

## **THE TELLING - מגיד**

"...מצווה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים. וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים, הרי זה משובח."  
"...it is incumbent upon us to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. And the more one tells of the Exodus from Egypt, the more one is praiseworthy."

רבן גמליאל היה אומר: כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח, לא יצא ידי חובתו, ואלו הן: פסח,

מצה ומרור:

**Rabban Gamliel used to say: Whoever has not addressed these three things on Passover, has not fulfilled his obligation, and these are: Pesach (the offering), Matzah & Maror**

פסח שהיו אבותינו אוכלים בזמן שבית המקדש היה קים, על שום מה? על שום שפסח הקב"ה על בתי אבותינו במצרים, שנאמר: "ואמרתם זבח פסח הוא לה' אשר פסח על בתי בני ישראל במצרים בנגפו את מצרים ואת בתינו הציל." "

שמות יב, כז

**Pesach, that our fathers ate when the Holy Temple existed, what does it signify? It signifies that the Holy One Blessed Be He, passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt, as it says, "You shall say it is a Passover offering to HaShem who passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt when He smote Egypt, while sparing our houses..." Exodus 12:27**

We have a mental picture of the Holy One skipping over the houses of the Hebrews while entering into the homes of the Egyptians and smiting their firstborn. Linguistically, it is very difficult to defend this picture. On Mount Carmel, the prophet Eliyahu throws down a challenge to the people of Israel: "How long will you waver between the two opinions? If the Lords is the G-d, follow Him! And if Ba'al, follow him!" (1Kings 18:21) *Ad matei atem posechim al shtei ha'se'ipim* – עד מתי אתם פוסחים על שתי הסעפים? מלכים א, יח, כא

Literally it means: How long will you vacillate between the two thoughts? The trouble was not that the Jewish people were passing over or bypassing the two thoughts (monotheism versus polytheism), but rather that in their minds they would reside at one thought for a while and linger at the other thought for a while. The key words are *posechim al* – פוסחים על.

Thus based on a careful linguistic analysis, it makes much more sense that G-d actually visited the houses of the Children of Israel in between slaying the firstborn of the Egyptian households. This visit or *pesicha* – פסיחה – took the form of *hashra'at ha'Shechinah* – השראת השכינה – the indwelling of the Divine Presence. Indeed our Rabbis tell us, “Our fathers had three alters: the lintel and the two doorposts.” (*Mechilta Bo; Talmud Yerushalmi Pesachim 9:5*) (Rav Kook's interpretation of events is that of the master Kabbalist Rabbi Moshe Chayim Luzatto – the Ramchal).

The resting of the Divine Presence was all the more remarkable because it took place *b'mitzrayim* – במצרים, sandwiched in the very midst of the impurity of Egypt.

*Hagadah shel Pesach im Perushie ha'Ra'a'yah*, pp. 181-182

**מצה** זו שאנו אוכלים, על שום מה? על שום שלא הספיק בצקם של אבותינו להחמין, עד שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים, הקב"ה, וגאלם, שנאמר: "ויאפו את הבצק, אשר הוציאו ממצרים, עוגות מצות, כי לא חמין, כי גורשו ממצרים, ולא יכלו להתמהמה..." שמות יב, לט

**Matzah, This unleavened bread that we eat, what does it signify? It signifies that our fathers' dough had no time to rise before there was revealed to them the King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed be He, and redeemed them, as it says, "They baked the dough they had brought from Egypt into unleavened cakes, because it did not ferment, because they were driven from Egypt and could not tarry..." Exodus 12:39**

At the conclusion of the Egyptian exile, the Children of Israel felt they could not remain in Egypt even a moment longer. This is the sign *pakod pakadeti* – פקוד – I have surely remembered – that was transmitted to them from Yaakov and Yoseph. The double language signifies that the true redeemer will reveal the will of the divine remembrance above and also arouse in Israel below the will to quit exile.

This will also be the sign of the future redemption. All Israel will feel that their place is no longer in exile and that they have no alternative but to enter Eretz Yisrael.

Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Harlap, *Mei Marom*, Volume 4 – *Hagadah shel Pesach*, pp. 49-50, 1953.

**מרור** זה שאנו אוכלים, על שום מה? על שום שמררו המצרים את חיי אבותינו במצרים, שנאמר:  
"וימררו את חייהם בעבודה קשה, בחומר ובלבנים, ובכל עבודה בשדה, את כל עבודתם אשר עבדו  
בהם בפרך." שמות א, יד

***Maror*, This bitter herb that we eat, what does it signify? It signifies that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt, as it says, "They embittered their lives with hard labor, with mortar and bricks, and all manner of labor in the field; all the labor they made them perform was backbreaking." Exodus 1:14**

Seemingly, the chronological order has been reversed. *Maror*, the bitterness of bondage, preceded *matzah*, the symbol of freedom. In fact, according to the Rambam, *maror* precedes *matzah*. (*Hilchot Hametz u'Matzah* 7:5, 8:4) The idea is that after the redemption came, they began, in retrospect, to feel the bitter taste of the exile.

Rav Yitzchak Arieli\*, *Hagadah shel Pesach: Shirat Ha'Ge'ulah*, pp. 62,72.

\*Developed a close relationship with Rav Kook after the Rav arrived in Jerusalem in 1921 and became one of his leading students. In 1966 Rav Arieli was awarded the esteemed Israel Prize in Rabbinic literature. He was born in the Old City in 1896 and passed away in Yerushalayim 1974.