

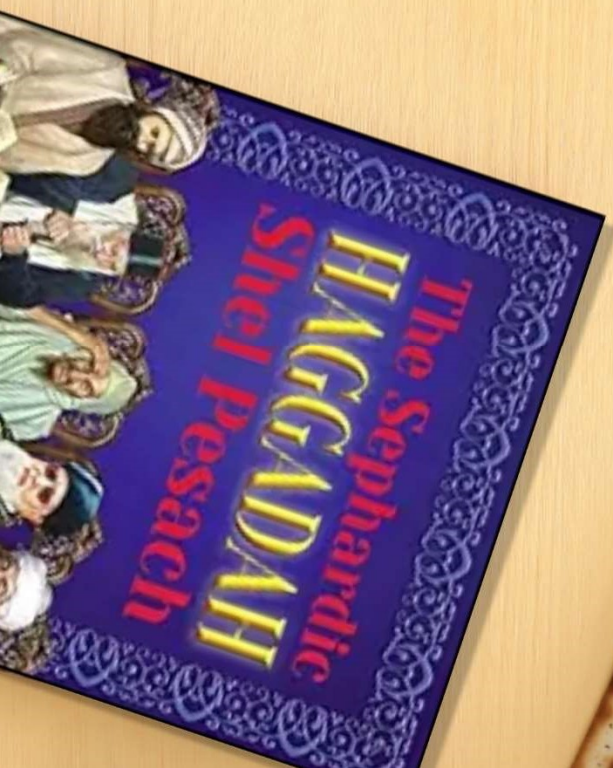


# Torah THOUGHTS

---

## ON THE SEDER Laws, Lessons, & Inspiration

By: Natan Kaziev



## TORAH THOUGHTS

## **Seder Night- A Night of Education:**

Seder night holds profound significance in our tradition, serving as a crucial opportunity to educate our children. It is the night of Vehigadeta Lebincha – telling over (the Exodus) to our children. Therefore, it is imperative that we engage them to keep them awake. A good idea would be to give out treats. Throughout the night, we do various strange customs to pique their curiosity.

During this evening, we recount the story of the Exodus, emphasizing the belief in Hashem's control over the world and the concept of Divine reward for good deeds and punishment for wrongdoing. Seder night becomes a pivotal moment for instilling Emunah, or faith, within our children. We convey to them the unbroken chain of our history spanning over 3,300 years, highlighting how Hashem liberated us from Egypt and took us as a nation to Him.

In the hagaddah, we are introduced to the four sons corresponding to four different types of children. The wise one, the wicked one, the simpleton, and the one that doesn't even know to ask. The hagaddah then explains the proper approach to each child. Famously, the Lubavitcher Rebbe zt"l would say that there is a fifth child, the child with no mention, because he doesn't show up to the seder. It is crucial to adapt our approach to each child's individual comprehension level. Some may require a more intellectual understanding, while others may resonate better with storytelling. There are also those who may initially show disinterest but may simply need additional love and attention to feel valued and engaged.

There is a story that illustrates this idea. Once upon a time, there was a King who had a son, but this son was unlike any other. He thought that he was a monkey! He'd make monkey sounds, eat bananas all day, and even climb trees. The King didn't know what to do with him, so one of his wise advisors came up with a plan.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

The advisor told the boy, "If you believe you're a monkey then I'll show you how to be the best monkey there is!" The boy was curious, so he followed along as the advisor pretended to be a monkey as well. They crawled under tables, climbed trees, and made monkey sounds. Then, the advisor, pretending to be a monkey, suggested they sit at the royal table. He then suggested that they eat normal food. The boy liked the idea and followed suit.

Eventually, the boy started acting more like a prince and less like a monkey. With the advisor's help, he learned good manners and how to behave like royalty. In the end, he became a fine prince, ready to rule the kingdom.

Similarly, on Pesach night, parents should act like the advisor in the story. They should talk to their kids *at their level*, in a way they understand, and teach them about their traditions. In this way, they will grow to become respectable observant Jewish adults, just like the prince became noble with the advisor's help.



## The Power of Seder Night:

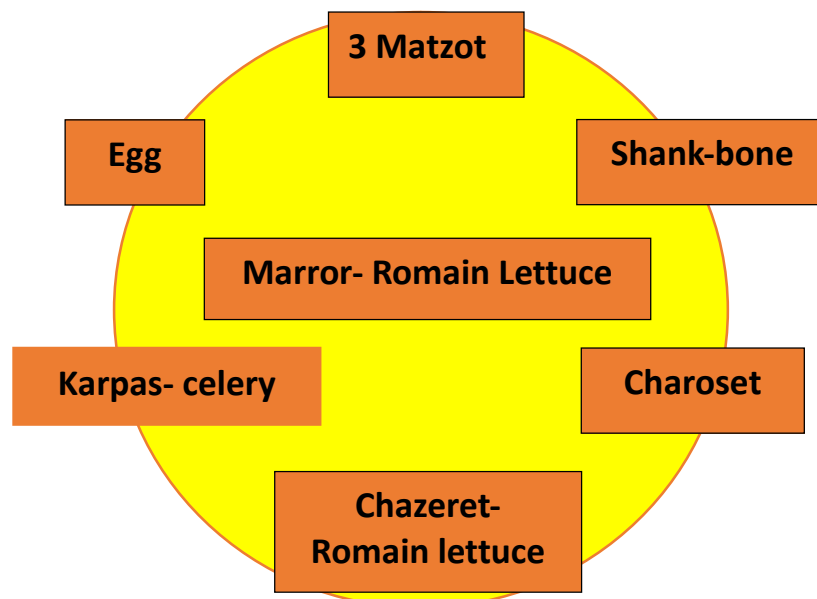
The Ramchal in Derech Hashem writes that anytime a holiday comes around, the aura of the event it commemorates comes down and shines for that time. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, Hashem took us out of Egypt. Every year on leil haseder we are able to tap into this realm of redemption.

On this night, the angelic beings recite praise and the chambers of dew open up. On this night, Yitzchak asked Esau to prepare him the Korban Pesach so that he may bless him. Rivka realized the big mistake that was about to take place and convinced Yaakov to go in Esau's stead explaining to him how powerful this night is and how impactful the blessings will be. On this night, Yaakov received 10 blessings from his father (Pirkei dR" Eliezer 32).

The Torah (Shemot 12:42) calls this night, "Leil Shimurim- a guarded night," because on this night, we are protected by Hashem. When we left Egypt, not one Egyptian attacked us nor did one dog bark (Shemot 11:7).

## Preparing the Seder plate:

Below is the seder plate according to the Arizal:



## TORAH THOUGHTS

### **The 3 Matzot**

Matzah was one of the foods the Jews in Egypt were commanded to eat along with the Korban Pesach (Shemot 12:8). In commemoration of that first seder meal and the haste in which the Jews left Egypt, giving them no time to allow their bread to rise, we eat Matzah at the seder. The reason for three matzot is because one is used to symbolize lechem oni (poor man's bread) which we break, and one half is eaten by Motzi Matzah just as a poor man only eats a slice of bread and the other half is left for Afikomen. The other two matzot are for lechem mishne (the two whole breads we have every Shabbat and Yom Tov meal). The three matzot can also represent the 3 forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, in whose merits we reap benefit from till today. The custom is to use round matzot.

### **Zero'a- Shankbone**

This is a roasted shank bone of meat. It is symbolic of the Korban Pesach which was eaten at the times of the Temple. Zero'a also means arm representing Hashem's mighty arm when He freed the Jews from Egypt.

### **Charoset**

This is a thick paste made with apples, raisins, wine and other ingredients. The thick paste of the Charoset reminds us of the mortar in Egypt. The apples represent the miracle of the Jewish women birthing in secret under apple trees (See Sotah 11a). The other ingredients are symbolic to what Jews are compared to. We dip the Marror in the Charoset by Korech.

### **Marror/Chazeret**

Marror and Chazeret are both romaine lettuce. This has somewhat of a bitter taste<sup>1</sup>, reminding us of the bitter times in Egypt. We eat the Marror

---

<sup>1</sup> Even though today lettuce isn't really bitter, that has to do with the system, temperature level, and other factors in which they plant and maintain the lettuce. I've spoken to an elderly Yemenite Jew who told me that in his youth, lettuce had a bitterness to it.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

and make the blessing Al Akhilat Marror on it while the chazeret is used for the sandwich (Korech).

### **Karpas- Celery**

This is a vegetable, generally celery, which we dip in salt water. When celery gets old, it looks like straw. This alludes to the straw used to make bricks in Egypt (Sefer Arvei Pesachim). The salt water represents the tears we shed in Egypt. The reason we do this before we even start the meal is to get the children to ask questions.

### **Beitzah- Egg**

A hard-boiled egg is used to represent the Korban Chagiga- festive offering. This is eaten by Shulkhan Orech (the eleventh step to the Seder). Many reasons are offered as to why a hard boiled egg is used. One basic reason is that we need something cooked and an egg is the cheapest and most accessible to everyone.

## **Pesach Seder and Its Procedures:**

The Seder table should be set before the evening begins so that one can recite Kiddush immediately upon returning home from Shul. It is imperative to begin the Seder as soon as possible so the little children will remain awake to participate. The Seder table should be set with the best dinnerware and the evening should be conducted in a grand manner as free men.<sup>2</sup> One should prepare his seat comfortably to allow him to recline. We recline when drinking the four cups of wine, when eating matzah, by Korech, and by the Afikoman. It is highly commendable to recline throughout the Seder meal. The mitzvah of reclining is to one's left side. If a healthy male adult forgot to recline when drinking one of the four cups, he should drink again.

---

<sup>2</sup> ומצוה לנהוג שררה בליל פסח ובזה יכופר מה שנהג שררה וגאווה כל השנה- כף החיים סימן תעב אות יב

## TORAH THOUGHTS

The names of the 15 steps of the Seder that flow in a rhythmic tune are attributed to Rashi.<sup>3</sup> The Arizal and other kabbalists revealed deep secrets with each step. Before each step of the seder, one should pronounce it out loud. For example, before Kaddesh, say “Kaddesh,” etc. (Kaf Hachaim siman 473:32).

### **Tips for the seder:**

- 1. Don't forget to recline by the four cups of wine, Motzi Matzah, Korech and Afikomen. Remind everyone to recline. Reclining means to lean on something to your left side and not to hang in the air. (Please note, if a man over 13 years old did not recline where he has to, he will have to eat or drink again.)**
- 2. The head of the household should keep everyone in mind by the berachot (kiddush, shehechyanu, ha'adama etc.) He should tell them in advance to have in mind that he will be covering their obligation.**
- 3. This night is all about Vehiggadeta Lebincha – giving over to your kids, therefore, make sure to keep the kids involved, give them treats, ask them to share their divrei Torah, ask them questions, etc. Unfortunately, many people have guests over and forget about the kids. I heard from Rabbi Michael Lassri that on Pesach he would seat his kids at the head of the table.**
- 4. The Haggadah should be recited in the language which one understands, and therefore one should explain to his family and guests in the language they speak.**
- 5. If one has family members that will not stay by the table for the full Maggid, they should at least be brought in for the part where we mention and explain Pesach, Matzah and Marror until the drinking of the second cup. The custom is to also bring them in for the recitation of the 10 Makkot as well (M”B 473:64).**

### **1) Kadesh**

One should fill up a cup that can contain at least 3oz and should drink the whole cup or at least, the majority of the cup. The order of the blessings is as follows: 1) Bore Peri Hagefen, 2) Asher Bachar Banu Mikol Am,<sup>4</sup> and finally 3) Shehecheyanu.

---

<sup>3</sup> The basic reason for the rhythmic tune of the 15 steps is to allow one to remember all the rituals of this night

<sup>4</sup> On Motzaei Shabbat, add the following two berachot at this point: a) Borei Me'orei Ha'esh and b) Baruch Hamavdil ben kodesh l'kodesh.



## TORAH THOUGHTS

When reciting Shehecheyanu, one should have in mind to cover the Mitzvot of eating Matzah and Marror.

Men and women are equally obligated in the four cups of wine (preferable red wine).<sup>5</sup>

### **2) Urkhatz**

Immediately after Kiddush, we wash our hands as we do before bread, but without reciting any blessing. We return to our seats and remain quiet until we recite the blessing over Karpas.

### **3) Karpas**

At this point, everyone takes a small piece of celery, smaller than a Kezayit, and dips it in salt water, vinegar, or lemon juice. The celery must be carefully checked to ensure it is free of infestation. Before eating it, everyone should hold the karpas in their hands and the head of the household (or anyone else) makes the blessing of boreh peri ha'adama having everyone in mind. Everyone else answers amen and eats it. When reciting ha'adama, one should have in mind that the blessing covers the Marror that will be eaten later in the evening since we do not recite this blessing twice.

### **4) Yakhatz**

After eating Karpas and before beginning to recite the Hagaddah, the person leading the Seder should take the middle Matzah from among the three Matzot on the Seder plate and break it in two. He should then return the smaller piece to its place between the two-remaining whole Matzot and give the larger piece to someone at the table and charge him with the task of keeping it until it is time to eat it as the Afikoman. It is proper to place this piece of matzah under a cloth.

### **5) Maggid**

*\*Remember to have in mind that you're fulfilling a Biblical command of telling over the story of the Exodus\**

---

<sup>5</sup> It is appropriate to give the children grape juice as well.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

At this point, we lift the Seder plate with the Matzot (some just lift the broken matzah) and recite *ha lakhma anya* up to *ma nishtana*. Then, the leader of the Seder orders that the Seder plate be removed (this is to arouse the curiosity of the children). We then fill a second cup of wine and begin reciting *ma nishtana*. Men and women are both obligated in the mitzvah of Maggid. After *ma nishtana* is recited, we return the Seder plate to the table and begin reciting *avadim hayinu*. It is forbidden to interrupt the reading of the Hagaddah with unrelated matters, unless it is an emergency.

The Matzah should remain uncovered through the time the Hagaddah is being read. When the family reaches the passage of *vehi she'amda* everyone must raise their cup of wine and cover the Matzot until they finish the passage. They then should put down their cups and uncover the matzot, leaving it uncovered until they reach the passage of *lefikhakh*.

When the head recites the words ***Dam, Va'esh, Ve'timrot Ashan***, the custom is for him to spill out a little bit of wine for each of these three terms. Also, when recounting the ten plagues, the custom is that he pours a bit of wine from his cup for each term and their acronym. This makes a total of sixteen pourings. The cup should be emptied, rinsed, and refilled.

When the passage of *Matzah zo* is recited, the head of the Seder should lift the matzah, and when the passage of *Marror zo* is read, the marror should be lifted. However, when he reaches *pesach shehayu avotenu okhlim*, he must not raise the roasted shank that is on the Seder plate, but rather, gaze at it. When the family reaches the passage of *lefikhach khayavim*, everyone must raise their cup of wine in their right hand. They then must recite the blessing of *asher ge'alanu*, recline to the left, and drink the second cup of wine.

### 6) Rakhtzah

After drinking the second cup of wine, each individual must wash their hands the way they wash for bread and recite the brachah of *al netillat yadayim*. One should not talk until after the matzah is eaten.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

### 7) Motzi-

### 8) Matzah

When everyone returns to the Seder table after washing their hands, they must not speak until the head of the Seder picks up the three Matzot from the Seder plate and recites the blessing *hamotzi lechem and al achilat Matzah*. The common custom, however, is that the head of the household puts down the bottom matzah after reciting the blessing of *hamotzi* and then recites the second blessing while holding the top whole matzah with the broken matzah. After reciting the two blessings, he should break a kezayit from the top matzah and a kezayit from the broken matzah, dip them into salt, and eat them together while reclining to his left. If there isn't enough to give a kezayit from these matzot to the rest of the people, they should take extra matzot and for them one kezayit suffices. One should eat the matzah within *achilat peras* which is between 6-7.5 minutes.

### 9) Marror

After eating the matzah, everyone takes a kezayit of marror. We then dip it into charoset and recite the blessing of *al akhilat marror*. When eating it, one should have in mind that he is fulfilling the mitzvah of eating marror. One does not lean.

### 10) Korech

After eating the marror, the leader of the Seder must take a kezayit from the third, bottom matzah and combine it with a kezayit of marror. Everyone else take other pieces of matzah and marror, dips the marror into charoset and declare the passage: "In remembrance of the Bet Hamikdash like Hillel (who would make a sandwich)." The korech sandwich is then eaten while reclining to one's left side.

### 11) Shulkhan Orekh

After eating the korech sandwich, we begin the meal. Everyone should eat foods that they enjoy for this exalted occasion. It is commendable

## TORAH THOUGHTS

to discuss Torah topics during the meal. It is wise to avoid eating too much so that one will have an appetite for the Afikoman.

### 12) Tzafun

At the end of the Seder meal, everyone must eat a kezayit (some are stringent and eat 2 kezayits) from the section of the broken middle matzah that was set aside as the Afikoman. If there is not enough for everyone to have a kezayit, one should use other shemurah matzah to fulfill the obligation. One should bear in mind that it is a reminder of the matzah we are commanded to eat with the korban Pesach. Optimally, the Afikomen should be eaten before halachic midnight. After eating the Afikoman, it is forbidden to eat anything else so that the taste of the Afikoman will remain in one's mouth. One must remember to recline while eating the Afikoman.

### 13) Barekh

After eating the Afikoman, everyone must rinse their fingers in water (mayim achronim) and recite birkat hamazon over a third cup of wine. Before filling up the cup, it should be rinsed. Everyone should then hold their cups in their right hand at least one tefakh (2.5 in.) above the tabletop. One should constantly look at the cup so that he will keep his attention on it. And then everyone begins reciting birkat hamazon. Don't forget to add the passage of ya'ale veyavo. After completing birkat hamazon, the blessing of *boreh peri hagefen* must be recited on the third cup of wine. One should have in mind that this blessing will cover the fourth cup as well. Everyone must drink the cup while reclining.

### 14) Hallel

Immediately after drinking the third cup of wine, we fill the fourth cup and recite the verses of *shefokh khamatecha*. After reciting these verses, we continue to recite the rest of Hallel. One should recite it with great joy and enthusiasm. After reciting the closing blessing of *yehallelukha*, we drink the fourth and final cup of wine and then recite the bracha of *me'en shalosh* on the wine.

### 15) Nirtzah

This is the final step of the Seder where we request that G-d accept our service [of the Seder] to Him and that He will grant us our full reward! After the Seder has been completed, it is a mitzvah to continue to discuss the exodus from Egypt for as long as possible. Some people have the custom of reciting *Shir Hashirim* or traditional poems such as *Khad Gadya* and *echad mi yode'a*.

### The Four Cups of Wine:

Our Rabbis instituted that on Seder night we drink four cups of wine. These four cups symbolize the four expressions the Torah uses for the redemption,

- Vehotzeti- "I will take you out..."
- Vehitzalti- "I will save you..."
- Vega'alti- "I will redeem you..."
- Velakachti- "I will take you as a nation to Me..."

Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurebach asks, why did our Sages choose wine to symbolize the four expressions of redemption, especially since, for some people, wine may be difficult to drink? Wouldn't it have been better to eat four pieces of Matzah or four walnuts or anything else to connote the four expressions of redemption?

The Rav answers that each expression of ge'ulah was actually another level of the redemption process..

- Vehotzeti- we were no longer oppressed under difficult labor but we were still under some level of servitude,
- Vehitzalti- we were spared of complete servitude but still remained in Egypt,
- Vega'alti- we left Egypt,
- Velakachti- Hashem took us as a nation to Him and gave us the Torah which is the ultimate purpose of the redemption.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

Hence, each stage of the ge'ulah adds an increased level of joy. Our sages were looking to mimic this, and wine was the most suitable candidate. The reason for this is because by all other foods, the first piece is the tastiest and most exciting, but it decreases from there. However, with wine, each cup adds an additional level of joy and excitement. Therefore, our sages established the remembrance of the four expressions on wine.<sup>6</sup>

Women are also obligated to drink the four cups since they were also part of the miracle.<sup>7</sup>

It is commendable to recite Kiddush over red wine<sup>8</sup>. Several reasons are brought for this, 1) remembrance of how Pharaoh slaughtered children and used their blood for his refuah<sup>9</sup>, 2) alluding to the blood of the korban pesach and the blood of milah because in their zechut, we left Egypt, 3) alluding to makkat dam which was the first plague to start off the redemption process<sup>10</sup>.

### Reclining:

Why do we recline?

- 1) We are like princes; therefore, we eat in a royal fashion.
- 2) To show we are all equals in avodat Hashem, we recline, so no one stands out more than the other. Everyone is obligated to say over the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim, even big Rabbis.

---

<sup>6</sup> In fact, Rav Moshe Feinstein was strict about fulfilling the obligation of the four cups solely with wine as opposed to grape juice. Rav Ovadia and many other Poskim, including Rav S.Z. himself, however, permit drinking grape-juice instead if it is too difficult for one to drink wine.

<sup>7</sup> Rashi and Rashbam to Pesachim say that the women were the main reason for the miracle because it was in their merit that we left Egypt (see dvar Torah titled, "Yetziyat Mitzrayim- The Righteous Women"). However, Tosafot maintains that "they were **also** included in the miracle" implies they weren't the main reason for the miracle, but rather they **also** left Egypt as did the men.

<sup>8</sup> Although there were times where some Jewish communities had to use white wine, due to blood-libels created by Christians against them.

<sup>9</sup> Taz. Rav Ovadia however, questions this reason. He asks if the redness of the wine is reminding us of the bitterness (blood of Jewish babies), then we should not recline when drinking like by marror.

<sup>10</sup> Pri Megadim (Eshel Avraham 13)



## TORAH THOUGHTS

- 3) It says Hashem took the Jews out of Egypt in a roundabout way. The passuk uses the word *vayasev* which can also mean recline.
- 4) Just like Hashem took us out of Egypt and into the midbar for forty years providing for all our needs, so too we have to lean onto Hashem and know that He will take care of all of our needs in this long and dark galut.
- 5) The Midrash Tanchuma (Bamidbar 2) says, Hashem took us out while we were reclining on the *ananei hakavod*, so in commemoration of this, we recline by the seder.

Why do we recline specifically to the left?

- To prevent choking,
- One needs his right hand available to put food in his mouth.
- Sefer Dorot Yesharim writes that the right side represents *chessed*- the good times, and the left side represents *din*- the difficult times. *Heseba* is reclining, being dependent on, which alludes to being dependent on Hashem. The true litmus test for this is when one leans/relies on Hashem even when things are going left, difficult. Leaning on Hashem, **only** when things are going good, is **no** good. Therefore, if a person leans to his right, he does not fulfill his obligation. That's not considered leaning/relying on Hashem.

## Lessons from the Splitting of The Matzah:

By the fourth step of the Pesach seder-*yachatz*, we split the matzah in two parts. The bigger part is hidden and kept for later (*afikomen*), while the smaller one is eaten by *motzi matzah*. A few reasons are brought for this custom.

- 1) The split matzah represents the two worlds, this world and the world to come. The smaller matzah symbolizes this world, which is finite, while the bigger matzah alludes to the next world, which is infinite and hidden from the human eye. We go searching for the

## TORAH THOUGHTS

“bigger half” and finally find it and enjoy it, corresponding to our mission in this world which is to constantly search for Hashem and fulfill the *mitzvot*. Eventually all the hard work pays off, and in the next world, we enjoy the fruits of our labor.

- 2) Matzah is called the bread of miracles. This is the bread we left Egypt with. The Sefer Dorot Yesharim quotes the Zohar (Balak 3 pg 200b) who explains the verse: *Le'ose nifla'ot gedolot levado* – “He (Hashem) who does great wonders alone.” The Zohar asks, what is the meaning of “alone”? He explains that Hashem performs many miracles for us, but many times it’s “alone”, meaning only Hashem knows about it.

Some examples to illustrate this:

- A person was supposed to get hit by a car and didn’t even notice that Hashem made the car stop in time.
- The stock he invested in was supposed to plummet, but Hashem made people make the right decisions and it went up instead, without his knowledge.

Therefore, we split the matzah. We keep the smaller half alluding to the smaller portion of miracles which we see and notice. The bigger half, however, is hidden alluding to the bigger portion of miracles which are hidden from us.

- 3) *Matzot* has the same letters as *mitzvot*. The Torah tells us *Ushmartem et hamatzot*- “and you shall guard the *Matzot*. ” Our Rabbis teach us that the same way one must guard the *Matzot*, he must guard the *mitzvot*.<sup>11</sup> When a person does mitzvot he should not show them off. Rather they should be done privately and only Hashem should know about them. Sometimes however, it’s important to publicly display our mitzvot to inspire others to do so as well. To hint to this concept, we split the *matzah* (*mitzvot*) in

---

<sup>11</sup> Just like by the *matzot*, we guard it from becoming *chametz*. So too, when a *mitzvah* opportunity comes, one should grab it before it becomes “*chametz*”.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

two parts. The smaller part is revealed for others to see but most of it is hidden.

- 4) Pesach is a holiday that is *mesugal* for *parnassah*. Our Rabbis teach us that on Pesach all of the produce for the year is being judged. Pesach is also an acronym for the three angels who are appointed over Parnassah<sup>12</sup>. Matzah too, hints to *parnassah* since it is made from wheat, and when we properly fulfill the mitzvah of eating it, we can bring a good judgement on our produce/wheat. Matzah is also an acronym for מצד צפון השפע - “from the Northern side is abundance.” This is consistent with what our Sages teach us, that a person who wants to become wealthy, should “go north”. This is in reference to the position where the *shulkhan*, which corresponds to *parnassah*, stood in the *Mishkan*. With this introduction, we can understand the splitting of the matzah. A person who attains great wealth should be careful to not show it off. Rather, he should spend money modestly and hide most of his wealth from ayin harah. Therefore, we leave the smaller portion which others can see, but the bigger portion, is hidden from the eye.

### Stealing the Matzah?!

Snatching the *afikomen* seems a bit absurd since we are always trying to teach our children honesty and integrity. However the custom has a beautiful background to it, and it is important to explain it to our family, our children, and our guests.

- 1) The Rambam writes<sup>13</sup>, we grab the matzah from one another in order to keep the children awake.
- 2) The Ktav Sofer says<sup>14</sup>, by stealing the afikomen we remember the great kindness that Hashem did for us in Egypt when He made the

---

<sup>12</sup> פ-א-ו ל-ח-ת-ך

<sup>13</sup> Laws of Chametz and Matzah 7:3

## TORAH THOUGHTS

dogs remain quiet and not bark<sup>15</sup>. Our Rabbis tell us<sup>16</sup>, “A person should not live in a place where there are no dogs.” Rashi explains, “because dogs protect from robbers.” Therefore, since the dogs didn’t bark, a lot of Egyptians were stealing from one another, so we mimic this by stealing the afikomen from one another.

Ironically, Rabbi Chayim Palaggi says regarding the Afikomen<sup>17</sup>: One should take a piece of the Afikomen and keep it in his pocket. This is a *segulah* to protect one from robbers.

- 3) R. Yochanan Zweig offers another answer<sup>18</sup>. He observed that one aspect of slavery is that a slave owns no property. Typically, whatever a slave owns or acquires belongs to his master. Thus, perhaps taking the *afikomen* represents that as slaves, nothing we owned was truly ours. The slave of one master could take from his fellow slave with no consequences. This practice is thus another means of demonstrating to our children just what it felt like to be a slave.

## Why the Egg?

On the Night of Pesach, we customarily eat an egg and recite *zecher leKorban Haggiga*- “In remembrance of the festive offering.”

Why specifically an egg?

- 1) We need something cooked, and an egg is usually the most affordable and commonly found food.
- 2) It cooks quickly and easily which shows that we pray that the redemption should come speedily and easily.

---

<sup>14</sup> Chelek 110:2

<sup>15</sup> It is for this reason that we reward the dogs with *tareif* meat.

<sup>16</sup> Pesachim 113a

<sup>17</sup> Sefer Chayim L’Rosh page 77b tzafun sa’if 9

<sup>18</sup> Aish.com

## TORAH THOUGHTS

- 3) An egg is eaten by mourners. We are in mourning since we don't have the *Bet Hamikdash* to offer the *Korban Haggiga*.
- 4) Tisha B'Av always falls on the same day of the week as the first night of Pesach. Therefore, we eat an egg as a symbol of mourning.
- 5) Already from the times of the Egyptian subjugation, Aharon and the tribe of Levi would mourn for their brethren on the first day of Pesach. This was the day on which Hashem made the *brit ben habetarim*- the covenant of parts- with Avraham and decreed that his descendants would be in exile. The laborious enforcement upon the Jews<sup>19</sup> also began on the first day of Pesach. Therefore, we eat an egg alluding to their mourning.
- 6) *Zecher leavelut*- in remembrance of mourning. This is because Avraham Avinu passed away erev Pesach.<sup>20</sup>
- 7) The more you cook an egg, the harder it gets. So too the more suffering and affliction we endured, the greater we became<sup>21</sup>. Or, in the same idea: the more difficulty klal yisrael undergoes, the firmer our Emunah becomes.<sup>22</sup>
- 8) Egg is unique in that it has two births.
  - a) The chicken lays the egg
  - b) The egg hatchesChazal tell us, "In Nissan we were redeemed, and in Nissan we will again be redeemed." We eat the egg to show that we were born into freedom once but, with the help of Hashem, we will soon completely hatch when Mashiach comes and be free again.

---

<sup>19</sup> The beginning of 86 years of difficulty

<sup>20</sup> Pri Megadim

<sup>21</sup> Like the passuk says *ka'asher ye'anu oto, ken yirbei vechen yifrotz*.

<sup>22</sup> Like the famous *mashal* of sun vs wind

## TORAH THOUGHTS

Interestingly, the secret to bring *Mashiach* and the final redemption is to learn from the egg. The egg hatches better and more efficiently through warmth. Cold weather can impair the chick and cause damage. So too, us; to bring *Mashiach*, we need warmth- ACHDUT!! The *Bet Hamikdash* was destroyed because of acts of coldness to each other. Let's come together and unite this year to bring Mashiach together, AMEN!!!

9) On a similar chain of thought, the Torat Emet of Lublin writes that birds experience two births:

- a) the laying of the egg
- b) the hatching of the egg

In the same way, the Nation of Israel experienced two stages of redemption:

- a) being released from the bondage of the Egyptians
- b) the more important stage of receiving the Torah and becoming the nation of Hashem

10) The egg represents the beginning of life. Similarly, Pesach marks the true beginning of Judaism and the start of a new season.

11) The egg reminds us that Hashem has no beginning and no end. Pesach is the holiday which commemorates the infinite Greatness of Hashem which we all witnessed.

12) An egg symbolizes silence since it is round and has no *mouth*. We eat it to commemorate the miracle that Hashem performed by redeeming us, and thus, shutting the mouths of those who were once confident that the nation of Israel would never be redeemed.

13) In order to enjoy an egg, one must peel it first. Likewise, the Jewish people were encased in the shell of slave mentality. Therefore, Hashem made the Jews wander in the desert for forty years to ensure that the generation of the Exodus died out, and that



## TORAH THOUGHTS

only their children, born in freedom, would get to start the new country.

- 14) An egg cannot stand without help. Likewise, our ancestors needed God's help to free them from slavery.
- 15) In Aramaic, an egg is called *bey'a*, which also means “pray” or “please.” Thus, the egg silently pleads, “May it **please** the Merciful G-d to redeem us”.

### **Yetziat Mitzrayim – The Righteous Women:**

Our Rabbi's tell us that in the merit of the righteous women, our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt.<sup>23</sup>

- 1) Pharoh decreed that Jewish men should work in the fields and not return home at night. He reasoned that in this way they will not be intimate with their wives, thus, no more Jewish babies will be born. However, the righteous women devised a strategy to thwart Pharoh's plan. They drew buckets of water, in which Hashem made a miracle that fish was drawn as well. They went out to their husbands, washed them, anointed them, fed them, and gave them to drink. They brought bronze mirrors and enticed their husbands to be intimate with them.<sup>24</sup>
- 2) Shifra and Puah (two righteous women) saved the Jewish baby boys.

---

<sup>23</sup> (Sotah 11b)

See Ein Yaakov who explains that the women hastened the Geulah because in reality, we were supposed to be in Galut for 430 years. However, we were only in Egypt for 210 and only 86 years of them were hard work (Megillat Ta'anit). The reason for this is because the women motivated their husbands to have more children and in this way they produced 5 times more than 600,000. Therefore, we only endured 1/5 of 430 years which is 86.

<sup>24</sup> Later on, the mirrors were used for the *kiyor*- washbasin in the *Mishkan*.

## TORAH THOUGHTS

- 3) Amram divorced Yocheved because he rationalized that the boys that will be born will be killed. Since he was a leader, many people followed suit and divorced their wives. Miriam told him that he is worse than Pharaoh, in that Pharaoh's decree was only on the boys while Amram is preventing even girls from being born. Thus, Miriam convinced her father, Amram, to get back together with Yocheved and many followed suit. Moshe- the messenger to redeem- is born due to Miriam- a righteous woman.
- 4) Yocheved placed Moshe in a basket to protect him from being taken by the Egyptians. Miriam watched over him. Batya spared him and raised him. The redeemer, Moshe, is being sheltered and raised by righteous women.
- 5) Moshe is greeted by the *Shechina* and is told to go down to Egypt to redeem the Jews. On his way a beast swallowed him whole. He was saved by his wife, Tzipporah- a righteous woman.

We see how the redemption and the events leading to the redemption were brought out by our righteous women.

According to the Rashbam and Rashi, the main redemption was brought out by the righteous women. Therefore, women are also obligated to drink the four cups of wine which represent the four expressions of redemption.

The Arizal writes that the future redemption will follow the pattern of the Exodus. Just as the Exodus was brought into fruition due to the merits of our righteous women, the same will be by the upcoming redemption.

**Chag Kasher V'Sameach! May we merit to see  
Mashiach speedily in our days, Amen!**

## TORAH THOUGHTS