced that the first person to agree to be buried in the new cemetery in town will receive 200 ruble. The catch was that the money would be given only after the person passes away and the 200 ruble will be delivered to the grieving spouse. Huge signs went up around town announcing this new promotion. However, even this lucrative offer was met with resistance. Nobody wanted to be buried in the new cemetery.

One of the local townspeople saw the sign and had an idea. He had recently experienced a tremendous downturn in his business dealings and he could barely make ends meet. There was little food in the pantry and prospects were not looking good. After seeing the sign, he told his wife, “You know, *Pesach* is coming soon and we don’t have any money to buy the necessities for *Yom Tov*. I have an idea. I will get into bed and you tell everyone that I am sick. Tomorrow, you will announce that I passed away and I will lay in an *aron*. They will come to bury me and you tell them that you are agreeing to allow me to be buried in the new cemetery. The *chevra kadisha* will give you the 200 ruble and we will have what we need for *Yom Tov*.”

His wife was simpleminded and agreed to go along with the plan. That night, the poor man built a coffin from firewood and laid himself down inside. His wife ran outside and burst into tears, telling anyone and everyone that her husband passed away suddenly and that before he died, he agreed to be buried in the new cemetery. The *chevra kadisha* came by and took the coffin to the local synagogue, where a short funeral was conducted. From there, two members of the burial society carried the coffin to the new cemetery to “break ground.” The woman received the money and returned home with her windfall.

The night was stormy and cold and as the two members of the *chevra kadisha* carried the coffin to the new cemetery, a chill passed through them and they decided to stop at a local inn and warm themselves up with a hot drink. They placed the coffin on the ground outside and went in. The moment the *aron* touched the ground, the “deceased” man opened the lid and climbed out. Nobody saw him and he clandestinely snuck back into town, ran into his house and hid in his bed.

Meanwhile, the two pallbearers came outside and lifted the coffin. Instantly, they realized something was wrong. The coffin was much lighter than before and when they opened it, they realized that the body was gone! Terrified, they came to the conclusion that someone must have “stolen” the body and if the *chevra kadisha* found out about it, they would get into a lot of trouble. So, they continued onto the cemetery and buried the casket as is, empty and weightless, in the first grave. They promised one another that they would not say a word to anyone as they made their way back to the city.

On the night of *Leil HaSeder*, all the preparations were complete. The 200 ruble had really come in handy and a beautiful table was set. The husband had secluded himself inside his house for weeks and was getting restless. He decided it was time to “show his face” and he arrived in *shul Pesach* night to the astonished and bewildered looks of his compatriots. People surrounded him and bombarded him with questions. Suddenly, the head of the *chevra kadisha* burst into the ring of people and shouted, “You liar! You thief! You faked your own death just to get 200 ruble! Give it back - it does not belong to you!”

But the man was prepared for this. “Why does it bother you so much that I am alive? Why does this make you so angry? I’ll tell you what. The moment I die for real, you can bury my body in the new cemetery and I won’t ask you for a penny!”

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתא בארעא דמצרים כל דיכפין ייתי וייכול כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח ... (סדר הגדה של פסח)

It was the first night of *Pesach*, and after *Maariv* in *Shaarei Chessed’s* “*Khal Chassidim*” synagogue, **R’ Sholom Schwadron ז”ל** noticed a man who had *remained* behind in *shul*. Though the fellow’s appearance bespoke a man of sense, perhaps even a *Torah* scholar, both sight and smell of his soiled and threadbare clothing testified to the fact that their last cleaning was lost in the mists of time. In fact, on closer scrutiny, fleas were clearly visible on his suit.

On the spot, the famed *Maggid* of Jerusalem decided to bring the man home for the *Seder*. To invite him to sleep over at their house was impossible, however, because of the fleas. This problem troubled R’ Sholom to no end. Where would the man sleep that night? “We have to find him a place to sleep. The meal will be over late. Where will we send him after midnight?” he whispered anxiously to his son-in-law. Back home, the family was impatiently awaiting R’ Sholom’s arrival before the little ones succumbed to sleep. But R’ Sholom did not appear. As time passed, his wife told the children, “*Abba* probably found some *mitzvah* to attend to. We’ll wait.” Sure enough, R’ Sholom was completely caught up in the momentum of the *mitzvah* at hand. Back at *shul*, he thought for a few minutes, and came up with an idea. “Let’s go,” he told his son-in-law. “We’ll track down the owner of the Yerushalayim Hotel.” (The hotel was located a short distance from *Shaarei Chessed*.)

Before he left, R’ Sholom went over to the unfortunate Jew, shook his hand warmly, and said, “Good *Yom Tov*. You’re invited to our house for the *Seder*! We’ll be back in a little while and walk home together. Please wait for us.” The man mustered a grateful smile, then sat down at a table to wait, a *sefer* open in front of him. R’ Sholom and his son-in-law left.

The streets were deserted. Everyone was already seated at their tables like kings, inaugurating the *Seder* by announcing *Kaddish*! R’ Sholom and his son-in-law hurried to the hotelier’s home, where R’ Sholom requested a single room for his guest. “We’ll be responsible for any damage that may result,” he promised. The man agreed; a key exchanged hands. The two

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of emotions. What message can we garner from this? At first glance, the words מה הוא אומר seem superfluous. It could’ve said חכם אומר. **R’ Chaim Mintz שליט’א**, in his *haggadah*, says a penetrating insight. The חכם, רשע, ותם may not say the exact words of the *baal haggadah*. We may hear a different version, “learning isn’t for me” or “why can’t I do this?” etc. But our ears have to be extra sensitive to pick up these nuances, and understand that what he really means to ask is possibly the *rasha’s* comment, *lo aleinu*. At times a child might act out. There’s usually an underlying reason behind it. Find it. Understand it. A spouse may make a comment. What did they really mean? Maybe they are just hurting; drill down

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ושמרתם את המצות כי בעצם היום הזה הוצאתי את צנאאתיכם מארץ מצרים וכו' (שמות יב-יז)

Throughout the year, helping others was so naturally a part of their parents’ home that it was difficult for the family and *talmidim* of **R’ Moshe Feinstein ז”ל**, to recall specific stories that left an impression. People tend to recall unusual events, not everyday occurrences. Before *Pesach*, however, a number of incidents truly stood out in their minds.

When **R’ Nissan Alpert ז”ל** was still a young *bochur*, R’ Moshe once asked him for a favor. He had received a letter from a needy person asking for financial help before *Pesach*, but he had misplaced the letter. All he remembered was that the sender was a *Belzer Chasid* who lived on Rivington Street, on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. “Nissan, please come with me to Rivington Street and let’s try to find him,” said R’ Moshe, and young Nissan complied. They went together, but failed to find their man. Rivington Street was crowded with all sorts of Jews. R’ Moshe was distressed but there was nothing he could do.

On *Erev Pesach*, R’ Moshe suddenly arrived at the Alpert apartment and asked for Nissan. He had found the letter and wanted to deliver the money immediately; a poor family’s *Yom Tov* would be much more festive if they knew there was some cash on hand. Would Nissan accompany him? Of course, his *talmid* would not turn down this chance to do a *mitzvah* with his *Rebbi*. The two went to the Rivington Street address and delivered the money to the thankful *Belzer Chasid*.

On their way back, it started to rain. R’ Moshe told Nissan to hurry home; he, R’ Moshe, had to make a detour to buy a newspaper, he said. Nissan wanted to go along, but R’ Moshe insisted that he should not walk unnecessarily in the rain. It seemed strange to Nissan that his *Rosh Yeshivah* should want to read a paper on *Erev Pesach*, and to walk two blocks in the rain to buy one, but he did not dare ask why. Several weeks later, Nissan found an opportunity to satisfy his curiosity. He told R’ Moshe that he had been wondering about the newspaper and thought he had solved the mystery. R’ Moshe asked to hear the solution.

“The *Rebbeztzin* probably would not have wanted the *Rosh Yeshivah* to deliver the money himself on such a busy day; so the *Rosh Yeshivah* said he was buying a newspaper. In order not to break his word, the *Rosh Yeshivah* had to go for a paper even though it was raining.” R’ Moshe smiled and nodded.

When it came to the *mitzvah* of baking *matzos*, as a rule, R’ Moshe personally supervised the baking of his own *matzos*. He would always emphasize that he came to perform the *mitzvah*, and not because he questioned the *kashrus* of the bakery. There were some who urged him to change to a larger, newer, more efficient bakery, but he always refused, explaining that people might take such a change as an aspersion on the *kashrus* of the older bakery. Those who accompanied R’ Moshe to the *matzah* bakery recall his zealotness in performing this *mitzvah* and his joy when the finished *matzos* were taken from the oven.

To someone who was overzealous in rejecting *matzos*, he gave the gentle, humorous rebuke, “Rabbi Akiva would eat our *matzos*, but we would not eat his.” The same person was in the habit of breaking off parts of many *matzos* because he maintained that they were not well baked. R’ Moshe opposed this practice. He told the gentleman that he should pay for the complete *matzos* because the breakage was unnecessary.

One year, he asked someone to bring some of these *matzos* to a man who had made a number of appeals for funds on behalf of R’ Moshe’s *yeshivah*, Tifereth Jerusalem. The *Rosh Yeshivah* knew that the man sought nothing in return for his efforts, but was hopeful that the very personal gift he was now sending would be accepted as a token of his appreciation.

שומרים הפקד לעירך כל היום וכל הלילה תאיר כאור יום חשבת לילה ... (סדר נרצה)

A story is told about an ancient city in Eastern Europe whose inhabitants were growing older and were soon met with a sticky situation. Apparently, the old cemetery at the edge of town was filling up fast and soon there would be no more room to bury any newly deceased citizens. A new *bais hachaim* was required to accommodate the population and the *chevra kadisha* got to work clearing a new area which would soon serve as the new *bais hachaim* in town. However, try as they might, they