

Haggadah Shel Pesach

Veheishiv

For an unforgettable experience
for you, for your children
and for your guests



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Look and see the holiday of redemption! No Kohen blesses the wine, no Kohen does the "Seder", nor do we need a Kohen to sever the matzos, . The heart longing for redemption and asking Hashem to redeem it, does not need a Kohen. This nation is all priests, every home is a Beis Hamikdosh, every table is a mizbeach, every father of a family is a Kohen Godol and all his offspring are candidates for this priesthood, this is Hashem's redeemed people. At the end of the feast where we ate matzah of affliction and moror all raise their glasses and bless once more for thier freedom and redemption. And may all the people of the world around be kind enough to understand the blessing and respond after it, Amen.

(במעגלי שנה ח"ג ע' נא - Harav Shimshon Refoel Hirsh)

Introduction

To all the wonderful and holy parents reading these notes, I'd like to make a disclaimer. There are two different types of homes on Pesach; there are the seemingly 'perfect' homes where everything and everyone seems to be toeing the line, happy, confident, content and thriving. I'm not suggesting that they adopt the ideas in the booklet for their Seder.

There are however other homes where there is one or more members that seems to be struggling with their identity; their connection to themselves, to Hashem, to mitzvos, and to life in general. The silent – sometimes deafeningly silent, sometimes not so silent – inner cry of these struggling souls can sometimes be missed. These kids are desperately waiting for the heavenly call directed at them saying **“You might think you're down in the abyss, but so am I, I'm with you, I love you, I'll continue to carry you, I believe in you, I want you, I understand your pain, just hold on the darkness will end soon, and you'll shine brighter than all those 'perfect' kids out there; Hashem. [ps: and don't forget, I'm bigger than**

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anything you could ever have done wrong, never give up]”. That is the theme of this pamphlet.

Dear Parents: The Seder night presents a unique opportunity to convey that message through the Haggadah. Let’s work through some main pieces together and be an inspiration for a beautiful generation, going through the final birth pangs of the geulah. Let’s be that voice and make that difference. Let us imbue each and every person lucky enough to attend the Seder with the hope needed to survive.

Kadesh:

The message of Kadesh is אשר בחר בנו מכל עם ... כי בנו בחרת – we are the chosen people. No strings attached. Each and every Yid has been hand-picked by Hashem. Hashem is saying ‘I want you’!

Karpas:

This makes no sense; all it does is raise an unanswerable question. Dear children, there are soooo many questions in life, and good ones, ones we feel deserve answers to,

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but Hashem is greater than our comprehension. The day will yet come and everything will be clear, but for now we cannot grasp what's going on. If you're grappling with questions; it's OK. In Tehillim, Dovid Hamelech asked countless questions, and didn't get a single answer. It's ok to have questions. However, we must remember that this is part of the 'Seder' – 'Order' – there is an orchestrator, the Almighty Hashem in who's understanding everything is in order. Let that comfort us. Even the mess is part of the order. Hashem carries all the answers, and we must just hold on tight for the moment.

Yachatz:

The Haggadah and its messages relate to a 'broken' matzah. A 'whole' matzah wouldn't understand the depths of the Haggadah. If you feel broken, you're at the right place. Everything at this stage of the Haggadah still feels broken. Just hold on there, by the time the evening ends we will take this Seder with us infused with hope and anticipation for a brighter future.

Maggid:

This is all about talking. We are going to have an opportunity to express our pain, our slavery, our hope, and ultimately our redemption.

Ho Lachmo Anyo:

Maggid starts with a mention of the ‘poor bread’ the ‘bread of affliction’. We all know that our struggling kids are the kindest, softest and most sensitive kids, they are the first ones to want to help another struggling person. Many of them have made a commitment that when they become established healthy adults they will do everything they can to stop kids from getting hurt. Here in the Haggadah the first thing we say, is “if you need help, if you’re lacking anything, please come in because I have become intimately too close to pain to allow you to be hurt”. And together we are hopeful that “next year” we will be passed this.

Ma Nishtano:

As we said; on this night we are expressing how ‘nothing

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makes sense', it's all about the question. More questions and more questions and more questions.

Avodim Hoyinu:

We started as slaves, we suffered as slaves, we were at our lowest point physically emotionally and spiritually. But since we hadn't given up hope of salvation, we were ultimately offered redemption, and became the chosen people. We didn't need to be tzadikim in order to leave mitzraim, all we needed to be was hopeful, and to go along with the process.

Ma'aseh:

The chachomim mentioned, were going through harrowing times, needing to be under cover in fear of being caught observing the mitzvos, and yet they basked in the light of emunah, and hope that the darkness would end soon.

Boruch Hamokom:

Hashem is referred to as 'Makom' the 'place', the 'carrier' of all of existence. Hashem has space for you no matter

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who you are, no matter what you've been through. When Hashem gave us His Torah it was for each and every Yid; irrespective of the level of his ability to conform or perform.

The Four Sons:

note; even if you – probably mistakenly – assume you belong to the son that is often shunned, please note you are part of the 'bonim'. You are a dear child to Hashem who will never ever disown you as a child. Notice how the sons are not numbered in order; one, two, three, four, rather they are each referred to as 'echad' 'the one'; each and every child in a one and only cherished child. Each child is an itegral part of our Seder experience, each child is part of the national redemption that started 3335 years ago and will hopefully be complete very shortly. Even if you feel you are the rosho in the and you feel 'disconnected', note that this is indeed 'your perception' – הוציא את עצמו – and not Hashem's. Even if you have thought to deny the 'ikar', the main points of Yiddishkeit, we understand that you are speaking from pain, and we see straight through you. We will 'shut you up' namely,

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we won't take the words you are saying, since who you are, screams louder than anything you can say. And who you are, is an amazing child of Hashem going through such a hard time, wishing you were feeling better about yourself, and more hopeful about your future. We will even prove it to you. The real reshoim were not given an opportunity to leave Mitzraim, but you; sitting here with us at the Seder, part of the redemption, are clearly deserving of a brighter future (Pri Tzadik Pesach 8) .

If you feel 'speechless' – aino yodeah lishol – don't worry, we will do the talking for you. We understand you and your temporary limitations. Just hold on. Your inability to ask questions may come from a place of connection that is yet merely subconscious, and later in the Haggadah we will actually base our 'hope', and try to 'visualize' our own personal redemption – עשה ה' לי – from these words of encouragement offered to those who remain speechless.

Mitchiloh:

If you think that your spiritual absence will prevent you from deserving delivery from your affliction, well, let's

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learn some history. Avrohom Ovinu came from a family that practiced idolatry, and not only that, Avrohom Ovinu himself practiced idol worship for his first 48 years (Rambam). That's for our humble beginnings. It was Avrohom's environment and life situation that brought him to that place. What singled out Avrohom, was his quest for the truth. He paid dearly for his choices, it almost cost him his life, but he stayed strong. After many decades it paid off and he became the foundation of Klal Yisroel. In spite of this terrible 'low' start, Hashem beckoned us to draw near to Him. He chose us as His people, and taught us that even when we go through unimaginable pain and 'downs', we mustn't lose hope, ultimately Hashem will personally draw us back up from the abyss, and take us to where he wants us to be. This is the promise Hashem made to Avrohom Ovinu. Be patient – I'll redeem you, and it'll become apparent that it was all worthwhile!!

Vehi Sheomdo:

This message of hope has stood us in good stead through all our collective traumas, as well as our personal ones.

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There will always be perpetrators trying to strip the gift of life from us, but Hashem will ultimately deliver us from them and heal us.

Tzei Ulmad:

The depths of the following passages – one of the focal parts of the Haggadah – is one that demands that we ‘step out’ from within the dark place we find ourselves. We really find it hard to grasp on to hope, but let’s take a step out of our situations and allow ourselves the opportunity to connect to the inner workings of what’s really going on with us and around us.

Veyeiired Mitzraymo:

First and foremost, let’s note that Klal Yisroel thrive most during their times of duress. When the world was against them, their situation somehow brought them to greater heights. Never give up.

Vayoreiu:

In spite of the above; it hurts. Life sometimes feels and becomes impossible to bear. People scheme up against us,

they hurt us, they traumatize us. How will life continue this way?

Vanitzak:

When things cannot get any worse, all we can do is ‘scream, shout and cry’. Just make sure to ‘point a finger, and blame’ the one who is letting this all happen – Hashem. Not chas vesholom in a disrespectful way, or undermining way, rather in a pleading way. Say to Hashem; “I know it’s all You, only You could allow me to go through soooo much pain. I can’t anymore. Pleeese take me out of this darkness”.

Vayotzieinu:

Believe it or not; sooner or later we will see the fruit of our cries. We will feel that Hashem is personally holding the reigns of our redemption. We will suddenly feel Hashems warm caressing existence envelope us and bring us the healing we are so desperately waiting for. We will experience miracles in our lives, and everything will turn around.

Ani Velo Malach

Hashem could have easily done the tenth plague via some angel, and didn't need to – so to speak – come himself to do it. The Zohar teaches us that the 49th level of tumah in Mitzraim at the time would have stained even a malach! Hear that loud and clear. Hashem could not expect even an angel, to enter the 49th level of tumah without the risk of the malach steering off the derech! The Ohr Hachaim tells us that our generation – the pre Moshiach era – will stoop to the 50th level of tumah. Dear parents; so many of us are struggling with children who are having a hard time connecting to our core values, but please realize, that we are expecting our children to survive spiritually in a generation that even angels wouldn't manage. This is not an excuse, but should help us understand the tremendous challenges our youth are experiencing. Hashem has a well-planned strategy with and for these struggling kids. Don't be quick on the trigger. Big things are happening. Get advice from the right people on how to deal with it! And all of you struggling youth; Hashem understands your struggles and appreciates every little bit you do, and ultimately you will all shine, as you emerge ever stronger

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from the painful journey you are on.

Makos:

Not only will Hashem redeem us; he will show us how he noticed each and every bit of pain we went through. Even though Hashem allowed it to happen – for reasons we cannot not yet comprehend – but He will not allow the perpetrators to get away with it. Our journey of pain will ultimately become the revelation of law and justice where the ‘bad guys’ will get their due.

Dayenu:

Now that we are on our journey of recovery and redemption, let us ‘look’ for and appreciate every positive change in our lives. A close friend or family member who remembered to smile at us, or call to say Hi, a job opportunity, a warm caring healer and more. If we start looking for those heavenly pointers directing us away and out of our personal exiles, we will see so many of them. Let us be grateful for each and every one of them. It is to be expected that only by the end of this challenging yet rewarding journey out of the darkness, will our spiritual

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state become healthier. By that time Hashem will atone us and forgive us for all we committed under duress and trauma.

Pesach:

Whilst Hashem was punishing the wicked, he skipped the Yiddishe homes. It seems that had he not skipped them, they too would have gotten hurt from the final plague. Indeed, the spiritual state of Klal Yisroel still left a lot to be desired, nonetheless Hashem proclaims “I’m choosing you just because of who you are, you are mine forever”. Indeed, at that time Klal Yisroel expressed appreciation even for those ‘sons’ that would not manage to toe the line (Rashi Parshas Bo 12 27, Pri Tzadik Pesach 8).

Matzah:

We started the evening with the matzah being ‘broken’ but now the brokenness has ‘meaning’ and ‘purpose’ and is the icon of our redemption.

Maror:

Now that the golus has meaning, we can thank Hashem

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by and with the bitter moror. It all fits into place.

This doesn't mean we have all the answers, and life sometimes seems totally messed up, but we now know that it all fits into some heavenly orchestrated order, that will ultimately triumph leaving none of us behind.

Bechol Dor:

At this point we can start to see the light at the end of the tunnel, and visualize and imagine ourselves experiencing personal and collective redemption.

Lefikoch:

Now that we have come on such a deep and profound journey all we can say is “Thank You Hashem”. Thank you for my journey, thank you for staying by my side whilst I was going through it. Thank you for never leaving me.

Halel [part 1]:

With this we can start singing joyfully to Hashem who chose us to become subservient to Him and His plans.

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Thank You Hashem for taking us out of Mitzraim.

Asher Go'olonu:

Whenever we say ‘Thank You Hashem’ we must always add ‘Please Hashem’ [otherwise it would sound like, “Thanks, and I don’t need you anymore”], so we ask Hashem to continue giving us reasons to rejoice.

Matzah

Now that we are feeling on a high; feeling ready to embrace and internalize the amazing place we have reached, the best way to digest it all is by eating the holy Matzah infused with Emunah that can carry us for the whole coming year. Let the matzah happen to you. It will! Even if you don’t feel its effect right away; as with any medicine, give it a chance, the healing will happen. [Don’t forget that the healing starts with the first dose, but continuing for seven days is surely conducive to further strengthening our connection to Hashem and to life’s journey]. Sit [lean] back and take in the experience.

Shulchon Oruch

Then comes the lavish meal, fit for kings, which indeed we have become. We have not become related to Royalty. We have an eternal inextinguishable relationship with the king of all kings! We mean something to the Creator of the entire universe! That's something to feast over.

And believe it or not; we're actually in the middle of Hallel! This is not a regular meal, this is a feast where we euphorically wine and dine basking in the ecstatic light of eternity. Where physical pleasures and spiritual one meet, merge and blend.

Tzofun

In order that the taste of 'Matzah' with all its hidden properties should stay in our mouths, be finish our lavish Hallel-meal with a final kezayis of matzah. Cherish its taste and texture, it'll come to good use for the upcoming year.

Halel [Part 2]

Kos Shel Eliyohu

There is a fifth cup, which possibly corresponds to the fifth child, the one who didn't make it to the Seder. The disconnected child.

Dearest parents, I'd like to share a profound message, on behalf of Eliyohu Hanovi. One day before the coming of Moshiach, Eliyohu Hanovi must come and he has a job to do, without which Moshiach cannot possibly appear. Each and every Yiddishe child must and will be brought back to the comforting embrace of a well-represented Yiddishkeit. Before that Moshiach will not come. Holy parents; Eliyohu Hanovi will not go out to all the 'hangouts' and perform miracles that will inspire everyone to 'come back'. No. He will meet with all us parents and beg us 'bring your children back home' not just physically but also conceptually (Rashi Malach 3 24). It is incumbent upon us parents to embrace each and every one of our children unconditionally. What we as parents can do for our child even Eliyohu Hanovi can't.

Halel

We now continue Halel, but not merely as a ‘thanks giving’ for bringing us this far, rather as a catalyst carrying us – through hope – to the final end of all sorrows and trouble, with the coming of Moshiach (Yerushalmi Megilah 2 1).

We can finally appreciate that ‘everything’ is ‘in order’ [that’s the message of the Halel (Megilah 17a)]

Nishmas

Nishmas is an added and deeper expression of gratitude for our having been salvaged from Mitzraim (Tur OC 281), this is on a ‘Neshomo’ level, transcending life’s weekday experiences.

Nirtzah

This is the take away! Everything about us in Hashems eyes is ‘pleasing’ ‘accepted’ ‘desired’. We are everything Hashem wants. It’s all about us! It has more to do with who we now, than what we ‘do’!

This image of ourselves will propel us to ‘want’ to make

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Hashem happy. After such an evening, we will wake up the next morning – that's if we managed to fall asleep – wanting to diligently do the Mitzvos to the best of our abilities, and conform with all the values of the Torah, to the best of our abilities.

Don't expect this high to last forever. The night's experience is a gift given to each and every yid, no matter where or in what state. Within twenty-four hours you can expect the 'high' to recede; but we will be prepared for the most rewarding 49 days of preparation for receiving the Torah – but this time, on a totally different level.

רשימת החיבורים שיצאו לאור בס"ד על ידינו

- קיצור הלכות תפלין (תשנ"ט) - בהסכמת הג"ר יהודה אריה הלוי דינר שליט"א.
חוקת תמיד - עמ"ס תמיד (תשס"ה) - בהסכמת ראש הישיבה הג"ר נתן צבי פינקל זצוק"ל, ועוד.
הדרך עלן - מדריך לקניית ארבעת המינים (תשס"ה) - בהסכמת הג"ר שלמה זלמן אולמן והג"ר אשר זעליג וייס שליט"א.
עריכת השולחן - עזר לניהול ליל הסדר (תשס"ו) - כנ"ל.
במצותיו חפץ מאד - מצוות הנוהגות בזמן הזה לאם ולבת [מספר המצוות הקצר] (תשס"ו).
ספר חובת הלבבות המבואר - שער התשובה (תשס"ח) - בהסכמת מו"ר ר' ישראל אליהו ויינטרויב זצוק"ל.
מצות כתיבת ספר תורה (תש"ע).
ברך בניך - על תפלת השל"ה (תש"ע) - בהסכמת הג"ר יהודה ליב וויטלער שליט"א.
ברית יצחק - עיונים בדברי חז"ל בנוגע לליל ברית מילה (תש"ע).
להחיות רוח ולב - הלכות אלמנה ויתום לא תענון (תשע"א) - בהסכמת הג"ר מאיר קסלר שליט"א.
אני מאמין - י"ג עיקרי האמונה (תשע"ג) - בהסכמת הג"ר ברוך דוב פוברסקי שליט"א.
כבוא השמ"ש - מוסר להתעוררות הלב קודם תקיעת שופר לרש"ש (תשע"ג).
פרשגן אגרתא - על אגרת הרמב"ן (תשע"ד).
ביאור על אגדות הגר"א - מס' מגילה (תשע"ה) - בהסכמת הג"ר דוד כהן שליט"א.
יקרא דחיי ודשכבי (תשע"ו)
בנסוע הארון - על 'בריך שמייה' (תשע"ז)
חיזוק מהוזה"ק פרשת המרגלים (תשע"ז)
כתבנו לחיים - על דרשת מהר"ח לסליחות - (תשע"ז)
תינוק שנשבר - בדרכי הגישה לנערים מתמודדים - (תשע"ט)
קבלת התורה ואהבת תורה - תנחומה פרשת נח - (תשע"ט)
המגיפה בתורה - (תש"פ)
קצירת האומר - מסכת שבת - (תש"פ)
מאחורי הדף [באנגלית]
ספר חובת הלבבות המבואר - שער הבטחון
ותשר דבורה - על ספר תומר דבורה [עם ספר 'תיקון המידות']
חיים של תורה (תשפ"ג)
הגדה של פסח - והשיב (תשפ"ג)