



The Legacy Haggadah

was created to honor and share the wisdom of some of our revered Gedolim who, for reasons known only to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, were not *zocheh* to have children as their legacies. These Gedolim spanned continents and generations; by bringing their timeless *divrei Torah* to life, we create a powerful connection to the past, thereby bringing forth untold *zechuyos*. Some of the Gedolim included in this masterful publication are the Zera Shimshon, the Sabba Kadisha, Rav Meir Shapiro, the Aish Kodesh, the Satmar Rav, the Yismach Yisrael, and the Chazon Ish, *zechusam yagein aleinu*. Invite them to your home and your table; speak their words of Torah at your Seder; **be their child**, thus allowing them to advocate on your behalf as a parent would.

The Fisher Family Edition

והגדלת
לכנך
Legacy
Haggadah

INSIGHTS FROM GEDOLIM
WHOSE TORAH IS THEIR LEGACY

RABBI MOSHE HUBNER

מוסדות אור שמח מרכז טננבאום ע.ר. 58-00-21343-00

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Michtav Bracha

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The mitzva of Sipur Yetzias Mitzraim, the annual obligation of a parent to recount the story of the exodus to his children, is one of the most beloved rituals in Judaism. The Pesach Haggada is the repository of our history, our mission, and our hope which we communicate faithfully to the next generation. There are literally thousands of commentaries on the Haggada and every single year, scores of new commentaries are published. It would be difficult to imagine that, at this late date, something new and different could be produced. And yet Rabbi Moshe Hubner has managed to do so.

He has prepared a Haggada containing the Torah insights of Gedolim who passed away without children. This is a lovely and moving tribute to the great spiritual leaders of our past who did not have the chance of fulfilling this mitzva in its literal sense. Nevertheless, by our studying their words, we become their children and, in small part, repay them for all they have given to us. This very concept exemplifies *chessed shel emes* and *hakaras hatov*. The Torah insights are of course valuable and fascinating and R. Hubner has combined them with biographies, stories, and pictures.

This is a beautiful Haggada and we owe a debt of gratitude to Rabbi Hubner for his labor of love in putting it all together. May it bring merit to the gedolim and tzadikim whose works are cited and may the Divrei Torah and events of their lives inspire all of us to grow in our Avodas Hashem which, at the end of the day, is what Yetzias Mitzraim is all about.

With Admiration and Gratitude,

Yitzchak A. Breitowitz
Rav, Kehillas Ohr Somayach
Yerushalayim



י"א שבט תשפ"ה

לכבוד

הרב משה הובנר שליט"א

עיר התורה ליקווד

התרגשתי לראות את ספרך "והגדת לבנך" - הגדה של פסח המתייחדת בביאורים וחיידושי תורה של גדולי ישראל לאורך הדורות, אשר לא זכו לצאצאים, אולם תלמידים רבים משמיעים את תורתם וממשיכים את חיותם בעולם הזה.

על הבטחת הקב"ה לעם ישראל בעת צאתם ממצרים כי יזכו להמשך דורות כותבת התורה "ויקוד העם וישתחוו" (שמות יב-כז). מבאר רש"י ששמחתם היתה על בשורת הגאולה, בשורת הארץ ובשורת הבנים שיהיו להם. תמה על כך מו"ר הגרא"מ שך זצ"ל ומדוע שמחו ישראל על כך, הרי מדובר בדור שילדה אישה שישה בכרם אחת, והיו משופעים בצאצאים, אז איזו סיבה יש להם לשמוח כל כך על דבר שלכאורה כבר יש בידם.

השיב הגרא"מ שך זצ"ל ואמר, הם לא שמחו על העובדה שיוולדו ילדים. כי אכן זכו לצאצאים רבים. הם שמחו על הבנים שיהיו להם, כלומר על הבנים שילכו בדרכם, על הבנים שיקשיבו בקול הוריהם וימשיכו את דרכם. גם לאחר חיותם בעולם הזה יזכו ההורים כי הבנים יאפשרו להם להמשיך ולהיות "הולכים" ומתעלים בישיבה של מעלה. לזה לא כל אחד זוכה, משום כך שמחו.

רבים היו גדולי ישראל אשר לאורם אנו הולכים, והם לא זכו לצאצאים ביולוגיים לקיים בהם את צו התורה "והגדת לבנך". אבל כבר הגדירו חז"ל את התלמידים כבנים "ושננתם לבנך" - אלו התלמידים. וכאשר יש לאדם תלמידים ההולכים בדרכו ומגדלים תורתו הרי שהותיר צאצאים, המתעלים בעולם הזה ומעלים את רבם בעולם האמת.

אוסף לכך גם את דברי הגר"ש קלוגר בחכמת שלמה (אבהע"ז סי' א) שהמגדל יתום בתוך ביתו מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו ילדו. חידש הגרש"ק שאף מקיים בזה מצות פריה ורביה. ואף שרוב הפוסקים לא נקטו כמותו, אבל מדברים אלו למדנו על המעלה הגדולה של המלמד תורה שנחשב כמולידו, ובכל מזכה התלמיד את הרב ביכולת להגיד לבנו, כבנו ממש.

החיידוש בהגדתך הוא שאספת דברי תורה של אלו שהותירו תלמידים, בכתב ובעל פה, ותורתם ממשיכה להאיר, ובדרך זו אתה נותן להם מהלכים (ראה זכריה ג-ז), מזכה אותם להמשיך להגיד לבניהם ומממש את הבטחת הקב"ה על הבנים שיהיו להם.

ספרך יוצא במהדורת הר"ר אליעזר מאיר פישר שליט"א. כה יתן לכם ה' זכה יוסיף להמשיך להאיר תורתם בנושאים נוספים. חפץ ה' בידכם יצלח להגדיל תורה ולהאדירה.



יום ג' ארבע קדילת התורה תשנ"ה

השמחה רבה ראית הספר הנכבד הגדה של פסח עם ביוטיבס
של גבולי תורה שלא הניחו אחריהם זרז של קיימא. ובדיהם בן בן תלמידיהם,
וה' יבי שלמנו געניש יתנו להם שם ושארית לבורות זולת. וגם אז יבי זה
'בוגדו שבענינם דקדק דזה שלומצית תורתם. וזהו לכבוד נלא דיות
לנשמותם דגן צבן, כאשר ראית גזל ארצות של מור' מן רשביה'
הגדל פיינשלין לצוקל שנסתק און אהרשט לאהרית להבנים מבדרי
גותו א שם אחיט, כיון שז' יבי זה ימלט את השמחתו בוגדות בקרב
אחיתם הבו נציק טוה מרודה לצדוק הספר היקר הזה ה' הידגאד
למסמס מאז ג' גבול דה משה שלאל' שהסקיז כח ומרש' דה לוקל
שונ' וזרן הספר דטוד טזת ובזג, ולזכור דזה נשמותיהם
של גבולי צולפ אלו, אשר דובאי יציקו טוה ח' ומליצו יוסר
גזבו להתירק דל מלי צמיל זקור האסס הקדול שזשה צפ
הת"פ והמג'פ

האותן דדרכה מרודה לכדוב התורה גבולי ומרדליה

שמחה ארנס יוכהן קאהן

רב בירושלים העתיקה תובב"א
מח"ס ביצחק יקרא
מציון מכלל יופי
שיחות לחמישה חומשי תורה ומועדים

בס"ד תאריך ל"ו שבט תשפ"ו

ראיתי את ההשנה של הרב הגר, ולו נראה שהיה ויטה
עם הרבה רבנים גדולים. תל כסר ושאל.

ד"ר י. גר

אני מודה לך

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שלו' ראובן פיינשטיין
ראש הישיבה
ישיבה ד'סטעטן איילנד

ט"ו בשבט תשפ"ה

לכבוד האי גברא רבה ויקירא הרה"ג ר' משה היבנר שליט"א

שמחתי מאד לקבל הגליונות מההגדה של פסח "והגדת לבנך" שאתה מוכן להוציאו לאור והוא אוצר מלא וגדיש מתורתם וסיפורים מעשרות גדולי הדורות שלא זכו לבנים. ובודאי שהוא דבר גדול מאד וכדברי רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אין עושין נפשות לצדיקים דבריהם הן הן זכרונן. ונהנתי לראות שהוא ראוי לעלות על שלחן מלכים נכתב באופן יפה וברור מאד חתיכה הראויה להתכבד בה.

וע"כ באתי לברכו לזכות לברך על המוגמר ולהוציא לאור שאר הכתבים שתחת ידו ממאות ת"ח וגדולים שלא זכו לזרע של קיימה וזכות כל אלו הת"ח יעמוד על ימינו לראות הצלחה רבה מכל מעשה ידיו מתוך מנוחת הנפש ובריאות הגוף ולראות נחת רב מבניך ותלמידיך ביחד עם רעיתך החשובה שתח' עד ביאת הגואל.

אלו ראובן פיינשטיין

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מס' 7

יום א' אסתר ז' אלול
דבר ה' וישלח משיח
י"ח לחודש שבט תשנ"ד

ברוך הוא אלהי אלהי לא יאמר חסדו את החיים ואמר החיים (יומא)
ה"ה תרה"ץ תתקנא. מוכנע בל תיאר. ה"ה מורינא.
הרב רבי. מלך היביר שליטא
אלהי אלהי דבר אדון אמר מקחן של אדוני ילגאן
אין ארץ צביון אברה אמי תזוזא הבא
שלא צב אבנא בית בנני של קיימא. וידועים דבר.
היטעם מלך צ"ל (פרכס) של צבין לאין מלך בלם
הוא רא' לאין מאמר הדור ובא רק אשמוע. דרא דל' הק'
ופרס בל' המבדל החן לקיים מלך והלך אבנא
לקיים דברי תל' (ימאמ צבין) בל' מלך לאמרים דבר
לאמרה מלך ביוזא הלך שרענע דובבוב בקבר
לקיים תפיק (מלך סאן) אגור באהלך מלך.
והלך הרב שליטא אלהי חסד של אחי וידועים
דבר רש' צ"ל (כ' ימי מאמר רב בל' צבין) חסד
ליושם עם המלך הוא חסד של אחי. לאין מלך
למלך אלו. וידועים דבר לזר העלך (מלך החמישי צבין)
בא' בל' מלך ומהעל מלך שלום הנאן. כ' מלך (מלך)
ומלכים מלך וצבנע מומד מלך מלך וצבנע
וכן יצב הרב שליטא שרענע ימאמ או ואלך שמו
ותפא מלך תן שלמה מאמר ה' אלקי ילגאן

הכנע יחוס אבנא הערה
ולכנע ידיו היקר והטוב
של מורד ילק יהודה ב'
מלך יחוס צ"ל צבין
בנימין ברייער



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ראש הישיבה

287

57 a) 1, 3, 7

פ' אב תש"ח

INTRODUCTION

Most English *Haggados* are designed for use at the Pesach Seder. However, this *Haggadah* should be read throughout the Yom Tov of Pesach. In fact, a renowned Rav told me that each person should have two copies of this *Haggadah*: one kept *chametz*-free, to be used throughout the Yom Tov of Pesach, and another to be used the rest of the year.

This *Haggadah* is based on *divrei Torah* from Gedolim who did not leave behind any descendants. Whether they were never blessed with children or their children passed away during their lifetime, they are cited in this *sefer*.

In addition to their Torah, biographical snapshots and photos have been included, allowing the reader to become even more familiar with these Gedolim.

Take this opportunity to become acquainted with these giants of Torah, these saintly *tzaddikim*. Learn as much as you can about their lives, their teachings, and their legacies. Share their stories. By doing so, you allow them to live on.

Most importantly, repeat their *divrei Torah* to your children. This will allow them, through you, to (באופן מזה) finally be *mekayeim* the mitzvah of והגדת לבנך. What greater *zechus* could there be than bringing merit to *tzaddikei olam*?

.....

The following quotes are attributed to some of the Gedolim included in this *sefer*:

The Tzaddik of Ranana stated, “I *daven* daily for those who learn and share my Torah. Anyone who studies my *sefer* will merit fear of Hashem and success.”

Rav Tzadok Hakohein of Lublin promises “to be an advocate for anyone who helps with the production of my Torah.”

Though not every Gadol expressly promised rewards, there is great reward for learning the Torah of such Gedolim.

Rav Shalom Yechezkiel Shrager writes, “It is known that my grandfather, the Holy Rebbe of Shinov, would help out in the production of any *sefer* whose author passed away without children, for he held it was a very important way to help the soul of the deceased” (*Divrei Naftali*, 1968).

Rav Yitzchak Isaak Friedman writes about learning the Torah of a *mechaber* who was childless, “In the merit of studying this *sefer*, one is rewarded *midah kineged midah*, and therefore just as he is creating children for this childless author, he too will merit having children who are *talmidei chachamim* that will study from his Torah as well” (*Ner Hameir*, 1890).

By learning their *divrei Torah*, we become their family.

The She’eiris Yosef (published in 1554) writes, “Hashem knows that I was forced to publish because I am now childless, as my son has passed away. I will remove my sorrow by having the young generation learn my Torah, and they will be my new children.”

.....

The third Rebbe of Radzymin quotes Reb Simchah Bunim of Peshischah, who said that if one analyzes the stylistic wording of the *Haggadah*, one must conclude that Eliyahu Hanavi is the arranger of the *Haggadah*. With this information, he sheds light on another one of our customs at the Seder. At the end of the night, we pour the *kos shel Eliyahu* with great joy and invite Eliyahu to join us. Why do we do this? He explains that since we have done our part by completing the Seder in accordance with his “Seder” (arrangement), we now turn to Eliyahu and ask him to fulfill his responsibility – to bring the redemption.¹

Some note that there is an ancient tradition in which the author of a *sefer* hints at his name in the opening words of his *sefer*. Here, the phrase *הא להמא* can be an acronym for *אליהו הנביא*.

Just as Eliyahu Hanavi visits every Seder where a cup of wine is prepared for him to see how we successfully followed his instructions, perhaps these tzaddikim will also join our Seder when we prepare a cup of their wine, their *yeina shel Torah*, and remember their righteousness. By doing so, you become a vessel to receive their *brachos*, as the *passuk* states, “*Zecher tzaddik l’vrachah* – the memory of a *tzaddik* is a *brachah*.” That *brachah* that you receive is their *afikomen* present to you in your life.

.....

This *Haggadah* is the first of many volumes in planning by the Zera Emes project. Few people are capable of naming even twenty Gedolim who passed without children, yet this *Haggadah* cites nearly one hundred, which is only a minor percentage of those to, *iy”H*, be included in the overall project, which, with Hashem’s help, will encompass Yomim Tovim, Tanach, and various other topics. (More about the project can be seen at zeraemes.com.)

All names highlighted throughout this *sefer* are those of Gedolim who are included in the Zera Emes project.

1 ולכך אצל הכוס רביעי הוא דמזמנים את אליהו הנביא הקדוש להראות לו כי אנחנו קיימנו מה שמוטל עלינו כל מה שהי' מסדר לנו בההגדה בשמחה רבה וע"כ יעשה עכשיו אלי' הנביא ז"ל מה שמוטל עליו.

On that note, please bear in mind the following disclaimers:

Firstly, if one notices that a particular Gadol who did not have children is not mentioned, please note that it is NOT personal or intended as a slight in any way. Nearly every Chassidic dynasty and every great yeshivah has in its history at least one Gadol who passed away without children. This is not limited to one century, nor one area of the globe. As stated above, we will, *iy"H*, introduce more of these Gedolim in future *sefarim*. In almost every case, it was simply a matter of space that precluded the inclusion of a particular Gadol. In the rest, it was a matter of the most fitting material. In fact, there was an entire section regarding the *korban Pesach* that was not used in the end, after much time, energy, and money were invested in perfecting it. It was difficult to put aside, but anyone who has ever published a *sefer* knows that Hashem is the One Who is organizing this, as can be seen in many ways during the production process.

Additionally, since Gedolim are being quoted from different generations and completely different parts of the globe, giving them each their proper title is challenging. Therefore, regarding the snapshots we decided to title each with the universal R', which also saves space. If you do notice any discrepancies, please chalk it up to what rolls off the tongue in a particular circumstance. Some names naturally lend themselves to Rav, others Rebbe, etc.

As well, the editorial board made a global decision to eliminate all mentions of *zt"l*, *zy"a*, or *ztz"l*, both to ensure consistency as well as to save space. Again, this in NO way has any bearing on the Gadol in discussion.

.....

The Pele Yoetz (early 1800s) writes (*Os Dalet, Dovev*) that “an eternal kindness one can do for a Torah scholar of the past is to learn from his *divrei Torah*, and his merit will thus shield and protect you.”

Rebbi Yehudah Hachassid (1100s), in his *Sefer Chassidim* (224), writes that “when one repeats their Torah in their name, they pray for you and defend you.”

It is my fervent hope that all of the Gedolim quoted in this *sefer* will be *meilitzei yosher* for me, my family, and the entire Klal Yisrael.

סדר בדיקת וביעור חמץ

THE SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ

On the eve of the fourteenth of Nissan, a search for chametz is conducted. If the fourteenth of Nissan falls on Shabbos, the search is conducted on the eve of the thirteenth (i.e., Thursday night). The search must be performed at the beginning of the night. One may not begin eating or doing any form of labor from a half hour prior to nightfall until after the search.

הנני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצות עשה ולא תעשה של בדיקת חמץ (לשם יחוד קידושא בריך הוא ושכינתיה על ידי ההוא טמיר ונעלם בשם כל ישראל: ויהי נועם אדני אלהינו עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננה עלינו ומעשה ידינו כוננהו).

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו
במצותיו, וצונו על ביעור חמץ:

Immediately following the search, one should nullify the chametz by saying.

Some have the custom to repeat the following three times.

If one does not understand the Aramaic passage, he may recite the nullification in any language he understands. One should be careful to properly dispose of any remaining chametz following the search.

כל חמירא וחמיעא דאיכא ברשותי, דלא חמתיה, ודלא
בערתי, ודלא ידענא ליה, לבטל ולהוי הפקר כעפרא
דארעא:

Any chametz which is in my possession which I did not see, and remove, nor know about, shall be nullified and become ownerless, like the dust of the earth.

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The Order of the Seder

קִדְּשׁ וְיִרְחֹץ כִּרְפֹּס יִחַץ מִגִּיד רְחֹצָה
מוֹצֵיא מִצָּה מְרוֹר כּוֹרֶה שְׁלַחַן עוֹרֶה
צָפוֹן בִּרְהֵ הֵלֵל נִרְצָה

WHO KNOWS FIFTEEN?

Rav Reuvein Margolis writes that Rav Shmuel of Falaise, who was close with the Smag and Rav Yechiel of Paris, is the author of the Simanim. He adds that there are many other versions of these Simanim found in the Rishonim.

What is the purpose of these Simanim? Why are they needed at all?

Rav Aharon Maggid (*Beis Aharon* 7, page 473 *os* 2) explains that in simple terms, the Simanim help us conduct the Seder in the proper order (like an instruction manual). Since the Seder consists of many requirements and details that must be followed in an orderly fashion, the Rishonim instituted the names of the various

steps in rhyme to remind us of how to properly conduct the Seder.

Rav Chamoi (*Beis Habicheerah* 100a) quotes the Yesod V'shoresh Avodah as saying that there are many mystical secrets and deep meanings underlying these famous words. Therefore, one should say them out loud with emotion and fervor. And, indeed, throughout the generations, our great Rabbis expounded upon the deeper meaning of the Simanim, whether from the standpoint of lessons based on *drush*, *mussar*, or even *kabbalah*. According to this understanding, the Simanim are not merely a memory tool but are actually part of the Haggadah, and this is why they should be verbalized.

THE NUMBER OF SIMANIM:

Although the common understanding is that there are fifteen Simanim, and that is how they appear in most Haggados, we find other sources which give a different number for the Simanim.

Reb Eliyahu Eichenstein (*Zichron Eliyahu*) based on the words of his grandfather, the Ateres Tzvi of Ziditchov, writes that there are fourteen Simanim. He excludes Nirtzah.¹

The Yismach Yisrael of Aleksander (*Pesach*

103) counts 13 Simanim², explaining that this number is meant to invoke the thirteen attributes of mercy.³

Based on this, we can better understand the words of Rav Avraham Chaim of Zlotchov (*Haggadah Pri Chaim*). He writes that one should verbally express each and every Siman before that portion of the Seder up to, and including, Nirtzah. His intent was to stress that Nirtzah is an integral part of the Haggadah, as it is the culmination of the thirteen attributes of mercy.

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- 1 The Haggadah known as the "Maharal Hagaddah" also writes: "The theme of the night is hinted to in the י"א Simanim, because this alludes to the great 'hand' of Hashem that punished the Egyptians." ("Hand" in Hebrew is the numerical value of 14). Elsewhere, he explains that Hallel Nirtzah is really one siman, because Hallel represents the praise that we sang when we were redeemed from Egypt, while Nirtzah represents the praises we will sing at the final redemption.
 - 2 On a *kabbalistic* note, Reb Eliyahu (*Zichron Eliyahu*) writes that the number 13 represents the thirteen attributes of mercy, which are the basis of Hashem's compassion for the Jewish nation. Reb Eliyahu adds that the words Kaddeish through Hallel have the same numerical value as the thirteen attributes of mercy!
 - 3 Though it's not clear how he gets to the number 13.

מגיד

One should have in mind to fulfill the Biblical mitzvah of recounting the story of yetzias Mitzrayim.

Some recite the following.

הִנְנִי מוֹכֵן וּמְזוּמֵן לְקִיָּם הַמִּצְוָה לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, (לְשֵׁם יַחֲדוּד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וּשְׂכִינְתָּיהָ עַל יְדֵי הוּא טָמִיר וְנִעְלָם בְּשֵׁם כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְיֵהִי נֹעֵם אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂיהָ יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה).

THE SEDER IS ALL ABOUT THE CHILDREN

The *sefer Shiras Moshe* is a compilation of songs composed by the Chasam Sofer in the days between Yom Kippur and Sukkos. During those days, he was unable to concentrate on his learning as he felt an intense attachment to Hashem after the cleansing of his soul on Yom Kippur. He spent those days composing songs of devotion and yearning to Hashem.

In the fourth printing of the *Shiras Moshe* by his esteemed grandson [Rav Yehudah Greenwald](#), the Rav of Satmar, he included a lengthy introduction relating the customs of his grandfather the Chasam Sofer. He writes that his grandfather, would recite the Haggadah with fervor, and in an unusually loud voice that was heard by passersby on

the street. This was unlike his typical service throughout the year, which was characterized by inner fervor, especially in his later years when his voice became weak and quiet. Nevertheless, he did this to inspire awe and instill refined faith in the hearts of his children and grandchildren.

Similarly, the Chasam Sofer's student, [Rav Chizkiyahu Feivel Plaut](#) (*Hakdamah* to volume 3 of *Lekutei Chaver ben Chaim*) writes that the main focus of the Chasam Sofer during the recitation of the Haggadah was the young boys and girls. He would translate each word for them and explain the meaning of the content without adding any homiletical interpretation (*drush*).

ר' חזקיה
פייבל
נחיים
כליט

R' Chizkiyahu Feivel Plaut (24 Shevat 1817 - 26 Kislev 1894) was a student of the Chasam Sofer and eventually Rav of Shurin for fifty years where he opened a yeshivah. Starting from 1878 he published eleven sefarim on many topics. Many of his contemporaries quote him, including the Maharam Shick, R' Yehudah Assad, and the Ksav Sofer. He writes, "With His kindness, I have reached old age, but I have not merited to have children. Therefore, I decided to give my parents an eternal name among the Jewish people by writing this sefer." He explains that the entire idea of publishing a sefer was for his parents' sake.



קִדְשׁ וְרִחַץ כֶּרֶס יִחַץ מִגִּיד רִחֲצָה מוֹצִיא מַצָּה

The broken matzah is lifted for all to see (some raise the entire Seder plate). It is important that the Haggadah should be recited in a language that even children and the uneducated understand. See **Rav Avraham Chamoi** 15-16.

הָא לַחֲמָא עֲנִיא דִּי אָכְלוּ אֲבֵהֲתָנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכָפִין יְיָי וְיִיכּוֹל. כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יְיָי וְיִפְסָח. הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל. הַשְׁתָּא עַבְדִּי, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוּרִין:

POOR MAN'S BREAD: POOR MAN OR POOR BREAD?

We open the Haggadah with the words, “This is the poor man’s bread.” The *meforshim* understand that this is a reference to the hard, dry bread that the Jews ate while they were enslaved by the Egyptians. However, these words can also be seen as an interpretation of praising Hashem for taking us – poor people – out of Egypt.

There is a well-known dictum, בַּתְּעֲרוּתָא דַּלְתָּתָא, “In order to create Heavenly mercy, we have to make a move on our part.” There are times, we are required to take the first step toward Hashem, however, there are special occasions, or times during the year, when an initial human effort is not required. During these great moments, one can take it easy, even if unworthy, and receive infinite goodness from Above. One of these special times is Seder night. This occurs because the Jews, at *yetzias Mitzrayim*, had no mitzvos to move Hashem’s mercy. Yet as we know, Hashem took us out. Every Seder night we reexperience those events.

Rav Aharon Shmuel Ravitz (Simchas Torah

1953 - 16 Cheshvon 2017) uses this to explain the opening words of the Haggadah. We acknowledge that we ate matzah in Egypt the night of Pesach, but it was לחמא עניא-poor man’s bread. “Poor,” is not referring to the type of bread, but to the people who ate the bread, meaning we were poor in mitzvos, and yet Hashem took us out. We are the עניא. This itself is a reason to celebrate, but it is also a source of encouragement. On Seder night, Hashem is willing to take us all into His embrace. One can add that this is another explanation for why we end this stanza, “next year in Yerushalayim.” It is because we recognize that although we are “poor,” the Seder night is a special time for redemption, even for those who are unworthy.

Reb Chaim Meir Braun (*Pesach os* 4 and 7) adds that this is why some have the tradition of adding the letter “chuf” to “ha lachma” and making it “kiha lachma.” The additional letter is interpreted as, “This is *like* the poor.” The extra letter is because we are pointing out that we can never be as spiritually poor as those in Egypt since unlike those in Egypt, we have a Torah to guide us.

WHY THE INTRODUCTORY WORDS

We begin the Seder by extending an invitation to all who wish to join us. Some explain that this tradition is rooted in the Medrash, which teaches that when the Jewish people were leaving Egypt, they made a covenant to practice kindness and compassion among themselves. As we prepare to recount that story, we re-enact those events and begin with an act of chessed, proclaiming, “Let all who are hungry come and eat.”

However, the opening words are, “This is the bread of our affliction,” and only after that we state, “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat.” At first glance, it seems more logical to begin with the invitation to the needy, “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat.” Why then, does the Haggadah begin with the words “הָאֵל לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אַכְלוּ אַבְהִתְנָא”? Why is it important now, to know that our ancestors ate poor man’s bread? Moreover, what is the connection between these words and the invitation “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat”?

It’s fascinating to see two totally opposite approaches to answer this question.

ANSWER ONE

The Chida prefaces his answer based on a Mishnah (*Baba Metzia* 83a) that recounts how R’ Yochanan ben Massya hired a number of day laborers and promised to feed them. When he got home, he repeated to his father what had transpired. His father told him, “Go back, and before they start working, *clarify* that you are only giving them some bread and lentils. Being that they are *bnei* Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, whatever you may give them won’t suffice; they are worthy of being treated royally.” This means that if

someone is not specific with his offer to his Jewish laborers, he could be accountable for an extreme amount of money.

The same applies here as well. Were we to invite guests with “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat.” which is an open invitation, whatever we might feed them wouldn’t be enough to fulfill our commitment towards them. Being that they are *bnei* Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, they deserve so much more than we might give them. Therefore, we introduce the Haggadah by saying “This is the bread of our affliction.” Tonight, we are accustomed to eating matzah like our predecessors. Having said that, we extend an invitation to all who are in need to come join us, which includes and is somewhat limited to eating matzah. In essence, we set a condition before we invite them inside to limit our liability.

ANSWER TWO

Rav Yitzchak Akshuti (*Bnei Yischak*, *Drush* 1 *Pesach*) cites the Chida and explains how he thinks the answer is the reverse. He bases his answer by quoting a Rambam (*Mechirah* 11:16): when one obligates himself in something where there is no way to know the cost, he’s not obligated to keep his word. There is no open-ended obligation that one takes upon himself. Hence, when one invites a guest without a condition of how much he will feed him, he’s not required to give anything. Therefore, before we say, “Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat,” we let them know that we are eating *matzah* tonight so they can be sure that they will at least get a piece of matzah to eat. In essence, we set a condition before we invite them inside to ensure the guest will get what was offered.

Hachnasas Orchim Benefits

We begin the Seder by inviting the needy to join.

Rav Moshe Midner shared a story he had heard from Rav Yitzchak of Neshchiz.

During the time when Rav Yitzchak lived in Berditchev, there was a pious man named Rav Leiber, known for his humility and morality. One bitter winter night, a weary traveler wandered the streets in search of shelter.

Spotting a flickering light in Rav Leiber's home, the traveler knocked on the door, desperate for warmth and rest. Rav Leiber welcomed him warmly and offered him a place to stay. Without hesitation, Rav Leiber began preparing a bed for his guest, carefully arranging it to ensure it would be comfortable.

The traveler, astonished to see such a distinguished man taking on this task himself, asked, "Reb Leiber, why are you, a person of such honor, making the bed with your own hands?"

Rav Leiber smiled warmly and replied, "Do you think I'm only making your bed? I'm also making my own bed." [By this, Rav Leiber was letting the traveler know that he would do anything for him, and he therefore, should not hesitate to ask.]

With those few words, Rav Leiber encapsulated a profound truth: every act of kindness and hospitality is an investment in eternity, preparing not only comfort for others in this world, but also building one's own place in Gan Eden. His humility and care transformed a simple act into something eternal, a legacy of *chessed* that continues to inspire.

Every act of kindness and hospitality is not only preparing comfort for others in this world, but it is also preparing one's own place in Gan Eden. An investment in eternity. We are not just inviting in the needy but we are beginning our Seder and hoping that the amount of mitzvos being accomplished tonight will make us "rich," and hopefully bring Mashiach.

מָרוֹר כּוֹרֵךְ שְׁלַחַן עוֹרֵךְ צָפוֹן בֵּירָה הַלֵּל נִרְצָה

ר' חיים מאיר ב"ר ישראל ברוך ברוין

R' Chaim Meir Braun (26 Cheshvon 1892-19 Iyar 1986). Born near Grosswardein. His father, R' Yisrael Baruch (d. 1940) author of *Knesses Yisrael* served for a time as a *dayan* in Sasregen (Romania). In 1916, R' Chaim Meir married Reina Goldberger (1894-1985), daughter of R' Menashe (1855-1919) of Stropkov. In the 1920s, the Brauns moved to London, where he was a Rav. In 1929, they emigrated to the United States. After a brief stint as a Rav in Malden, Massachusetts, he became a Rav in The Bronx. In 1935, he helped launch an association for alumni of Hungarian Yeshivos, which helped support many institutions Europe. At the end of the 1930s, they moved to Boro Park, opening up a Shul on 11th Avenue. The shul was named Etz Chaim. In October of 1942, R' Chaim Meir joined Mesivta Chaim Berlin in Brownsville as an executive director, a position he held for several years. During the war years, he was very active in helping to run the American-Hungarian Jewish Federation, efforts that evolved, ultimately, into assisting newly arrived refugees with resettlement.

ר' יצחק אקשוטי

R' Yitzchak Akshuti was born in Kushta, Turkey. In 1837 he was appointed a *dayan* (together with R' Yosef Alfandri and Chacham Yaakov Halevi). He passed away Lag BaOmer 1862. His brother published this sefer in 1884.

ר' משה מידנר

R' Moshe Midner (1860-23 Cheshvon 1929) was named after Reb Moshe of Kobrin. His mother was the daughter of the Baal Hayesod Va'avodah, with whom he studied daily until the latter's passing (11 Cheshvon 1884). After his marriage he lived in Brisk and became very close to Reb Chaim Brisker. He was also meticulous in retelling Gedolim stories. After WWI, he settled in Baranovitch. R' Moshe has no living descendants, as his daughter, Devorah Leah predeceased him and his son R' Avraham Altar, was murdered along with his 6 children. Witnesses at the funeral of his daughter, relate that R' Moshe stood by the open grave and whispered, "My dear daughter, have no fear, just say that you are Moshe's daughter." Most of his manuscripts were lost during World War II.



RAV BRAUN WITH THE CHASAN
RABBI SHIMON EPSTEIN.



THE CHASAN, RAV ZEIDEL EPSTEIN, RAV BRAUN
AND RAV YISRAEL RABINOWITZ.