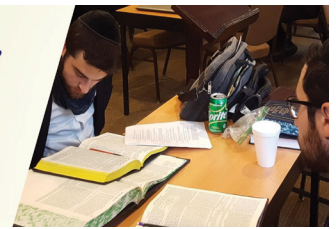




# TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel



Pesach

April 10, 2020

## A Taste of Torah A Praiseworthy Reminder

by Rabbi Yosef Melamed

The momentous, once-a-year event is coming to a close. The Seder began with *kiddush* as the first of the Four Cups of Wine, continued with the salt-water-dipped *karpas*, the telling of the story of the Exodus, eating the matzah, *maror*, and the *korech* sandwich, followed by a scrumptious Seder meal, the eating of the *afikoman*, and *Birchas Hamazon* (After-Meal Blessing). We have incorporated the many messages of the Seder, the lessons taught by the miraculous events of this special night. Nearing the end of the Seder, over the fourth and final cup of wine, we begin to sing the sweet songs of Hallel, in which we thank Hashem for His great kindnesses and wonders. While the Hallel recited is the same as Hallel of other festivals of the year, another layer is added at its conclusion at the Seder. Psalm 136 is added; this chapter of Tehillim contains twenty-six stanzas, each ending in the joyous pronunciation, "for eternal is His kindness," thanking Hashem for everything from the beginning of Creation through Hashem's bringing the Jewish People into the Promised Land. (The closing blessing of Hallel also includes an addition, the prayer of *Nishmas*, which is usually recited as part of *shacharis* on Shabbos and Festivals.)

The finale of Psalm 136 to Hallel is striking: "He grants sustenance to all flesh, for eternal is His kindness. Thanks to the G-d of the heavens, because eternal is His kindness." Is this how we conclude our praises on such a night? Not about the Exodus from Egypt, not about the Ten Plagues nor the Splitting of the Sea. Just the bread on the table?! Of course we are grateful for this, too, but wouldn't it be much more appropriate to end the Seder on a more glorious note?

Rabbi Matisyahu Salomon (Haggada Shel Pesach) offers the following insight. The Ramban (Shemos 13:16) teaches that the purpose of the Exodus was to teach the world belief in Hashem. The Exodus from Egypt proved that the world has a Creator

Who is constantly involved, overseeing, and interested in our world. However, teaches the Ramban, this lesson is not only true regarding miraculous and wondrous one-time events such as the Exodus. Rather, the Exodus from Egypt reminds us of the fact that every second of existence is itself a miracle, albeit hidden behind the mask of nature.

The lessons of the Seder, continues Rabbi Salomon, cannot end with the miraculous events of the Exodus. Rather, it needs to follow us throughout the year and serve as a constant reminder of G-d's guiding hand in all of the mundane and seemingly natural events of everyday life. This is the reason that the conclusion of Hallel is the verse acknowledging Hashem's providing all flesh with sustenance. Our acknowledgement that Hashem guides the world and all that is in it begins with recognizing the miracles of the Exodus, but doesn't finish until those miracles translate into an awareness of Hashem's guiding hand at all times and in all scenarios, however small.

When discussed in the Torah, the *Shalosh Regalim* (Three Festivals) of Pesach, Shavuos and Sukkos revolve around two distinct axes. One path centers upon the creation of the Jewish People as G-d's Chosen Nation; Pesach commemorates our national freedom, Shavuos the Giving of the Torah, and Sukkos the Clouds of Glory that surrounded the Jewish Nation as they sojourned in the desert. The other track is predicated upon the agricultural seasons; Pesach is in the spring, when the grain ripens; Shavuos is at the time of the harvest in the summer, and Sukkos is at the time of gathering in the bounty of the fields in the fall. The Talmud (Rosh Hashana 7a) teaches that this connection to the cycle of seasons is halachically mandated and is actually the reason for the need to occasionally add an extra month to the lunar calendar of the Jewish year, ensuring that Pesach is synchronized with

## Stories for the Soul

### A Peace of Piety

It was erev Pesach, and the home of Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Apt (the Apter Rav, also known as the Ohev Yisrael; 1748-1825) was quite busy. A knock on the door was answered by one of the household members. Standing at the door were two individuals collecting matzos and other necessities for the poor of the community. Seeing some matzos wrapped in a cloth nearby, the person handed them to the collectors, who promptly went on their way.

A bit later, the rebbetzin came and noticed that the matzos her husband had baked that very day, with his special stringencies and loft intentions, were gone! She soon figured out what had happened, but the collectors were long gone, and there was not much she could do. She did not want to inform her husband of the loss, as he would be most anguished. Instead, she took some regular matzos, wrapped them in a similar cloth, and said nary a word about the whole issue. The Seder passed without incident, and the matter was all but forgotten.

After the holiday concluded, a young man, married not long before, arrived at the Apter Rov's door, saying he wanted to divorce his wife. Upon inquiring as to the reason, the Apter Rov was told by the man that he followed a stringency not to eat matzah that came into contact with water during Pesach, known as *matzah shruya* (also known as *gebrotks*). As an additional stringency, he had asked his wife to use a separate set of utensils for Pesach and to avoid using the standard Pesach utensils in which such matzah had, at some point, been cooked. His wife did not comply with his request, and he thus wanted to divorce her.

*continued on back*

*continued on back*

## Kollel Happenings

### KOLLEL CLASSES CONTINUE VIA ZOOM MEETING

The Kollel is continuing many of its classes and offering new classes via Zoom Meeting. You can tune in to live classes online or call in on a phone. For a full schedule and the links and phone numbers to access this treasure trove of Torah, visit [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org) or email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### BUILD YOUR LEGACY AND SECURE THE FUTURE OF TORAH WITH LIVE ON/LIFE & LEGACY

The Kollel is one of 28 local organizations selected to be part of Rose Community Foundation's Live On/LIFE & LEGACY program, which focuses on creating financial stability for the future through planned giving. Think it's not for you? Think again! Anyone can make a planned gift, no matter the amount. Visit [www.denverkollel.org](http://www.denverkollel.org), email [rmh@denverkollel.org](mailto:rmh@denverkollel.org) or call 303-820-2855 for more information.

### HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF TORAH IN DENVER

Claim your part in building the future of Torah in Denver! The Kollel is in the midst of a capital campaign to build a three-story, state-of-the-art Torah Center that will serve the entire Denver Jewish community. To contribute, or for dedication opportunities and details on the building, visit [denverkollel.org](http://denverkollel.org) or email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

## Parsha Quizzers

Parsha Quizzers are based upon the Torah reading of the first day (Shemos 12:21-51) and last day (Shemos 13:17-15:26) of Pesach. Can you figure out where they are?

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Unkinglike            | 4) Just go            |
| 2) Count more than Egypt | 5) Heavy punishment   |
| 3) Monitor               | 6) Two hands, not one |

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders

### Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk - Part XX

Reb Meir Simcha had one daughter who never married. He thus has no descendants.

Reb Meir Simcha passed away in 1926. His

death occurred in the city of Riga, and the Jewish community of Riga wanted him to be buried in their city, since he had died there.

## A Taste of Torah

*continued from front*

the time of the ripening of the grain.

In light of Rabbi Salomon's explanation, these seemingly disparate tracks of the *Shalosh Regalim* actually share a common basis. On the one hand, the *Shalosh Regalim* remind us of G-d's greatness and omnipotence through the great miracles experienced during each of these festivals as G-d took us to be His People. However, we do not stop with attributing all the major and wondrous events to Hashem. Rather, we apply the lessons of those miraculous events to the mundane and seemingly smaller events of daily life. Therefore, the Torah created a connection between commemorating the miraculous events of the *Shalosh Regalim* and

the agricultural seasons, as this enables us to connect the meaning of the Exodus and the subsequent miracles to the natural success and bounty of the cycle of seasons.

The experience of the Seder should truly electrify us with belief in Hashem. Let us take its important message and bring it into our daily lives. As we say three times a day in *Shemone Esrei*, "We thank You Hashem... for Your miracles that occur every day to us, and for Your wonders and goodness at every second." Let us recognize how the natural occurrences of life are indeed a miracle and orchestration of Hashem's omnipotence and power!

## Stories for the Soul

*continued from front*

The Apter Rov called his rebbetzin into the room. "Tell me, please," he said pleasantly, "which matzos did you serve at the Seder?"

The rebbetzin stammered that regular matzos, not the Rov's special matzos, had been used for the Seder.

The Apter Rov turned to the young man and said, "You see? My wife served regular matzos, not the special ones I had meticulously prepared, at the Seder.

Though I was aware of the difference, I didn't utter a word, so as not to disturb the harmony in my home. And you want to divorce your wife over a stringency of *shruya*!?

Pesach is a time when people observe many customs and stringencies, and, indeed, one should endeavor to observe these ancient traditions to the greatest degree possible. However, one must be cognizant that maintaining peace in one's home is of great importance, as well.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1) Unkinglike 12:30 s.v. hu                   | 4) Just go 14:15 s.v. daber              |
| 2) Count more than Egypt 12:40 s.v. sheloshim | 5) Heavy punishment 14:25 s.v. bichvedus |
| 3) Monitor 14:5 s.v. wayugad                  | 6) Two hands, not one 15:17 s.v. mikdash |

## Parsha Quizzers - Answers