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A Tzaddik, or righteous person, makes everyone else appear righteous before Hashem by advocating for them and finding their merits.

Kedushas Levi, Parshas Noach (Bereishis 7:1)

TZAV - PESACH

CHASSIDUS ON THE PARSHA

It is a great *segula* to recite the *Ma'amar Sod Etzba Elokim* from Rav Shimshon of Ostropoli (1599–1648). This revelation came along with the assurance of tremendous blessings to all those who learn this *Ma'amar* at least once a year, especially on the eve of *Pesach*.
Due to the shaimos involved, we have included it in the e-mail as a separate pdf and we request that you treat it with due respect.

Dvar Torah - Tzav

The Light Reflected

The *Torah* tells us (*Vayikra* 9:16) that Moshe "brought the *ola*, the burnt offering, and performed its service *kamishpot,* according to the law". What is the meaning of "according to the law"? *Rashi* states that it refers to the laws of the *ola* presented elsewhere.

We can also discern an allusion here, says Rav Levi Yitzchok, to the effectiveness of our *tefillos* during the month of *Tishrei*. According to the *Zohar*, the *chatos*, the sin offering, represents the *ohr yoshor*, the direct light that emanates from Heaven and is conferred upon the earth, while the *ola*, the burnt offering, represents the *ohr chozer*, the reflection of this supernal light back toward Heaven. Therefore, parts of the *chatos* are eaten, since the light it represents is entrusted to humanity. But the *ola*, whose light is ultimately directed to Heaven, must be completely consumed on the *Mizbei'ach* (Altar), thereby given to *Hashem*, so to speak.

In this context, the word *kamishpot* alludes to the month in which justice is meted out,

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specifically, the month of *Tishrei*. During this month, the *tefillos* of the Jewish people reflect the supernal light back toward Heaven, as implied by the word *Tishrei*, which is spelled with the letters in reverse order of the alphabet – *tav*, *shin*, *reish* – indicating the reversal of the light.

Story

Outside the windows of the *shul*, the sun was sinking behind the trees, and the daylight was fading away. *Yom Kippur* was almost over, and Rav Levi Yitzchok was desperate. He saw a huge thunderhead of darkness looming over the Jewish people, a frightening harbinger of impending doom. All day, he had tried his utmost to dispel the hovering cloud, the harsh decree that hung over the heads of the Jewish people. He had *davened*. He had argued. He had advocated. He had pleaded. He had made an uproar that had shaken the heavens. But all had been to no effect. The darkness continued to gather and grow more ominous with each passing minute, and fear gripped Rav Levi Yitzchok's heart.

And then, just as the gates of Heaven were swinging shut, Rav Levi Yitzchok saw a brilliant light flash through Heaven like a meteor, and the threatening darkness was instantly dispelled. Rav Levi Yitzchok breathed a sigh of relief. Disaster had been averted at the very last minute. But what had tipped the scales in favor of the Jewish people? What force had produced the dazzling bolt of light that had so thoroughly dispelled the darkness? Rav Levi Yitzchok knew that it had not been his own efforts. He knew full well that those had failed. Someone else had come to the rescue of the Jewish people. Someone else had stormed the gates of Heaven. But who?

Rav Levi Yitzchok would not rest until he found the answer to this question. He roamed and probed the highways and byways of the upper worlds until he finally discovered the truth. The reprieve had been wrought by a group of Jewish soldiers who had been conscripted into the army of the Russian czar. These unfortunate souls were forced to remain in their regiments for at least ten years, often much longer, separated from their families, their traditions, their people. Nonetheless, on *Yom Kippur* the Jewish soldiers trapped in this cycle of misery would come together to *daven* to *Hashem*. It was the *tefilla* during the last moments of *Yom Kippur* of the *chazzan* of this group, the one who had led the desperate *tefillos* of these Jewish soldiers, that had illuminated the heavens and dispelled the dark cloud that hung over the Jewish people.

This group that Rav Levi Yitzchok had detected after great effort was stationed in a town that was very far from Berditchev. Although Rav Levi Yitzchok was eager to meet the *chazzan*, it would necessitate a long and difficult journey. Nonetheless, because Rav Levi Yitzchok wanted very much to see him and hear his *tefilla*, he decided to go on this arduous journey the following *Yom Kippur*.

Rav Levi Yitzchok arrived in that town on *Erev Yom Kippur* and immediately set out to find the Jewish soldiers. This was no simple matter. Everywhere he turned, he encountered doors that closed in his face. But Rav Levi Yitzchok was not to be deterred. He finally discovered where the group was meeting and went to join them.

When he entered the room, it was already time for *Ne'ila*. The gates of Heaven were about to swing shut. The Jewish soldiers stood huddled together, seeking comfort in their

unity.

Rav Levi Yitzchok stood transfixed by the scene unfolding before his eyes. He saw one of the soldiers step forward to serve as the *chazzan*. But before he began the service, he turned to face the others.

"My dear friends," he said, "my comrades, my brothers. We stand here at the closing moments of this holy day. This is the moment of last resort. It is the moment when people all over the world plead with *Hashem* to provide them with what they want and what they need. Some people ask for money, a decent living to provide for their families. Others ask for a family; they are alone, and they want a wife and children. People ask for health, for success, for whatever is in their hearts. But what do we ask for?"

He paused for a moment and lifted his eyes to Heaven.

"Master of the Universe," he cried out, "what do we ask of You? Do we ask for food, for a livelihood? This means nothing to us now. We are in the czar's army, and we are provided our meager rations of bread. Do we ask for a wife and children? How can we when we are conscripted and torn away from our communities? What are our needs, our wants? What are our aspirations? What is the yearning in our hearts? We ask for only one thing. We ask that *yisgadal veyiskadash shemei rabba*, that Your great Name be exalted and sanctified."

Rav Levi Yitzchok stood in the rear of the room and listened in silence, and he trembled as he saw the brilliant light of these words rise up toward the heavens.

Divrei Torah - Pesach

***P**esach* is the name we give to the festival we celebrate in the month of *Nissan*, but nowhere in the *Torah* is it mentioned by that name. Rather, it is always called *Chag HaMatzos*, the Festival of the *Matzos*. Why then do we call it *Pesach*?

Shlomo *HaMelech* writes (*Shir HaShirim* 6:3): *Ani ledodi vedodi li* – "I am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is for me". This means that it is for us to sing the praises of *Hashem* and for Him to sing our praises. For instance, in the *tefillin* we wear, the scrolls speak the praises of *Hashem*, and in the *tefillin* that He wears, according to the *Gemora* (*Berochos* 6a), the selections praise the Jewish people.

The *Torah* calls the festival *Chag HaMatzos* in praise of the Jewish people who did not hesitate to leave Egypt instantly, even before their bread had a chance to rise (see *Rashi*, *Shemos* 12:39). But we call it *Pesach* to recall that *Hashem* skipped over the Jewish homes when he unleashed the final plague on the land of Egypt.

Two Forms of Delight

"Just as in the days of your Exodus from Egypt I shall show you wonders" (*Micha* 7:15).

And we shall elucidate the *pasuk* (*Shemos* 3:14): "I shall be what I shall be", based on the following parable:

A pauper once earned ten thousand coins all at once. He was delighted and greatly overjoyed. When afterward he earned an additional twenty thousand, he was also happy, but compared to the original delight and joy that he had felt [when he earned the first ten thousand] this current happiness was seemingly nothing. In order to reach a level of delight and joy that would be comparable to the way he first felt, he would have to earn tens and hundreds of thousands.

The meaning of this parable is: The Holy One redeemed us from Egypt from the house of bondage and slavery and performed many wonders and miracles for us; this was our initial delight, and speedily He will once again do wonders and miracles for us. However, at first glance, compared to the first initial delight, this delight will not stand up to it at all. However then *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* will work such wondrous unlimited miracles for us all – to such a degree that even if we were to compare them to our initial delight, it will surpass it.

This is the meaning of "just as in the days of your Exodus from Egypt": even compared to that initial delight, this too will be delightful, and again "I shall show you wonders". This is the meaning of "I shall be what I shall be".

Another interpretation of "I shall be what I shall be".

And this will elucidate why this *Yom Tov* is called *Pesach*. *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* took us out of Egypt in order to serve Him and in order to accept the holy *Torah*, as it says (*Shemos* 3:12): "You shall serve *Hashem* on this mountain", and it would have been more proper to have accepted the *Torah* before [having been redeemed from Egypt]. But *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* skipped over the acceptance of the *Torah*, and this is why He is called *Ekeyeh* – implying the future tense – "I will be".

It says (*Shemos* 20:2): "I am *Hashem* your G-d, Who took you out of Egypt", and this is difficult. Why does it not say "Who Created heaven and earth"? (This question was posed by the *Ibn Ezra*, *Rabbeinu Bachaya*, *Chizkuni* and others.)

The answer is that at that time they grasped the Creator, understanding Him because of His having taken them out of Egypt. The *Torah* and the Holy One are unified (*Zohar* III 73a) and just like they grasped the Creator as the G-d of the Exodus, similarly on that same level of understanding did they grasp the *Torah*, and no more.

However, speedily in the future the Holy One will work unlimited wonders and miracles for us. Then we will all be able to grasp the Creator more and then they will understand the *Torah* better as well. This is the meaning of "a (new) *Torah* will come out from me" (*Yeshaya* 51:4; *Vayikra Rabba* 13:3). And in the future it will be like this as well: initially the Holy One will redeem us with wonders and miracles, and afterward they will grasp the *Torah* anew, as we just explained, and then the future delight they feel will be an aspect of *Ekeyeh*, as we explained above. This is the meaning of *Ekeyeh* – "I will be as I shall be".

Shir HaShirim

Rav Levi Yitzchok explained the *pasuk* in *Shir HaShirim*: "Watching from the windows". When a person watches his fellow through the window, he can see his friend but his friend does not always see him, since there is a wall between them. Similarly, *Hashem*, who sends us *shefa*, abundant blessings and sustenance, is hidden; we cannot see Him

watching us. Nonetheless, we must *daven* that we merit to see the kindness of *Hashem*. (*Ma'ayan HaChassidus* Vol. 12, No. 25–26 5735 p. 22)

The Tefillin Of The Master Of The World

You shall say it is a *pesach* offering to *Hashem*, who passed over the houses of the children of Yisrael... (*Shemos* 12:27)

Why is it that we call the *Yom Tov* that the *Torah* designated as *Chag HaMatzos*, the Festival of Unleavened Bread, by the name *Pesach*? Where does the *Torah* indicate that we might call this *Yom Tov* by the name *Pesach*? Any time the *Torah* mentions this *Yom Tov*, it is called *Chag HaMatzos*.

And it is written elsewhere, *Ani l'dodi v'dodi li* — "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine" (*Shir HaShirim* 6:3). This teaches that we relate the praises of *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*, and He in turn praises us. So, too, we don *tefillin*, which contain the praises of *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*, and *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* dons His "*tefillin*", in which the praise of *Klal Yisrael* is written.

This will help us understand what is written in the *Tanna D'Vei Eliyohu* [regarding the praises of *Klal Yisrael*]. The *Medrash* there says: "It is a *mitzva* to speak the praises of Yisrael, and *Hashem Yisborach* gets great *nachas* and pleasure from this praise". It seems to me that for this reason it says that it is forbidden to break one's concentration on one's *tefillin* while wearing them, that it is a *mitzva* for a man to be continuously occupied with the *mitzva* of *tefillin*. This tells us that it is a *mitzva* to constantly praise *Klal Yisrael* and to praise *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*. The "praise of *Klal Yisrael*" is symbolized by the *tefillin* of the *Ribbono Shel Olam*, since the praises of the Jewish people are written in them, as the *Gemora* teaches: "What is written in the *tefillin* of the Master of the World? 'Who is like Your nation, Yisrael?'" (*Berochos* 6a). And the "praise of *HaKodosh Boruch Hu*" hints at our *tefillin*, which contain praises of *Hashem Yisborach* — that is, the *parshiyos* of *Shema, Kadeish* and *V'hoya Ki Yeviacha.* Therefore, we find that we are constantly praising *Hashem Yisborach*, and *Hashem* is constantly praising us.

We find that the name *Chag HaMatzos* was given to praise *Bnei Yisrael*. *Rashi* comments on the *pasuk*: "They baked the dough that they brought out of Egypt into matza cakes" (*Shemos* 12:39) that "this *pasuk* praises Yisrael, that they did not complain, 'How will we go out into the desert without preparing provisions?' Rather, they had faith and they went, as it says: 'I remember for you the kindness of your youth, the love when you were a bride, your following Me into the desert in a land not sown' (*Yirmiyohu* 2:2)." Therefore, the name *Chag HaMatzos* is considered a praise of *Klal Yisrael*, that they baked their dough into *matza* cakes [since they hastened their departure, and did not take time to prepare provisions, because they had faith that *Hashem* would provide for them in the desert].

This is why the *Torah* names this holiday *Chag HaMatzos*. In this way, *Hashem* is relating the praise of the Jewish people. We, on the other hand, call this *Yom Tov* by the name *Pesach*, in praise of *Hashem*, as it says [in our *pasuk*], "You shall say it is a *pesach* offering to *Hashem*, Who passed over the houses of the children of Yisrael..." This is His praise, just as in the *pasuk* we mentioned above: "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine".

Stories

Two Legal Disputes

Two men were shouting at each other in the street, impervious to their surroundings. A curious crowd gathered around them. A few of the onlookers begged the two angry men to stop but to no avail. Finally, an older man came forward and stepped between them.

"Enough is enough," he said. "What is going on here?"

"He owes me a thousand rubles," said the lankier of the two, "and he refuses to pay."

"Not true!" shouted the heavier of the two. "I owe him nothing."

"He's a thief!" said the lanky man. "I want the whole city to know that he is no better than a robber who climbs into houses at night."

"How dare you! You are the thief here, trying to rob me of money that's not coming to you."

The older man held up his hand. "All right, everyone calm down. Fighting and accusations will not resolve anything. Let's go to the new *Rav* of the city. Let him sort it out."

The two men reluctantly agreed, and a half hour later, they were standing before Rav Levi Yitzchok, once again shouting at each other, their faces red as fire. Rav Levi Yitzchok fixed them with a stern glance, and they fell silent.

"Why don't we begin," he said, "by having both sides present their arguments calmly and without interruption?"

It took an effort for the two litigants to control themselves, but each one managed to remain silent while the other spoke. When they were finished, Rav Levi Yitzchok said he would consider the matter and give them a ruling the following day. It would require a great deal of thought, because the dispute was not only about obligations and responsibilities but also about the facts of the case.

Rav Levi Yitzchok considered the evidence and the arguments, and finally, reached what he considered a reasonable conclusion. The next day, he ruled in favor of the lanky man and ordered the heavyset man to pay him a thousand rubles. The loser bowed his head and nodded. Two hours later, he returned with the money. He paid the lanky man in front of Rav Levi Yitzchok and asked for a receipt endorsed by the *Bais Din*.

"I don't trust that man," he said. "In another place, he might come after me again and claim I never paid him."

Rav Levi Yitzchok wrote out a receipt for him, and the man left without another word.

The following morning, he returned and asked to speak with Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"I couldn't sleep last night, *Rebbe*," he said. "I understand that the *Rebbe's* ruling is true and just, that it is based on the guidelines of *halocha*. And I accept it. But I also know that I am innocent and that I did not owe him even a measly *groshen*. He presented his lies as the truth, and it was impossible for me to prove he was lying. So how can I accept, in my own mind, that his was the true judgment when I know that he has stolen my money?"

Rav Levi Yitzchok saw the sincerity of the man and suspected that he was telling the truth. But he had to base his ruling on *halocha*, not his personal feelings. The man was,

therefore, raising a valid point. How could he accept that following the *halocha* could result in a miscarriage of justice?

He stroked his chin and mulled over the question. "You're making an excellent point," he said at last. "I need to think about it. Come back in three days."

During those three days, Rav Levi Yitzchok fasted and *davened* for enlightenment. Then the answer came to him in a dream.

Three days later, the heavyset man once again stood before Rav Levi Yitzchok.

"It was revealed to me in a dream," said Rav Levi Yitzchok, "that your grandfather borrowed one thousand rubles from your friend's grandfather and never paid him. The one thousand rubles that he should have paid back went instead to his children and now to his grandson – you. The Heavenly Court has decreed, however, that the money should be returned to your grandfather's lender, and since he is no longer alive, it should be returned to his grandson."

"That is amazing," said the heavyset man. Then he gathered up his courage and pressed on. "Please forgive my question, but how do we know this is true? Maybe it was just a dream."

Rav Levi Yitzchok nodded. "Tell me, did you inherit a *Shulchon Aruch* from your grandfather?"

"Yes, I did."

"Go home and looked through its pages. You will find a document that proves he took a loan of one thousand rubles from your friend's grandfather."

The heavyset man went home and riffled through his *Shulchon Aruch*. A document fell out, and just as Rav Levi Yitzchok had predicted, it contained a record of the old loan. He immediately ran back to Rav Levi Yitzchok and showed him the document.

The next day, Rav Levi Yitzchok called a meeting of the leaders of the congregation.

"I want to offer my resignation," he said.

They were aghast. "But why?" they cried out.

Rav Levi Yitzchok told them the story of the dispute and the dream. "I think I should seek a position in another city. Apparently, disputes brought before me in this city will require three days of fasting before justice is delivered, something that has never happened to me before. I think it would be better if I sought a position in a different place."

"Please don't make such a hasty decision, *Rebbe*," said one of the men. "We understand your concerns, but please give it some more time and think it over. *Pesach* is coming. Let us talk about this again after *Pesach*."

Rav Levi Yitzchok agreed, and the city leaders departed.

On *Pesach* night, the beggars and the homeless gathered in the back of the *shul*, waiting for the householders to invite them to their homes, as was the custom every year in Berditchev.

One of the householders approached a bedraggled pauper and said, "Would you like to be my guest for the *Seder* tonight?"

"Yes, I would. Thank you kindly."

"It is my pleasure and honor," said the householder. "Would you mind waiting for me for a minute or two? I have to have a word with a friend of mine."

"Take as much time as you need. I'll be right here."

The householder went to his friend, and soon they were deeply engrossed in conversation. Together, the householder and his friend left the *shul* and continued their conversation as they walked through the streets. They stopped at the householder's door, bid each other a *gut Yom Tov* and parted ways.

The householder walked into his house and looked about him with delight. The table was covered with a white tablecloth trimmed with lace. The candles glowed, the silverware gleamed, and faces of his family beamed. He sighed with content.

"What happened?" asked his wife. "Where is our guest?"

The householder smacked himself on his forehead. "*Oy*, I forgot him,' he groaned. "He's probably still standing there in the *shul*. I must run back there."

The householder hurried through the streets, impervious to the chill of the night. When he arrived at the *shul*, he found it deserted. There was no sign of the poor man he had invited. Despondent, he walked home. That year, to the chagrin of his wife and children, there was no guest at their *Seder* table.

The householder spotted his prospective guest in *shul* the following morning. He immediately ran over to him.

"A thousand apologies, my good man," he said. "Please forgive me. I became so absorbed in my conversation that I forgot about you. It is inexcusable. Forgive me please."

The poor man waved it aside. "Think nothing of it. I admit that I was nervous at first when I couldn't find you."

"So why didn't you stay where you were and wait for me? I came back to find you, but you were already gone. What happened?"

"Everything was fine. Believe me, I did not go hungry last night. That man over there" – he pointed – "came by and invited me."

"I see. Did he ask you if you had been invited?"

"He did. I told him that you had invited me but that I didn't see you anywhere. So he took me home with him. The *Seder* was really wonderful, and the food was excellent. I mean, excellent."

Angry and upset, the householder sought out and confronted the man who had invited the poor man.

"How could you take my guest?" he said. "You knew I had invited him."

"True. And I also knew you had abandoned him."

"I did not abandon him! I was just speaking to someone else about an important matter, but as soon as I finished, I came to get him. But he wasn't there. Why? Because you took him with you."

The men were soon shouting at each other and had to be pulled apart before they came to blows. Peace finally reigned when it was decided they would bring their case to Rav Levi Yitzchok after *Pesach*.

Rav Levi Yitzchok listened carefully to their arguments, and then he ruled that the second man should pay a penalty to the first for appropriating his guest. When the two left, Rav Levi Yitzchok called a meeting with the leaders of the community.

"I have reconsidered," Rav Levi Yitzchok announced. "I've decided to remain here as the *Rav* of Berditchev. If the men in this city fight over the privilege of inviting a poor man to their table, this is the kind of city that I want to serve."

When Rav Levi Yitzchok would sit at the *Sedorim* on the two nights of *Pesach* and recite the *Haggoda*, an unusual thing would happen when he reached the statement *Matza zu*, which means "this *matza*". He would get so excited that he would fall under the table, the table itself usually toppled over and all the dishes and *matzos* would fall and turn over. While he was in this unconscious state of ecstasy and rapture, they would reset a new table complete with a new set of dishes, cups of wine and *matzos*, as well as a new, unstained *Kittel* for him to wear. He would redress himself and sit back at the table, where he would continue by saying *Matza zu*, in a tone which sounding like he was reviving and awakening himself, saying, "Ah, ah, *matza zu* – ah, ah, this *matza*!"

Once, when he went to draw water from the well for baking *matzos*, he was so excited and enraptured by the *mitzva* that he fell into the well! Fortunately, the water was not too deep!

When he made the *berochos* over the *Megilla* on *Purim*, he danced out of *simcha* on the *amud* (lectern) and almost on the *Megilla* itself! (*Eser Oros* 3:6-8)

The Appointment

Berditchev was a large city and it was a great honor to serve as its *Rav*. The committee demanded no less than a great *Torah* scholar and *Tzaddik* to fill this post. Here is the account of how Rav Levi Yitzchok — indeed, a great Torah scholar and *Tzaddik* — came to be appointed as the Berditchever *Rav*.

The previous *Rav* of Berditchev had passed away. A committee was formed to search for a new *Rav*. They had heard that the *Rav* of Zelichov, Rav Levi Yitzchok, was a man of great piety and righteousness. Two young men were sent forthwith to meet with Rav Levi Yitzchok and interview him as a potential candidate. They were to speak to him and test his knowledge to see if he was a fitting replacement for their venerable *Rav*.

The two arrived just before *Pesach*. They went to Rav Levi Yitzchok and asked if he would host them as his guests. They knew that they were sure to find the highest standards of *kashrus* in the home of the *Rav*, and it was an opportunity to observe Rav Levi Yitzchok and so arrive at a decision.

Rav Levi Yitzchok was honored to have them as his guests. On the first night of *Pesach*, during the *Seder*, the two delegates were astonished when Rav Levi Yitzchok did a most unusual thing. They reached the point in the *Haggoda* when we recites the ten plagues, when they heard Rav Levi Yitzchok "honor" the local enemies of the Jewish people with the plagues, distributing them and handed them out to each one. When they named the plague of blood, the *Rav* said, "*Dom* — blood! To the evil *poritz*! Frogs — to the immoral duke! Lice — to

the wicked prince!" The *Rav* handed out each one of the ten plagues to a different enemy of *Klal Yisrael*, cursing each one with a different affliction. The two guests laughed and made light of Rav Levi Yitzchok's odd behavior. They didn't know what else to think.

When *Yom Tov* ended, they left Zelichov to return home. On the way, they stopped for refreshments and heard the odd rumor that the place had recently been plagued by frogs! As they traveled on, they heard more rumors. Nobles from other provinces had been plagued by cattle disease, lice and boils.

In Berditchev, they related what they had discovered — that Rav Levi Yitzchok was not only a great *Torah* scholar and genius, but he was truly a holy man whose decrees were miraculously fulfilled. The decision was obvious: the city decided to appoint him as their *Rav*.

They wrote up a letter of appointment, and two honorable personages traveled to him with the letter. When they returned in the coach together with the *Rav*, the streets were filled with men, women and children, eager to greet him and get a glimpse of the *Tzaddik*. And the city of Berditchev celebrated the arrival of their new *Rav*.

The Glory of Yisrael: Rav Levi Yitzchok and the Tefillin of Klal Yisrael

Rav Nachman of Breslov warned his *talmidim* that whenever Rav Levi Yitzchok passed through their towns, they must have their *tefillin* examined. The Rebbe himself had his own *tefillin* checked whenever the *Kedushas Levi* passed through.

"It is because the holy *Rav* of Berditchev represents *Pe'er Yisrael*, the Glory of Yisrael," explained Rav Nachman, "which is the attribute of *tefillin*."

The *Avodas Levi* explained that if they did not honor Rav Levi Yitzchok properly in one of the towns he passed through, this not only represented a blemish on their own honor, but it would also blemish their *tefillin*, because the Berditchever represented *Pe'er Yisrael* — the Glory of Yisrael.

הילולא

The anniversary of the *petira* of a *Tzaddik* is known as a *Hilula*, which means "A Day of Joy".

One of the tools that *Kabbola* teaches is to connect to a *Tzaddik* (righteous person). The method to connect to a *Tzaddik* is to adopt the following ritual:

1) Learn the anniversary of his *petira* or, if this information is not available, the days of *Erev Rosh Chodesh*, *Rosh Chodesh* and the fifteenth day of the Hebrew month can be utilized for a connection.

2) Light a twenty-five-hour candle in his or her honor. There is no specific *berocha*. Some say the following: This candle is being lit in the merit of _____.

Others say that it is the custom within *Klal* Yisrael to light a *yahrzeit* candle on the day that a relative or a *Tzaddik* has passed away. The lighting has no accompanying blessing, and people would like to express themselves in a *tefilla* when lighting the candle. This is not only true on a *yahrzeit* but on every *Yom Tov* as well.

The author of the *Pele Yo'etz*, Rav Eliezer Papo (1785–1828), did in fact compose such a *tefilla*. Rav Papo was the *Rav* of the city of Selestria in Bulgaria. Bulgaria was a part of the Ottoman Empire at the time. The *tefilla* of the *Pele Yo'etz* is reproduced and translated below, as a public service.

Hebrew Tefilla for Lighting a Yahrzeit or Hilula Candle

[תְּפִילָה הַנִּמְצֵאת בַּסֵּפֶר אֶלֶף הַמָּגֵן מִבַּעַל הַפֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ עַל פָּרָשַׁת וַיֵּצֵא עָמוּד כ״ד]

הֲרֵינִי מַדְלִיק נֵר זֶה לִמְנוּחַת וּלְעִילּוּי נִשְׁמַת אָבִי / אִמִּי מוֹרָתִי / הַצַּדִּיק _____ בֶּן/בַּת _____, יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה׳ אֱלֹקֵינוּ וֵאלֹקֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתִּתְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים וּבְרָצוֹן כָּל מַעֲשֶׂה הַטּוֹב שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, בֵּין בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה, בֵּין בְּדִיבּוּר, בֵּין בְּמַעֲשֶׂה וְיִהְיֶה הַכֹּל לְזְכוּת וּלְמְנוּחַת וּלְעִילּוּי לִנְשָׁמוֹת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבִפְרָט לְנֶפֶשׁ רוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה שֶׁל אָבִי / אִמִּי / צַדִּיק _____. יְהִי רָצוֹן שֶׁתִּהְיֶינָה נַפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בִּצְרוֹר הַחַיִּים.

Translation:

Behold I am lighting this lamp for the resting and uplifting of the soul of my father/my mother/the *Tzaddik* _____ the son/daughter of _____. May it be Your will before you, *Hashem*, our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers, that all my good deeds whether in thought, speech or action be done for a merit and a resting and an elevation of the souls of your nation Yisrael. It should be especially for the soul of my father/mother/the *Tzaddik* _____. May it be Your will that their souls be bound in the bond of life.

3) Learn about the person including history, culture, writings and teachings.

4) Study some of his teaching or writings.

See more at: www.yeshshem.com/hilulah.htm

GEDOLIM BE'MISASAM YOSER

YAHRZEITS BEGINNING SHABBOS TZAV

http://www.chinuch.org/gedolim_yahrtzeit/Nissan

Biographical information and yahrzeits compiled by Reb Manny Saltiel and www.anshe.org

14th of Nissan ~ Begins Friday Night (Mar 26th) – Erev Pesach

- **Rav Asher Yeshaya** of Ropshitz *ben* Rav Eliezer Lipman, son-in-law and successor of Rav Naftoli of Ropshitz. He was the main *Rebbe* of Rav Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam, the Shinover *Rav*, (5605/1845);
- **Rav Avrohom Yaffen**, *Rosh Yeshiva* Novardok (1897–1970). Educated as a youth in the Pinsk *Talmud Torah*, he then learned under Rav Isser Zalman Melter in Slutzk. In 1913, he was apppointed *Rosh Yeshiva* of the main Novardok *Yeshiva* by Rav Yosef Yoizel Horowitz and became his son-in-law. From then on, he assisted his father-in-law with all aspects of Novardok's *Yeshivos*. By 1939, there were over eighty Novardok *Yeshivos* throughout Poland, serving over four thousand *talmidim*. He moved to *Eretz* Yisrael in 1964, (5730/1970);
- Birthdays of *Rambam* and *Maharal* of Prague.

15th of Nissan ~ Begins Motzai Shabbos (Mar 27th) – 1st day of Pesach

- **Yitzchok *Avinu***, (1713–1533 BCE). Yitzchok *Avinu* willingly went with his father Avrohom *Avinu* when he came to bind him as a sacrifice. This is why the incident is called the Binding of Yitzchok and not the Sacrifice of Yitzchok. The *Medrash* says he passed away and was resurrected. This is one of the reasons that the Resurrection of the Dead will come through his *Torah* teachings;
- **Yehuda** *ben* Yaakov *Avinu*;
- **Rav Yona Teumim Frankel** (1595–1669), *Av Bais Din* in Metz, the son of Rav Yeshaya Teumim. He is the *mechaber* of *Kikoyon DeYona*. In it, he explains the commentaries of *Rashi*, *Tosafos*, the *Maharsha* and the *Maharshal* on *Gemora*, (5429/1669);

  Iyov (Job). The book of Iyov was written as the story of this man's *tikkun* of pain and suffering. It is only through the insight of the *Zohar* that we can understand this true cause and effect on many levels. The *Zohar* teaches that Iyov was an advisor to Pharaoh who advised him to enslave the Jewish nation and to kill the male babies. Og, another advisor, told Pharaoh to kill all of them. The *Torah* testifies to his *tikkun*. Yisro, the third advisor to Pharaoh, did not answer and ran away to Midian when asked what to do with the Jews! The *Zohar* also testifies that Iyov also was used by *Hashem* as a scapegoat to keep the *Soton* away from the Light of *Shemini Atzeres*. Many *Medroshim* say Iyov is an analogy to Moshe *Rabbeinu*.

16th of Nissan ~ Begins Sunday Night (Mar 28th) – 2nd day of Pesach

- **Levi** *ben* Yaakov *Avinu*, 1567 BCE. This day is also his birthday;
- **Rav Mordechai Dov Ber Twerski** of Tomashpol, son of Rav Nachum, son of the Mitteler *Rebbe*, (5680/1920);
- **Rav Nosson Ordman**, *Rosh Yeshivas Eitz Chaim*, London for more than fifty years. Born in Tavrik, Lithuania, and educated in Telz, he came to London in 1936, (5666–5756/1906–1996);
- **Rav Simcha Zissel Brodie** (Broyde), *Rosh Yeshiva* of Chevron, (5760/2000).

17th of Nissan ~ Begins Monday Night (Mar 29th) – 3rd day of Pesach

- **Rav Yisrael Noach** of Niezhin (the *Maharin*) *ben* Rav Menachem Mendel (the *Tzemach Tzedek*) of Lubavitch, (5643/1883);
- **Rav Avrohom Reuven *HaKohen* Katz** of Prague, *mechaber* of *Yalkut Reuveni*, a collection of kabbalistic material, arranged according to the *pesukim* in the *Torah*, (5433/1673);
- **Rav Yitzchok** of Skver, (5645/1885);
- **Rav Yirmiyohu Lev**, the *Divrei Yirmiyohu* (1811–1874). Born to Rav Binyomin Zev Lev (the *Shaarei Torah*), he received *semicha* from Rav Mordechai Banet, the *Rav* of Nicholsburg, at the age of seventeen. He served as *Rav* of Magendorf from 1844 to 1851, then succeeded his father in Verbau. Finally, he took a position in Ujhel (Hungary), (5634/1874);
- **Rav Moshe Mordechai Heschel**, successor of his father, Rav Avrohom Yehoshua Heschel, the Kapischnitzer (Kopycznitzer) *Rebbe*, until his sudden *petira* in 1975, (5735/1975);
- **Rav Meir** *ben* Rav Yisrael Abuchatzeira of Ashdod, son of *Baba Sali*. His sons are all great *Tzaddikim* who are sought after by people around the world for their blessings, (5743/1983);
- **Rav Shlomo Wolbe**, *Mashgiach* of *Yeshiva Givat Shaul* in Yerushalayim's Sanhedria neighborhood (1916–2005). Born in Berlin, Rav Wolbe's early education was in the *Yeshiva* of Frankfurt and in Rav Botchko's *Yeshiva* in Montreux, Switzerland. In the 1930s, he spent

several years in Mir, where he became a close *talmid* of Rav Yerucham Levovitz and Rav Chatzkel Levenstein. Rav Wolbe spent the war years in Sweden. After the war, Rav Wolbe moved to Petach Tikva, where he married the daughter of Rav Avrohom Grodzinsky, *hy"d*, the last *Mashgiach* of Slobodka. Through her, he became a nephew of Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, and a brother-in-law of Rav Chaim Kreisworth. In 1948, Rav Wolbe became *Mashgiach* at *Yeshiva Gedola* of Be'er Yaakov, a position he held for over thirty-five years. Later, he served as *Mashgiach* in the Lakewood *Yeshiva* in *Eretz* Yisrael and he opened *Yeshiva Givat Shaul*. Rav Wolbe published his first Hebrew work, *Alei Shur*, to provide today's *Yeshiva talmid* with a basic guide to assist him to become a *ben Torah*, (5765/2005).

18th of Nissan ~ Begins Tuesday Night (Mar 30th) – 4th day of Pesach

- **Rav Meir *HaLevi* Abulafia**, the *Yad Rama*, (5004/1244);
- **Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik** (1903–1993). Son of Rav Moshe Soloveitchik, and older brother of Rav Aharon Soloveitchik., great-grandson of Rav Yosef Ber Soloveitchik, the *Bais HaLevi* (1820–1892), and nephew of the Brisker *Rav*, Rav Velvel. Born in Pruzhan, Poland, on the 30th of *Shevat*, he was awarded a PhD from the University of Berlin, and then settled in Boston in the early 1930s. He became *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshiva University, and gave weekly *shiurim* to senior *talmidim*, while delivering philosophy lectures to graduate *talmidim*, (5753/1993);
- **Rav Moshe Ellinson**, *Rav Ohel Torah* Manchester (after January 2001);

19th of Nissan ~ Begins Wednesday Night (Mar 31st) – 5th day of Pesach

- **Rav Yehoshua Falk Katz**, *mechaber* of *Me'iras Einayim*, the *Derisha* and *Perisha* on the *Tur* and the *Sema* on *Shulchon Aruch Choshen Mishpot*. As a youth, he learned under the *Rema* (to whom he was related) and the *Maharshal*. He later served as *Rosh Yeshiva* in Lemberg. He was the grandfather of the *Pnei Yehoshua*, (5374/1614);
- **Rav Aharon *HaGodol*** of Karlin (1736–1772). Student of the *Maggid* of Mezritch, founder of *Chassidus* in Belarus and the Karlin-Stolin dynasty. Rav Aharon left behind a son, Rav Osher of Stolin, who was the father of Rav Aharon Karlin II, (1808–1872). His father was known as the *Nistar*, which means "the hidden one", (5532/1772);
- **Rav Menachem Ziemba** (also known as Rav Menachem Prager) (1883–1943). Born in Praga, a small neighborhood of Warsaw along the right bank of the Wisla River, Rav Menachem was only nine years old when his father, Rav Elozor Ziemba, passed away. He then lived and learned with his grandfather, Rav Avrohom Ziemba. He married Mindel, the daughter of a wealthy businessman, Rav Chaim Yeshaya Tzederboim, when he was eighteen. When his father-in-law passed away, he wrote a treatise on carrying on *Shabbos* and entitled it *Totza'as Chaim* in his honor. He became a *Chassid* of the *Imrei Emes* of Gur. He was appointed Chief *Rav* of Warsaw in 1935. He became close to Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, and through him, his son-in-law, Rav Avrame'le Luftbir of Warsaw. When the latter was *niftar*, childless, in 1919, Rav Menachem published his *sefer*, *Zera Avrohom*, based on their many correspondences. He was *niftar* in the Warsaw ghetto, (5703/1943);
- **Rav Shlomo Leib** of Lentche, (5603/1843);
- **Rav Yaakov Yosef Weiss** of Spinka, (5748/1988);
- **Rav Shmuel Alexander Unsdorfer** of Montreal and Petach Tikva, (5762/2002).

20th of Nissan ~ Begins Thursdazy Night (Apr 1st) – 6th day of Pesach

- **Rav Yaakov** of Moglonitza *ben* Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk, called *Tzaddik Nistar*;
- **Rav Hai** *bar* Sherira Gaon, *Rosh Yeshiva* Pumpedisa, last of the *Geonim* of Pumpedisa, (4798/1038);
- **Rav Yitzchok Chori**, *Dayan* in Djerba, (5628/1868);
- **Rav Yechezkel Panet** of Karlsburg, *mechaber* of *Mareh Yechezkel*, (5605/1845);
- **Rav Yitzchok Dov Ber** of Liadi, grandson of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, *mechaber* of *Siddur MaHaRiD*, (5670/1910).

HILLULA DE'TZADDIKA

WHAT'S BEHIND *YAHRZEIT* MEANINGS & CUSTOMS

The *Maharil,* in *Hilchos Taanis,* teaches us that the reason why there is a custom to visit the *Bais hachaim* on a fast is because "this place is the resting place of the *Tzaddikim* and is therefore sanctified, pure and holy and our tefillos are more readily heard, accepted and answered when *davened* on holy ground. When you *daven* there, do not make requests of the dead who are buried there; rather ask *Hashem* to answer you mercifully in their merit. Then circle around the graves and donate charity before reciting tefillos."

בית הקברות הוא מקום מנוחת הצדיקים ומתוך כך הוא מקום קדוש וטהור התפילה נתקבלה שם יותר, אך אל ישים מגמתו נגד המתים, אך יבקש מהשי"ת שיתן עליו רחמים בזכות הצדיקים שוכני עפר, ויקיף הקברות, ויתן צדקה קודם שיאמר התחינות.

The *Zohar* in *VaYeira* page 71 teaches us that if we suffer any calamity or tragedy we have the custom to go and daven at the kevorim of *Tzaddikim*. The reason for this is that we approach them with fasting, remorse and repentance, and we have in mind that the departed souls ask and *daven* for us before *Hashem* on High, as opposed to the prohibition against speaking to the dead which is an idolatrous practice where the idol worshippers sought out the impure dead souls and bodies using sorcery and witchcraft. Instead, beseech our *Tzaddikim* who, in *gan eden*, are truly alive, and ask through *tefilla* and fasting and *teshuva* alone.

GEDOLIM BE'MASAYHEM

STORIES & ANECDOTES

Rav Asher Yeshaya Ben Eliezer Lipman Rubin of Ropshitz, 14th of Nissan

Mechaber of *Ohr Yesha*

A Sheina Kosher Korban Pesach'el!

In Warsaw sat a *bochur* named Asher Yeshaya in the *Bais Medrash* engrossed in his learning. The Ropshitzer, *mechaber* of *Zera Kodesh*, was visiting. He entered the *Bais Medrash* and found the *bochur* sitting and learning, and began exchanging *Divrei Torah* with him. The *bochur* found great favor in his eyes. He asked the *bochur* about his father, and when he found out that he was a tailor, he inquired as to where he worked, for the

Ropshitzer *Rav*'s *bekeshe* was torn and he needed someone to mend it.

As he stood watching the tailor mend his torn clothes, the Ropshitzer entered into a discussion with the tailor and offered to make a *shidduch* between his own daughter and the precious young budding *Torah* scholar, Asher Yeshaya, whom he had met in the *Bais Medrash*. The tailor, seeing the Ropshitzer's ripped clothes, imagined him to be someone with no means and he laughed, shrugging off the suggestion with a backhanded gesture.

"I have already been offered some good suggestions from my own townsfolk and I turned them all down, even though they offered me thousands of rubles in dowry and upkeep. Until now I have not agreed to any suggestion at all."

"Go and tell the *Rav* of the town, the *Chemdas Shlomo*, that the Ropshitzer *Rav* is suggesting you make a *shidduch* with him."

Hearing that he was a *Rav*, the tailor took the matter more seriously and ran off to the *Chemdas Shlomo*, who told him to seize such a good opportunity.

According to the *She'eiris Boruch*, by Rav Boruch Rubin, who heard these traditions and stories from his father Rav Meir of Gloguv, who heard them in turn from Rav Yosef Dombrover, his father-in-law, the *minhag* was that the *Chassidim* and *talmidim* of the *Chozeh* (among whom Rav Naftoli Ropshitzer was counted) came to Lublin with *shidduch* suggestions and wrote the names of the suggested match, *chosson* and *kalla*, on a *kvittel* and presented it to the *Chozeh*; he would then declare if it was a good match.

The Ropshitzer had two choices for his only daughter Ratzchi: Rav Asher Yeshaya and another possibility. He came to Lublin to ask the *Chozeh* which *shidduch* he should choose to complete. The *Chozeh* actually thought the other *chosson* was a good match, but the Ropshitzer, in his wisdom, realized that Rav Asher Yeshaya would be a better match, and so he immediately traveled to Warsaw and completed the *shidduch* with Asher Yeshaya. He then returned to Lublin to ask the *Rebbe*, the *Chozeh*, to wish him *Mazel Tov* as was customary on finishing a *shidduch*. When the *Chozeh* read the *kvittel* with the *chosson*'s name and saw it was not the one he had suggested as a match, the holy *Chozeh* remarked, "*Nu*? *Chochom adif minovi* – A sage is better than a prophet!" alluding to the superiority of the Ropshitzer's choice, for he was well known as a sage and the *Chozeh* was so far-seeing with *Ruach HaKodesh* that he was like a prophet. The *Chozeh* then concluded,"*A sheina Korban Pesach'el*! – What a nice *Pesach* offering!" No one understood this remark at the time, but many years later, when Rav Asher Yeshaya Rubin was *niftar* on *Erev Pesach*, the *Chozeh*'s remark was understood. His soul was accepted on high as the *Korban Pesach* that year.

Other traditions tell us that the Ropshitzer made the *shidduch* first and then went to Lublin after the *tenno'im*, and the *Chozeh* was not happy with his choice. Afterward, when the young *chosson* was orphaned of both parents, the Ropshitzer took the *chosson* to Lublin to meet the *Chozeh*. When the *Chozeh* actually met him, he was pleased and remarked, "*Chochom adif minovi*." After the *chasuna* and during *Shabbos Sheva Berochos*, the *Chozeh* honored the young *chosson* with leading *Birkas HaMozon*. When this scenario occurred again during the daytime *Shabbos* meal, the Ropshitzer told the *Chozeh* that he was afraid of *ayin hora* and the *Chozeh* remarked about Rav Asher Yeshaya, "*A Kosher Korban Pesach'el*!"

(Based on *She'eiris Boruch* Vol. II p. 9 #40 and *Ohr Rabbeinu Asher* p. 7–8)

Rav Avrohom Ben Asher Tzvi Yaffen, 14th of Nissan

Rosh Yeshiva Novardok

Who Needs to Apologize To Whom?

A hunger permeated *Yeshivas* Novardok in Bialystok. A hunger and thirst – not for bread or water but for *devar Hashem*, *Torah* and *mussar*. Nonetheless, *bochurim* still need to eat and the impoverished conditions of the *Yeshiva* caused the *bochurim* to literally go hungry and sate themselves on words of *Torah* between one slice of bread and another.

Shabbos was the worst. The *Yeshiva* accepted *Shabbos* early and the *seuda* concluded by five thirty. The entire *seuda* consisted of one slice of *challa* and a piece of gefilte fish. The *bochurim* congregated in the home of Rav Avrohom Yaffen, the *Rosh Yeshiva*, which, like Avrohom *Avinu*'s tent, was always open to everyone. The *bochurim* treated it like home. They came and went as they pleased, slept on mattresses in the living room, and often entered the kitchen and helped themselves to what little there was.

The *mussar shmuess* was over by ten that evening and the *bochurim* were left hungry. They turned to Rav Yankele Galinsky and asked him to find a solution. He entered the *Rosh Yeshiva*'s kitchen and came back with a treasure! An entire *challa* and a jar of honey! The *bochurim* happily ate their fill and afterward Rav Yankel's conscience began to bother him. Surely the *Rebbetzin* would miss the jar of honey! Indeed, the next day she turned the house upside down looking for it and Rav Yankel Galinsky was ashamed to admit the theft. He kept putting off the confession of guilt until an opportune moment would present itself. Then came the war and miraculously he survived. After the war, he did indeed meet the *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Yaffen, and the *Rebbetzin* and apologized to her.

"It is I who needs to beg your forgiveness and apologize!" exclaimed Rebbetzin Yaffen. "I had a jar of honey – I should have shared it with the *bochurim*! Who deserved it more than you? I should have given you everything!"

The *Rosh Yeshiva*'s home belonged to the *bochurim* and he himself would never take from the *Yeshiva*. Once, he asked Rav Yankel Galinsky to take some coins and buy some bread and salted herring fillet for his family. Rav Yankele asked the *Rosh Yeshiva* why he didn't take these provisions from the *Yeshiva* kitchen where they were available.

"That is the *Yeshiva*'s kitchen," answered Rav Avrohom Yaffen. "I and my family are hungry but so are the *bochurim*. If I take fish from the *Yeshiva*'s kitchen, that means that some *bochur* might go hungry and not have food to eat. How could my family and I eat if he were to go hungry?!" (*Vayevaser Yaakov* p. 34–5)

Rav Pinchas Eliyohu Rottenberg, Av Bais Din Piltz, 16th of Nissan

Mechaber of *Sifsei Tzaddik*

How Rav Pintshe Accepted the *Rabbonus* of Piltz

Originally, Rav Pintshe refused to accept the responsibility and position of *Rav*. A *Rav* must teach and guide, and only a complete person can do so, yet he felt himself sorely inadequate and incomplete. Instead, he rented a business and he and his cousin used their dowries to rent a factory that produced alcoholic beverages licensed under the Polish noble, complete with a *heter mechira* to allow it to operate on *Shabbos* under the auspices of the non-Jewish workers.

On *Shabbos*, as Rav Pintshe prepared to *daven*, new and disturbing thoughts penetrated his usually calm and serene *Shabbos* atmosphere. The *Shabbos* queen reigned, yet somehow, somewhere, he owned a business that even now was operating on *Shabbos*. True, he had a *heter* and non-Jews were operating the business and the machinery, but Reb Pintshe could feel the chimney of his factory billowing out thick, black smoke, polluting the clean, fresh, pure air of *Shabbos*! He couldn't stand it! Still wrapped in his *tallis*, he ran to the factory and simply turned the faucets of the bronfen barrels, and happily left as the contents poured out onto the floor and the barrels emptied themselves out. With a clear conscience, Rav Pintshe could now *daven* and serve *Hashem* on *Shabbos*.

This incident left Rav Pintshe with no choice. As he now had no means of support and no money left, he would have to accept a position as *Rav*. When the community of Piltz approached, Rav Pintshe agreed but he stipulated three terms and conditions which left the townsfolk, many of them *Chassidim*, astounded and dumbfounded:

1. He was not to be disturbed from learning by meaningless and trivial arguments and *Dinei Torah*.

2. He was not to be asked to give *deroshos*, for he was not a *darshan*.

3. He should be allowed to leave and travel to his *Rebbe* whenever he wished.

The heads of the *kehilla* did not know what to do with such bizarre conditions. On the one hand they recognized the stature and sanctity of the young genius and wanted him be their *Rav* and spiritual leader. On the other hand, how could they agree to such demands? And so they turned to the *Sefas Emes* to rule on the matter. The Gerrer *Rebbe* heard the conditions and vehemently disagreed. "Tell Rav Pintshe he left out the fourth condition: that he be allowed to remain at home as before and simply draw a salary from Piltz!"

When Rav Pintshe heard this, he understood his error. He dropped the conditions and accepted the position as *Rav* of Piltz. He then ascended the *bima* in *shul* and delivered his first *derosha*: "Hear me, *Yidden*!" he cried. "If you listen to the *Torah* it will be good for you now and in the future and if you don't listen, woe to you all!" (*Bais Kotzk* p. 231–2)

No Mercy for the Arrogant and No End of Mercy for the Downtrodden

Whereas Rav Pintshe could never remember the name or identity of wealthy, so-called important individuals, for whom he gave no second thought and to whom he spared no words of rebuke when deserved, despite their stature and honor in the eyes of others, when it came to widows, orphans, the poor and downtrodden, Rav Pintshe knew them all by name, never forgot to bless them, say hello and goodbye to them – even all the servants in his household did Rav Pintshe greet and recognize with a kind word.

He once observed a huge gathering at the limits of Dubenka. When he inquired as to what had transpired, the townsfolk pointed to a sickly, lame pauper, who sat stunned and silent as the mob raged and shouted at him to go away.

"Why are you chasing him away?" asked Rav Pintshe.

"For some time now," explained one of the Jews, "someone has been stealing from the *shul* coffers. Now we have caught this rascal red-handed with his hand in the *tzedoka pushka*! He is a good-for-nothing lowlife, a thief and a drunkard who has been boozing away the funds! We beat him into submission and we are running him out of town, but he refuses to go!"

Rav Pintshe turned to the head of

the mob and berated him, yelling, "Were you an orphan?!"

"Me? No, never."

"Were you ever lame?"

"Me? No, never."

"Did you ever starve for bread?"

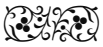
"Me? No, never."

"Did you ever wander the streets homeless, with no education and no place to lay your weary head and call home?"

"No!" he finally answered.

"Then how," demanded Rav Pintshe, "can you judge this lame, impoverished man?! *Chazal* say not to judge your fellow till you have been in his place, and you have never been in his place!"

When asked why he lowered the honor of the important and revealed their shortcomings, shaming them publicly while at the same time he was full of mercy, kindness and understanding toward the poor and downtrodden, since arrogant, wealthy people are also blemished and surely also deserve mercy and kindness, Rav Pintshe answered, "I have mercy on both kinds of people. The lowly I uplift and strengthen. When they need some kind words, I supply them with those. The arrogant need someone to push them down and lower them and I supply them with their needs as well!" (*Bais Kotzk* page 254–5)



The Sleep of the *Tzaddik*

Every two or three hours, Rav Pintshe lay himself down for a quarter-hour nap. He would awake roaring, and cast himself down from his bed. He threw himself out of bed with such force that he often cracked his head on the floor and called himself lowly names, debasing himself. "This is how you waste your time, by sleeping it away – and you enjoy it too?" he would berate himself. (*Bais Kotzk* page 255)

The *Tefilla* of a *Tzaddik*

The *Sefas Emes* once sent his son, Rav Nechemia Alter, to spend *Shabbos* in Piltz. There, Rav Nechemia overheard the *Tzaddik* praying softly to himself, "*Ribbono Shel Olam*, I have a special guest for *Shabbos*! Please make the *kugel* tasty and the *chulent* a success, for the *Rebbe*'s son is my special guest!" (*Bais Kotzk* p. 256)

Rav Meir Abuchatzeira of Ashdod, 17th of Nissan

Supernatural Housechores

Rav Dovid Chai of Nahariya related how in his younger years his father Rav Meir would sometimes ask him to come into his room and set up his bed or pillows. One time he did so and as he punched the pillow into shape, his father asked him to turn it over. When Rav Dovid did so, he saw a huge scorpion, 20–30 cm in length, crouched with its stinger quivering. His father did not seem scared or troubled.

"Take the pillow to your mother," he said.

"My mother," explained Rav Dovid, "was not in the least bit frightened or worried either. No one asked where the scorpion had come from or seemed in the least bit disturbed, or even wondered if there were more like it. We were used to a supernatural existence in my home," continued Rav Dovid, "and so she simply knocked the scorpion outside, proceeded to change the pillowcase and handed me the pillow!" (*Boruch Hashem Yom Yom* p. 237)

Rav Yehoshua Falk (Wolk), 19th of Nissan

Mechaber of the Sem"a, Perisha and Derisha

Rav Yehoshua authored the well-known work *Sefer Meiras Eynaim* or *Sem"a*, a commentary on the *Shulchon Aruch* as well as the commentaries named *Derisha* and *Perisha* on the *Tur*.

As he himself writes in the introduction to his work the *Sem"a*, he studied under the famed Rav Moshe Isserles (the *Rema*) and under Rav Shlomo Luria (the *Maharshal*). Among his *talmidim* was the *mechaber* of *Meginei Shlomo*, the *mechaber* of *Be'er Sheva* and the *mechaber* of *Eison HaEzrachi*.

His wife, Baila, the daughter of Rav Yisrael Aidels, authored a few novel rulings in Jewish law cited by her son in his introduction to his father's work the *Derisha* on *Yoreh Deah* Volume II. The two novel laws cited regard the manner in which women light the candles on *Yom Tov* and how it differs from *Shabbos* candle lighting. Although some authorities such as the commentary *Mogen Avrohom* ruled against her, most of the later authorities concurred with her rulings and praised her insight.

(Footnote: It seems that in her time women had two customs which she took issue with. First, they recited the blessing after lighting the candles both on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, and second, they lit the *Yom Tov* candles only when their husbands returned from the *tefilla* service in the evening as opposed to at the onset of the holiday).

Rav Aharon HaGodol of Karlin, 19th of Nissan

The Power of *Emuna*

Rav Mordechai of Slonim used to tell that Karlin was in Lithuania, whereas when Rav Aharon became part of the *Maggid* of Mezritch's circle, he became well known as a miracle worker in Volhynia. "Why does the *Rebbe* work miracles only in Volhyn and not in your own hometown?" they complained. "What should I do, there they have more *emuna* (faith) and that draws down the *shefa* (bounty)!"

(*Maamar Mordechai*).

A Different Kind of *Ba'al Aveira* Becomes a Different Kind of *Ba'al Teshuva*

When Rav Avrohom Elimelech of Karlin visited *Yerushalayim*, Rav Mordechai of Slonim went to see him and he teasingly asked the *Tzaddik*, "They say that your *Zeide*, Rav Aharon the Great of Karlin, made some eighty thousand *ba'alei teshuva* (returnees); *nu*, so where are yours?!"

Rav Avrohom Elimelech answered him thus, "The sinners in my great-grandfather's day had passions and desires, so my *Zeide* showed them a way to taste the delight and vitality in *Avodas Hashem*. He channeled their energy into holiness, each way corresponding to its opposite pole. Thus he turned them around to the path of true goodness. In our generation, however, these sinners are apostates and faithless; they stray after *kefira* and *apikorsus*. I doubt my *Zeide* would have made from them *ba'alei teshuva*!"

(*Maamar Mordechai*).

Dressed in Dazzling Diamonds

Rav Mottele Rachmastrivker told the

following story when he lived in Yerushalayim:

It was *Marcheshvan*, and Rav Nachum of Czernobyl, the *Meor Einayim*, had passed away. The entire township of Czernobyl sat in *aveilus* – even the non-Jews mourned the passing of the *Tzaddik*. Into this melancholy town, sad and despondent, came the news that the *Tzaddik*, Rav Shneur Zalman of Liadi, *mechaber* of the *Tanya* and *Shulchon Aruch HaRav*, famed *talmid* of the Mezritcher *Maggid* and a colleague of the deceased *Rebbe*, was on his way to pay a *shiva* call to the bereaved family.

The entire township and all its citizens lined the boulevards to wait and catch even a glimpse of the holy *Tzaddik*'s visage. Thus they stood in awe as he passed through the throngs, no one even daring to shake his hand or give him a *Sholom Aleichem*, due to the glint of fire in his holy eyes.

When the *Ba'al HaTanya* entered the *shiva* house, he came before Rav Mordechai, sitting *shiva* for his father, and the *Ba'al haTanya* told him:

"My master, the *Maggid* of Mezritch, once remarked that he had the ability to grant a lofty soul to one of his *talmidim*, but he did not know who would merit such a gift.

"When Rav Aharon *HaGodol* of Karlin left this world, the *Maggid* commanded your father Rav Nachum of Czernobyl to go to his *tziun* in the *bais hachaim* and tell him in the name of the *Maggid* of Mezritch that Rav Aharon Karliner's daughter, the orphaned Chaya Sora, must be wed, and since Rav Nachum himself was destined to soon have a son, Rav Mordechai [to whom the *Ba'al HaTanya* was telling this tale] they were to be betrothed and wed. Rav Nachum went and fulfilled the word of his *Rebbe*, the *Maggid*. He traveled to Karlin to Rav Aharon *HaGodol*'s *tziun* and afterward returned to the *Maggid* and to his home.

"The next year, Rav Nachum had a son and named him Mordechai. He married Rav Aharon Karliner's daughter, Chaya Sora, and they had three sons: Rav Aharon of Czernobyl, Rav Moshe of Karistshuv and Rav Yaakov Yisrael of Tsherkas, as well as one daughter, Malka, who later married into the dynasties of Rav Boruch of Mezhibuzh and Rav Yosef of Yampola.

"Now the *teno'im* and wedding contract between this orphan girl, Rav Aharon *HaGodol*'s young daughter, and Rav Mordechai were drawn up between the families in the home of the Mezritcher *Maggid*, and all the *talmidim* and *chevraya kadisha* participated with their presence. The *Maggid* honored Rav Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, *mechaber* of *Pri HaAretz*, with reading aloud the *teno'im*. When Rav Menachem Mendel reached the name of the *kalla* and read, 'Chaya Sora *bas* HaRav Rav Aharon who stands by the side of the *kalla*,' he fainted away! No one could revive him, until the *Maggid* of Mezritch came and placed his hand on Rav Menachem Mendel Vitebsker's shoulder and said, 'Why are you seized with such fright? Did you never before meet or see Rav Aharon?!'

"Rav Menachem Mendel Vitebsker recovered and said, '*Rebbe*, Master – *Mori veRabi*! I was awed and terrified because I saw Rav Aharon dressed in dazzling white garments that glowed and sparkled as if they were made of pure white diamonds and gemstones! The tradition I received tells me that only one or two single individuals in each generation can merit such garments – and in all my life I had not realized that Rav Aharon had reached such staggering heights!'" (*MeOrei Aish* p. 81-82)

Rav Menachem Ben Avrohom Ziemba Hy"d, 19th of Nissan

Most of Rav Menachem's *seforim* were lost, consumed in the flames of the Warsaw Ghetto, including *Machze Lamelech* on the *Rambam*, *Shu"t HaRamaz* and *Bais Menachem* on the four volumes of *Shulchon Aruch*, *Menachem Yerushalayim* on the *Talmud Yerushalmi*, and on the *Halochos* of *Eretz* Yisrael. He even wrote an entire *sefer* on the topic of *Kiddush Hashem* while he sat in the office of the Warsaw archives. As he worked long hours in that office, he composed a *sefer* which he dedicated to his wife:

> These are the *chiddushim* which *Hashem* helped me originate during the days of terror under the enemy's fury regarding the laws of *Kiddush Hashem*, sanctifying the name of G-d, according to the *Rambam* and *Raavad*, on the day my precious wife was taken from me. She sacrificed herself to raise and educate our children to *Torah* and *yira* and allowed me and them to study the holy *Torah*.

Sadly, he too was murdered by the Nazis, *yimach shemom*, and was buried in the ghetto. Years later, he was reinterred on Har HaMenuchos in Yerushalayim. Thousands attened his *levaya*, including the Gerrer *Rebbe*, the *Bais Yisrael*, and the Brisker *Rav*, Rav Soloveitchik, as well as the Tchebiner *Gaon* who eulogized him. May *Hashem* avenge his blood among the martyrs of Klal Yisrael.

Rav Hai bar Sherira Gaon, 20th of Nissan

Last of the Greats in the Geonim Period

The Lion's Temptation

The *Geonim* were the heads of the Jewish academies of Sura and Pumbedisa in Babylonia following the period of the *Savoraim* until the middle of the eleventh century. Rav Hai *Gaon* (939–1083), leader of the *Yeshiva* of Pumbedisa, was the last and one of the greatest of the *Geonim*. He was an illustrious sage and a revered *halachic* authority. Countless questions in *Torah* law were sent to him from Jews in various countries, eagerly awaiting his opinions and rulings. Many of his responsa are gathered in an important work, *Teshuvos L'Rav Hai Gaon*. While most of the matters he deals with in his writings are of a legal nature, in the following letter he discusses an issue of *Aggada*, *Torah* lore.

In *Maseches Sanhedrin* (38b) we are taught that Rav Meir had three hundred fox parables, but, as Rav Yochonon said, we only know three of them. The *Talmud* doesn't tell us the actual parables but instead quotes three *pesukim*. The first *pasuk* is from *Yechezkel* (18:2), which states: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge". Rav Hai *Gaon* was asked to clarify the cryptic *Talmudic* passage regarding the parable of the fox. This was his explanation:

In a fable, a fox encountered a lion that was about to devour him. The fox said to the lion, "I am not substantial enough to fill you up. Come, I will show you a heavy man, whom you can eat and thereby satisfy your appetite!" There was a covered pit, beyond which stood the marked man. Once the lion saw him, he told the fox, "I fear that this pious man's *tefillos* will cause me to be trapped." The fox replied, "The concern you have will not affect you or your children; perhaps it will affect your grandchildren. Regardless, you are

famished now, and it will be a long time until your grandchildren are born!"

The lion was convinced. As he advanced toward his prey, he fell into the camouflaged pit. The fox came to the edge of the pit and peered down inside. The lion looked up and asked, "Didn't you assure me that, as a result of my offense, neither I nor my children, but only my grandchildren, would suffer this fate?" To which the clever fox responded, "Yes, and what I said was true. This misfortune occurred to you not because of your misdeed, but rather as a result of a misdeed committed by your grandfather!" The lion protested, "That is not fair! The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" The fox smiled and said, "Why did you not make that consideration earlier?"

Rav Hai concludes, "There is a profound lesson to be learned from this parable."

Rav Eliyohu Eliezer Dessler suggests that this parable conveys a crucial message: Lustful desires drive even wise men, men who should know better, to abandon their faith. Rather than utilize their common sense to travel down the right path in life, they use their intellect to justify to themselves, as well as to convince others, that their heretical approach is correct. The reason they fall into this trap of blasphemy is that their craving for hedonistic pursuits blinds their judgment. This is the lesson drawn from the parable. The lion was captured because he was seduced by the fox's promise of a little more flesh. The lion, being an intelligent being, could have logically reasoned that if his grandchildren would suffer for his crime, he, too, might suffer for a crime of his grandfather. Nonetheless, his hunger clouded his judgment. Only after he fell into the pit was he able to realize how his desires had lured him toward his tragic fate.

לזכר נשמת אמנו החשובה, נפש יקרה ועדינה
אשה יראת ה' ובעלת מדות טובות
מרת **זיסל** ז"ל
בת הרה"ה מו"ה **מאיר זאב הכהן כ"ץ** ע"ה הי"ד
מעיר נירעדהאז יע"א
ונכדת הרה"ק רבי אהרן צבי טערקלטויב זי"ע מבריד
אשת הרה"ח מו"ה **אברהם חיים** ע"ה **גאלדענבערג**

She was a Holocaust survivor who never let that period of time define her life. Although she lost most of her family - she claimed that *Hashem* gave her an amazing life. She had a unique knack of making everyone who encountered her feel like they were the most important loved person. Her inimitable smile never left her face.

She transmitted a strong value system stressing *Emunas Hashem* and *Tzaddikim*. Her love for stories of *tzaddikim* gave her *chiyus* and she conveyed that *chizuk* to anyone who met her. In her eighty-nine years of life, there wasn't one person who had an untoward word or adverse feelings about her.

She loved her family deeply and immensely. May *Hashem* console her family and may she be a constant *melitza yeshura*, אמן.

(מתוך אמונה טהורה) בדרך המסורה
(והתנהגה כאשה כשרה) לכל משפחתה,
היא הודה היא הדרה - נקיה וטהורה היוצר וצר צורה (וקיבלה הגזירה)
נפטרה בש"ט בת תשעים שנה
ביום **כ"ד** לחודש **כסלו** (ערב חנוכה) שנת **תשע"ח** לפ"ק
ותקים לתחיה לקץ הימין במהרה תמליץ טוב בעד משפחתה היקרה **ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'**

Zera Shimshon

Tzav

The Zera Shimshon, Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachmon Michoel Nachmani, was born in 5467 (1706/1707) into an illustrious family with great Rabbinical lineage. He studied the revealed and concealed parts of the Torah by the Torah greats of his day.

He served as Rav of Modena, Pisa, Sayna and Rigyov, Italy, and was recognized as a holy and pious individual, as well as a tremendous Torah scholar in all areas of Torah. He passed away on the 6th of Elul 5539 (1779).

His Seforim were named, Toldos Shimshon (The 'Offspring' of Shimshon) on Pirkei Avos and Zera Shimshon (The 'Seed' of Shimshon) on the Parshi'os of the Torah. In his introduction, he explains that since his only son had died during his lifetime, he wrote his Seforim to perpetuate his own memory after his passing.

The following is his passionate request to learn his works.

"I implore of you with ten terms of supplication to choose from my Chiddushim (novella) the piece that finds favor in your eyes, for your learning will sooth my soul etc…

"This righteousness will stand by you forever – to 'eat' in this world, and be satiated in the next. In this merit, Hashem will repay you with children, health and sustenance.

"…and now my brothers and friends etc. do a true kindness, and with your eyes you will see children and grandchildren surrounding your table, houses filled with all that is good, wealth and honor will not cease from your children…"

לזכר נשמת
רבינו **שמשון חיים** בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל
בעל **הזרע שמשון** זיע"א
ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לזכר נשמת
יעקב יצחק בן שושנה אסתר
לרפואה שלימה
רוני דינה בת סימי
דוד בן שרה
לזווג הגון במהרה
אלישבע נעמי בת רחל
להצלחת
הג"ר נחום צבי בן רחל ומשפחתו

This week's parsha discusses the various korbanos that one can bring.

The Gemara (Menachos 110a) says in the name Rava, that anyone who toils in Torah does not need the offering of the Olah, Mincha, Chatas or Asham.

The Gemara (Ta'anis 27b) records the following exchange between Avraham Avinu and Hashem:

Avraham said to Hashem, "Perhaps the Jewish people will sin and you will do to them as you have done to the generation of the Mabul etc?"

Hashem responded, "No!"

Avraham Avinu asked, "How can I be assured of this?"

Hashem answered, "Take a calf etc." (i.e. that the order of the Korbanos offerings will atone for their sins).

Avraham Avinu pressed further, "That is only a satisfactory arrangement as long as the Beis HaMikdash stands, but what will be after it is destroyed?"

To this Hashem guaranteed Avraham Avinu saying, "I have already arranged the order of the Korbanos offerings, as long as the Jewish people read it, I will consider it as thought they brought those offerings before me."

The Zera Shimshon asks that this Gemara does not seem to agree with Rava's statement since according to Rava, as long as the Jewish people toil in any area of Torah, their sins are forgiven as if they brought the Korbanos. The Gemara is Ta'anis however, seems to hold that only by specifically reading the order of the Korbanos will the Jewish people's sins be atoned for?

The Zera Shimshon explains as follows:

The Yalkut (Yechezkel 358) says that Chochma (Wisdom) was asked what the punishment of a sinner should be, to which it answered, "Sinners are persecuted by bad". Prophecy said, "The soul of the sinner shall die". The Torah said, "The sinner should bring a Korban and he will be forgiven". Finally, Hashem said, "He shall do Teshuvah and he will be forgiven".

What this Medrash teaches is that although one must indeed bring a Korban when he sins (while the Beis HaMikdash existed), as the Torah said, the real point is for the sinner to do Teshuva and recognize Hashem's existence. If this goal is not reached, the Korban is essentially pointless, as the passuk says, *"The offering of the wicked are an abomination"* (see Zevachim 7b).

Thus, when Rava said that one who learns Torah does not need the offerings, this is because he will not sin, as the Torah itself brings a person to recognize Hashem's existence. However, in the Gemara in Ta'anis, Avraham Avinu was concerned that perhaps the Jewish people will stop learning Torah and after the Beis HaMikdash is destroyed, they will have no Korban to atone for the sins that that will consequently commit.

Hashem's remedy of reading the order of the Korbanos was in order to reinstate the Jewish people's awareness of Hashem, which they obviously lost before they sinned, since this was the ultimate goal of the Korbanos. This would return them to the study of Torah, which would in turn protect them from further sin.

This is seen from the story in the days of Eliyahu (Melachim I 28:23), where the Jewish people denied the existence of Hashem, and Eliyahu returned them to Hashem by offering a Korban, after which they all proclaimed, *"Hashem is (the only) G-d"*.

Zera Shimshon Pesach

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לזכר נשמת

רבינו **שמשון חיים** בן רב נחמן מיכאל זצ"ל

בעל **הזרע שמשון** זיע"א

ויה"ר שיתקיימו בנו ברכותיו של אותו צדיק

לרפואה שלימה
אברהם צבי בן פיגא
נחת דקדושה
משה שמעון בן שולמית
לסייעתא דשמיא בכל העניינים
יצחק ישעיה בן רות רפאלה
ושולמית בת יענטל

לזכות כל עם ישראל בכל מקום שהם

והיא שעמדה לאבותינו ולנו שלא אחד בלבד עמד עלינו לכלותינו אלא שבכל דור ודור כו'

Hashem's promise to Avraham Avinu is what stood by our fathers and us, for not only one rose up against us to destroy us, but in every generation they rise up against us to destroy us and Hashem saves us.

The Zevach Pesach asks - although the Jewish people were saved from Egypt due to Hashem's promise that He made to Avraham Avinu by the Bris Bein Habesarim, what does the Haggada mean when it says that this promise is what stood by us as well? The promise was already fulfilled when our forefathers' were taken out of Egypt and seemingly has nothing to do with us today?

The Zera Shimshon answers this question with a Medrash. The Medrash says (Bereishis Rabba 44:17), that when Hashem spoke to Avraham Avinu at the Bris Bein Habesarim, He included in the forecast all the exiles Avraham Avinu's children would go through. This the Medrash finds hinted to in the words of the passuk that says (Bereishis 15:12), "a great fear and darkness fell upon him (Avraham Avinu)". The Medrash says that fear refers the exile of Bavel. Darkness refers to the exile of Maday and so on.

According to this Medrash, the promise that Hashem made to Avraham Avinu at the time of the Bris Bein Habesarim did not only apply to the exile of Egypt. It applied to all exiles that the Jewish people would go through. This is the intention of the Haggada that Hashem's promise by the Bris Bein Habesarim stands with us even today.

The Zera Shimshon explains another point in והיא שעמדה

The Gemara says (Pesachim 87b), that the fact that Hashem dispersed the Jewish people between many different nations is a kindness. Had the Jews been grouped together in exile in one place, they could have been entirely annihilated by the non-Jews of that country. Being that they are spread out amongst many nations, even if they are persecuted by one nation, in a different area, the Jews will have it easier.

This is what the Haggada means when it says that not only one rose up against us to destroy us but in every generation etc. The Zera Shimshon understands this to mean that in Hashem's promise to protect us throughout the exiles He made sure that we are not under the rule of only one since we are in danger of annihilation, as was the case in Egypt. Rather, He places us under the rule of many. This is one of the ways the Jewish people is saved from annihilation.

The Zera Shimshon also explains why the Haggada uses the words, 'in every generation' as opposed to using a term that would actually refer to the aggressors such as, all the nations rise up against us etc.

The Zera Shimshon explains that it is really the actions of the Jews of each generation that determine what their exile will look like. The Gemara says (Shabbos 139a), that if haughty individuals who dress and style themselves conceitedly, if them would stop, then the anti Semites would stop spewing hate at the Jews. If the crooked judges would be weeded out of the court system of the Jews, then those in positions of power that attack the Jews would stop. Similarly, the Gemara in Yevamos says (63b), that the non-Jews decreed that the Jews cannot eat slaughtered meat because the Jews were lax about giving the proper gifts to the Kohen. They decreed on the Jewish bathhouses because the Jews were not careful about mikva etc.

From these Gemaros we see that it is not necessarily the nation amongst whom we are exiled that creates the decrees, rather, it is our spiritual state that causes them to (unknowingly) create decrees against us. This is why the Haggada does not say that every nation that we are exiled amongst tries to destroy us, since it not true. Rather, it says, in every generation they rise up against us. Every generation refers to the generations of the Jewish people and it is dependent on them and their actions, if the non-Jews will rise up against them or not. זכות רבינו יעמוד לר' חיים דוד בן טויבא חוה וכל משפחתו להצלחה ברכה שפע רב וסייעתא דשמיא מרובה בכל מעשה ידיו ובכל העניינים

Zera Shimshon - Pesach

Redemption From Egypt In Yosef's Merit

והנה הסנה בוער האש (ג' ב')

And behold the bush was aflame in fire (3:2).

The Yalkut (§169) writes that Hashem appeared to Moshe Rabbeinu to inform him about taking the Jewish people out of Egypt, specifically in a bush called a Sneh, being that very name of the bush (Sneh) carried a special message. The word Sneh is similar to the word שנאה, hate. Hashem said that it was the hate of the brothers that sent Yosef down to Egypt where he was followed by Yaakov Avinu and his whole family and it is in Yosef's merit that I will redeem the Jewish people from Egypt. This is proven by the passuk that says (Tehillim 77:16), *"You redeemed, with Your powerful arm, Your nation, the children of Yaakov and Yosef". (It is important to note that the 'hate' discussed between Yosef and his brothers is not to be understood, Heaven forbid, at face value.)*

The Zera Shimshon asks - the passuk that the Yalkut brings to prove that the redemption was in the merit of Yosef, actually shows that it was not only in the merit of Yosef himself, but that Yaakov Avinu's merit also played a role, Thus, the passuk seems to serve as a challenge what the Yalkut is trying to say?

The Zera Shimshon explains the Yalkut as follows:

Although some understand the underlying reason why the Jewish people ended up in Egypt to be the brothers' quarrel with Yosef, the Galya Raza writes a different reason. The Galya Raza says that it was a punishment for the fact that because of Yaakov Avinu, there are Aramaic words in the Torah. This is in reference to the passuk (Bereishis 31:47) that says, ויקרא לו לבן יגר סהדותא ויעקב קרא לו גלעד, *"Lavan called it Yegar Sahadusa and Yaakov called it Gal'ed"*. This refers to when Lavan made a covenant with Yaakov Avinu to ensure that Yaakov Avinu will treat Lavan's daughters properly. Yaakov told his sons to gather rocks and make a mound that would serve as a witness to this agreement. Although it was Lavan who referred to this pile of stones in Aramaic, nevertheless, being that it was Yaakov Avinu who came up with this idea to gather them and Lavan's Aramaic reference to this pile was recorded in the Torah, Yaakov Avinu was punished for this.

The Zera Shimshon briefly explains that Aramaic is the dialect of negative forces and as such we find that angels do not understand Aramaic (Shabbos 12b). It therefore should not be used in the Torah.

This concept is hinted to in the passuk that tells of the caravan of Yishma'elim who where the first ones to purchase Yosef. The passuk says that they were coming from גלעד, Gil'ad, (ibid 37:25). This seems to be an irrelevant detail. However, according to the Galya Raza, it hints to the very reason that the Jewish people had to go to through the Egyptian exile (which began with Yosef being

sold as a slave) – because of גלעד (גל - the pile, עד - that serve as a testimony), the deal that Yaakov made with Lavan, causing Aramaic words to be used in the Torah.

As well, this sheds light on the passage in the Hagada Shel Pesach in which we say, *'Arami (tried to) destroy our father'*. Simply, this refers to Lavan the Arami who tried to destroy Yaakov Avinu. Based on the above, it can be literally understood as, Aramaic (Arami), destroyed Yaakov and was the cause that he and his family had to suffer in Egypt. The Hagada continues, *'we went down to Egypt – forced by the word'*. Here again, the simple meaning is that the Word of Hashem decreed that we must go Egypt. However, according to the Galya Raza it can mean that because of a simple word, we had to descend to Egypt – the Aramaic words that are now, forever part of the Torah, were the cause that sent us down to Egypt.

It was to address this reason as well that the Yalkut spoke about Yaakov Avinu.

While in Egypt, Yosef was called recognized as an Ivri (ibid 39:14, 41:12). Rashi says that the Sar Hamashkim told Pharaoh that Yosef doesn't even speak Egyptian, that is why he referred to him as an Ivri. Yosef proved his identity to his brother by speaking to them in Lashon Hakodesh (Bereishis Rabba 93:18). Following Yosef's lead, the Jews also held steadfast in keeping their language and not changing it. They eventually merited being redeemed from Egypt in this merit.

The Zera Shimshon now rereads the passuk that the Yalkut brought. "*The children of Yaakov*" – had to go down Egypt because of Yaakov Avinu's causing Aramiac to be recorded in the Torah, "*and Yosef*" – in Yosef's merit this was somewhat rectified since Yosef, and subsequently all the Jews, kept their language and thus, merited redemption. Thus, the passuk indeed only intends to point to Yosef as the one in who's merit the redemption came about.

Why Shevet Levi Was Not Included in the Egyptian Slavery

The Two Parts To The Egyptian Exile

ויאמר אליהם מלך מצרים למשה ואהרן למה תפריעו את העם ממעשיו לכו לסבלתיכם (ה' ד')

The king of Egypt said to them, "Moshe and Aharon, why do you disturb the people from its work? Go to your own burdens!" (5:4).

Rashi explains, that Pharaoh's intention by saying, "Go to *your own* burdens" was that since the Levi'im were not required to participate in the physical labor, Pharaoh specifically said, "Go to *your own* burdens", meaning, go take care of what you have to do in your house, but not the physical labor that all the other Jews were required to do.

Zera Shimshon - Pesach

The Zera Shimshon asks why is it that the Shevet Levi was not included in the decree of the physical labor, after all, the passuk that describes the decree of the Egyptian exile and bondage does not differentiate between any of the Shevatim? The passuk says (Bereishis 15:13), כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא להם ועבדום וענו אותם, *"Your children will be strangers in a land that is not their own. They will serve them and oppress them."* From this passuk it seems that everyone will be part of this decree of slavery, if so, why is it that the Shevet of Levi was excluded?

The Zera Shimshon answers that the Medrash (Rabba 1:10) says that when Yosef HaTzaddik passed away, the Jewish people stopped keeping the Mitzva of Bris Mila – they wanted to be similar to the Egyptians. When this happened, Hashem made the Egyptians hate them.

The Zera Shimshon points out that it seems that had the Jewish people kept the Mitzva of Mila they would not have been subjected to the slavery and backbreaking labor of the Egyptian exile. How does this coincide with the passuk that seems to say that the Jewish people would have been subjected to this decree regardless?

The Zera Shimshon suggests that there was two parts to the decree of going down to Egypt. Originally, the decree was only that the Jewish people would be strangers in the land. If however, they would not keep the symbol of Jewish people – the Mitzva of Mila, then, they would be subjected to the additional decree of slave labor. Being that the Shevet of Levi kept the Mitzva of Mila, they remained strangers but were not subjected to the physical labor. All the other Jews that gave up the Mitzva of Mila, were subsequently subjected to second part of the decree, namely, the backbreaking slave labor.

This, the Zera Shimshon culls from the wording of the aforementioned passuk. The passuk says, *"Your children will be strangers in a land that is not their own. They will serve them and oppress them."* The passuk could have said, "Your children will be oppressed in a land that is not their own." As well, once the passuk said that they will strangers, there is no need to add, *"in a land that is not their own"*?

The Zera Shimshon says that if the decree was indeed a two-part decree, this passuk is very well understood. The first part of the decree was that the Jewish people would be strangers in a foreign land. If they would be noticed and live as though it is not their own land – by keeping their Jewish identity through the Mitzva of Mila, then the decree would end there. This is why the passuk adds *"in a land that is not their own"* – to emphasize that if they would live as though it is not their land and not try to assimilate, then, all that the decree would entail would be living as strangers in Egypt.

If however, they would not keep this difference, the passuk continues to tell what the second part of the decree would be – *"They will serve them and oppress them."* This is why the passuk says the decree in two parts and doesn't just say, "Your children will be oppressed in a land that is not theirs."

Zera Shimshon - Pesach

The Four Reasons For Yetzi'as Mitzrayim

ויאמר אליו אני ה'. וארא אל אברהם וגו' בא'ל שד'י וגו'. וגם הקימותי את בריתי אתם לתת להם את ארץ כנען. וגם אני שמעתי את נאקת בני ישראל וגו' (ו' ב'-ה')

And He said to him (Moshe), "I am Hashem". And I appeared to Avraham etc, with name א'ל שד'י etc. Moreover, I established My covenant with them to give the land of Canaan etc. Additionally, I heard the cries of the Jewish people (6:2-5).

The Zera Berach who points out that there are four separate reasons enumerated in these pessukim as to why Hashem is going redeem the Jews from Egypt.

1) Rashi explains that when Hashem said I am Hashem, Hashem meant that He can be trusted to pay back those who so merit. Being that Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov Avinu were righteous, they deserve that their descendants should not be enslaved to the Egyptians forever.

2) Hashem promised with the name א'ל שד'י that he would redeem the Jews (see Rashi 6:3).

3) On top of this, Hashem made a special covenant with Avraham Yitzchok and Yaakov that he would eventually give their descendants the Land of Eretz Yisroel.

4) Lastly, the Jews themselves, were worthy of being redeemed as the passuk says, "*I heard the cries of the Jewish people*".

The Zera Shimshon explains why all four reasons are necessary for the Jews to be redeemed since at a first glance, each one by itself should have sufficed.

Were it only for the first reason - the merit of Avraham Yitzchok and Yaakov, the Jews would not have been worthy of redemption since they did not act in the ways of the Avos. They served Avoda Zara, they violated the mitzva of Mila etc. and therefore, they weren't worthy of being called the children of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov.

To this, Hashem added that He had promised by His name of א'ל שד'י that He would redeem them. With this, Hashem was implying that in the merit of the Torah that the Jewish people would eventually accept and fulfill, they are worthy now of being redeemed. This is because the Torah is what keeps the world running and the name of א'ל שד'י is the name Hashem set limits to the world with when He created it. The world the way we know it is due to the name א'ל שד'י (see Chagiga 12a). Being that the Torah is what keeps the world running and Hashem promised to take us out of Egypt by His name of א'ל שד'י, Yetzi'as Mitzrayim had to be in merit of keeping the Torah.

Still, the argument exists that right now, the Jewish people were not worthy of being redeemed. Thus, even though they would eventually have the merit of the Torah, this was not a reason for them to be taken out Egypt early. They should have stayed in

Egypt until the four hundred years were up. This is why the third reason, that Hashem made a covenant, is needed.

The halacha is (Choshen Mishpat §73:7) that if someone swears he will pay his friend by a certain date and that day turns out to be Shabbos, he must pay him before Shabbos. Similarly, (Yoreh De'ah §232:12) if a person promises to do something by a fixed time, he should do it as soon as he can lest he forgets about his promise and the time passes without him fulfilling his promise.

Thus, in the case of the Jewish people in Egypt, had Hashem let them stay in Egypt until the end of the four hundred years, Hashem would not have been able to keep His promise since the Jews would have sunken too deep into the impurities of Egypt. Therefore, Hashem had to take the Jewish people out early in order to be able to fulfill His promise.

The last reason, that the Jews had their own merits, is also needed since the Jewish people witnessed the punishment and downfall of the Egyptians. In reality, the Jewish people shouldn't have merited seeing this, since when one is saved based on other's merits (in this, the merit of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov), he isn't worthy of witnessing his enemies' downfall. For this, the fourth reason was given – that the Jews had their own merits as well.

The Zera Shimshon clarifies that although the Jews were indeed on the 49th level of impurity and they served Avoda Zara, the passuk refers to them as *'naked and bare'* (Yechezkel 16:7). This description clearly depicts the Jewish peoples' situation in Egypt. The same way any normal person who is naked, wishes to be given clothes to wear, so too, the Jewish people desired to serve Hashem. It was only because of the impurity of Egypt that they fell so low. As well, the Yalkut (Beshalach §240) says that the Jews were redeemed in the merit of their Emuna. Thus, indeed the Jews did possess merits - their desire to serve Hashem and their Emuna in Him!

The Plague of Blood: Lucrative For The Jews

והדגה אשר ביאור מתה (ז' כא')

And the fish that were in the Nile died (7:21).

The Medrash (Rabba 9:9) says that the Jewish people became rich from the plague of Blood. This came about because the Jews were the only ones that had access to fresh drinking water, which they subsequently sold to the Egyptians.

The Zera Shimshon asks - how did Chazal learn this in the aforementioned passuk?

The Zera Shimshon explains that the Egyptians allowed the Jewish people to catch

and eat fish free of charge. This is clearly seen from the passuk where the Jewish people complained about the Mann in the desert, saying, (Bamidbar 11:5) "*We remember the fish we ate in Egypt free of charge*." Now that the fish died, the Jewish people just lost their source of free nourishment and they would now have to spend money they did not have, to buy food

The Zera Shimshon learns that the Medrash understood that if the Jewish people just lost their source of free food, Hashem had to have brought a remedy along with this loss. This must have been from the fact that they were now able to sell the most precious and most necessary commodity at a tidy profit – water. This being the case, they were no longer in need for free food since they now had the means with which to acquire food.

10 Plagues or 16 Plagues?

What Actually Happened During Lice, Boils and Darkness

The Zera Shimshon points out that looking through the pessukim of the ten plagues there were three plagues that Moshe Rabbeinu did not issue a warning before the coming of those plagues – כנם, Lice, שחין, Boils, חשך, Darkness.

The Zera Shimshon explains the reason for this in the following manner.

The Yalkut Reuvaini (Va'eira) quotes the Sefer HaPliah that these three plagues happened together. When Egypt was plagued with Lice, it also came along with Boils and Darkness. *(It would seem that Lice was the primary plague and the other accompanying plagues did not come with the same force that they came with when they served as the primary plagues.)* As well, when Egypt was plagued with Boils, it was accompanied by *(a lesser degree of)* Lice and Darkness etc. This is seen in the following diagram:

ם	נ	כ
ן	ח	ש
ך	ש	ח

All these plagues can be read regularly *(right to left)* and can also be read bottom up. This indicates that they are interconnected.

For this reason, Moshe Rabbeinu did not warn Pharaoh before the arrival of these plagues since had he warned Pharaoh about Lice, Pharaoh would have said that Moshe was wrong since it wasn't only Lice that came but rather Lice, Boils and Darkness. As well, he could not warn Pharaoh about the other two plagues that would be accompanying the Lice since it was not yet the time for the other two plagues to serve as the main plague. This is why no warning preceded these plagues.

Zera Shimshon - Pesach

Makkas Bechoros: Perfect Timing

ויאמר משה כה אמר ה' כחצות לילה אני יוצא בתוך מצרים ומת כל בכור בארץ מצרים (יא' ד', ה')

And Moshe said, "So said Hashem, 'At around midnight I shall go into Egypt. And every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die'" (11:4, 5).

The Gemara (Brachos 4a) points out that Moshe Rabbeinu chose to express that Hashem said he would slay the firstborns at *'around'* midnight, rather than say it the way Hashem actually told him – at *'exactly'* midnight. The Gemara explains that Moshe Rabbeinu relayed Hashem's words in this manner so that if the Egyptian astrologers would miscalculate the exact moment of midnight, they should not be able to then say that Moshe Rabbeinu lied about the correct time the plague would occur.

The Zera Shimshon asks numerous questions on this Gemara.

1) Even with Moshe Rabbeinu's reasoning, as a prophet, he still should have said the exact words told to him by Hashem? And if he felt his reasoning was strong enough to alter Hashem's words, he should have omitted the words, 'so said Hashem?'

2) Up until this point, the Egyptians all saw how everything that Moshe Rabbeinu said would happen, indeed came to pass. Why was Moshe Rabbeinu concerned that during this plague they would doubt his words?

3) What would the difference of a fraction of a minute make to Egyptians, if in the end, the plague came?

The Zera Shimshon explains that during every hour throughout the day, a different Mazal, constellation, presides. The rotation is between, Shabsai, Tzedek, Mad'im, Chamah, Nogah, Kochav and Levanah. Based on their order, the hour before midnight on the night of Makkas Bechoros (Thursday night), the Mazal of Tzedek dominated. The hour after midnight Mad'im dominated.

The Mazal of Tzedek is one of kindness. Whereas Mad'im is of a negative nature. Rashi in Shabbos (129b) writes that Mad'im is the administrator of (death by) sword, pestilence and calamity. Thus, had the plague arrived (based on the astrologers miscalculations), shortly *before* midnight, they would have claimed that the miracle was only that the Egyptians where smitten, since the fact that the Jews were spared is not a miracle but rather due to the fact that the general nature of Tzedek is one of kindness. This isn't a clear sign that the Jews are worthy of redemption - they are just lucky.

The same is true (again, based on the astrologers miscalculations) if the plague came shortly *after* midnight. They would have said that the miracle isn't that only the Egyptians were killed since under the constellation of Mad'im, bad things occur.

The miracle was only that the Jews were spared.

This is why Hashem wanted to smite them exactly at midnight – at the exact time that the domination of Tzedek ends and a split second before Mad'im takes over – to show that it wasn't the kindness nature of Tzedek that saved the Jews, nor the bad attributes of Mad'im that caused the Egyptians to be killed. Rather, it was a double miracle, both the punishment to the Egyptians and the salvation of the Jews, that only Hashem could bring about.

However, if Moshe Rabbeinu would have said *'at exactly midnight'* he would be implying exactly this idea – that two miracles would occur, 1) the Egyptian firstborns will be killed and 2) the Jewish firstborns will survive. This would allow room for the astrologers (should they miscalculate the exact time of midnight) to say that Moshe Rabbeinu lied about there being two miracles. Had the plague come (based on *their* timing) before midnight, they would have said that the miracle was that the Egyptians were killed. And had it come after midnight, they would have said that the miracle was that the Jews were spared. This was the opposite of Hashem's intention.

For this reason, Moshe Rabbeinu altered Hashem's original word specifically to give over Hashem's message very clearly. To this effect, Moshe Rabbeinu said, *'at about midnight'*, to tell the Egyptians that whether the plague arrives before or after midnight, the result will be the same – the Egyptians will be punished and the Jews would be saved. By saying so, before the plague happened, Moshe Rabbeinu showed that the plague was an act of Hashem and not dependant on the dominating Mazal during which the plague occurred.

No Dogs Barking: The Sign That The Jews Were Ready To Leave Egypt

ולכל בני ישראל לא יחרץ כלב לשונו למאיש ועד בהמה (יא' ז')

Against any of the Bnay Yisrael, no dog will bark (sharpen) its tongue, from man to beast (11:7).

The Zera Shimshon asks - why did Moshe Rabbeinu find it important to inform Pharaoh that during the plague of the dying of the firstborns, the dogs would not bark at the Jewish people when in reality, the main miracle was the fact that only the Egyptian firstborns would die. As well, why was it worth mentioning that not only will the dogs not bark at the Jewish people but they will even refrain from barking at their animals?

The Zera Shimshon explains that as long as the Jewish people were associated with impurity, they were not able to free themselves from Egypt. The passuk says (Yirmi'a 2:3), "*Holy is Yisrael to Hashem, His first produce (firstborn), all those that eat it (His*

produce, the Jewish people) are held accountable. The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabba 2:13) says that this passuk refers to those that steal from the Jewish people. This teaches that the Jewish peoples status of Hashem's firstborn sanctifies not only them but their possessions as well.

The status of the firstborn's holiness was one that began with the creation of the world. However, after the sin of eating for the Etz Hada'as, during which Chava was defiled by the snake, the firstborn retained some of this impurity that the snake contaminated Chava, the mother of all mothers, with. It was only through the purifying slavery in Egypt that this impurity left us. Now, we as a nation, were ready to leave Egypt as Hashem's holy firstborn after severing all connection to impurity.

The fact that the dogs did not bark at the Jewish people and at their animals proved that the Jewish people were now totally unassociated with impurity and entirely Hashem's firstborn. Therefore, the dogs, which symbolize the impure, did not even bark at the Jewish people's possessions, namely their animals, since even their possessions were now holy. Moshe Rabbeinu told this to Pharaoh to show him that the Jews were ready to leave Egypt and he was not going to be able to stop them.

The Zera Shimshon offers another explanation as to why it was important to mention that the dogs would not bark at the Jews.

The Midrash Rabba (Shemos 1:35) says that Moshe Rabbeinu was wondering why it was that of all the nations, only the Jews had to suffer so much under Egyptian bondage, until he saw that there was lashon hara between them. It was then that he exclaimed (Shemos 2:14), "*now the matter is known*".

The Gemara says (Makkos 23a) that one who speaks lashon hara is deserving of being thrown to the dogs. When the dogs refrained from barking at the Jews, it was a proof that they had repented from the sin of lashon hara and were now worthy of leaving Egypt, and there was nothing Pharaoh could do to stop them.

The Scope of Makkas Bechoros

ועברתי וגו' בלילה הזה והכתי כל בכור בארץ מצרים (יב' יב')

And I will slay all the firstborns in the land of Egypt (12:12)

Rashi explains that *any* firstborn in Egypt died even if they were from a different nationality. Rashi then adds, that even Egyptian firstborns that were in other lands died during this plague as the passuk says (Tehillim 136:10), "*...hit the Egyptians through their firstborns*".

The Zera Shimshon asks on Rashi - why does Rashi have to bring the passuk that teaches that even Egyptian firstborns in other

lands died, Rashi himself writes numerous times that he only explains the simple meaning of the passuk, which in this case would be to explain what the passuk means when it says the every firstborn in Egypt will die (that this included *all* firstborns in Egypt, not only the Egyptian firstborns). This, Rashi explained in the first half of his comment and the passuk is clear without him having to add that Egyptian firstborns elsewhere also died? Apparently, it doesn't add to the simple understanding of the passuk. Why then does Rashi add it?

The Zera Shimshon explains that Rashi in fact, is adding to the simple meaning of this passuk by his additional comment, he explains this as follows.

In the aforementioned passuk, Hashem says that He will kill all the firstborns in the land of Egypt. This implies than any firstborn in Egypt, regardless of his nationality, will perish. This could lead a skeptic to say that there was a disease that affected all firstborns in Egypt - the proof is that even firstborns of other nations that happened to be visiting Egypt at the time, died. Thus, they would claim, it must not be a punishment aimed specifically at the Egyptians and was not an act of Hashem. (Although this may sound farfetched, we do find that Moshe Rabbeinu himself was very careful with his words when he foretold about this plague so as not to leave the Egyptians room to say that even though the plague happened, it did not happen as he said it would etc.)

In other words, when reading this passuk by itself, we do not get the entire scope of the plague which would prove beyond doubt that even the part of the plague that played out in Egypt was indeed carried out by Hashem.

To show this from the pessukim themselves that this in fact was the act of Hashem, Rashi brings a passuk that seemingly does not add to the understanding of the passuk. In reality however, this passuk is the one that proves that even the plague in Egypt was brought by Hashem since this passuk tells how all Egyptian firstborns around the world died. This clearly proves that Hashem was behind the plague even in Egypt.

The question though is, why did Hashem have to kill the foreign firstborns in Egypt? Had He only killed the Egyptian firstborns in Egypt it would have been clear beyond a doubt that Hashem brought about this plague. Why then did Hashem kill all the firstborns in Egypt which lead to the necessity to kill all Egyptian firstborns around the world in order to quiet the skeptics?

The answer, says the Zera Shimshon, is simple; Hashem wanted it to be clear in the land of Egypt that the Jewish people and only the Jewish people, are the chosen people, referred to by the title - 'My firstborn Yisrael', and therefore only they were spared. All other firstborns in Egypt perished.

Zera Shimshon - Pesach

Pharaoh's Sends The Jewish People out of Egypt - A Sign That There Would Be Subsequent Exiles

ויהי בשלח פרעה את העם וגו' כי קרוב הוא וגו' פן ינחם וגו' (יג' יז')

It was when Pharaoh sent out the (Jewish) Nation, Hashem did not lead them through the land of Pelishtim, because it was near etc. perhaps they will reconsider when they see a war and return to Egypt (13:17).

The Zera Shimshon asks - why does the Torah describe it as though Pharaoh was the one who let the Jewish people leave his land? It was Hashem who took them out of Egypt and that is the way the passuk should have worded it?! Why then does the Torah chose to make it appear as though Pharaoh, on his own accord, decided to send the Jews out?

The Zera Shimshon answers that although the exile and slavery was supposed to be four hundred years long, nevertheless, the Jewish people felt that the difficulty of the slavery made up for the rest of the time and they cried out to Hashem that He should redeem them already.

Had the actual time of their redemption arrived, either after four hundred years or because Hashem counted the difficulty of the slavery as equivalent to four hundred years, there would have been no need for Pharaoh's 'permission' to send the Jews out since he would have been powerless to hold them back. To show that the time had not actually arrived yet and nevertheless, Hashem decided to redeem then, He worded the Torah to sound as though the Jews were sent out at Pharaoh's discretion.

By having it worded like this, the Jews would now know that Hashem indeed listened to their prayers, yet not based on their reasoning - that the exile was over since the difficulty made up for the four hundred years. Rather, He had mercy on them, but the decree of the exile would have to be made up at a later date.

Knowing this when they left, it was dangerous to take the Jewish people through the land of Pelishtim since had they encountered the bodies of Bnay Efraim (see Targum Yonasan Ben Uziel) they would have become scared and knowing that they would anyways have to return to exile one day, they might have decided to return to Egypt. If however, they would have not been aware of this fact that they, as a nation, would have to make up the rest of the decree, they would have never entertained the thought of returning to Egypt.

This is why after the Torah says that Pharaoh sent the Jews out of Egypt to show that it was not the end of all exiles, Hashem had them circumvent Pelishtim - כי קרוב הוא because it was close. The Zera Shimshon translates this in a new manner based on his explanation. Because the time of their redemption was brought closer than it actually was supposed to be (and there therefore would be more exiles) Hashem

could not lead them through the land of Pelishtim.

With this, the Zera Shimshon explains the peculiar fact that when Moshe Rabbeinu came to inform the Jewish people that he was to take them out of Egypt, they did not listen to him (6:9). The obvious question is - why not?

The Zera Shimshon explains that the four terms of redemption that Moshe Rabbeinu repeated in Hashem's name (והוצאתי, והצלתי וכו' I will take out, I will save etc.) were also a hint to subsequent exiles, that from them too, the Jews would eventually be saved. Once the Jews understood that the Egyptian exile was not the end of all exiles and the difficulty did not make up for the four hundred years and they would eventually have to go through other exiles, they did not listen to Moshe Rabbeinu, reasoning that they might as well finish the exile there in Egypt.

This explains what the Jewish people said to Moshe Rabbeinu when Egypt was behind them and they were trapped with the sea in front of them (14:12), "Didn't we tell you in Egypt that it would have been better to stay there?" The question is where do find that the Jews voiced such an opinion in Egypt?

Explains the Zera Shimshon, that this refers to when they did not listen to Moshe Rabbeinu, is wasn't that they were simply were out of breath from their slavery. Rather, the thought of having to endure more exile made them not listen and essentially show Moshe Rabbeinu that if that was the case, they were not interested in leaving Egypt.

Long Route vs. Short Route

ויסב אלקים את העם דרך ארץ המדבר (יג' יח')

Hashem turned the nation toward the direction of the desert (13:18).

Hashem did not lead the Jewish people through the land of the Pilishtim, even though it was a much shorter route to reach Eretz Yisroel. This was because Hashem knew that the Pilishtim would not allow the Jewish people to traverse their land and would wage war against them. This, in turn, would weaken their spirit and they would want to return to Egypt.

Rashi writes (13:17), that if even when going in a roundabout way, Hashem knew that the Jews may still want to return to Egypt, surely, if He would have taken them straight to Eretz Yisroel there was reason to be concerned that the Jews may want to return to Egypt.

The Zera Shimshon asks that Rashi's words are visibly puzzling; in fact the opposite is true. If they would have gone directly into Eretz Yisroel, their suffering from Egypt would still be fresh in their minds and they would be much less disposed of

returning to Egypt. However, by going in a roundabout way and taking a longer time to reach Eretz Yisroel, the trauma may have faded somewhat and the Jews would be more comfortable returning to Egypt? This is clearly seen by the episode of the Meraglim, when, after hearing the derogatory reports of the spies about Eretz Yisroel, the Jews said (Bamidbar 14:4), *"Let us appoint a head and return to Egypt".*

On this statement that the Jews made regarding appointing a head to return to Egypt, the Zera Shimshon asks - why did they have to say, *"Let us appoint a head etc."* they should have simply said, "Let us return to Egypt"?

The Zera Shimshon explains, based on a well-known principal that the Megaleh Amukos writes.

The Megaleh Amukos says that if Moshe Rabbeinu would have brought the Jewish people into Eretz Yisroel and built the Bais HaMikdosh, it would never been destroyed. As well, the Jewish people would not have gone into exile again. Instead, when they sinned, they would have been destroyed. However, if they were brought into Eretz Yisroel by someone other than Moshe Rabbeinu, when they sinned, Hashem would execute His 'wrath' on the Bais HaMikdosh and the Jews would go into exile.

The Jewish people knew this and therefore reasoned, what good is it to enter Eretz Yisroel now with Moshe Rabbeinu as our head, if we sin we will be destroyed? It would be better to have a different head, even if that entails having to go back into exile, including Egypt.

This is how the Zera Shimshon explains what the Jewish people meant when they said, *"Let us appoint a head and return to Egypt".* Let us appoint a *different* head, *even if it entails having to possibly* return to Egypt *in a future exile.*

The Zera Shimshon explains that this was the nature of the exchange between Moshe Rabbeinu and Hashem when Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu that he should inform the Jewish people that Hashem is with them in this exile as He will be with them in future exiles (Shemos 3:14). To this, Moshe Rabbeinu countered that why should he mention other exiles to them they have enough on their plate. This is because Moshe Rabbeinu knew that if he was to bring the Jewish people into Eretz Yisroel, there would never be another exile. And Moshe Rabbeinu did not want there to be any other exiles.

The Zera Shimshon learns that had Moshe Rabbeinu been the one who was going to take them straight into Eretz Yisroel, then from the moment they left Egypt, no nation would have fought with the Jews on their way to Eretz Yisroel.

Thus, when the Jewish people saw that Hashem circumvented the land of Pilishtim so that they would not be faced by war, they understood that there would eventually be more exiles that they would have to go through, since it was clear that they were avoiding war which meant Moshe Rabbeinu was not going to be the one to bring them into Eretz Yisroel which in turn meant that when they eventually sinned they would be sent into exile again.

With this, the Zera Shimshon explains what Rashi wrote - that if even when going in a roundabout way, Hashem knew that the Jews may still want to return to Egypt, surely, if He would have taken them straight to Eretz Yisroel they would have desired to return to Egypt.

Based on this new understanding, Rashi meant to say the following. If, when the Jews knew that there would be more exiles in the future, which was now indicated by the fact that they circumvented Pilishtim and still, they wanted to return to Egypt, out of fear of war, surely, if they would have gone straight to Eretz Yisroel, which was indicative that there would be no more exiles, they would have wanted to return to Egypt, out of fear of possible destruction. They would have the option of leaving Eretz Yisroel alive to enter a different exile (symbolized by Egypt) and not be subject to possible destruction.

Why Halachically, Hashem Cannot Afflict Without Having A Prior Remedy In Place

כל המחלה אשר שמתי במצרים לא אשים עליך כי אני ה' רופאך (טו' כו')

All the illness that I placed on Egypt I will not place upon you, because I am Hashem your healer (15:26).

The Zera Shimshon explains this passuk based on a halacha in the Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat §420:21). The halacha is that if someone injures another person, the damager is obligated to pay to heal the injuries. The Shulchan Aruch rules that even if the damager says that he can heal the person he injured, we do not take him up on his offer, rather, a good doctor is brought to heal the other person's injuries and the damager is obligated to pay.

Being that Hashem is our only doctor, should He afflict us, He would no longer be able to be the One Who Heals us. This would leave us without a healer. This is the meaning of the aforementioned passuk. Being that Hashem is our only healer, He will not afflict us with the ailments of Egypt since we would have no way to be healed.

However, this explanation leaves us with the obvious question - Jewish people do get sick and they also get better and all this is done by none other than Hashem. According to the halacha mentioned above, this should not be possible?

The Zera Shimshon answers this question with a Medrash (Shir HaShirim Rabba 4:12) that says that before Hashem afflicts the Jewish people, He always creates the remedy first. Whereas with the non-Jews, Hashem firsts afflicts them and then, when the time comes to heal them, He creates the necessary remedy.

The Zera Shimshon explains that the reason for this is because once Hashem afflicts us He can no longer serve as our doctor, therefore, He creates the remedy first and puts it in place even before He afflicts us, like this, when the affliction comes, the remedy is already in place to begin healing automatically.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JEWISH AFFLICTION AND THAT OF THE OTHER NATIONS

The Zera Shimshon addresses another point in this passuk. If Hashem will not afflict us with the ailments of Egypt, why does He call Himself our Healer, we should have no need for a Healer?

The Zera Shimshon explains that the passuk is not saying that the Jewish people will not become ill. Rather, the passuk is explaining the difference between when Hashem sends ailments on the non-Jews and when He sends them on the Jewish people. When the Egyptians were afflicted, it was in retribution for what they did.

However, when Hashem afflicts the Jewish people, it is for an entirely different purpose - it is to heal them from their spiritual ailments and to cause them to repent. Therefore, the passuk does not mean that the Jews will not become ill. Instead, it means that although they will become ill, it is because Hashem is our healer and He wants us to repent. The passuk only means to differentiate between the ailments the Egyptians got as a punishment and the ailments that may afflict the Jews that are to cure the Jewish people from their sins, since Hashem is our healer.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים

לזכות כל התורמים והלומדים ומעודדים. זכות רבינו שמשון חיים בן ר' נחמן מיכאל ז"ל זכותו יגן עליהם ועלינו ועל כל ישראל אמן

MeOros HaGedolim Berditchev

It is I, I and no other! *Ani, Ani hu ve'lo acher*! (Pesach Haggadah)

The *pasuk* says in *Parshas Bo* (*Shemos* 10:1) Come with Me together to Pharaoh for I have hardened his heart, and at first glance this would seem to be a very difficult *pasuk* to understand. Why is the *pasuk* giving such a reason for coming to Pharaoh? So that therefore *Hashem* will harden his heart and if Moshe would not go then *Hashem* would not harden Pharaoh's heart?!

And why would we assume that Moshe, master of all the prophets should Heaven forbid disobey a direct Divine command to go? That *Hashem* should need to explain to him the reason behind why he should go as if to convince him, as if Moshe needs convincing? Rather the matter is as *Chazal* say that we must follows in *Hashem's* footsteps by cleaving and attaching ourselves to His ways (*Shabbos* 133b, *Sotah* 14a) just as He is merciful so must we be, and furthermore it says (*Eicha* 3:38) that evil comes out from on High. Therefore, surely the master of all prophets that none has ever followed in his footsteps to be like him (*Melachim* II 23:25), was also one who from Moshe no evil shall come out from either. Therefore, Moshe worried how can I go to Pharaoh if I will be the cause of some evil to befall his household and his people? Lastly, the very same question can be asked of *Hashem*, how can *Hashem* predict that from His command to Moshe an evil will befall Pharaoh when we just cited the *pasuk* that no evil comes from on High?

The answer is based on the explanation of the holy Berdithever *Rav*, who explained that when *Hashem* struck Pharaoh with the ten plagues that this was all to his benefit because by so doing *Hashem's* Divine was sanctified, is there anything greater than that?

Therefore, this was in fact a great benefit and a favor to Pharaoh, because of that when *Hashem* told Moshe to go, He was assuring Moshe not to worry, that any evil will befall Pharaoh and how can I say that something evil will happen when no evil comes from on High? The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is in evil it is a favor and a good thing since through this the Divine Name will be sanctified in the world. And by speaking harshly to Pharaoh you are doing him a favor and following in My footsteps and emulating My ways to be merciful and kind as I, *Hashem* am. This is why *Hashem* told Moshe the reason why he should come with Him to Pharaoh.

As we say in the *Pesach Haggadah* – It is I, I and no other! **Ani, Ani hu ve'lo acher!**

And surely no evil comes from Me, says *Hashem*!

Furthermore, I *Hashem* am letting you know the reason why you should come with me together to Pharaoh in order to place these signs within him *le'ma'an shisi ososai eleh bekirbo* – which we shall explain to mean as in order to reveal through Pharaoh [through the *parshiyos* of the entire story of the ten plagues and the Exodus that form these Torah *parshiyos* of *Sefer Shemos*] the holy *osios* – the Divine letters of the Hebrew *Alef Bais* of the *Torah* that was hidden for two thousand years before Creation, can there be a greater good than that revelation of *Torah*?! Had Pharaoh known all this he would have been enamored of all his pain and sufferings because he would understand how beneficial they were and what greater good they serve. However, the wicked never understand these good favors and benefits and they remain completely wicked. [Based on *Imrei Tzaddikim*]

MeOros haGedolim - the *Maggid's Torah* through his *talmid* the Berditchever's writings

Shevi'i Shel Pesach

Why did the Sea Split When it Say Aron Yosef?

לְגֹזֵר יַם־סוּף לִגְזָרִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃

Who split apart the Sea of Reeds, His steadfast love is eternal (*Tehillim* 136:13)

The *Midrash* (*Yalkut Shimoni* 241) says that this event refers to the eighth day of the covenant of *bris milah*, and similarly we know that the *Midrash Tehillim* (114) says on this *pasuk*:

הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס הַיַּרְדֵּן יִסֹּב לְאָחוֹר׃

The sea saw and fled, Jordan ran backward (*Tehillim* 114:3)

What did the sea, see? It saw the sarcophagus of Yosef *haTzadik*. The *Zohar* (II 230b) says that the sea, saw the flight of Yosef regarding which the same Hebrew word for flight *VaYanus* is used in (*Bereishis* 39:15).

The meaning of all this is that a *tzaddik* refines good from evil. For example, if he sees something unintentionally and that event or act is unseemly and improper, he refines it and extracts the good from it, and then he takes that to perform a *yichud* unification as it says (*Bereishis* 29:17) that Rachel was beautiful and when Yaakov saw Rachel (ibid 29:10 he kissed her).

This is what occurred with Yosef, as we know [that through no fault of his own Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him over and over, again and again) for example *Chazal* say (*Yoma* 35b) that she changed her clothes over and over to get his attention, whatever she wore in the morning she changed her outfit for the evening, and she too was beautiful and when Yosef saw her - what he did was to extract the good from her and instead her meditated on the attribute of beauty *Tiferes Yisroel* and this is why he saw a vision of his father Yaakov (*Sotah* 36b) [since Yaakov embodied the supernal attribute of *Tiferes*].

This is why the *pasuk* says that Yosef fled outside – *VaYanus haChutzah*, why does it not say *haChutz* without that extra *Hay*? It means he left the world behind and ran out, he exited this physical world and attached himself to the supernal world as we explained, and then the see also saw him and it too copied Yosef and it departed this physical world and emulated him and since in the supernal worlds there is no water as it says (*Chagigah* 14b) when you reach the heavenly palace and see the pure marble floors do not say water, water! Therefore, since the water exited all that remained behind was dry land, all in the merit of the *tzaddik* who safeguards and protects the holy *bris kodesh*. (Based on *Dibros HaMaggid*)

MeOros HaGedolim

The Berditchever's Teachings About *Oneg Shabbos*

וְאַתָּה דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אַךְ אֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמֹרוּ כִּי אֹות הִוא בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם לָדַעַת כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדִּשְׁכֶם׃

"Speak to the Israelite people and say: Nevertheless, you must keep My *sabbaths*, for this is a sign between Me and you throughout the ages, that you may know that I the Lord have consecrated you".

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת כִּי קֹדֶשׁ הִוא לָכֶם מְחַלְלֶיהָ מוֹת יוּמָת כִּי כָל־הָעֹשֶׂה בָהּ מְלָאכָה וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מִקֶּרֶב עַמֶּיהָ׃

"You shall keep the *sabbath*, for it is holy for you. He who profanes it shall be put to death: whoever does work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his kin".

***(Shemos* 31:13-14)**

The holy Berditchever *Ra*v taught during *parshiyos Mattos Maasay*:

Chazal say (in *Pirkei Avos* 2:5) "A fool has no fear of heaven, and an ignoramus cannot be a pious *chassid*, a person who is ashamed and embarrassed will never learn."

The meaning of *Chassidus* and the differences between a *chassid* and a *tzaddik* (a pious individual versus a righteous individual) this is the root of the matter: a *tzaddik* is constantly striving to be righteous before his Maker, he is very careful lest he transgress any of the 365 negative prohibitions and to fulfill the 248 positive commandments in all of their details.

This is all of man and fulfills and completes him, body and soul by correspondingly completing all his limbs and sinews which number 613 (*Zohar* vol 1 170b). Therefore, he is called by the name *tzaddik* meaning to say that he seeks to be a righteous person and appear righteous before the king of all kings the holy One Blessed be He, Who loves justice. All his deeds are just and righteous and no stain or taint besmirches them, not even a speck. However, he is not overly pious to attempt to fulfill matters going beyond the letter of the law. This is a servant who fulfills his master's commands as it says *Tehillim* 113:1 Praise *Hashem* His servants, bless Him all the servants of *Hashem* (ibid 132:1).

The pious *chassid* is he who does acts of loving kindness and *chessed* with his Maker (Zohar II 114b). All his deeds and all his desire is to give his Maker satisfaction and *nachas ruach*. It does not suffice to him to just fulfill the commandments scrupulously and to meticulously obey his Creator's will. He also seeks to find a way to give *Hashem* satisfaction and *nachas ruach* at every opportunity and with whatever he has at his disposal, in every situation he finds himself in. Even when he is not command or obligated to do so, he seizes the opportunity and seeks more ways to serve. This is called a child or son, like a child who loves his father very much and surely such a loving child seeks all ways and all opportunities to give his parents satisfaction and *nachas*.

This is our sages taught in the *Midrash Shemos Rabbah* 24:1 that when will fulfill the Divine Will we are called children of *Hashem* – *banim laMakom*. Note that it says His will and not His commandments, because surely the term 'Will' does not refer to His commandments as they are found in His holy *Torah* full of the *mitzvos* that He commanded and obligated us to fulfill, surely it does not refer to those. Rather, whoever transgresses the words of the *Torah* is not even demoted to the level of servant or slave, rather he is a rebel. Rather the meaning of *Chazal* in the

Midrash to fulfill His will must mean to do that which gives *Hashem* satisfaction, pleasure and delight, *nachas ruach*. This is the true level of a *chassid* called a child or son of *Hashem*. When they fail to do His will but do fulfill His commandments and *mitzvos* that is called a servant or slave.

Therefore, they said in *Avos* that an ignoramus cannot be a *chassid*, meaning that the level of *chassidus* is inaccessible to him and he cannot achieve it. Only he who rules over his own passions and desires and is separated from them in abstinence and attached bound in *dveykus* to the supernal intellect and can ascend the rungs to the ladder of some attainment and grasp some Divine knowledge and His exaltedness and greatness to some degree, then such an individual he can be enlivened with enthusiasm and aflame with excitement to desire to fulfill the Divine Will and his soul wishes to give *Hashem nachas* and satisfaction. He can ascend the rung to the next level of *chassid*. Which is simply not the case with someone who has not distanced himself from his desire for worldly material matters and thing. Therefore, an *Am HaAretz* - he who is engaged in *Artziyos*, a person married to material matters, he cannot become a *chassid* as we explained, an *Am HaAretz* is no *chassid*.

Now come and let me show you an example of just one of the *mitzvos* that will demonstrate for you why an *Am HaAretz* cannot be a *chassid*:

Let us take for example the *mitzvah* to safeguard and observe *Shabbos* and delight in it.

It is well known and publicized to all that *Oneg Shabbos* is a great and lofty matter. Whoever delights in *Shabbos*, merits life and inherits honor - a boundless limitless inheritance, all his wishes are fulfilled, all the desires of his heart are granted, and he is saved from the three disastrous calamities (*Shabbos* 118a).

Chazal say in the *Gemara Pesachim* 68b that everyone agrees that on *Shabbos*, you must also include personal enjoyment and benefit [besides spiritual pursuits you must also engage in physical delights such as eating and drinking]. A wise man has eyes in his head, so that whatever physical enjoyment and material comfort and delight he engages in on *Shabbos* such as eating, drinking, sleeping and other matters of bodily enjoyment and *Shabbos* needs, any wise person will engage in these matters but do so for the sake of *Hashem*, intending and aiming them for *Hashem*, King of the world, to fulfill His commandments, the *mitzvah* He gave us to delight in *Shabbos* because his soul expires and desires to give *Hashem* satisfaction and *nachas ruach* and therefore we can make a logical inference that *kal vachomer* in physical pursuits where he must engage his body and exert toil and effort and monetary expense he would let nothing stop him nor hold him back from achieving and fulfilling them to give *Hashem nachas ruach,* how much more so *kal vachomer* here when he eats and drinks and delights that he should so with the intent to give *Hashem* a *nachas ruach,* with the right *kavana* and correct intentions.

This is not the case when we discuss material worldly pursuits, when while engaged in them all day long he fails to think about *Hashem*, nor to fear Him and give Him any *nachas* or satisfaction. This is due to the material and gross physical desires that hold him back and prevent him from properly serving *Hashem*, so that he falls into such vices as laziness and sloth, he feels heavy and weak hearted and cannot even serve *Hashem* in such easy matters that require little effort or exertion and incur no monetary loss or expense such as delighting in *Shabbos*, since this is actually something enjoyable and pleasurable a personal delight! It would make sense to do so for the right reasons as we said, he won't lack food or sustenance by delighting in eating food that satiates the physical body. Nonetheless a person's nature and habits make him used to not putting

in the effort to think and have in mind the right intentions to give *Hashem nachas ruach* and satisfaction, because he becomes worried that maybe he will somehow miss out on his personal benefit or gain or some material benefit, even in our case when in fact he lacks nothing and misses out on nothing, since we run the rat race, pursuing idle matters of naught and fail to direct our intentions towards proper matters such as giving *Hashem nachas ruach*.

Based on this explanation we can now understand the flow of the *pesukim* (*Shemos* 31:13-14) "And you shall speak with *Bnei Yisroel* however observe my *Shabbosos* because they are a sign between Me and you for all generations to know that I *Hashem* sanctify you and make you holy, and you shall observe the *Shabbos* for it is holy unto you".

There are many various different nuances we can pay attention to in these *pesukim* such as why the plural form of *Shabbososai* is used instead of *Shabbatai*, and why the *pasuk* repeats itself asking us twice to observe *Shabbos*, and also why the possessive changes from observe My *Shabbosos* [which implies it is *Hashem's Shabbos*] and then changes to "observe *Shabbos* . . . unto you," the word used is *Lachem* which implies is your *Shabbos* [and not *Hashem's*].

The matter can be resolved by saying that the *pasuk* is warning us to delight in *Oneg Shabbos*. When a person delights in *Shabbos* and does so for the intent and sake of *Hashem* because He commanded us to delight in *Shabbos*, it warns the masses by saying Observe My *Shabbosos – Es Shabbososai Tishmoru*, that they should not hasten and run off to eat, drink and enjoy themselves in bodily pleasures as they are known by the term *Lachem* for yourselves, as *Chazal* said in *Pesachim* 68b which we cited above. Rather, observe *Hashem's Shabbos* and that is what is meant by My *Shabbosos*. Then the *pasuk* explains the reason why we need to have that in mind and intend to delight in *Shabbos* for *Hashem's* sake, Because [to know that] I *Hashem* am sanctifying you, meaning I *Hashem* desire to sanctify you on *Shabbos* in all possible ways and in all possible matters, completely and thoroughly, even regarding physical material pleasures and pursuits that are for your own sake, those too must be sanctified and made holy, that is the proper and correct intention we must have.

The *pasuk* then repeats itself explaining why it needs to warn us and ready us to be so prepared, "observe the *Shabbos* because it is holy unto you – *Lachem*," meaning to say that I am warning you that even physical material worldly and bodily matters known as yours – *Lachem*, on *Shabbos,* these too must all be made holy unto *Hashem*. Lest you fall back unto your habitual manner of enjoying yourself with delights for your own pleasure without the proper intent I just mentioned, as you are not aware of this all week long when you engage in physical pleasure for your own enjoyment, and do not engage your heart to properly intend and meditate on these matters, therefore I am forewarning you to be diligent in this matter that requires alacrity and awareness, which is different than other *mitzvos* that do not have a component of physical pleasure and bodily delight. Therefore, surely all who delight in *Oneg Shabbos* must do so with the proper intent and correct *kavanah*, solely to fulfill the decree of the King the Ruler of the world, and we need only be warned regarding the act of pleasure and enjoyment and not regarding the intent and motivation behind them since nothing can prevent or hold back our *kavanah*, and our motivations can be recognized by our actions.

(Based on *Shmua Tova*, *Kedushas Levi Pirkei Avos* and *Dibros haMaggid*)

STIFF-NECKED IS A COMPLIMENT FOR STUBBORN TRACES OF HOLY RESIDUE

"I have seen this nation and they are a stiff-necked people and now leave Me be" (32:9-10)

The *heilige* Berditchever *Rav* explained these *pesukim* in *Ki Sisa* regarding the sin of the golden calf, that *Hashem* was telling Moshe *Rabbeinu*, " 'I have seen this nation and they are a stiff-necked people and now leave Me be,' " and when Moshe bowed prostrating himself while praying before *Hashem* he said there (34:9) "May *Hashem* walk among us because we are a stiff necked people", many commentators have already had trouble with this and have a hard time explaining it (see for example the *Ohr haChaim haKadosh*) and they ask why did Moshe is his prayers mentions that we are a stiff necked people?! This attribute is seemingly a negative vice and why bring it up and why mention it now, since surely it leads to sin?! The proof is that [this is a negative vice, because] *Hashem* Himself prefaced His remarks to Moshe, leave me be, by citing this attribute [that they are stiff necked.]

The answers seem to be that it is known (*Etz Chaim Shaar Akudim* Chapter 5) that the order of all holy matters is that even after holiness moves on it does not completely depart, rather it leaves behind some kind of impression like a spiritual residue remaining behind called a *reshimu* as is known by *Chazal's* statement in the *Midrash* (*Shemos Rabbah* 2:2) the Divine Presence of the *Shechinah* never moved from the *Kosel Maaravi*, never departing from the Western Wall.

Now what does the following matter mean, when even the wicked have thoughts of remorse and repentance, thoughts of *teshuva* that visit them day after day?

However, since they are drawn after their evil inclination and passion and desires, no sooner does good will and good thoughts come, when they pass quickly away and move on. However, sometimes it so happens that such a pang of remorse and regret is taken to heart over his wayward ways, and just a little thought of repentance and *teshuva* grows stronger. The reason why is because the element of kedusha leaves behind an *ohr segula* – a special healing light, that remains behind even after he sinned, and all sanctity and holiness departed because of those sinful acts and deeds. This is the left behind impression or residue known as the aforementioned *reshimu*. This is true only in matters of *kedusha* and holiness [that they leave behind such a *reshimu*]. However, regarding external spiritual matters this is not so, rather the evil leaves behind no trace and departs completely and fully.

Therefore, only a Jew has such a *segula* in matters of *kedusha*, because they are bound and attached to the service of their Creator the *avodas Hashem* and engaged in the study of His holy *Torah*. However, the nations of the world who have nothing to do with *kedusha* and matters of holiness and engage only in external matters that have no depth and are just a façade, therefore when one of them is engaged in idle matters even after he turns away from them no trace of holiness or residue leaves behind any impression and the matter completely and totally departs. As can be seen and clearly observed that these nations have no personal connection to matters of *kedusha*, unlike the holy Jewish people, *Am Bnei Yisroel* who are cleaving attached to *Hashem* their Creator in *dveykus* and rapture, because they are a portion of *Hashem* (*Devarim* 32:9) as is known. (Note see *Maharal Netzach Yisroel* Chap 11 sv *HaNesiv HaShelishi*)

Now when a person focuses on a single goal, we say that he stands opposite that matter and he is standing before it, and when his mind turns away from that matter we say he has turned

his back on it, because he turns his face and gaze away that matter, by turning his back to face it rather than his own face as it says "For they have turned their back to me and not their faces" (*Yermiya* 2:27) it is hard to turn back from this about face when they have turned their backs, therefore *Hashem* said Leave Me be, because what can I do if they find it hard to turn around and about face to return. Moshe with his prayers on behalf of the Jewish people retorted that 'please walk *Hashem* among us because we are a stiff necked people', meaning that we are a nation that has a stubborn streak that holds us fast to one matter, that is the left over residue, that trace of *kedusha* left behind as a *reshimu* of holiness that remains with us, as I explained that it is stubborn and will not depart under any circumstances, even if they turn their backs on *Hashem*, Heaven forbid at times when sometimes they are so stiff necked that they seemingly turn their backs on *kedusha*, and it seems to depart from them, even then it is stubborn and stubbornly leaves a remaining trace of *reshimu* that is immovable and stands remaining strong, therefore they are in fact closer to do *teshuva* and return back to the right correct path.

May the Creator have mercy and place us among those who return and repent wholeheartedly and with their entire soul, may He bring us back to Him and then we shall come back, and may He renews our days as of old, to see the delight of *Hashem* and to visit His palaces and chambers, all full of honor and glory, *Amen Selah* - forevermore.

(Based on *Shmua Tova* pages 39-40 and *Dibros haMaggid Ki Sisa*)

Regarding the thoughts of Teshuva and Repentance That Come to Us

I heard from the holy Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev:

It says in the *Gemara Chagiga* 15a - A Heavenly Voice goes and proclaims repent and return wayward children all of you except for Acher, since he acknowledges his Master and intentionally rebels against Him!

The matter is as follows: Any awakening that a person feels down here below means that they are send him a wake-up call from on High! These are the very same thoughts of repentance *hirhurei teshuvah* that come to a person, as *Chazal* say in *Avo*s 6:2 Every day a Heavenly Voice goes out and proclaims!

The matter is that whenever a though enters a person's heart to repent and return to his blessed Creator with *teshuvah sheleima* this is that very same Heavenly Voice known as the *Bas Kol*, and these are the very same thoughts of repentance that reach a person. (See also *Kedushas Levi Chaey Sarah* and *Shelach O Yomar Shleach* 3rd)

Let it be known that within the heart of every man this is what is known as the *Bas Kol* – the Heavenly Voice itself and what each and every individual Jew feels in his heart this is the actual *Bas Kol* that he himself hears!

If a person truly has full faith and believes this is true *beEmunah Sheleima* with no ulterior motives, haven forbid, that this *Bas Kol* is speaking to him and actually literally telling him to come back and repent fully before *Hashem*, then, if he believes that They are awakening Him from on High and sending Him a heavenly wake up call in his heart, to fear or love *Hashem* the blessed Creator, then this matter engraves itself on his heart with great endurance and exertion, then the *Bas Kol* does its job properly and is effective in leaving a lasting impression, it leaves its mark on a person to fulfill the Divine Will as *Hashem* Wills it since He sent that person those thoughts of

teshuva to serve Him with love or fear and to safeguard and protect himself from all evil and harm, not to be attached or connected Heaven forbid to any matters of falsehood and deceit in any way, heaven forbid. Only to attach himself in *dveykus* and rapture to the love and fear of *Hashem* because of the *Bas Kol's* Heavenly wake up call to rouse him to serve *Hashem* and engage in His holy *Torah*.

When a person is enlivened and enthused and embarks on this path, then *Hashem* allows him to hear the *Bas Kol* again at any time, even at any moment he can rekindle the flame with an awakening from on High, because surely Hashem will not hold him back nor hold back that *Bas Kol* from him, heaven forbid. Because he wishes to fulfill the *Bas Kol*, and then such a lively enthused person can serve *Hashem* using that *Bas Kol* as his motivation to serve *Hashem*, this is known as *isarusa di'leila* – an awakening from above.

This is the path for a *ba'al teshuva* to always hold himself as if he is constantly getting Heavenly wake up calls and always hearing the *Bas Kol*, whether it is driving him towards love or fear of *Hashem*, either way it's all coming from the *Bas Kol* to repent fully and sincerely, going back to *Hashem*, with no ulterior motives or drives, heaven forbid. According to this such a person has no more liabilities, rather all he has to do is just listen to the *Bas Kol* as we explained.

However, is someone means to rebel, Heaven forbid, then he cannot just go back and do *teshuva* because he hears the *Bas Kol*, since such a person who intends to willfully rebel pays no attention to the *Bas Kol* and therefore he cannot fully or sincerely repent and do *teshuva*. Rather he requires an *isurasa diltasa* an awakening from below, to awaken his own heart and go back and repent and return to *Hashem* without the *Bas Kol*, because to the Heavenly Voice he pays no heed nor attention, but if he awakens and rouses himself with an *isurasa diltasa* then surely his repentance and *teshuva* will be accepted before *Hashem* because that is the power and strength of *teshuva*!

This is what is meant whenever we see that two types of awakenings are described *isarusa diltasa* & *isarusa dileila* the awakening from below is man's own regrets without listening to or hearing the *Bas Kol*. [And the awakening from above is hearing and listening to the *Bas Kol*].

This then is what is meant by I heard a Heavenly voice – a *Bas Kol* that proclaimed return and repent all except for Acher – because he is a rebel:

He willfully chooses to ignore the awakening from above because he is intentionally rebellious, however he can still do *teshuva*, if he rouses himself with a self-awakening *isarusa diltasa* then his repentance will be accepted and he will succeed, because that is the power and strength of *teshuva* as *Chazal* say (*Yerushalmi Peah* 1:1 cited by the *Rambam* in *Hilchos Teshuva*) nothing stands in the way of *teshuva*.

Therefore, the meaning of willfully rebelling against his Master, means that he chooses to ignore the *Bas Kol*, but with self-arousal and an awakening from below as we said surely he can be accepted as we explained because so great is teshuva that is even reaches up to the throne of glory (*Yoma* 86a).

This is the meaning of return and repent o wayward children – *shuvu banim shovavim*, because of the awakening from above that is the *Bas Kol*, except for Acher, who requires an awakening from below because he chooses to ignore the *Bas Kol* as we explained.

Emunas Tzadikim on Shevii Shel Pesach

Rav Mendel of Rymanow cited Dovid *HaMelech* says that (*Tehillim* 30:7)

וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְשַׁלְוִי בַּל־אֶמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם׃

When I was peaceful and untroubled, I thought, "I shall never be shaken",

He said this in his younger years during his youth since in his later adult life he had not one moment of peace or quiet and he was worried lest he fail and fall. Therefore, anyone who fears to fall should grasp onto a lifeline and hold onto anything even the smallest thinnest frailest rope and hang from a great tree on *Hashem's* mountain, this small string is our unmovable and unshakable faith in *emunas Hashem* - as I heard from one of the disciples of our master the Rebbe Elimelech who said in his name that the most appropriate and auspicious time for this *segula* is the night of *Shevii Shel Pesach*, and we need to strengthen ourselves and bind and attach ourselves and our thoughts at that time to the holy *tzaddikim* and this is a true *segula* that provides maximal benefits. Because on this day it says *Shemos* 14:31 They believed and had *emuna* in *Hashem* and in Moshe His servant. That their *emuna* and faith in *Hashem* was contingent upon their attachment and connection to Moshe.

(Based on Menachem *Tzion Derushim* for *Pesach Seudas Leil Achron Shel Pesach*)

A visitor from Lizensk on *Shevii Shel Pesach* in Belz

It once happened that as Rav Yehoshua of Belz prepared himself to enter and conduct his holy *Yom Tov tisch* on *Pesach*, he saw the Rebbe Reb Melech of Lizensk (who had since passed on.)

The Belzer *Rav* asked the Rebbe Reb Melech, '*Rebbe* you promised us the redemption during the lifespans of your disciples and *talmidim*, that the *Moshiac*h would arrive in their lifetime, and yet all of your *talmidim* have since departed and left this world (yet *Moshiach* has not yet arrived?!)

Responded the Rebbe Reb Melech: Ask me a question and I shall respond with an answer and by so doing you too shall be counted among my disciples and be my *talmid*.

This is the question that Rav Yehoshua of Belz asked the Rebbe Elimelech of Lizensk:

What is the meaning of the *pasuk* when *Hashem* said to Moshe why are you crying out to Me?! Speak to *Bnei Yisroel* and tell them to get a move on!

The difficulty is how at such a terrible time, such a disastrous moment, with the sea before them and the Egyptians behind them – what should Moshe have done in such a situation if not to call out to *Hashem*?!

Another difficulty is that the sea had not yet split at this stage and how did *Hashem* tell Moshe that they should travel and move on?! *Hashem* should have told Moshe to raise up his staff and split the sea first and then tell *Bnei Yisroel* to move on and travel.

This is the answer that the Rebbe Elimelech replied to the Belzer *Rav's* question using a parable and *mashal* to illustrate the reply as follows:

There was once a great king who had an only daughter who was truly fulfilled and possessed all the virtues. She was the envy of all the other girls in the entire kingdom and they plotted against her.

[Finally, they saw a chance] it was one day during her pregnancy that in the midst of labor she had trouble giving birth. The birth pangs were tremendously painful, and the doctors and physicians gave up all hope seeing as how her pain and suffering were so great that her very life was in danger!

A wise surgeon arrived and promised to heal her so that she would have an easy birth and suffer no more. He ordered everyone else to depart and leave the room, so that only he would remain behind as well as the king. Then when everyone left and departed, he asked the king to go out and make a riyal proclamation as if his dear daughter had given birth already and wish her *Mazal Tov* and extend congratulations. The king was dumbfounded and seized with incredulous wonder at this wild suggestion, how could he make such a false proclamation before the event had taken place and why?!

However, the wise man promised the king that no sooner would he proclaim so then his daughter would indeed give birth immediately.

The king commanded the proclamation should be announced and publicized throughout the kingdom and all of his royal provinces. No sooner than this command was carried out and the news spread, and word went out then his dear daughter did in fact actually give birth and the king greatly rejoiced and was exceedingly happy.

Afterwards the king asked the wise man what made him think of such a solution to heal his daughter? He responded back to the king that since the princess has so many envious detractors and there are sorceresses and witches among those wicked women, they conjured up a curse against her with various magical means and sorcerous ways to prevent her success in giving birth. However, once the matter became official public knowledge that she had given birth already and their nefarious plots seemingly failed they gave up and ceased their conjuring and she was in fact able to give birth unhindered!

The *tzaddik* concluded his *mashal* and added: This is how it happened at the Exodus as well, continued the Rebbe Reb Melech to explain to the Belzer *Rav* - as *Chazal* say *Chullin* 7a why is sorcery called *keshafim* - because it weakens the Heavenly hosts and *Pamaliya Shel Ma'alah*, the Egyptian necromancers and black magicians did their best and exerted all efforts to prevent the Exodus and this was holding back the salvation from taking place. Besides them there were also many accusers that prosecuted against *Bnei Yisroel* saying that they were unworthy of redemption. When Moshe *Rabbeinu* cried and called out to *Hashem*, *Hashem* responded by saying *Shemos* 14:15 why are you crying out to Me?! By so doing these very accusers and witches all realize that you are still in danger and have not yet been saved. They will continue their conjuring and their witchcraft along with their accusation and prosecution against you so long as you demonstrate that you are still in need of Divine aid. Therefore, I advise you to instead tell *Bnei Yisroel* to get a move on and depart! By so doing you will fool them all, when the Egyptians and accusers all see that Moshe commands them to move and depart, they will give up their witchcraft cease their conjuring and stop their accusations.

This is what *Chazal* had in mind *Mechilta BeShalach* 14:31 when they said that *Bnei Yisroel* were only redeemed in the merit of their *emuna* and faith, that they believed even before the miracle actually took place that *Hashem* would redeem them and this itself caused them to merit the redemption and bring about their *geulah*.

(Based on *Haggadah Shel Pesach Imrei Kodesh*, page 255)

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

Lights Of Our Righteous

Parshas Tzav

Tzav es **Aharon - Command Aharon**

Rav Mordechai Steiner cites Rashi, who explains that Tzav means alacrity, to perform immediately and also to fulfill for all future generations. Rabbi Shimon taught that the *pasuk* needed to encourage us more in such a case where there is a monetary expense involved.

The simple meaning is that this refers to the two burnt elevation offerings that we sacrifice daily two whole sheep and since they are completely burnt this incurs a monetary loss therefore we needed encouragement. However, why does it say immediately and for all generations? The problem is that the *korban olah* is not a *mitzvah* that exists nowadays and due to our many sins, we have no sacrificial offerings and no *bais hamikdash*.

The *seform* offer an explanation that the language used here for financial expense and incurring a monetary loss is *chisaron kis*, which literally translates as lack of a pocket. The *seforim* explain that each limb and organ has a sack like pocket called a *kis*. The tongue has a cover (mouth), the lips close, the eyes have lids, the ears have lobes etc. whereas the mind has no cover or pocket. Therefore, when it comes to sins of the mind or sinful thought, there is no *kis* or cover. The *olah* burnt elevation offering is sacrificed to atone for sinful thoughts, and therefore we need much more encouragement to safeguard and protect our minds and our thoughts from sin.

Another possible answer that Rav Mordechai offers is that we need to understand this important foundation: that we should never hold ourselves back in the performance of any *mitzvah* or good deed due to fear of financial loss or expense. This includes the *mitzvah* of *davening*, as there are many people who are late for *shul* and miss a *minyan* or leave early at *Ashrei and Uva leTzion* or even before that! All because they are in a rush, they hurry to go to work thinking and imagining that when they leave before *davening* is over somehow, they earn and profit more. The truth is however just the opposite!

They are likely at a loss, as the *Midrash* says that *Hashem* declares: no one who listens to Me loses out! It is an impossibility that anyone will listen to *Hashem* and heed His words and lose out on anything, rather surely, he will only gain and profit. The opposite is true, by shortening the *davening*, skipping, leaving before it has ended you won't gain or profit anything at all from such time, and even if a person imagines or believes that he is profiting and making money, there is no *siman berachah* in such money and who knows if his future expenses and losses won't far exceed any supposed profits or gains?!

Rav Mordechai added: I wanted to also bring up the following important point and rouse the hearts of the people to pay attention to this situation: There are those that do their shopping in big chain stores and large super markets such as (PathMark for example) where they purchase all kinds of goods that they claim have a cheaper price than what those items cost if they purchase them at a Jewish owned store. Such a practice is under the heading of the aforementioned *chazal* that we need to be extra diligent and more meticulous when it comes to being hit in the pocket and where there is an incurred financial cost or loss. Here too, when people imagine they are saving money by shopping at a gentile owned supermarket because they argue that in the Jewish owned stores the same items are more expensive, they fail to fulfill the great grand *mitzvah* of *VeChai*

Achicha Imach - help your own brother live together with you! It is proper to make your purchases and do your shopping only in Jewish owned stores and businesses and not at those owned by the *ovdei kockavim*, to give *chizuk* to our brothers and help the shop keepers and owners and support them! Especially some of the local supermarkets and retail chains that sell food and chametz and are open all year long including *Pesach* and surely they are co-owned by Jews who are non-observant and fail to sell their *chametz* and all their products are forbidden since they fall under the rabbinic ban of *chametz she'avar alav ha'Pesach*! And such stores stench stinks of *tumah* and therefore be diligent, careful and beware as we said that we require extra *ziruz* when we talk about *chisaron kis* and this is a warning for all generations, may *Hashem* merit us to once again offer the sacrificial offerings and *korbanos* in *bais hamikdash* once more, *Amen*.

Simchah and *Ziruz* for Future Generations

Tzav es Bnei Yisroel - this is *Toras haOlah*

Rashi comments that *Tzav* means to take action and urge us on immediately now and also for all future coming generations. The holy *seforim* teach us that when we do *mitzvos* with *simchah* and joy they have a continuing influence for coming generations and their *shefa* goes on. Perhaps, says Rav Mordechai, this is what *Rashi* means - that *tzav* is a *ziruz*, all *mitzvos* and commandments need to be done with joy and alacrity, and then they last and go on to influence coming generations as well!

Why *Torah* is Better Than *Korbanos*

Zeh Toras haOlah – this is the *Torah* of the Burnt Offering

Chazal say in *Shabbos* 30a on the *pasuk Tehillim* 84:11, one day in Your courtyards as better than one thousands burn offerings. This means that the study of *Torah* is more important than the sacrificial offerings and *Torah* study refines and atones more than *korbanos*. This matter can best be understood as follows: The burnt elevation offering atones for sinful thoughts and when offered the *Kohen* was the one responsible to move the offender to repent and do *teshuva* and feel remorse over his past sins and misdeeds so he could do full complete *teshuva* and only then would the *kohen* offer his sacrifice and achieve atonement for him. The truth is however, that even after the *korban* was offered he still needs to guard himself from stumbling in sin again a second time. However, through *Torah* study a person is refined and sanctified so that the *Torah* saves and protects him from harm and gives him strength to overcome his evil inclinations and urges. Furthermore, *Torah* study invests us with holy thoughts as the *Rambam* writes (Laws of *Hilchos Issur Biya* end of 22) that evil sinful thoughts enter minds that are empty and lacking wisdom. Therefore, *Torah* is preferable to *korbanos*, because through *Torah* study man merits to refine his mind and *Torah* protects him and guards his mind.

To help overcome the *yetzer hara*. Especially nowadays in our times when we no longer have any *korbanos* and cannot offer *olos* or *chatas* - elevation or sin offerings, therefore the best advice is that our only hope to purify us and cleans us of sin is through *Torah* study. The primary focus of *teshuvah* is the future resolution to refrain from repeating the same sinful behaviors, however in order to ensure that no stain or impression is left behind by those sins we need a lot of work. This effort is the exertion of *Torah* study with self-sacrifice and *mesirus nefesh* as *Chazal* say *Menachos* 110 this is *Toras haOlah* - this is the *Torah* of a burnt elevation offering - whosoever engages in *Torah* study of the *Olah* is considered as if he offered one, and this atones for all.

Perhaps, we can add another reason why *Torah* study is preferable to *korbanos*, this is because sacrificial offerings can only be done by day, and therefore whoever sins at night has to wait until morning! However, *Torah* study can be engaged in at any time, and all the more so, those who merit the crown of *Torah* are those who tirelessly toil all night long, as the *Rambam* writes in the laws of *Talmud Torah* 3:12, that whoever wishes to earn the crown of *Torah* should not give up even just one night and perhaps that is how we can interpret our *pasuk* as well: *Zeh Toras haOlah - Kol haLayla* - this is why *Torah* is preferable to *Olah* because it lasts *Kol haLayla Ad haBoker* - all night long - *Torah* can be studied at night as well, which is not true regarding the offering of *korbanos* (which are limited to daytime.) Also, *Torah* study refines a person so that later on when he is at a dark point in his life, symbolized by nightfall, a time of darkness for the soul, that *Torah* shall safeguard and protect him from harm as we said, and therefore *Torah* is preferable to *korbanos* and nowadays when we have no *korbanos* we must engage in *Torah* and this shall atone for all.

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM

Lights Of Our Righteous

Pesach

Bread of Faith - For Seven Days Shall You Eat Matzos

It is known that the holy *Zohar* names the *matzo*s - *Michla DiMehaymenusa* - the food of faith - because they draw down an influx of *emunah* and influence a person to faith in *Hashem*. By eating *matzah* we merit *emunah* all year long and through this *emunah* we merit *yiras shomayim* - fear and awe of Heaven. However, it's obvious that we do not rely on faith alone, *emunah* all by itself is insufficient and we need to couple it with *Torah* study and then together with *Torah* and *Yiras Shomayim* - then we merit to be drawn close to *Hashem*, the Blessed Creator.

Using this concept Rav Mordechai interprets *Pirkei Avos* 3:5: If there is no flour there is no *Torah*. And if there is no *Torah*, there is no flour. The flour here hints at *matzah* which is made of flour and nothing else (besides water). Without the influence of the *matzah* instilling *emunah* in us it is impossible to merit *Torah* because *Torah* that lacks faith and *yiras shomayim* has no *chashivus* and lacks any substantial value. Similarly, when there is no *Torah* there is no flour, without *Torah* one cannot merit flour, meaning faith that comes from the matzah and only together with *Torah* can it be drawn down.

The conclusion is that we must strengthen ourselves in *Torah* and merit *emunah* from the *matzah* that lasts all year long and the only thing we need is to prepare a container to hold this faith - a *keli* or receptacle to receive, and may *Hashem* aid us and help us to merit receiving all of His *berachos* from this *Yom Tov*, *Amen*.

Armed with Torah - They departed the land of Egypt armed.

Perhaps we can say that this hints to us that the redemption from Egypt was in the merit of *Torah* as *Hashem* said to Moshe (*Shemos* 3:12) when I take you and deliver the people from Egypt you shall serve *Hashem* on this very mountain - and *Rashi* interprets this as a merit that stood by *Bnei Yisroel* - and this is hinted at in the Hebrew word for armed - *chamushim* which is like the *Chumash*, because we are armed with *Chamisha Chumshei Torah* that we received on *Har* Sinai, we merited to rise up leave and be delivered from Egypt and redeemed.

Apple - It says in *Shir haShirim* 2:3 like an apple among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the boys

We can interpret the meaning of this *pasuk* based on the known nature of an apple that as soon as the fruit blossoms it is ripe and ready to eat. Which is not so when it comes to other fruits that are unripe when they first begin to grow and they are not yet ready to eat.

This is why *Bnei Yisroel* are compared to apples, to teach us that we need to educate our children when they are young and from the early years of youth a father needs to educate his sons and teach them the *derech haTorah* - the proper path of *Torah* - and this is why the *pasuk* compares us and says like an apple among the forest trees, just as that apples grows and is ripe to eat as soon as it appears, so do we need the *Shechinah's* presence to rest upon our children even when they are young and tender.

Ma'amar Sod Etzba Elokim

Shalom to you great Rabbis and Ge'onim[1]. May Hashem save you from all evil and allow you to merit seeing the salvations you await. And may you enjoy many blessings forever, Amen Selah.

In short, on that which his honor sent to me questioning what I wrote concerning the words דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב, wanting to know how the redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt is hinted in these words, I will now reveal this to his honor, *"and let his arrow shoot forth before me as (clear as) lightning"* (based on Zechariah 9:14), and may He, the Merciful One, forgive sin.

Behold! I will begin by writing to his honor that which the Arizal writes in his work called 'Pelaos Rabos':

"Pharaoh was punished in Egypt with the ten plagues by the hands of 3,280 angels of retribution that are appointed on and that dwell in the three heavens of impurity. Of which, one is called שרע, another תמוך, and the third is called בישהא. Governing on these angels is the officer (overseeing angel) called דלפקטם (דלפקט), and at the head of them all, stands the officer called תקא. Remove 10 from the third, 6 from the fourth and 6 from the ninth as it is written.

The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with 10 plagues and at the sea, they received 50, this came about through the name שפו. In this name, Dovid the son of Yishai grasps. The name (שפו) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name תקל the Egyptians received 40 plagues in Egypt and 200 at the sea. The name (תקל) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with 50 plagues in Egypt and at the sea, they received 250. The name אשצה (שצה) said and hit (the Egyptians).

With precisely that which Hashem punishes, he heals the (pain of) exile. What was the sin and evildoing that our forefathers committed to deserve being placed in the "Iron Crucible" (Egypt)? Until they were redeemed with these names דעב צדא כשחב." Here the words of the Arizal end.

His words are baffling and impenetrable, seemingly unexplainable. Many of the greatest scholars and Rabbis have already requested that I enlighten them in understanding his intention, but I have not. Nonetheless, due to the great love I have for you, I will reveal the secret to you. It was revealed to me in a dream – a vision in the night.

The Arizal wrote,

…"Pharaoh was punished in Egypt with the ten plagues by the hands of 3,280 angels of retribution"…

His intention is as follows: In the writings of Kabbalah it is taught that there are 3,280 angels whose job it is to punish the evildoers to purify them from their sins. This concept is alluded to in the passuk (Yeshaya 58:4) ולהכות באגרף רשע, *"To strike wickedness with a fist."* The word אגרף, a fist, stands for גַ אַלפים רַ"פַ, 3,280, implying

[1] **It is should be pointed out that one must be careful not to enunciate any of the names of the angels** etc. brought in the Ma'amar, being that this can cause harm.

that the wicked are beaten (punished) via 3,280 messengers, who are appointed specifically for this task. What is truly an amazing secret, is that when the ten plagues are written in the following manner

דם צפרדע כנם ערב דבר שחין ברד ארבה חשך מכת בכורות

(634) (460) (328) (208) (206) (368) (206) (272) (110) (444) (44)

Blood, Frogs, Lice, Wild Animals, Pestilence, Boils, Hail, Locust, Darkness, Death of the Firstborn) they have the numerical value of 3,280. This signifies that it was these 3,280 punishing angels that dwell in the three heavens of impurity שרע תמוך בישהא, whose task it is to bring about punishment on the wicked to purify them, that brought the punishments of the ten plagues on Egypt. This is truly an amazing insight.

This calculation though, is only exact when כנם, Lice, is written without the י (as opposed to כנים), ערב, Wild Animals, without the ו (as opposed to ערוב) and חשך, Darkness, without the ו (as opposed to חושך).

This is the Arizal's intention when he writes,

…"remove 10 from the third, 6 from the fourth and 6 from the ninth as it is written"…

The plagues have to be spelled as they are written in the Torah. Remove 10 from the third means leave the י (whose numerical value is ten) out of the spelling of the third plague which is כנם. Remove 6 from the fourth means leave the ו (whose numerical value is 6) out of the fourth plague which is ערב. Remove 6 from the ninth means leave the ו (6) out the ninth plague which is חשך.

Then the Arizal writes,

..."that dwell in the three heavens of impurity. Of which, one is called שרע, another תמוך, and the third is called בישהא"…

This is the secret of the words אלו עשר מכות שהביא הבק"ה במצרים, "These are the ten plagues that the Holy One blessed is He brought in Egypt." Taking a closer look, one will see that the letters of the names of these heavens, שרע תמוך בישהא, also make up the words עשר (שרע) מכות (תמוך) שהביא (בישהא), "The ten plagues that He brought." Thus, the words עשר מכות שהביא allude to the three heavens in which the 3,280 angels dwell. They also allude to the 3,280 angels of punishment themselves, since that is the numerical value of the ten plagues that Hashem had these very angels carry out on the Egyptians.

… "(Governing on these angels is the officer called דלפקטם (דלפקט)"…

This name is derived from the word המצרים, the Egyptians, by combining the letters that precede the letters of the word המצרים.

ד precedes ה

ל precedes מ

פ precedes צ

ק precedes ר

ט precedes י

The letter ם remains the same. It is not reckoned with, being that it is only to turn the word המצרים from the singular tense to the plural tense; and so it is not part of the root of the word. This leaves us with the name דלפקטם.

This name is hinted to in the Haggadah when it says אלו עשר מכות שהביא הקב"ה על המצרים, "These are the ten plagues that Hashem brought on the Egyptians". In other words, 'on HaMitzriyim' means the letters that precede those that spell the word המצרים, which are דלפקטם (דלפקט). This officer saw to it that the 3,280 angels delivered the plagues on the Egyptians. This explanation I have received from my teachers. May Hashem, forgive.)

Continuing, the Arizal writes,

…"Governing on all of these angels is the officer called תקא"…

His intention is as follows. When taking the first letter of each plague

(114) דצ"ך

(374) עד"ש

(13) באח"ב

the numerical value of this combination equals 501, the exact numerical value of the name תקא. (Hence, his name symbolizes his mission – to oversee all the plagues being brought on Egypt).

The name תקא is also numerically equal to the word אשר. This is the meaning of the passuk (Shemos 10:2), למען תספר באזני בנך ובן בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים, *"So that you shall tell over in the ears of your children and grandchildren, of My setting Egypt to scorn."* אשר alludes to the scorn that came via the ten plagues whose abbreviations equal 501 – אשר.

This is also the meaning of the passuk that says (Shemos 4:17), ואת המטה הזה תקח בידך אשר תעשה בו את האתת, *"And this staff you shall take in your hand, with which you shall perform the signs."* The Medrash teaches that this staff had the letters צד"ך עד"ש באח"ב engraved on it. The passuk implies with the word אשר, that the signs would be the ten plagues whose abbreviation's numerical value is that of the word אשר.

These are two of the countless pessukim that use the word אשר when speaking about the ten plagues, alluding to this secret, since it numerically equals the abbreviations of the ten plagues and the name תקא. There are many more amazing secrets, however, כבוד אלקים הסתר דבר, *"For the honor of Hashem they are better unrevealed."* (Mishlei 25:2, due to the inability of the human mind to grasp their depth.)

After this the Arizal writes,

… "The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with 10 plagues and at the sea they received 50, this came about through the name שפו. In this name, Dovid the son of Yishai grasps. The name (שפו) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name תקל the Egyptians received 40 plagues in Egypt and 200 at the sea. The name (תקל) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with 50 plagues in Egypt and at the sea they received 250. The name אשצה (שצה) said and hit (the Egyptians)" …

The meaning in these words is as follows: They hint to an amazing and wonderful secret – the argument between R' Yossi HaGalili, R' Eliezer and R' Akiva (cited in the Haggadah) in which each one has a different opinion as to the number of plagues the Egyptians received.

On this the Arizal writes,

…“ **The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with 10 plagues and at the sea they received 50, this came about through the name שפו”…**

This hints to R’ Yossi HaGalili who is of the opinion, that in Egypt the Egyptians received 10 plagues and 50 at the sea, since

(212) רבי

(86) יוסי

(88) הגלילי

has the same numerical value as the name שפו (386).

The Arizal also mentions Dovid the son of Yishai (Dovid HaMelech), since

(14) דוד

(52) בן

(320) ישי

also equals שפו. This emphasizes what the Sodi Raza writes that R’ Yossi HaGalili had a share of Dovid HaMelech’s soul in him.

The Arizal continues,

…**“Through the name תקל the Egyptians received 40 plagues in Egypt and 200 at the sea”…**

This hints to R’ Eliezer who is of this opinion, since (318) אליעזר (212) רבי has the same numerical value as the name תקל, (530). Therefore, it is precisely he that holds that the Egyptians were punished with 40 plagues in Egypt and 200 at the sea.

…**“Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with 50 plagues in Egypt and at the sea they received 250”…**

This is a hint to the opinion of R’ Akiva since (183) עקיבא (212) רבי equals אשצה (שצה) numerically (395), and he is of the opinion that the Egyptians were hit in Egypt with 50 plagues and with 250 at the sea.

Thus, the three names – שפו, תקל, אשצה (שצה) hint to these three sages, רבי יוסי הגלילי equaling שפו, רבי אליעזר to תקל, and רבי עקיבא to אשצה (שצה). This is a fascinating secret, a secret of secrets, hidden within the hidden as I have written to you.

After this the Arizal writes,

…“**With precisely that which Hashem punishes, he heals the (pain of) exile. What was the sin and evildoing that our forefathers committed to deserve being placed in the “Iron Crucible” (Egypt)?**”…

His intention with this is that the reason why the Jews went down to Egypt is hinted in the letters of the ten plagues, as I have already written to his honor. It was from these plagues that the Egyptians were hit and from them the Jewish people were healed, since from the plagues came the healing to Yisrael to redeem them blessed is He and blessed is His Name. I have another tremendous secret to answer his honor’s question, however this that I have written is also a satisfactory explanation, true wonders in His pure and holy Torah.

The Arizal concludes;

…"until they were redeemed with these names דעב צדא כשחב…"

The meaning in this is as follows: The first letters of the words דַצ"ך עַד"ש בַאח"ב make up the word דעב. The second letters make up the word צדא and the last letters make up the word כשחב. Hinted to, are these three names with which we were redeemed. This then, is where the redemption and healing to Yisrael are found hinted to in the plagues that afflicted Egypt.

May it be the will of the Almighty to let us see the days of Moshiach with the angels associated with the final redemption speedily in our times, Amen Selah!

The following is a Ma'amar from **R' Shimshon of Ostropoli's** on **Parshas Massei** in honor of his Yortziet this coming Motzai Shabbos (3 Av).

The 42 wanderings of the Jews

אלה מסעי בני ישראל

These are the journeys of the Jewish people (33:1).

R' Pesach, the Maggid of Zalkava, writes (Zevach Pesach) that he found in his uncle, **R' Shimshon of Ostropoli's**, notes to say the following Ma'amar in times of distress and sickness, once every morning and evening, and it helps to be saved. **R' Pesach** ends off, although we have no idea why this is, **R' Shimshon**, who the great of the land testified on him that he learned with Eliyahu HaNavi, could definitely be relied upon.

כד נטלו ישראל מרעמסס לא ידעון
אי ינטלו לסוכות או לקהלתה או למוסרות
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לסוכות.
מסוכות לא ידעון אי ינטלון לאיתם או לחצרות או לתרח או לעציון גבר
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לאיתם.
מאיתם לא ידעון אי ינטלון לפי החירות או לרימון פרץ או לערבונה או להרי העברים
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לפי החירות.
מפי החירות לא ידעון אי ינלטון למרה או לתחת או לערבות מואב
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון למרה.
ממרה לא ידעון אי ינטלון לאילים או למקהלות או לעלמון דבלתימה
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לאלים.
מאלים לא ידעון אי ינטלון לים סוף או לחשמונה או לפונון או לעיי העברים
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לים סוף.
מים סוף לא ידעון אי ינטלון למדבר סין או לחרדה
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון למדבר סין.
ממדבר סין לא ידעו אי ינטלו לדפקה או ליטבתה
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לדפקה.
מדפקה לא ידעו אי ינטלון לאלוש או לרסה או לאובות
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לאלוש.
מאלוש לא ידעון אי ינטלו לרפידים או להר שפר או לבני יעקן
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לרפידים.
מרפידים לא ידעון אי ינטלו למדבר סיני או לקברות התאוה או לחור הגדגד
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון למדבר סיני.
ממדבר סיני לא ידעון אי ינטלו לקברות התאוה או לחור הגדגד
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לקברות התאוה.
מקברות התאוה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לחצרות או לתרח או לעציון גבר
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לחצרות.
מחצרות נטלו לרתמה.
מרתמה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לרמון פרץ או לערבונה או להרי העברים
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לרמון פרץ.
מרמון פרץ נטלו ללבנה.
מלבנה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לרסה או לאובות
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לרסה.
מרסה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לקהלתה או למוסרות
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לקהלתה.
מקהלתה לא ידעון אי ינטלו להר שפר או לבני יעקן
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון להר שפר.
מהר שפר נטלו לחדרה.
מחרדה לא ידעון אי ינטלון למקהלות או לעלמון דבלתימה
ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון למקהלות.

When the Jews traveled from Ra'amses, they did not know if they would travel to Succos, Kehelasa, or Moseros and Hashem commanded them to travel to Succos.
From Succos they did not know if they would travel to Eisam, Chatzeiros, Tarach, or Etzyon Gaver and Hashem commanded them to travel to Eisam.
From Eisam they did not know if they would travel to Pi Hachiros, Rimon Paretz, Arvona, or Harei Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Pi Hachiros.
From Pi Hachiros they did not know if they would travel to Mara, Tachas, or Arvos Moav and Hashem commanded them to travel to Mara.
From Mara, they did not know if they travel to Eilim, Makhelos, or Almon Divlasayma and Hashem commanded them to travel to Eilim.
From Eilim they did not know if they would travel to Yam Suf, Chashmona, Funon, or Eyay Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Yam Suf.
From Yam Suf they did not know if they would travel to Midbar Sin or Charada and Hashem commanded them to travel to Midbar Sin.
From Midbar Sin they did not know if they would travel to Dofka or Yotvasa and Hashem commanded them to travel to Dofka.
From Dofka they did not know if they would travel to Alush, Risa, or Ovos and Hashem commanded them to travel to Alush.
From Alush they did not know if they would travel to Refidim, Har Shafer, or Bnei Ya'akan and Hashem commanded them to travel to Refidim.
From Refidim they did not know if they would travel to Midbar Sinai, Kivros Hata'ava, or Chor Hagidgad and Hashem commanded them to travel to Midbar Sinai.
From Midbar Sinai they did not know if they travel to Kivros Hata'ava or Chor Hagidgad and Hashem commanded them to travel to Kivros Hata'ava.
From Kivros Hata'ava they did not know if they would travel to Chatzeiros, Tarach, or Etzyon Gaver and Hashem commanded them to travel to Chatzeiros.
From Chatzeiros they traveled to Ritma.
From Ritma they did not know if they would travel to Rimon Peretz, Arvona, or Harei Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Rimon Peretz.
From Rimon Peretz they traveled to Levona.
From Levona they did not know if they would travel to Risa or Ovos and Hashem commanded them to travel to Risa.
From Risa they did not know if they would travel to Kehelasa or Moseros and Hashem commanded them to travel to Kehelasa.
From Kehelasa they did not know if they would travel to Har Shafer or Bnei Ya'akan and Hashem commanded them to travel to Har Shafer.
From Har Shafer they traveled to Charada.
From Charada they did not know if they would travel to Makhelos or Almon Divlasayma and Hashem commanded them to travel to Makhelos.

From Makhelos they did not know if they would travel to Tachas or Arvos Moav and Hashem commanded them to travel to Tachas.	ממקהלות לא ידעון אי ינטלו לתחת או לערבות מואב ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לתחת.
From Tachas they did not know if would travel to Tarach or Etzyon Gaver and Hashem commanded them to travel to Tarach.	מתחת לא ידעון אי ינטלו לתרח או לעציון גבר ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לתרח.
From Tarach they traveled to Mitka.	מתרח נטלו למתקה.
From Mitka they did not know if they would travel to Chashmona, Funon, or E'yay Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Chashmona.	ממתקה לא ידעון אי ינלטון לחשמונה או לפונון או לעיי העברים ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לחשמונה.
From Chashmona they traveled to Moseros.	מחשמונה נטלו למוסרות.
From Moseros they traveled to Bnei Ya'akan.	ממוסרות נטלו לבני יעקן.
From Bnei Ya'akan they traveled to Chor Hagidgad.	מבני יעקן נטלו לחור הגדגד.
From Chor Hagidgad (they traveled) to Yotvasa.	מחור הגדגד (נטלו) ליטבתה.
From Yotvasa they did not know if they would travel to Arvona or Harei Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Arvona.	מיטבתה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לערבונה או להרי העברים ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לערבונה.
From Arvona they traveled to Etzyon Gaver.	מערבונה נטלו לעציון גבר.
From Etzyon Gaver (they traveled) to Kadesh.	מעציון גבר (נטלו) לקדש.
From Kadesh (they traveled) o Hor Hahar.	מקדש (נטלו) להר ההר.
From Hor Hahar (they traveled) to Tzalmona.	מהר ההר (נטלו) לצלמונה.
From Tzalmona they did not know if they would travel to Funon or E'yay Ha'avarim and Hashem commanded them to travel to Funon.	מצלמונה לא ידעון אי ינטלו לפונון או לעיי העברים ופקיד מדברנא דעמא דינטלון לפונון.
From Funon they traveled to Ovos.	מפונון נטלו לאובות.
From Ovos (they traveled) to E'yay Ha'avarim.	מאובות (נטלו) לעיי העברים.
From E'yay Ha'avarim (they traveled) to Divon Gad.	מעיי העברים (נטלו) לדיבון גד.
From Divon Gad (they traveled) to Almon Divlasayma.	מדיבון גד (נטלו) לעלמון דבלתימה.
From Almon Divlasayma (they traveled) to Harei Ha'avarim.	מעלמון דבלתימה (נטלו) להרי העברים.
From there (Harei Ha'avarim they traveled) to Arvos Moav.	ומתמן (נטלו) לערבות מואב.

This Ma'amar is clearly a riddle. **R' Yoel Baal Shem of Zamotch** and the **Malbim** both explain **R' Shimshon's** words in a wondrous way and although it doesn't explain what the mechanics of the Segula is, it diffuses a lot of the mystery in **R' Shimshon's** words. The **Megaleh Amukos** and the **Magen Avraham** (Orach Chaim § 428:8) write that the 42 locations that Jewish people traveled via correspond to the 42 letters in Hashem's name of 42[1], as the following chart illustrates:

אנא רעמסס	**ב**כח סוכות	**ג**דולת איתם	**י**מיך פי החירות	**ת**תיר מרה	**צ**רורה אלים
קבל ים סוף	**ר**ינת מדבר סין	**ע**מק דפקה	**ש**גבנו אלוש	**ט**הרנו רפידים	**נ**ורא מדבר סיני
נא קברות התאוה	**ג**בור חצרות	**ד**ורשי רתמה	**י**חודך רמון פרץ	**כ**בבת לבנה	**ש**מרם רסה
ברכם קהלתה	**ט**הרם הר שפר	**ר**חמי חרדה	**צ**דקתך מקהלות	**ת**מיד תחת	**ג**מלם תרח
חסין מתקה	**ק**דוש חשמונה	**ב**רב מוסרות	**ט**ובך בני יעקן	**נ**הל חור הגדגד	**ע**דתך יטבתה
יחיד ערבונה	**ג**אה עציון גבר	**ל**עמק קדש	**פ**נה הר ההר	**ז**וכרי צלמונה	**ק**דשתך פונן
שועתנו אובות	**ק**בל עיי העברים	**ו**שמע דיבן גד	**צ**עקתנו עלמון דבלתימה	**י**ודע הרי העברים	**ת**עלומות ערבות מואב

[1] This name is used to form the first letters of the words found in the Tefilla written by R' Nechunya Ben Hakana, known as Ana Bekoach.

Based on this chart, every place that the Jews stopped at corresponded to a different letter of אנא בכח. **R' Yoel Baal Shem** and the **Malbim** explain that the Jews knew what letter they had to rectify next, and they also knew which letter each place corresponded to. Thus, as they left their first stop – רעמסס they knew that they would be traveling to a place that corresponded to the letter ב since in the name of Hashem of 42 letters, after אנא comes בכח. They just were unsure which location they would be traveling to since, as the chart shows, there are a number of locations that correspond to the letter ב. They are סוכות קהלתה מוסרות this is the meaning of what **R' Shimshon** writes 'When the Jews traveled from Ra'amses, they did not know if they would travel to Succos, Kehelasa, or Moseros and Hashem commanded them to travel to Succos. Since they knew that based on the name of 42 they were to now travel to a location that corresponded to the letter ב but they just were unsure which one of the locations that correspond to the letter ב it would be, Hashem commanded them which location it was that they were to travel to.

This why when they left Succos, although they knew that they now were to travel to a location that corresponded to the letter ג since that is the next letter in the name of 42, there were unsure of which one of the 4 place that correspond to the letter ג they would be traveling to as the chart shows there are 4 location that correspond to ג – איתם חצרות תרת עציון גבר. Following this explanation, the rest of the Ma'amar is easily understood and everything R' Shimshon wrote falls into place. This also explains why by some places there isn't a question as to where they would travel since there was only one such letter in the whole name of 42 or because in some cases they had already traveled to the other locations that correspond to that letter and there was only one location left corresponding to that letter and it was clear to them where they were to travel to.

Based on this explanation the **Moneh Mispar** points out the following. Looking closely at all the letters in the name of 42, the letters ה' מ' ס' are missing. When Moshe Rabbeinu rebuked the Jewish people in Sefer Devarim over the various sins they committed in the desert, he mentions the sin of the Meraglim and says (Devarim 1:28) that the Jews had said, אנה אנחנו עולים אחינו המסו אל לבבנו לאמר עם גדול ורם ממנו, To where shall we ascend? Our brother have melted our hearts saying 'A people greater and taller than we' etc. the word Moshe Rabbeinu mentioned to describe that the Meraglim convinced the Jews against entering Eretz Yisrael was המסו, the root of which is המס. This word is made of precisely the 3 letters that are not part of the name of 42.

This is because the Meraglim did not want to the Jews to enter Eretz Yisrael as the Zohar says that they knew they would lose their position when the Jews entered Eretz Yisrael. They therefore used fear tactics to try to keep the Jews in the desert longer. Being that they wanted to add to the wanderings of Jews in the desert, on top of the 42 wanderings that correspond to the name of 42, the word used to describe their action is made up of precisely the letters that do not appear in the name of 42 since they wanted to add wanderings that were not part of the original 42 – ה' מ' ס'.

זכות מרן הקדוש הגאון רבינו שמשון בן רב פסח יגן עלינו ועל כל ישראל אמן

Ma'amar Sod Etzba Elokim[1]

Shalom to you great Rabbis and Ge'onim. May Hashem save you from all evil and allow you to merit seeing the salvations you await. And may you enjoy many blessings forever, Amen Selah.

In short, on that which his honor sent to me questioning what I wrote concerning the words דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב, wanting to know how the redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt is hinted in these words, I will now reveal this to his honor, and let his arrow shoot forth before me as (clear as) lightning (based on Zechariah 9:14) and may He, the Merciful One, forgive sin.

Behold! I will begin by writing to his honor that which the Arizal writes in his work called Pelaos Rabos:

> **"Pharaoh was punished in Egypt with the ten plagues by the hands of 3,280 angels of retribution that are appointed on and that dwell in the three heavens of impurity. Of which, one is called שרע, another תמוך, and the third is called בישהא. Governing on these angels is the officer (overseeing angel) called דלפקטם (דלפקט), and at the head of them all, stands the officer called תקא. Remove ten from the third, six from the fourth and six from the ninth as it is written.**
>
> **The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with ten plagues and at the sea they received fifty, this came about through the name שפו. In this name, Dovid the son of Yishai grasps. The name (שפו) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name תקל the Egyptians received forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the sea. The name (תקל) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with fifty plagues in Egypt and at the sea they received two hundred and fifty. The name אשצה (שצה) said and hit (the Egyptians).**
>
> **With precisely that which Hashem punishes, he heals the (pain of) exile. What was the sin and evildoing that our forefathers committed to deserve being placed in the "Iron Crucible" (Egypt) until they were redeemed with these names דעב צדא כשחב."**
> Here the words of the Arizal end.

His words are baffling and impenetrable, seemingly unexplainable. Many of the greatest scholars and Rabbis have already requested that I enlighten them in understanding his intention, but I have not. Nonetheless, due to the great love I have for you, I will reveal the secret to you. It was revealed to me in a dream, a vision in the night.

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[1] **One must be careful not to enunciate any of the names of the angels** mentioned in the Ma'amar as it can cause harm.

The Arizal wrote,

"Pharaoh was punished in Egypt with the ten plagues by the hands of 3,280 angels of retribution"

His intention is as follows: In the writings of Kabalah it is taught that there are 3,280 angels whose job it is to punish the evildoers to purify them from their sins. This concept is alluded to in the passuk (Yeshaya 58:4) ולהכות באגרף רשע, "To strike wickedness with a fist." The word אגרף, a fist, stands for גַ אַלפים רַ״פַ, 3,280, implying that the wicked are beaten (punished) via 3,280 messengers, who are appointed specifically for this task. What is truly an amazing secret, is that when the ten plagues are written in the following manner:

דם	צפרדע	כנם	ערב	דבר	שחין	ברד	ארבה	חשך	מכת בכורות	
(44)	(444)	(110)	(272)	(206)	(368)	(206)	(208)	(328)	(460)	(634)

Blood, Frogs, Lice, Wild Animals, Pestilence, Boils, Hail, Locust, Darkness, Death of the Firstborn) they have the numerical value of 3,280. This signifies that it was these 3,280 punishing angels that dwell in the three heavens of impurity שרע תמוך בישהא, whose task it is to bring about punishment on the wicked to purify them, that brought the punishments of the ten plagues on Egypt. This is truly an amazing insight.

This calculation though, is only exact when כנם, Lice, is written without the י (as opposed to כנַים), ערב, Wild Animals, without the ו (as opposed to ערַב) and חשך, Darkness, without the ו (as opposed to חַשַך).

This is the Arizal's intention when he writes,

"remove ten from the third, six from the fourth and six from the ninth as it is written"

The plagues have to be spelled as they are written in the Torah. Remove ten from the third means leave the י (whose numerical value is ten) out of the spelling of the third plague which is כנם. Remove six from the fourth means leave the ו (whose numerical value is six) out of the fourth plague which is ערב. Remove six from the ninth means leave the ו (six) out the ninth plague which is חשך.

Then the Arizal writes,

"that dwell in the three heavens of impurity. Of which, one is called שרע, another תמוך, and the third is called בישהא"

This is the secret of the words אלו עשר מכות שהביא הבק״ה במצרים, "These are the ten plagues that the Holy One blessed is He brought in Egypt." Taking a closer look one will see that the letters of the names of these heavens שרע תמוך בישהא, also make up the words עשר (שרע) מכות (תמוך) שהביא (בישהא), "The ten plagues that He brought." Thus, the words עשר מכות שהביא allude to the three heavens in which the 3,280 angels dwell. They also allude to the 3,280 angels of punishment themselves, since that is the numerical value of the ten plagues that Hashem had these very angels carry out on the Egyptians.

"(Governing on these angels is the officer called דלפקטם (דלפקט)"

This name is derived from the word המצרים, the Egyptians, by combining the letters that precede the letters of the word המצרים.

ד precedes ה

ל precedes מ

פ precedes צ

ק precedes ר

ט precedes י

The letter ם remains the same. It is not reckoned with, being that it is only to turn the word המצרים from the singular tense to the plural tense; and so it is not part of the root of the word. This leaves us with the name דלפקטם.

This name is hinted to in the Haggadah when it says אלו עשר מכות שהביא הקב״ה על המצרים, "These are the ten plagues that Hashem brought on the Egyptians". In other words, 'on HaMitzriyim' means the letters that precede those that spell the word המצרים, which are דלפקטם (דלפקט). This officer saw to it that the 3,280 angels delivered the plagues on the Egyptians. This explanation I have received from my teachers. May Hashem, forgive.)

Continuing, the Arizal writes,

"Governing on all of these angels is the officer called תקא"

His intention is as follows. When taking the first letter of each plague – דצ״ך (114) עד״ש (374) באח״ב (13), the numerical value of this combination equals 501, the exact numerical value of the name תקא. (Hence, his name symbolizes his mission – to oversee all the plagues being brought on Egypt).

The name תקא is also numerically equal to the word אשר. This is the meaning of the passuk (Shemos 10:2) למען תספר באזני בנך ובן בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים, "So that you shall tell

over in the ears of your children and grandchildren, of My setting Egypt to scorn." אשר alludes to the scorn that came via the ten plagues whose abbreviations equal 501 – אשר.

This is also the meaning of the passuk that says (Shemos 4:17), ואת המטה הזה תקח בידך אשר תעשה בו את האתת, "And this staff you shall take in your hand, with which you shall perform the signs." The Medrash teaches that this staff had the letters צד"ך עד"ש באח"ב engraved on it. The passuk implies with the word אשר, that the signs would be the ten plagues whose abbreviation's numerical value is that of the word אשר.

These are two of the many pessukim that use the word אשר when speaking about the ten plagues, alluding to this secret, since it equals numerically the abbreviations of the makkos and the name תקא. There are many more amazing secrets, however כבוד אלקים הסתר דבר, "For the honor of Hashem they are better unrevealed" (Mishlei 25:2, due to the inability of the human mind to grasp their depth).

After this the Arizal writes,

"The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with ten plagues and at the sea they received fifty, this came about through the name שפו. In this name, Dovid the son of Yishai grasps. The name (שפו) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name תקל the Egyptians received forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the sea. The name (תקל) said and hit (the Egyptians). Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with fifty plagues in Egypt and at the sea they received two hundred and fifty. The name אשצה (שצה) said and hit (the Egyptians)"

The meaning in these words is as follows: They hint to an amazing and wonderful secret - the argument between Rebbe Yossi HaGalili, Rebbe Eliezer and Rebbe Akiva (cited in the Haggadah) in which each one has a different opinion as to the number of plagues the Egyptians received.

On this the Arizal writes,

> **" The Egyptians were punished in Egypt with ten plagues and at the sea they received fifty, this came about through the name שפו"**

This hints to Rebbe Yossi HaGalili who is of the opinion, that in Egypt the Egyptians received ten plagues and fifty at the sea, since רבי (212) יוסי (86) הגלילי (88) has the same numerical value as the name שפו (386).

The Arizal also mentions Dovid the son of Yishai (Dovid HaMelech), since דוד (14) בן ישי (52) also equals שפו (320). This emphasizes what the Sodi Raza writes that Rebbe Yossi HaGalili had a share of Dovid HaMelech's soul in him.

The Arizal continues,

"Through the name תקל the Egyptians received forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the sea"

This hints to Rebbe Eliezer who is of this opinion, since (318) אליעזר (212) רבי has the same numerical value as the name תקל, (530). Therefore it is precisely he that holds that the Egyptians were punished with forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the sea.

"Through the name אשצה (שצה) the Egyptians were punished with fifty plagues in Egypt and at the sea they received two hundred and fifty"

This is a hint to the opinion of Rebbe Akiva since (183) עקיבא (212) רבי equals אשצה (שצה) numerically (395), and he is of the opinion that the Egyptians were hit in Egypt with fifty plagues and with two hundred and fifty at the sea.

Thus, the three names – (שצה) אשצה ,תקל ,שפו hint to these three sages, רבי יוסי הגלילי equaling שפו, רבי אליעזר to תקל, and רבי עקיבא to אשצה (שצה). This is a fascinating secret, a secret of secrets, hidden within the hidden as I have written to you.

After this the Arizal writes,

"With precisely that which Hashem punishes, he heals the (pain of) exile. What was the sin and evildoing that our forefathers committed to deserve being placed in the "Iron Crucible" (Egypt)"

His intention with this is that the reason why the Jews went down to Egypt is hinted in the letters of the ten plagues, as I have already written to his honor. It was from these plagues that the Egyptians were hit and from them the Jewish people were healed, since from the plagues came the healing to Yisrael to redeem them blessed is He and blessed is His Name. I have another tremendous secret to answer his honor's question, however this that I have written is also a satisfactory explanation, true wonders in His pure and holy Torah.

The Arizal concludes;

"until they were redeemed with these names דעב צדא כשחב"

The meaning in this is as follows: The first letters of the words דַצ"ך עַד"ש בַאח"ב make up the word דעב. The second letters make up the word צדא and the last letters make up the word כשחב. Hinted to, are these three names with which we were redeemed. This then, is where the redemption and healing to Yisrael are found hinted to in the plagues that afflicted Egypt.

May it be the will of the Almighty to let us see the days of Moshiach with the angels associated with the final redemption speedily in our times Amen, Selah.

סוד גדול ונורא, וכתוב שם שכל מי שמעיין הסוד הנפלא והנורא הזה על מכונו, אפילו פעם אחת בשנה, ובפרט בערב פסח, מובטח לו שינצל באותה שנה מכל מכשול וממיתה משונה, ושום אדם לא ימשול בו, וכל אויביו יפלו תחתיו, והוא על במותימו ידרוך, ובכל אשר יפנה יצליח ובכל עסקיו ירויח, עד ביאת הגואל אמן סלה:

שלום לרבני ארץ, גודרי גדר ועומדים בפרץ, יצילם ה' מכליון וחרץ, כולם קדושים אשר המה בארץ, כל חד לפום חורפיה מקשה ומתרץ, אמן סלה, בתכלית הענין מה שכתב האר"י ז"ל בקונטרס שלו הנקרא פלאות רבות בשער הנקרא יציאת מצרים, פרק ג' דף מ"ב ע"א וזה לשונו:

הִנֵּה כְּבָר הוֹדַעְתִּיךָ שֶׁפַּרְעֹה נִלְקָה בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּעֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת אֵלּוּ עַל יְדֵי שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה, הַמְמֻנִּים בִּשְׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים שֶׁל טֻמְאָה, הָאֶחָד נִקְרָא שרע וְהַשֵּׁנִי נִקְרָא תמוך, וְהַשְּׁלִישִׁי נִקְרָא בישהא, וַעֲלֵיהֶם הַשַּׂר הַנִּקְרָא דלפקט, וַעֲלֵיהֶם וְעַל כֻּלָּם הַשַּׂר הַנִּקְרָא תקא, בְּרֵאשִׁית חָסֵר מִן הַשְּׁלִישִׁי עֶשְׂרָה, וְחָסֵר מִן הָרְבִיעִי שִׁשָּׁה, וְחָסֵר מִן הַתְּשִׁיעִי שִׁשָּׁה כַּכָּתוּב:

וְהִנֵּה מַה שֶּׁלָּקוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, הַשֵּׁם שפ"ו שֶׁבּוֹ אָחַז דָּוִד בֶּן יִשַׁי, וְהַשֵּׁם אָמַר וְהָכָה. וּמִצַּד הַשֵּׁם תק"ל לָקוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם אַרְבָּעִים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם מַכּוֹת, וְהַשֵּׁם אָמַר וְהָכָה. וּמִצַּד הַשֵּׁם אשצ"ה לָקוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם וַחֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, וּבְמַה שֶׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַכֶּה, בּוֹ מְרַפֵּא הַגָּלוּת. מַה פָּשְׁעוּ וּמֶה חָטְאוּ, וּמָה הַמַּעַל אֲשֶׁר מָעֲלוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, לִהְיוֹת בְּכוּר הַבַּרְזֶל הַזֶּה, עַד שֶׁגְּאָלָם בְּשֵׁמוֹת אֵלּוּ דע"ב צד"א כשח"ב. עד כאן לשון האר"י ז"ל:

וְהִנֵּה מוֹרַי וְרַבּוֹתַי קְדוֹשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה פְּלָאִים הֵם, סְתוּמִים וַחֲתוּמִים סָגוּר וְאֵין פּוֹרֵשׂ אוֹתָם. וּכְבָר שְׁאָלוּנִי גְּדוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָאֵר לָהֶם דִּבְרֵי הָאַר"י ז"ל וְלֹא הִנַּדְתִּי. וּמִגְּדֶל אַהֲבַת מוֹרַי וְרַבּוֹתַי אֲגַלֶּה רָז זֶה שֶׁנִּתְגַּלָּה לִי בַּחֲלוֹם חֶזְיוֹן לַיְלָה, וְעַכְשָׁו אֲגַלֶּה הַדָּבָר בְּרֶמֶז לִפְנֵי כְּבוֹד תּוֹרָתוֹ, וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר:

וְזֹאת הָעִנְיָן:

מַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאַר"י ז"ל שֶׁפַּרְעֹה נִלְקָה בְּמִצְרַיִם עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת וְכוּ', כַּוָּנָתוֹ כָּךְ:

כִּי אָמְרוּ בַּעֲלֵי קַבָּלָה מַעֲשִׂית, שֵׁשׁ שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה הַמְמֻנִּים לְהַכּוֹת אֶת הָרְשָׁעִים וּלְהַעֲנִישָׁם בְּגֵיהִנֹּם וּלְטַהֲרָם מֵעֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם. וְעַל זֶה נֶאֱמַר: "וּלְהַכּוֹת בְּאֶגְרֹף רֶשַׁע", כִּי אֶגְרֹף, רֶמֶז שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים מָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים, וְעַל יָדָם נִלְקָה

גַּם כַּיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן. וְאוֹמֵר אֲנִי הַכּוֹתֵב שֶׁזֶּהוּ סוֹד נִפְלָא כַּאֲשֶׁר הוּא נִכְתָּב בְּמִנְיָן וּבְמִסְפָּר: דָּם. צְפַרְדֵּעַ. כִּנִּם. עָרוֹב. דֶּבֶר. שְׁחִין. בָּרָד. אַרְבֶּה. חֹשֶׁךְ. מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת:

אֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתִּי אוֹת בְּאוֹת, עוֹלִים שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה, הַמְמֻנִּים לְטַהֵר אֶת הָרְשָׁעִים, וְהוּא פְּשַׁט נִפְלָא, עַיִן לֹא רָאָתָה:

וְהִנֵּה הַחֶשְׁבּוֹן מְכֻוָּן כַּאֲשֶׁר נִכְתָּב כִּנִּם חָסֵר יו"ד, גַּם עָרֹב חָסֵר וא"ו. גַּם חֹשֶׁךְ חָסֵר וא"ו. וְאָז הַחֶשְׁבּוֹן מַמָּשׁ, לֹא פָּחוֹת וְלֹא יוֹתֵר מִשְּׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה, שֶׁמַּעֲנִישִׁין אֶת הָרְשָׁעִים. וְהֵינוּ מַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאַר"י זַ"ל: "כַּכָּתוּב", פֵּרוּשׁ כַּכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרָה, וְלֹא כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב בַּסִּדּוּרִים וּבַעַל הַהַגָּדָה, כִּי שָׁם נִכְתְּבוּ כֻּלָּם מְלֵאִים. אֶלָּא צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת חָסֵר כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּסֵּפֶר תּוֹרָה. וְגַם רַבִּי יְהוּדָה לֹא כָּתַב סִימָנִים כֻּלָּם רַק רָאשֵׁי תֵּיבוֹת, דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַב הָרַב יִצְחָק אַבַּרְבָּנֵאל וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי לְעֵיל:

וְהֵינוּ מַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאַר"י זַ"ל: "בְּרֵאשִׁית חָסֵר מִן הַשְּׁלִישִׁי עֶשְׂרָה", פֵּרוּשׁ: מָכָּה שְׁלִישִׁית שֶׁהִיא כִּנִּם חָסֵר יו"ד. "מִן הָרְבִיעִי שִׁשָּׁה" שֶׁהִיא מַכַּת עָרוֹב גַּם חָסֵר וָא"ו. "וְחָסֵר מִן הַתְּשִׁיעִי שִׁשָּׁה", שֶׁהִיא מַכַּת חֹשֶׁךְ גַּם כֵּן חָסֵר וָא"ו. וּמַה שֶּׁאָמַר "כַּכָּתוּב", רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר שֶׁכֵּן כָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרָה חָסֵר, כַּנִּזְכָּר לְעֵיל:

וְזֶהוּ סוֹד אֵלּוּ "עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת שֶׁהֵבִיא" הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּמִצְרַיִם, מִכֻּוָּן מַמָּשׁ שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה שֶׁהִכּוּ אֶת פַּרְעֹה וְאֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם, הַמְמֻנִּים בְּאֵלּוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים: אֶחָד נִקְרָא שרע, וְאֶחָד נִקְרָא תמוך, וְאֶחָד נִקְרָא בישהא, גַּם בָּזֶה יֵשׁ סוֹד גָּדוֹל וְנִפְלָא, אֵלּוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַחֲנוֹת שֶׁהִכּוּ אֶת פַּרְעֹה וְאֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם כָּאָמוּר, שֶׁמְּמֻנִּים בְּאֵלּוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים שֶׁל טֻמְאָה, אָמַר לָנוּ הַכָּתוּב סוֹד נִפְלָא וְנוֹרָא, וְתִקֵּן הַמַּגִּיד כְּמוֹ שֶׁשָּׁנָה אֵלּוּ "עשר מכות שהביא" שֶׁבְּאֵלּוּ שָׁלֹשׁ תֵּיבוֹת נִרְמָזִים הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים שֶׁל טֻמְאָה, וּשְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה שֶׁהִכּוּ אֶת פַּרְעֹה וְאֶת הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם, כְּמִנְיַן עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת: דְּהֵינוּ עשר אוֹתִיּוֹת שרע, מכות אוֹתִיּוֹת תמוך, שהביא אוֹתִיּוֹת בישהא, רֶמֶז לְאֵלּוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים שֶׁל טֻמְאָה שֶׁבָּהֶם יֵשׁ מְמֻנִּים כְּמִנְיַן שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּמָאתַיִם וּשְׁמוֹנִים מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה מַמָּשׁ, כְּמִנְיַן עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת דָּם צְפַרְדֵּעַ וְכוּ', וְהֵם שֶׁהִכּוּ אֶת פַּרְעֹה וְאֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם, כִּי מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה מְמֻנִּים לְהַכּוֹת אֶת הָרְשָׁעִים לְטַהֲרָם מֵעֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם כָּאָמוּר. וְעַל יָדָן הִכָּה אֶת פַּרְעֹה וְאֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם מִנְיַן עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת אֵלּוּ, וְהוּא פֶּלֶא גָּדוֹל:

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאַר"י זַ"ל: "וַעֲלֵיהֶם הַשַּׂר דלפקט", כַּוָּנָתוֹ הוּא שֶׁשָּׁם זֶה שָׂרְשׁוֹ יוֹצֵא מִמַּלַּת הַמִּצְרִים, וְהֵינוּ: שֶׁשְּׁלֹשָׁה רְקִיעִים הֵם: עש"ר מכו"ת שהבי"א וּכְפֵרוּשׁ הַגָּאוֹן,

וְנִמְשַׁךְ עַל הַמִּצְרִים שֶׁהוּא שָׁם דלפקט בָּאוֹתִיּוֹת הַקּוֹדְמוֹת לְאוֹתִיּוֹת הַמִּצְרִים, והמ"ם אַחֲרוֹנָה הִיא מ"ם הָרְבּוּי וְאֵינָהּ מִן הַשֹּׁרֶשׁ, וְרָמַז לָזֶה הַמַּגִּיד בַּמַּאֲמָר: "אֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת שֶׁהֵבִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם", כְּלוֹמַר הָאוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁהֵם קוֹדְמוֹת עַל אוֹתִיּוֹת הַמִּצְרִים:

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאֲר"י זַ"ל: "וַעֲלֵיהֶם וְעַל כֻּלָּם הַשַּׂר הַנִּקְרָא תקא, כַּוָּנָתוֹ, כִּי רָאשֵׁי תֵּיבוֹת שֶׁל אֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת, דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב, בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא תקא, כְּמִנְיַן הַשַּׂר מַמָּשׁ, וּכְמִנְיַן אשר, וְזֶהוּ סוֹד כַּוָּנַת הַכָּתוּב בְּסֵדֶר בֹּא: "וּלְמַעַן תְּסַפֵּר בְּאָזְנֵי בִנְךָ וּבֶן בִּנְךָ אֵת אשר הִתְעַלַּלְתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם", אשר דַּיְקָא, שֶׁהוּא כְּמִסְפַּר תקא, וְכֵיוֹצֵא בּוֹ הַרְבֵּה פְּסוּקִים אֶלֶף, שְׁמוֹרִים עַל זֶה לְסוֹד אשר, כְּמִנְיַן רָאשֵׁי תֵּיבוֹת שֶׁל עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת כְּמוֹ שֶׁבֵּאַרְנוּ, וְיֵשׁ לָנוּ בָּזֶה סוֹדוֹת נִפְלָאִים. וּכְבוֹד אֱלֹהִים הַסְתֵּר דָּבָר:

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב רַבֵּנוּ הָאֲר"י זַ"ל: "הַשֵּׁם שפו שֶׁבּוֹ אָחַז דָּוִד בֶּן יִשַׁי, וְהַשֵּׁם אָמַר וְהִכָּה אוֹתָם בְּמִצְרַיִם עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת. וְהַשֵּׁם תקל אָמַר וְהִכָּה אוֹתָם בְּמִצְרַיִם אַרְבָּעִים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם מַכּוֹת. וְהַשֵּׁם אשצה אָמַר וְהִכָּה אוֹתָם בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם וַחֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת". כַּוָּנָתוֹ לְסוֹד נִפְלָא וְנוֹרָא: פְּלֶגְתָּא דְּרִבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי וְרִבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרִבִּי עֲקִיבָא הַמַּזְכָּר בַּהַגָּדָה. רִבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי אוֹמֵר מִנַּיִן, וְרִבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר מִנַּיִן, וְרִבִּי עֲקִיבָא אוֹמֵר מִנַּיִן, וְזֶהוּ שֶׁכָּתַב הָאֲר"י זַ"ל: וְהַשֵּׁם שפ"ו אָמַר וְהִכָּה אוֹתָם בְּמִצְרַיִם עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, רָמַז לְרִבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי. כִּי רִבִּ"י יוֹסֵ"י הַגְּלִיל"י בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא שפו, וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב שֶׁבּוֹ אָחַז דָּוִד בֶּן יִשַׁי, רָמַז גַּם כֵּן, דָּו"ד בֶּ"ן יִשַׁ"י גִּימַטְרִיָּא שֵׁם שפו, שֶׁבְּאוֹתוֹ הַשֵּׁם דָּוִקָא בָּא דָּוִד בֶּן יִשַׁי. וְרָמַז גַּם כֵּן מַה שֶּׁכָּתַב בְּסֵפֶר סוֹדִי רָזָא, שֶׁרִבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי נִצּוֹץ דָּוִד בֶּן יִשַׁי. וְזֶה הַשֵּׁם הִכָּה אוֹתָם. וּמִצַּד הַשֵּׁם תקל לָקוּ הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם אַרְבָּעִים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם מַכּוֹת, רָמַז לְסוֹד רִבִּ"י אֱלִיעֶזֶ"ר בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא תקל, וְהַיְנוּ רִבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר, דַּוְקָא, שֶׁהוּא שֵׁם תקל, לָקוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם אַרְבָּעִים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם מַכּוֹת. וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הַשֵּׁם אשצה לָקוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם וַחֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, רָמַז לְסוֹד רִבִּ"י עֲקִיבָ"א, שֶׁהוּא בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא אשצ"ה עִם הַכּוֹלֵל, שֶׁהַשֵּׁם הַזֶּה אָמַר שֶׁיִּכּוּ הַמִּצְרִיִּים בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מָאתַיִם וַחֲמִשִּׁים מַכּוֹת. הֲרֵי מְרֻמָּזִים אֵלּוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה שֵׁמוֹת שפ"ו תק"ל אשצ"ה בְּאֵלּוּ הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה תֵּנָאִים:

שלום לרבני ארץ, גודרי גדר ועומדים בפרץ, יצילם ה' מכליון וחרץ, כולם קדושים אשר המה בארץ, כל חד לפום חורפיה מקשה ומתרץ,

רִבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא שפ"ו, רִבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא תק"ל, רִבִּ"י עֲקִיבָ"א בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא אשצ"ה, וְהוּא סוֹד נְפָלָא וְנוֹרָא. רָזָא דְּרָזִין. סְתָרָא דְּסִתְרִין. הַיְנוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתִּי לְמַעֲלַת כְּבוֹד תּוֹרָתוֹ, וְהוּא רַחוּם יְכַפֵּר עָוֹן:

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב רַבֵּנוּ הָאַר"י זַ"ל: "בְּמַה שֶׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַכֶּה, בּוֹ מְרַפֵּא הַגָּלוּת, מַה פָּשְׁעוּ מֶה חָטְאוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ" וְכוּ', כַּוָּנָתוֹ: בְּאֵלּוּ עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת שֶׁהֵם דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב, נִרְמָזִים בְּאֵלּוּ אוֹתִיּוֹת סוֹד וְטַעַם יְרִידַת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְמִצְרַיִם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי לְמַעֲלַת כְּבוֹד תּוֹרָתוֹ. וְהִנֵּה בְּאֵלּוּ הַמַּכּוֹת הִכָּה אוֹתָם, וַיְרַפֵּא אוֹתָנוּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא וְהִכָּה בָּהֶם מַכָּה רַבָּה אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים הִיא, וּמִן הַמַּכָּה עַצְמָהּ בָּאָה רְפוּאָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁגְּאָלָם הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, וּכְמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְתִּי.

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב: "מַה פָּשְׁעוּ" וְכוּ', רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר: בְּאֵלּוּ הַמַּכּוֹת נִרְמַז הַחֵטְא שֶׁל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁגָּרַם יְרִידַת מִצְרַיִם. וְיֵשׁ לָנוּ סוֹד נִפְלָא וְנוֹרָא לְתָרֵץ קֻשְׁיָא זוֹ מַה שֶּׁהִקְשׁוּ מַעֲלַת כְּבוֹד תּוֹרָתָם עָלַי, אֲבָל גַּם זֶה נִיחָא כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתַבְתִּי לְמַעֲלָתָם, נִפְלָאוֹת מִתּוֹרָתוֹ הַקְּדוֹשָׁה וְהַטְּהוֹרָה.

וּמַה שֶּׁכָּתַב הָאַר"י זַ"ל: "שֶׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא גָּאַל אוֹתָנוּ בְּשֵׁמוֹת אֵלּוּ דע"ב צד"א כשח"ב", כַּוָּנָתוֹ כִּי הָאוֹתִיּוֹת רִאשׁוֹנוֹת שֶׁל דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב הֵם דע"ב, וְהָאוֹתִיּוֹת שְׁנִיּוֹת הֵם צד"א, וְהָאוֹתִיּוֹת הָאַחֲרוֹנוֹת הֵם כשח"ב, וְנִרְמָזִים בְּאֵלּוּ הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה שְׁמוֹת הָרְפוּאָה שֶׁרָפָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁגָּאַל אוֹתָנוּ בָּהֶם, הֲרֵי בְּאוֹתָן הַמַּכּוֹת שֶׁהֵכּוּ בָּהֶם הַמִּצְרִיִּים, נִרְמָזִים הַגְּאֻלָּה וְהָרְפוּאָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל. וְיֵהָא רַעֲוָא לְפָנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁיַּרְאֵנוּ בִּיאַת מְשִׁיחֵנוּ בִּמְהֵרָה בְיָמֵינוּ, עִם הַמַּלְאָכִים הַשַּׁיָּכִים לַגְּאֻלָּה, וְיִקַּיֵּם בָּנוּ מִקְרָא שֶׁכָּתוּב: כִּימֵי צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אַרְאֶנּוּ נִפְלָאוֹת, אָמֵן נֶצַח סֶלָה:

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הרב **שמשון בן פסח מאוסטרופולי זצ"ל**, רב ומקובל, נולד בקוריץ (Korets) בווהלין, אז בפולין כיום באוקראינה, בשנת ה'ש"ס (1600) בערך, ונרצח ב- ג' באב בעת פרעות גזרות ת"ח 1648 בעיר פולנאה (Polonnoye).

אביו, פסח, היה חתנו של רבי שמשון בן בצלאל ליווא - אחי המהר"ל מפראג. לכן אף ייחוסו המשפחתי, בדומה למהר"ל, מגיע על פי המקובל עד דוד המלך.

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The following letter is taken from a pamphlet written by the Tzaddik, Rebbe Shamshon from Ostropoli. He writes at the end of the pamphlet that anyone who studies the wondrous and awesome secrets written here, even one time in a year, and especially Erev Pesach, is guaranteed that he will be saved from any kind of accident or disaster or strange death for the whole of that year, and that everything that he turns his hand to will be successful! As mentioned in the Shai L'Mora Haggadah, the names of the angels mentioned in the letter should be scanned only, but not read out loud!)

Shalom Rabbi…as briefly as possible I will answer Your Honor's question regarding that which I wrote about the symbols DaTSaCH ADaSH BeaChaB דצ"ך (עד"ש באח"ב) etc. and how the Redemption is hinted at by these symbols.

The holy Ari z"l wrote in his pamphlet "Many Wonders" (פלאות רבות), Part 15 entitled The Departure from Egypt, Chapter 3, Page 42, as follows:-I have already made known to you that Pharaoh was afflicted by these ten plagues at the hands of 3,280 (ג' אלפים ור"פ) Angels of Punishment that are appointed to and dwell in the three Heavens of Impurity. The first [Heaven] is named ShaRA (שר"ע), the second TaMOCH (תמו"ך), and the third BISHeHA (בישה"א). The Minister appointed over them is named DaLPaKT דלפק"ט (an alternative version: DaLPaKTA, דלפקט"א). And over (ועל) an alternative version: and over them, ועליהם all, the Minister known as TaKA, BeRAISHIS (תק"א, בראשית).

(And behold,) the third is lacking ten, the fourth is lacking six, and the ninth is lacking six, as they are written in the Torah. And furthermore, that which we find, that the Egyptians were afflicted by ten plagues in Egypt and fifty at the Sea, is all according to the name SHaPO (שפ"ו), which is the aspect of David ben Yishai, "And G-d said 'Strike,' and they struck them," (an alternative version: "And G-d spoke and they struck"). According to the name TaKaL (תק"ל), the Egyptians were afflicted by forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the Sea, "And G-d said 'Strike,' and they struck them," (an alternative version: "And G-d spoke and they struck"). According to the name SHaTZAH (שצ"ה) (an alternative version: ASHaTZAH, אשצ"ה), the Egyptians were afflicted by fifty plagues in Egypt and two hundred and fifty at the Sea, "And G-d spoke and they struck."

And G-d rectified the Exile in exactly the same way that He had afflicted [the Egyptians]. And what was their transgression and their sin, what trespass did our forefathers commit [against Hashem], that made it necessary for them to suffer in the Iron Furnace of Exile [i.e. Egypt], until they were finally redeemed (an alternative version: until He redeemed them), using the following names, DeAV (דע"ב), TZeDAH (צד"א), KaSHCHaV (כשח"ב)? This is all as written by the Ari z"l.

And Your Honor wrote to me that all these words of the Ari z"l are obviously the most wondrous and awesome secrets, sealed , closed and locked away from the slightest understanding, for who is there that could explain them? And, in fact, I have been asked many times by some of the greatest Rabbis to explain these words to them, and I refused. However, because of my great love for Your Honor, I will

explain them to you as they were revealed and explained to me in a dream. And He who is merciful, forgiving of sin, etc.

That which the Ari z"l started off by writing : I have already made known to you that Pharaoh was afflicted by the ten plagues at the hands of 3,280 (ג' אלפים ור"פ) Angels of Punishment etc. he was saying, as the Kabbalistic Masters teach, that there are 3,280 Angels of Punishment appointed to punish the wicked in Gehinnom, and to purify them from their sins. The proof for this coming from the quote, "to smite with the fist (באגרף) of wickedness," (Isaiah 58:4,) the word "fist" being the initial letters of the number 3,280 written out, thus ג' א'לפים = א'ג'ר'ף ר"פ Angels of Punishment who punish the wicked, and it is them who also punished the wicked Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

And this is a wondrous secret, for if you work out the numerical value of the Ten Plagues exactly according to the way they are written as follows, ד"ם צפרד"ע כנ"ם ער"ב דב"ר שחי"ן בר"ד ארב"ה חש"ך מכ"ת בכור"ת they add up to exactly the same amount as ג' אלפים ור"פ ג' א'לפים ר"פ, hinting at the camps of Angels of Punishment mentioned previously, appointed to punish and purify the sinners. This is an incredible explanation, according to the simple meaning of the words, which has never before been revealed!

דם	44
צפרדע	444
כנם	110
ערב	272
דבר	206
שחין	368
ברד	206
ארבה	208
חשך	328
מכת בכורות	1094
Total: 3280	

And that which he wrote: the third is lacking ten, this is referring to the third plague, כנים, which is written without the letter Yud [gematria: 10]. "The fourth is lacking six," i.e. the fourth plague, ערוב, is missing the letter Vav [gematria: 6]. "The ninth is lacking six," refers to the ninth plague, חושך, also lacking a Vav. (An alternative version: A Yud is missing from the third plague, כנם, which needs to have the Yud missing. The fourth plague, ערב , is missing six, because it needs to have the Vav missing. The ninth plague, חשך, is lacking six, because it also needs to be written without the Vav.)

And that which he wrote: as they are written in the Torah, his intention was to say that this is actually how they are written in the Torah, with these missing letters. For they are written in Parshas Vaera, כנם without the Yud, ערב without the Vav, and חשך without the Vav, and not as they are written in the Haggadah, all written out in full. He is referring to the way they are written in the Torah, which adds up exactly to the ג' אלפים ור"פ Angels of Punishment that punish the wicked, which punished the Egyptians and afflicted Pharaoh and the Egyptians in Egypt, from the three Heavens of Impurity.

And that which he wrote: that these ג' אלפים ור"פ Angels of Punishment dwell in the three Heavens of Impurity. The first [Heaven] is named ShaRA (שר"ע), the second

TaMOCH (תמו"ך), and the third BISHeHA (בישה"א), there is in this also a wondrous and awesome secret in what he wrote (an alternative version: hinted at in what he said), "these ten plagues that (Hashem) brought (אלו עשר מכות שהביא)," "ten (עשר)" is the same letters as ShaRA (שר"ע), "plagues (מכות)" is the same letters as TaMOCH (תמו"ך), and "that brought (שהביא)" is the same letters as BISHeHA (בישה"א), these words are hinting at the three Heavens of Impurity containing the ג' אלפים ור"פ Angels of Punishment which inflicted the ten plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt, and this is truly a great wonder.

And that which he wrote: the Minister appointed over them is named DaLPaKT (דלפק"ט), he is revealing that this name comes from the name "the Egyptians (המצרים)" where each letter of the angel's name is the one previous to it's equivalent letter in the words "the Egyptians," in the aleph beis, thus, the ד' precedes the ה', the ל' the מ', the פ' the צ', the ק' the ר', the ט' the י', and the final ם' of the word המצרים is just the plural and not part of the root of the word. This is what he was hinting at when he said: ten plagues did Hashem bring upon the Egyptians (i.e. the letters that preceded the letters of the word Egyptians המצרים), try to understand all this, and the good G-d will atone etc.

And that which he wrote: and over (ועל) [an alternative version: and over them, ועליהם] all, the Minister known as TaKA, BeRAISHIS (תק"א, בראשית), he was referring to the initial letters of each of the ten plagues דצ"ך עד"ש באח"ב which add up to the same number as the name of the Angel, תק"א, [gematria: 501] (and the reason that he added the word בראשית [first], was to point out that he was referring to 'the first,' i.e. the initial letters of each of the plagues).

דצ"ך	114
עד"ש	374
באח"ב	13
Total:	**501**

This is also the gematria of the word אש"ר [gematria: 501], which is the secret hidden in the verse את אש"ר התעללתי במצרים, "these things which I have wrought in Egypt," (Shemos 9:2), where in fact there are many many verses that hint to this secret of אש"ר being the gematria of the initial letters of the ten plagues, and concerning this matter there are wondrous secrets and many hints, and the greater glory of Hashem is in what is hidden…

And that which he wrote: and furthermore, that which we find, and Hashem spoke and afflicted the Egyptians with ten plagues in Egypt and fifty at the Sea, is all according to the name SHaPO (שפ"ו), he is referring to the wondrous and awesome secret which is the source of the argument between ריה"ג ור"א ור"ע as brought in the Haggadah, "Rabbi Yosi

רבי	212
יוסי	86
הגלילי	88
Total:	**386**

HaGalili said: from where do we know…etc Rabbi Eliezer said: from where do we know…etc. Rabbi Akiva said: from where do we know…etc, this is the secret of the name רב"י יוס"י הגליל"י which has the same gematria as the word שפ"ו (gematria : 386), which is that which is written: Rabbi Yosi HaGalili said…i.e. that the name שפ"ו spoke and afflicted them etc.

And that which he wrote: which is the aspect of David ben Yishai, the explanation is that דו"ד ב"ן יש"י is also gematria שפ"ו, and it was, in particular, with this name that He afflicted them, but said it in a very hidden way. For Rabbi Yosi HaGalili was a reincarnation of David ben Yishai, and ben Yishai [the Messiah] will use precisely this name when he comes. There are also many other hidden secrets in this matter, but the main intention is as recorded above.

דוד 14
בן 52
ישי 320
Total: 386

And that which he wrote: according to the name TaKaL (תק"ל), the Egyptians were afflicted by forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the Sea, this is a clue that Rabbi Eliezer is gematria TaKaL (gematria: 530). That is to say, Rabbi Eliezer in particular, who is the gematria of the name TaKaL spoke and afflicted them etc. (An alternative version: "Rabbi Eliezer said…meaning that he holds the opinion that it was the name TaKaL that afflicted the Egyptians).

רבי 212
אליעזר 318
Total: 530

And that which he wrote: according to the name SHaTZAH (שצ"ה) (an alternative version: ASHaTZAH, אשצ"ה), the Egyptians were afflicted by fifty plagues in Egypt and two hundred and fifty at the Sea, Rabbi Akiva is the gematria of the word SHaTZAH (gematria : 395), (an alternative version: ASHaTZAH including the kollel [i.e. adding an extra one for the word itself]). That is to say, that Rabbi Akiva, who is the gematria of the word SHaTZAH (or ASHaTZAH), was the one who said that it was the name SHaTZAH (or ASHaTZAH) that spoke and afflicted etc. And

רבי 212
עקיבא 183
Total: 395

each of the three Rabbis explained it according to his understanding, which is why the three names ShaPO, TaKaL and ASHaTZAH equal the gematrias of the three Tannaim, Rabbi Yosi HaGalili (ShaPO), Rabbi Eliezer (TaKaL) and Rabbi Akiva (ASHaTZAH). And this is all an awesome and wondrous secret, as I said previously. And may the Merciful One atone [for our sins] etc.

And that which he wrote: and G-d rectified the Exile in exactly the same way that He had afflicted [the Egyptians], this is as I explained above, that the initial letters of the plagues hint to the original cause of the descent to Egypt, and in exactly the same way as Hashem struck the Egyptians, that in itself was the method by which He redeemed Israel, that the actual letters of the plagues are a hint to our redemption.

(An alternative version: and that which he wrote: and how many sins etc. he intended to teach that our forefathers ' sins, which were the cause of them having to go down to Egypt, are hinted at in the actual letters of the plagues. And similarly, the letters of the plagues are also a hint to our redemption by Hashem.)

And that which he wrote: until they were finally redeemed (an alternative version: until He redeemed them), using the following names, DeAV (דע"ב), TZeDAH (צד"א), KaSHCHaV (כשח"ב), he was hinting that the letters of the word DeAV (דע"ב) are the initial letters of each of the three symbols DaTSaCH ADaSH BeaChaB ד'צ"ך ע'ד"ש (ב'אח"ב). The second name, TZeDAH (צד"א), is the second letter in each group, and the third name KaSHCHaV (כשח"ב), is the third letter, through which Hashem redeemed us. The actual plagues that Hashem inflicted on Egypt hint to Israel's redemption. (An alternative version: the actual letters of DaTSaCH ADaSH BeaChaB (ד'צ"ך ע'ד"ש ב'אח"ב) are a hint to the Minister appointed over all the Angels of Punishment which afflicted the plagues upon the Egyptians, and those same letters hint to the reason for the exile to Egypt, and also to Israel's redemption from there. The selfsame letters are both the secret of the affliction and of the redemption.)

And may we be found worthy in Hashem's eyes to quickly see the coming of the Messiah, with all the Angels appointed to accompany the Final Redemption, may it come speedily and in our time. And may we be worthy of seeing the fulfillment of the verse, "As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt I will show him marvelous things (Micah 7:15), for ever and ever amen.

And finally, I hereby declare that anyone who studies these wondrous and awesome secrets, even one time in a year, and especially on Erev Pesach, I promise him that he will be saved from any kind of accident or strange death for that whole year. His enemies will have no power over him and will fall before him, and that he will be successful in everything that he turns his hand to, Amen.

Step-by-Step Checklist for Erev Pesach That Occurs on Shabbos

From ArtScroll/Mesorah's "Pesach" volume

Halachos by
Rabbi Moshe Dov Stein and Rabbi Moshe Lieber

THURSDAY MORNING:

- ❑ Fast of the Firstborn – Attendance at *siyum* or *seudas mitzvah* absolves one from this fast.
- ❑ *Mechiras chametz* must be arranged.

THURSDAY EVENING:

- ❑ *Bedikas chametz* followed by *bitul* formula. Place remaining *chametz* in secure location.

FRIDAY MORNING:

- ❑ Recite *Mizmor Lesodah* and *Lamenatzeiach* at *Shacharis*.
- ❑ *Biur chametz* of all *chametz* not needed for *Shabbos* must be conducted before the end of the fifth hour.
- ❑ The *bitul* formula is not recited. However, one who will retain no *chametz* into *Shabbos* should recite the *bitul* formula.
- ❑ *Hafrashas challah* must be arranged if it hasn't yet been done.
- ❑ *Eruvei chatzeiros* must be made.
- ❑ Work is permitted Friday afternoon. Some refrain.
- ❑ *Kashering* is permitted (when necessary) even after midday, but must be completed before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ All *chametz* and *chametz* vessels not needed for *Shabbos* should be placed in the sealed *chametz* area.
- ❑ All covering materials must be cut before *Shabbos*. Prepare twine or child-safety locks to reclose *chametz* closet and cupboards.
- ❑ Care should be taken not to place the *Shabbos* candlesticks on top of the tablecloth on which one will eat *chametz*.

SEDER PREPARATIONS:

- ❑ The shankbone should be roasted before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ The egg should be prepared before *Shabbos*.

- ❑ Lettuce or Romaine lettuce should be checked before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ *Charoses* should be ground or chopped before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ Saltwater should be prepared before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ According to some authorities, horseradish (used for *maror*) should be ground before *Shabbos* and placed in a sealed receptacle.
- ❑ The *Seder* plate (*ke'arah*) should be arranged before *Shabbos*.
- ❑ All seals on wine bottles and *matzah* boxes needed for the *Seder* should be opened.

SHABBOS MEAL PREPARATIONS:

- ❑ Purchase sufficient (but not more than necessary) *challah* or egg *matzah* for the *Shabbos* meals. If necessary, one may make use of (but not eat) a *matzah* as the second of the *lechem mishneh*.
- ❑ If possible, purchase sufficient disposable dishes, utensils and tablecloths to avoid *kashrus* problems with *chametz* dishes or cleanup problems with *Pesach* dishes.
- ❑ A *chametz* broom should be available for cleanup after the morning meal.

FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL:

- ❑ The meals should be held in a room with a floor that may be swept on *Shabbos*. If the room is carpeted, a drop cloth or disposable tablecloth should be spread on the floor of the area where *chametz* will be eaten. The table should be covered with two new or disposable tablecloths. The *challos* should be on the table in a closed bag.
- ❑ *Kiddush* should be made with a *Pesach* wine cup. All cups and wine bottles should be kosher for *Pesach*. All *Pesach* items must be removed from the table before cutting the *challos*.
- ❑ One must wash and make *hamotzie* on *lechem mishneh* and eat at least a *kebeitzah* of *challah*. In order to facilitate crumb disposal, it is prudent for each individual to eat the *challah* over a spread paper napkin. The napkin and crumbs should then be discarded in the toilet.
- ❑ The top tablecloth and the drop cloth on the floor (after cleaning them of crumbs and discarding the crumbs into the toilet) are put away for use at the *Shabbos* morning meal or else discarded.
- ❑ Clean face and hands of crumbs and rinse your mouth thoroughly. This should be done in the bathroom and not over the kosher-for-*Pesach* sink. When leaving the bathroom, wash your hands in the same fashion as for *netilas yadayim*, but without reciting the *brocha*.
- ❑ The *Shabbos* meal is now eaten with *Pesach* food and utensils. [Disposable plates and utensils may be used. They should be of a quality befitting the honor of *Shabbos*.]
- ❑ You may alternatively use *matzah ashirah* (egg *matzah*) for this meal. Wash, make *hamotzie* and eat a *kebeitzah* of *matzah ashirah,* preferably eating it along with the food of the *seudah*. [The first five items listed above are not applicable when using *matzah ashirah*.]

SHABBOS MORNING:

- ❑ *Shacharis* is scheduled earlier than usual to allow the completion of the meal and the removal and disposal of the *chametz* in a timely fashion.

- ❏ Conduct the *Shabbos* morning meal following the first six items of the Friday night meal. After reciting *Birkas Hamazon,* take a break for at least 15 minutes and then follow the third through fifth items in the previous section. Note: If you use the *matzah ashirah* option, you must divide the meal in two by reciting *Birkas Hamazon*, recessing, and then repeating the last item in the previous section.
- ❏ All leftover *chametz* must be disposed of into the toilet before the end of the fifth hour. The area around the table should be swept with a *chametz* broom and the crumbs thrown into the toilet. Alternatively, the drop cloth placed on the floor is removed and the crumbs on it discarded into the toilet. Note: All *chametz* items (broom, etc.) should be placed in the *chametz* closet. [Taping or tying with string is prohibited on *Shabbos*. When closing *chametz* closets or cupboards on *Shabbos*, one may wrap string around the handles or use child-safety locks.]
- ❏ The *bitul chametz* formula usually recited when burning *chametz* must be recited before the end of the fifth hour.

SEUDAH SHLISHIS:

- ❏ *Mincha* is scheduled earlier than usual in order to allow one to partake of *seudah shlishis* before the tenth hour.
- ❏ Neither bread, *matzah* nor *matzah ashirah* are used at this meal. One may partake (depending on custom) of *kneidlach* (*matzah* balls), meat, fish, or fruits. [Sephardim with the custom to eat *matzah ashirah* on *Pesach* may use it for this meal before the tenth hour.]
- ❏ After the tenth hour, one may not partake of large satiating amounts of any food. Small amounts of fruit are permitted.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS:

- ❏ No *Seder* preparations may be made until after *tzeis hakochavim*. One must recite *"Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh"* before beginning any *Yom Tov* preparations.

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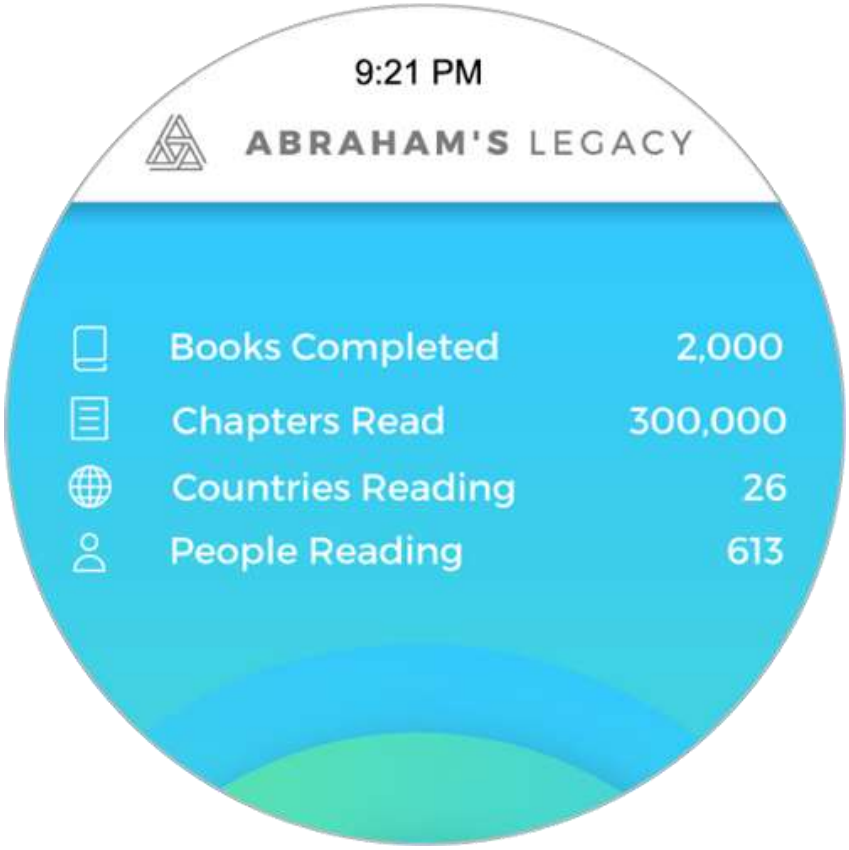

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