

**NONE OF THIS HAS BEEN PUT INTO THE ADD HAGADA OR DIVREY TORAH
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The Viznitzer Rebbe was asked why when burning the חמץ we also burn the candle used in our search for the חמץ. Certainly there is no suspicion of חמץ adhering to it.

He replied: This candle was used for one purpose only - to search for חמץ. A candle whose sole existence is for the purpose of seeking out the negative must be burned. (2020)

The 15 steps of the סדר are to be viewed as rungs in a ladder and are intended to move us toward a spiritual ascent on the night of Passover.

Who is on a greater spiritual level, a person on a low rung or on a high rung of the spiritual ladder?

It depends which direction the person is moving. If the person on the low rung is climbing and growing day by day, that means that you are spiritually alive and engaged. Conversely, if a person on a high rung is moving downward, you have lost spiritual elevation and may continue to sink.”

The סדר is an opportunity to move up and up. (Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook 2020)

Why do we break the מצה in half to start the סדר?

We break the מצה to emulate the conduct of our ancestors in מצרים (And maybe even to show who WE ARE). Those who had more to eat broke their bread and shared it with others who had less. יחץ, the act of breaking the מצה in half is a symbol of חסד, loving kindness. Even under the harshest conditions the Jew had mercy and shared his meager rations with his fellow brothers and sisters. (Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik)

Why do we break the middle מצה to allude to the “Bread of poverty” that we ate in מצרים, considering that the middle מצה corresponds to לוי, and the

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tribe of לוי was not enslaved?

It is to teach us that even though the tribe of לוי was not enslaved, they were heartbroken over the suffering of their brothers. (Reb משה Hagada Page 64)

I want to add to this the following.

Why didn't פרעה include לוי in the שיעבוד? He was not a nice guy? He wanted to get rid of ישראל.

פרעה saw through astrology, that the savior for the Jews is going to come from שבט לוי, he said I got it, I wont work the leader, by extension whoever the leader is wont do any work, מי שאינו בצרה אינו יכול להושיעה, if you don't feel the others pain, you will not be a effective leader. you cant lead without feeling someones pain, greatest way to be an infective leader, is not to feel pain (תפארת יונתן)

If you went through a difficult situation, take that experience and become a leader in that area, learning, social, Shiduchim, you can become a quality leader in that area. (2020)

כל דכפין ייתי ויכול. כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח

We call out כל דכפין ייתי ויכול, 'all who are hungry' come and join our סדר. This is followed by second call, כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח, 'all who are in need' join our סדר.

What is the difference between those two invitations?

This second invitation is not addressed to those in need of food; we have already reached out to them with the first phrase. Rather, here we are inviting those who are lonely, those in need of companionship and friendship. We Jews, who were slaves in מצרים and have suffered in the hands of countless oppressors, unfortunately know all too well the feeling of being forsaken and abandoned. On the night of the סדר we open our doors with warmth and love embracing all those in need. (Rabbi Joseph B.

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Soloveitchik 2020)

כל דכפין ייתי ויכול. כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח. השתא תכא, לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל. השתא
עבדי, לשנה הבאה בני חורין

Anyone who wants, come and join us.

This sounds insincere. Your door is closed, your windows are closed and you scream out, anyone want a meal? We have plenty of room at the table, pull up a chair!

We are really talking to our selves.

The שפת אמת says, that the ליל הסדר tells us who we are.

כל דכפין ייתי ויכול-might not be for potential guests, but for ourselves, its a mission statement, a message for our family about what we stand for.

We are people who welcome guests, we are people who see food as a means to satisfy others, we wont enjoy ourselves if we aren't providing joy to others.

If you sit down, fancy crystal, silver Becher, good wine, royal table, **and you don't have any guests**, if all of your freedom that you have been blessed to have is saved for your self, that is not freedom.

If you are collecting money for worthy causes, some people cant let go of their money. On one hand they are saying that they just made a lot of money and they are indulging in one luxury after the other. Then when you ask them to contribute to Tomchey Shabbos, they say, well you know, it is not really all that good, I do, I want, I wish.

You are not wealthy, if you cant part with it. You don't own your money, **your money owns you**. You don't own your material possessions, the possessions own you.

Freedom is the ability to share with guests. You host events, if you cant part with it, that is the opposite to freedom.

We are connecting the beginning of the statement to the end.

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כל דכפין ייתי ויכול, whoever is hungry come and eat, whether it is genuine or not genuine.

לשנה תבא בני חורין, if we are able to part with what we have, then we are truly free people.

We are defining who we are. We are free. What does it mean to be free? To be able to share. That is what we are as Jews. People who have no problem giving of what that have to others. (Rabbi Efrem Goldberg 5779)

I wanted to add the following.

The סדר begins with an invitation to those in need to join us in our homes for the סדר. This is an act of kindness and צדקה. We begin the סדר this way because the moment we were freed from slavery our true essence could emerge. As soon as we reenact the story of our liberation we engage in the act most characteristic of us as people: feeding the hungry. (Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook 2020)

השתא עבדי, לשנה תבא בני חורין

One year on Pesach, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau led a סדר for soldiers of the Israeli air force and their families. There were about one hundred and fifty men, women, and children, including pilots and other army personnel. It was a tremendous challenge to engage such a large crowd for an extended period without a microphone.

Rabbi Lau began reciting the opening paragraph of Maggid, Ha lachma anya, and translating each phrase into Hebrew. As soon as he completed the paragraph, a soldier stood up and raised his hand. Rabbi Lau looked at the base commander unsure whether he should accept the question. They had just begun and still had a long way to go. The commander replied that the soldier was mature and serious, and he should be allowed to ask.

The young soldier began, “Honored Rabbi, as I listened to your explanation of the paragraph, I had the feeling that the words are antiquated and inapplicable. You said, “This year we are here; next year in א”א. This year we are slaves; next year we will be free men” I was born in א”א and have lived my entire life here. I was born into a democracy and never knew of

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anything different. If those opening words don't apply anymore, perhaps the entire הגדה is also outdated and antiquated!?"

Every eye in the room was locked on Rabbi Lau. He calmly replied, "I personally knew Rabbi Lazer Shach, Rabbi Elya Lopian, and Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Aurebach. These great men never allowed an untruth to escape their lips and they were honest to a fault. Yet, with my own ears, I heard them reciting the vidui (confession) prayers on י"ב, "For the sin that we sinned before you". Each of them then proceeded to list a litany of sins that I am absolutely sure they never committed. Some of the sins they enumerated are so severe that one must sacrifice his life so as not to transgress them. How could such great men have made false statements on the holiest day?"

"The answer is they weren't only praying for themselves. Our problem is that it's always about me, me, me! But they were praying on behalf of the entire Jewish nation. They did not only worry about their own fate on the day of judgement, but also that of their fellow Jews who may have committed severe sins.

"The same is true about the opening words of the הגדה. You may have indeed been born into freedom in this Holy Land, but what about the rest of your fellow Jews? What about the Jews in the גלות who don't have that privilege? What about Jews living under persecution among hateful enemies? What about the myriads of Jews who don't have מצה, wine, and a סדר plate before them tonight?"

"We have to stop thinking only about ourselves. We are a nation that endures through unity and love for each other. What better way is there than to commence the הגדה by thinking about our fellow Jews? The הגדה's timeless words indeed apply today as much as ever."

With that Rabbi Lau proceeded.

וכל המרבח לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משבח:

On the night of פסח there is a Halachic requirement of סיפור יציאת מצרים - the retelling of Exodus story. This is done via the הגדה. At the very beginning of

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the הגדה we are told 'All that extend the Exodus story are praiseworthy'.

But the שו"ע (או"ח תפא ב) tells us that we should speak about it all night , חייב אדם לעסוק בהלכות הפסח וביציאת מצרים, ולספר בניסים ובנפלאות שעשה הקדוש ברוך הוא עד שתחטפנו שינה – 'until sleep overtakes us'. This makes it a חייב - a requirement - and not simply praiseworthy? (2020)

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה הרי אני כבן שבועים שנה ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא,

רבי אלעזר בן עזריה became Rosh Yeshiva literally over night, ascending to the position of leadership over his peers. Even his physical appearance miraculously changed. One merit, however, was not granted to him, the ability to find convincing proof that the Exodus should be mentioned at night. Why? If he was worthy of so many gifts, why did this Drasha elude him?

The only way one merits to become proficient in torah knowledge is through toil and study. There are not shortcuts in the path to success in torah learning. One becomes a גדול בתורה, through עמילות בתורה, toil in torah study, determination and diligence, not by sitting back and waiting for it to happen. רבי אלעזר בן עזריה was worthy of miracles, but proficiency in תורה comes only to those who have worked specifically to achieve this goal. (Rav Chatzkel Levenstein Peninim Haggadah Page 27 2020)

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות

We usually translate this as, why is tonight different than all other nights?

As Jews with אמונה, that is not the way that we should be looking at this. We should not question why ה' does things. We should translate it, What is different about tonight? (Heard from Rav Schorr 2020)

מרור

כתב של"ה ראיתי מבני עליה שהיו מנשקין, (תע"ז סק"ה בשם השל"ה) מ"ב The מרור, that we should kiss the מרור. On the night of the סדר we need

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to show that we understand the גלות, we need to understand that the גלות is for our benefit.

All year this is very hard to understand, to see the good in a very difficult situation, but on the night of פסח, we are זוכה to be elevated to be able to see the good, even in גלות, up to the point that we kiss the מרור, and to love the גלות, because we recognize that it is good for us. (Rav Schors Hagada page (קכב) (2020)

מרור

How can bitter herbs not be bitter? On the list in משנה, Horseradish is number 3, and Romaine is number 1.

Bitter is not pain, it is a view of life, tasteless, he feels emptiness in everything that he has done, life gives no joy, no delight. That is worse than pain. Pain is painful as long as you have pain, if you have a respite, then there is no pain anymore. The real tragedy of slavery is not hard work, the difficulty is the feeling of hopeless and worthlessness, everything that you do is meaningless. That is the way that slavery was set up, they build cities on quick sand, as soon as they finished all their hard work, it would sink and you would not see any fruits of your labor. Even a slave, if he is not getting paid, even though he might be doing back breaking labor, when he is finished, there is still a sense of accomplishment.

It is like that in any test, if there is no concrete benefit, you feel used and manipulated. What they tried to do to us, is make us feel used and manipulated with no productivity.

The lettuce is bland. I can endure pain, because I also have joys. A life of ups and downs is not terrible. That is a regular life. If you have a life, with no joy, even if there is no suffering, that is not a life. The emptiness, the lifeless is what the מרור represents.

Life with joy and tragedy is life.

Life with listless is what מרור represents. No taste, it is not feeling of pain, it is feeling of bitterness, emptiness.

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If you are bitter, your life has no joy in anything you do.

Pain is a lower level. (Rabbi Zweig Pesach סדר 1990)

מכת ארבה

ר' לוי יצחק of Berditchev says that the the מכה of Locust that destroyed all trees plants and anything that grew in מצרים, that plague broke out on the day of טו בשבט. ר' לוי יצחק says, how ironic. The new year for trees, the day we celebrate the growth, is the same day the מכת ארבה happened.

There are times when we look around and we see nothing more than desolation and destruction, both in our lives and in the world. And yet, we have to realize that it's at that very same moment, very same time when the רבונו של עולם is starting and initiating the growth, the blossoming and the beauty of life. Therefore, on a day like טו בשבט, which is just around the corner, we have to remember that once upon a time, things didn't look so optimistic. But we have to have בטחון and אמונה that the רבונו של עולם will make things great.

Indeed, the world ארבה, locust, means "I will increase". On the surface it looks like a plague. But in truth, the רבונו של עולם is only increasing that which is good for all of us (2020).

אחד חכם. ואחד רשע. ואחד תם. ואחד שאינו יודע לשאול:

If you look at the Four Sons, you see that three of the four are measures of intellect or ability to use that intellect. Yet, the fourth, the Evil Son, is NOT a measure of intellect but describes his character. Why do we not say something like "Fool" instead of "wicked/evil"?

In truth, the "Wicked son" is also a very intelligent individual. Yet, instead of using his intelligence for GOOD purposes, he uses it for evil. Consider a modern day computer hacker. While he/she is quite intelligent insofar as the ability to break into someone else's computer, the intellect being used is for evil purposes.

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When we see our children doing something that is not correct, it is an opportunity to show them how they can use that talent and skill for something positive. (2020)

שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו לכלותנו

When we are not connected to 'ה, who is the One who unifies and sustains the entire world, then we are vulnerable to those who “stand up to annihilate us.” (R' Gamliel Rabinowitz 2020)

ובאותות, זה המטה. כמה שנאמר, ואת המטה הזה תקח בידך אשר תעשה בו את האתת

משה took care of the rest of the 7. אהרן hit the water and the ground for the first three מכות,

Why was it necessary for משה to show הכרת הטוב to the water, it is an inanimate object?

When it comes to הכרת הטוב, the beneficiary need not make החשבונות, to appraise the actual amount of effort his benefactor has exerted in order to estimate how much gratitude he owes. Did he have to do it anyway? If we find that it did not really cost him much we may discover excuses and reasons that could justify not repaying the favor, not demonstrating gratitude where it is due. Quiet possibly, once we start with החשבונות, we might negate the whole concept of הכרת הטוב.

Rav Shach adds the following point. We must recognize that 'ה is the source of all the good that we receive. The medium through which we receive this benefit is nothing more than a vehicle for channeling 'ה's favor to us. What difference does it make to us who or what 'ה employs to serve as the agent for carrying out his objective? He demands that we imbue ourselves with the מידה of appreciation, not distinguishing among the benefactors. This is a case in which too much “discrimination” might cause us to lose sight of the actual source of our blessing-'ה.

(Peninim Haggadah Page 47 2020)

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אז ישיר (טו א)

The מדרש says that before the Jews said שירה at the ים, no one said שירה. But if you go back all the way to אדם, he composed לְכוּ נִרְנְנָה לַיהוָה, after he did שירה he said, מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, what does that mean no one said שירה before us?

The אור גדליהו explains, that there are two types of שירה, one is that we are thanking 'ה' for saving us from a difficult situation. We thank 'ה' for getting us out and saving us.

But there is a higher level of singing שירה. We are not thanking 'ה' for GETTING US OUT, but we are thanking 'ה' for putting us IN THAT SITUATION. For what we perceived as being bad, we sing שירה for that as well. We were the first to do that. After we left the ים סוף. We realized that EVERYTHING that 'ה' does, even the seemingly difficult situations in מצרים, was also good for us.

That is what was meant when we said, אָמַר אֱוִיב אֶרְדָּף אֲשִׁיג אֶחֱלֶק שְׁלָל (טו ט). We spoke about the times that they were chasing us and hitting us, because we understood that even that was good for us. Now we recognize it. We not only sing שירה for saving us, but for the those seemingly dark times as well. (2020 Heard from Rabbi Storch)

לֹא תֵאֱסָפוּן לָתֵת תֶּבֶן לַעַם לְלֶכֶן הַלְבַנִּים בְּתִמּוֹל שְׁלֹשָׁם הֵם יִלְכוּ וְקִשְׁשׁוּ לָהֶם תֶּבֶן (שמות ה ז)
Do not give straw to the people

לֹא תֵאֱסָפוּן is not spelled with a ו, תֵּאֱסָפוּן, it is with an א, לֹא תֵאֱסָפֵן, don't allow them to gather, and sit together, and be מהזק together, if you do, then we will loose to the down trodden.

When we sit together, great things happen. (Reb Dovid Levlover From Rabbi Spero)

ואתא תקדוש ברוך הוא, ושחט למלאך המות

Rav Noson Adler had many people who were sharply critical of him, since

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they found his manner of עבודת ה' to be different from that they were used to.

Once Rav Noson was sitting in the corner of a Beis Medrash, unrecognized and unnoticed by the people present. Suddenly, he overheard a conversation that was very critical of him, and his דרך in עבודת ה'. The speakers did not realize that the subject of their conversation as listen to they every word. Rav Noson approached them and asked them the following question question.

In תהי' נדב' we understand that the “cat that ate the kid” was wrong, and consequently it follows that “the staff that hit the dog” was wrong. Therefore, “the fire that consumed the staff” was right. Thus, “the water that extinguished the fire was wrong”. And as such, “the ox that drank the water” did the proper thing. This then means that “the Shochet who slaughtered the ox” was wrong, and thus “the angel of death” was justified in taking revenge on the Shochet. The question remains therefore, why did the Holy One blessed be he, punished the angel of death?

Rav Noson himself gave the following answer. It is true that the cat bit the lamb, and it may not have been justified in doing so. Therefore, the father was right to be angry at the cat, and to seek to punish it. But the argument was between the father and the cat, so what right did the dog have to fan the flames of the strife by joining an argument that did not concern him? consequently, the dog was actually more guilty that the cat that bit the lamb, and therefore the stick was justified in hitting the dog, and so on. Thus, following this train of succession, the angel of death was certainly guilty of deserving of punishment.

When we see a מחלוקת among גדולי ישראל, we should not see to fan the flames of strife by getting involved. For even if we perceive one side of the מחלוקת as more correct than the other, nevertheless our participation in the disagreement only adds to the controversy, and may even be more harmful in the end that the possibly erroneous opinion that may have been the issue in the first place. (Rabbi Yitzchok Sender 2020)

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