

THE PESACH

HAGGADAH

and my journey through it

By

Yekutiel Atkins

My Grateful thanks to the Holy One Blessed is He who has kept me
alive unto this Season

The Guide to the Haggadah is dedicated

To my wife Flora who has been an inspiration to me for all of our
married life and a true helpmeet and who has encouraged me in all that I
have done.

To my parents Harry and Rachel Atkins to my Zaida, Baruch Elya and
Booba, Chai yenna who introduced me to life and to yiddishkeit

To my Parents in Law, Sam and Sara Marks from whom I learnt much
by their example

To my children and grandchildren from whom I learnt much more

To my brothers and sister

To my teachers and to all those from whom I learnt anything

To the 120 generations of my ancestors from Abraham onwards to the
present day who took seriously the command

“and you shall teach it to your children”

and to all those unnamed people who have had an influence upon me

My thanks also to my son Mordechai who researched the sources of the
quotations and concepts

*How goodly are thy tents O Jacob
Thy dwellings O Israel (Num Ch. 24 V.5)
How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed,
and how shall I execrate whom the Lord has not execrated
For from the tops of the rocks I see him
And from the hill I behold him
Lo it is a people that shall dwell alone
And not be reckoned among the Nations. (Num. Ch. 23 V.8-9)*

From Balaam's blessing
of the Children of Israel
against his will

And you shall teach it diligently to your Children
(Deut Ch.6 V.7)

Moses received the Torah at Sinai
And passed it to Joshua
Who passed it the elders who passed it

To the prophets, who passed it
To The men of the Great Assembly who passed it
To Simon the Just who passed it
To Antigonos of Socho who passed it
To Yose benYoezer and Yose benYochanon who passed it
To Joshua ben Perachya and Nittai the Arbelite who passed it
To Judah benTabbai and Simeon benShetach who passed it
To Shemayahu and Avtalion who passed it
To Hillel and Shamai (the Ethics of the Fathers Ch.1)

Who
passed it on to their pupils
who passed it on to their pupils
who passed it on to their pupils
who passed it to our grandparents
who passed it on to our parents
who passed it on to us

and
We must pass it on to our children
Who must pass it to their children our grandchildren
Who must pass it on to their children
until the end of days

Glossary of Sources researched by Mordechai Atkins

Torah

Gen	Genesis
Ex.	Exodus
Lev.	Leviticus
Num.	Numbers
Deut.	Deuteronomy

Bible:

Chron	Chronicles
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Isa	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Josh	Joshua
Joel	Joel
Lam	Lamentations
Meg.Esth	Book of Esther
Mic	Micah
Ps.	Psalms
Sam.	Samuel
Zech.	Zechariah

Talmud

Arach	Arachin
Ber.	Berachot
Bikk	Bikkurim
Kidd,	Kiddushin
Makk	Makkot
Pes	Pesachim
San.	Sanhedrin
Shabb	Shabbat
Shav	Shavuot
Sot	Sotah
Ta'an	Ta'anith
Eth	Ethics of the Fathers (Pirke Avoth)

Commentaries

Maim	Maimonides
Rambam	Maimonides
Ramban	Nachmanides
Rashi	Rabbi Shlomo Itzchaki
Tosefoth	on the Talmud

Codes of Law

Hilch Tshuva	Maimonides Laws of Repentance
Shulchan Aruch	Halacha derived from the Talmud compiled by Joseph Caro
Or Ch	Orach Chaim Section of the Shulchan Aruch, that deals with daily life, prayers, Shabbat, Festivals etc. also found in
Mish Ber.	Mishna Berura commentary on the Orach Chaim by the Hafetz Chaim, Rabbi Israel Meir Hakohen

Midrash

Midrash Tanchuma

The lay out of the Haggadah

Translations follow immediately after the Hebrew

הא לחמא עניא

“This is the poor bread”

Instructions are written in Italics.

Fill the first cup of wine

My commentary is separated from the text by a line

oo

and written

Maror is eaten to remind us of the bitter things that happened in Egypt

Quotations are written

. ***Hear** O Israel, the Lord is our God the Lord the One and Only*

(Based on the translation in “Art Scroll”)

Sources such as Exodus Chapter 20 Verses 1-16

(Ex. Ch. 20 V.1-16)

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FOREWORD

Some 3000 years ago, an event occurred whose reverberations have continued to the present day. This event was the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt and their escape from slavery. The slavery the Jews endured, and the subsequent Exodus, is indelibly etched into the psyche of the Jewish people. It permeates the Torah, our liturgy, and not only the Festival of Passover, which is the subject of this commentary, but the Shabbat and every Festival in the Jewish calendar.

It has a profound effect on our religion, on our relationship with our fellow Jews and our relationship with other peoples. It shaped our morality, our humanity, and the way we react with and treat each other. It entered so deeply into the subconscious of the whole Jewish Nation, that much of our day to day activities are unknowingly and unthinkingly shaped by it. It is no accident that Jews seem to be in the forefront of those seeking to better the lot of those less fortunate than themselves.

However the Exodus and freedom from slavery was not a reason in itself. It was only the beginning of the story. What does it matter if a group of slaves escaped from their masters. Who cares if an insignificant tribe living in a tiny corner of the imposing and glorious Egyptian Empire 3000 years ago, slipped over the border into the desert.

The Exodus was to lead exactly seven weeks later to the event that was a turning point in the direction that world civilization would take. The Exodus was the start of the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the forefathers of the Jewish people, that their descendants would inherit the Land of Canaan. (Gen. Ch. 35 V. 12). But first they had to receive the rules that they were to live by and that event at Mt. Sinai seven weeks after the escape was the event that changed the world forever.

This event heralded a new era in man's relationship to his fellow man. At first, it was hardly noticed, but as time went on the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt and the two Tablets of Stone they received some seven weeks after that dash for freedom, had an increasing effect on the world. Today because of that event, the Jewish people for better or for worse, are seldom out of the front pages of the world's newspapers and the television screens.

If the Exodus had not happened, there would not be a Jewish people today, there probably would not be democracy in the world, there would certainly have been no Christianity or Islam. The way of thinking especially towards others would perhaps have been different, There probably would not have been the idea of Hillel's "Golden Rule" "Not to do to others what you would not have others do to you". In short the world would have been an entirely different place. It is true that there is still evil and evil people in the world but now because of what happened 3000 years ago we know that there is a morality and a decency towards which we must strive.

That event, we celebrate during the Festival of Passover, more usually called by its Hebrew name 'Pesach'. Probably no other home event has a more honoured and loved place in the Jewish Home than the Passover Seder which brings in the Festival and probably no other Jewish book has such an honoured and loved place in the Jewish home as the 'Passover Haggadah'.

Together with Rosh Hashanah (the New Year) and Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement), Pesach is part of the glue that binds the Jewish people together no matter how tenuous is the individual's commitment to the tenets of Judaism.

At the same time, to many people, the Passover Haggadah presents many difficulties, particularly to those whose attitude to the Seder is more than that of a slap up meal in the company of friends and relations. The Passover Haggadah has many facets; it is a book of history, study, prayers and hopes.

The Commandment, 'Mitzvah' in Hebrew, to celebrate the Passover, is contained in Exodus Ch.12 V.1-20. It is one of the three pilgrim festivals during which the Jewish people were enjoined to travel to the Temple at Jerusalem for its celebration. The others are, Shavuoth, the Feast of Weeks, the festival celebrated seven weeks after Passover which among other events commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai and Succoth, Tabernacles, celebrated in the autumn after Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

On Passover, in Temple times, the main event was the "Passover Offering", consisting of a lamb or young goat, for each family which was slaughtered and eaten as part of the meal at the Seder. If the lamb or goat was more than enough for a family, several families, joined together to share in the meal. This could only take place within the city of Jerusalem, all the celebrants had to be in a state of ritual purity, and the males had to have been circumcised.

The Torah tells us that Passover is to be celebrated throughout the generations in the spring. (Ex. Ch. 23 V. 15). We are commanded to tell our children what transpired in Egypt (Ex.Ch. 12. V. 26-27 et al) so long ago, to discuss and to instruct not only the children but also each and every one of us, of the Exodus from Egypt, our escape from slavery and about the miracles and wonders that happened there. The Divine direction of those events, and the beginnings, of the welding together of the Jewish people as a nation. The Haggadah says *"Even if we are all wise, if we are all clever, if we are all old, and even if we are all learned in the Torah, it would still be our duty to tell the story of the going out of Egypt"*.

We are commanded *"And you shall relate to your children on that day"* (Ex Ch. 13 V 8), and that is precisely what we do on the Seder Night. As we recite the Haggadah during the Seder, we relate and recount to, and discuss with, the children and all those present, the story of our deliverance on the anniversary of the day the Exodus from Egypt occurred.

If we examine what we say, we will uncover and unfold the whole story and purpose of the Jewish people, to serve God and obey His commandments, and thus to be a *"Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation"* (Ex Ch. 19.V. 6). And so thereby impart to the nations of the world the knowledge and acknowledgement of the Almighty as Creator and Regulator of the Universe and everything that is in it.

However, the Commandment does not tell us what to say, or how to say it. To help us, the Haggadah, was compiled by the Sages and Rabbis many years ago. It has been hallowed by recitation throughout the ages and has been accepted by all traditions as the means of "Telling The Story" which is indeed what the word Haggadah means. It contains many allusions, quotes from the Bible and Talmud, quotes from sources which are today unknown, prayers, blessings, instructions, children's songs and an altogether seeming hotchpotch through which we thread our way during the Seder.

Each concept indeed in some cases just a word in the Haggadah triggers an aspect of Jewish practice and philosophy in much the same way that a student's notes will remind him of a whole lecture. This interpretation of the Haggadah, in all trepidation and humility will endeavour to explain some of those allusions and try and reveal some of the concepts behind them. It does not pretend to be erudite but tries to explain in simple language my own understanding during its recitation of our past our present and perhaps our future. This joins those countless editions of the Haggadah and commentaries published throughout the centuries which help to enlighten us about our long history as a people and perhaps ourselves.

Hopefully this guide will strike a spark, take the reader further up the road of Jewish knowledge and study, and make Passover and the Seder even more meaningful.

Just one more word, although I have taken great care, no Halachic, that is Jewish law, inferences should be drawn from it. Any Halachic questions should be addressed to a competent Rabbinical authority.

Y.A

INTRODUCTION

Pesach or Passover has another name in the Torah, the Festival of Matzoth. It is also called in the liturgy 'The Season of Our Freedom'. It celebrates and marks the Jewish people's freedom from 210 years of slavery and domination in Egypt some 3,000 years ago. We will discuss more about "Freedom" later on in the comments on the Four Sons.

The Torah, that is the Five Books of Moses, also known as The Pentateuch, is the story of the Jewish People and the Commandments given to them, from their beginning with the birth of Abraham until the eve of their entrance to the Land of Israel. Prior to this, however it opens with a brief account of the Creation of the Universe. This account is not meant to be scientific treatise, as our Rabbis say, the Bible is written "in the language of men" *. There we learn from the story of Adam and Eve that we are all descended from those two first people, which makes all of mankind, related one to the other

We are introduced to Abraham, (Gen Ch.11 V. 26) who, while not the first to come to an understanding of the One God, who is the 'Fount of All' and the 'Creator of the Universe', but whose character and steadfastness makes him the one chosen by God. His descendants, the Children of Israel, - the Jews, were to be the instrument by which the peoples of the world were to be introduced to the 'One God' and hopefully the understanding and final realization of the brotherhood of man

The Bible tells us that Abraham was told by God to leave *"Your land, your birthplace and your father's house and to go to a place which I will show you"*. (Gen. Ch. 12 V 1). He was also told that God would "Bless those who Blessed him" (Abraham). God also revealed to Abraham, in what is known as the "Brith bein Ha'betarim" – the "Covenant between the Pieces", (Gen. Ch. 15.), that his descendants were to spend 400 years in exile in a foreign land. The Rabbis calculated that this exile started with the birth of Abraham's son Isaac so that the actual time spent in Egypt was only 210 years. The question arises why did Abraham's descendants have to spend any time in exile at all? After all the Land of Canaan was promised to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. Ch.13 V. 14-17.) why not start there and then.

The answer given by the Torah (Gen. Ch. V.15 v16) is simple. Abraham left Haran (Gen. Ch. 12. V. 5), the city in which his father had settled. *'To go to the Land which I will show you'*, (Gen Ch. 12 V.1). Taking with him Sara, his wife, Lot his nephew and the people he had made, that is converted to the recognition of the Creator, the one and only God. When he was gone, would their faith be strong enough to continue in his way? Abraham's only son at that time was Ishmael the son of Hagar his Egyptian concubine, who was not a member of Abraham's own tribe that had originated in Ur of the Chaldees.

Much later Abraham was to send his servant Eliezer to Haran, where his immediate family still lived, to bring back for Isaac his son by his wife Sara, through whom the Jewish people are descended, a wife, Rebecca. (Gen. Ch. 24). Later still Jacob, Isaac's son, also went back to the family in Haran to find a wife from his ancestral family. (Gen. Ch. 28 V. 2.) He eventually came back with four, (Gen. Ch. 29) Rachel Leah Bilha and Zilpah.

Ishmael, Abraham's other son by his concubine; Hagar married an Egyptian, as his mother was, (Gen. Ch. 21. V. 21). Of Isaac's twin sons Esau and Jacob, Esau also married out of the tribe by marrying two local Hittite women, Judith and Basemath (Gen. Ch. 26. V. 34-35) much to the great sorrow of his parents thus forfeiting the right of inheriting the mantle of Abraham and of becoming one of the fathers of, and the ancestor of, the Children of Israel. Israel was the additional name given to Jacob by God, (Gen. Ch. 34 V. 10).

By marrying into a people of idol worshippers there was a great danger of being influenced by their wives and leaving the path chosen by Abraham. This showed the necessity of Abraham's descendants leaving Canaan and going into exile. By so doing and by being strangers in a strange land, they stuck together and married among themselves. In

*see Appendix

the end they became enslaved by the people among whom they lived which helped to keep them together. Keeping their own laws and customs they were less influenced by the idolatry of the indigenous population.

Had they stayed in Canaan the opposite might have taken place. Abraham and Isaac were honoured by the people among whom they lived. However we see from the story of Dinah, (Gen. Ch. 34) how easy it is to be seduced by the pleasant but licentious and idolatrous life of Canaan. It was essential therefore if God's promise was to come to pass, that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were to be a special people devoted to the one true Creator of the Universe that the children of Israel had to be sent away, so that they would grow into a cohesive people and not disappear by assimilation.

Because of the famine in the land of Canaan, Jacob and his sons and their families went down to Egypt, (Gen. Ch. 46), where at first they were treated with honour for the sake of Joseph, Jacob's son who had become the viceroy and the most powerful man in Egypt after Pharaoh (Gen. Ch. 41 V 39-44). The account of Joseph being taken to Egypt, his trials and tribulations and his rise to power, the going down to Egypt by Jacob with his children, the enslavement of the Children of Israel, and the story of the Exodus, are told in the book of Genesis from Chapter 37 to the end of the book, and in the first 17 chapters of the book of Exodus.

The Exodus from Egypt, begins with the first commandment or "Mitzvah" to the Jewish people as a people, and is the commandment to mark and celebrate the Rosh Chodesh (The New Month marked by the appearance of the New Moon) of the first month Nisan. (Ex. Ch. 12. V. 2). Nisan is the month in which the first Pesach and the Exodus occurred This first commandment addressed to the Children of Israel as a group, is the beginning of the history of the Jewish people as a people. Indeed in the special prayers recited during Passover, Passover is called "the Season of our Freedom".

The Jewish people have been scattered far and wide, at first, after the destruction of the first Temple when we were exiled to Babylon for some 70 years until, under Ezra and Nehemiah we were able to make Aliyah and return to the Promised Land. And then again with the second Exile, after the rebellion against the Romans when the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed nearly 2000 years ago. During this long night of dispersion, we as a people experienced humiliation, pogroms, and persecution, forced conversion and the greatest horror of all, the Holocaust. The remembrance of our Exodus from Egypt, the subsequent gathering at the foot of Mount Sinai where we received the Torah (Ex Ch 20), the celebration during the centuries of the Passover and the recitation of the Haggadah, kept us together as a Free (in our hearts) people, proud and subservient to no one, but the God of Israel.

The commandment to celebrate the Passover Festival is given in Exodus Chap.12 V. 1-20. These verses contain several commandments in connection with how the festival should be celebrated. Each family was to take a lamb or young goat for the Passover Offering, which was to be the main part of the ceremonial meal. Before the lamb could be slaughtered, we were commanded to remove from our possession all Chametz (leaven) (Ex. Ch. 34 V. 25). If a lamb was too much for one family, two or more families should join together.

It is to be celebrated from the evening of the 14th day of Nisan, which was to be calculated by the elders after deciding which day was the 'New Moon'. They *"should eat it with Matzah and bitter herbs"* (Num. Ch. 9 V. 11) .The Passover was to be kept *"throughout the generations forever"* (Ex. Ch. 12 V 14). For the seven days (eight outside Israel), no "chametz" was to be seen or found (in your possession) and certainly not eaten. (Ex. Ch. 12. V 19). In Ex. Ch. 12 V. 26-27 and in several other places the Jewish people are commanded to teach their children throughout the generations the commandments and in particular those relating to the Festival of Passover.

The Seder is the most outstanding ceremony of the Festival of Passover. The Seder meaning "Order," of the recitation of the Haggadah and the festive meal takes place in our

homes on the first and (excepting in Israel) second night of the festival today as it has done from the time of Joshua's and the Children of Israel's entry into the Land of Israel. (Josh. Ch. 5 V. 10). Not in the same way however, as without the Temple we cannot offer the Passover Offering, which in Temple times was the central part of the Festival. The Seder is the climax of the preparation for Passover, which has gone on from the end of the last Passover a year ago, with the production of Matzoth and other specially prepared food stuffs.

As mentioned above the Torah says that we are not to eat "Chametz" during the seven (eight days outside Israel) days of Passover, nor to have it in our possession or to own it. (Ex Ch. 12 V. 15).

We must now define what is Chametz.. Chametz is the result of any of the five species of grain, wheat, barley, spelt, oats and rye, ground or whole, being in contact with water for more than 18 minutes without being baked in the oven. This of course includes drinks that are made from grain such as whisky and beer and many others. Chametz is not the process of fermentation in which case wine would not be permitted.

Matzoth are made from dough made by mixing a special flour that prior to being ground has been specially watched and guarded so as not to come into contact with water before being processed, with water and with no other additive, even salt. Special supervision ensures that the dough from which Matzoth is made is speedily processed so that no more than 18 minutes elapses from when the dough is mixed and rolled out into matzoth until it is placed in the oven. Ordinary flour that is bought in a store or supermarket is Chametz as before being ground, the wheat kernels are soaked in water for ease in milling.

In modern times, we purchase many foods already processed and prepared. Even with reading the lists of ingredients on the label, how many of us know what is put in our food, which we buy so trustingly and eat. How many of us know what are the additives the colours, taste enhancers, emulsifiers, anti-oxidants, hydrolyzed protein and other chemicals too numerous to mention many of which are made from chametz products that are put into manufactured and processed food, let alone what is their origin.

How much more so should we be sure, that all food and drink for Passover including wine, spirits and liqueurs, even seemingly simple foods like sugar, tea, coffee, salt and spices, should not contain additives, which unknown to ourselves may be included, perhaps to stop them clogging or to enable them to "run" smoothly, that are 'Chametz'. It is essential therefore that Matzoth and all processed food and drink that is bought to be consumed during Passover are specially baked, cooked or otherwise prepared, under the supervision and endorsed as "Kosher for Passover" by a reliable Rabbinical authority, and carries the appropriate "Hechsher" (guarantee of fitness for use during Passover).. This is so as to ensure that no "Chametz" is included in the process or contents or additives of the product and is necessitated by the strictness of the Mitzvah of, not eating, not owning, and not even seeing on our property the slightest vestige of "Chametz".

To many people, these regulations may seem unnecessary hair splitting, but Jewish food laws, kashrut and the observance of the Sabbath and the Festivals have been the bonds that have kept the Jewish people together and helped us withstand the attacks both spiritual and physical that has been our lot throughout the ages.

To make sure that no chametz is owned or seen or found during Passover the conscientious housewife begins her preparations immediately after Purim which takes place a month before the Passover. Gradually every room, every closet, every cupboard, every pocket is turned out and cleaned until on the night before the Seder the house is ready. Pots and pans, cutlery, china and glassware have all been replaced by utensils specially kept from one year to the next, for the Passover. How to make sure that ovens, microwaves, gas burners and other kitchen equipment may be made fit for use over Passover, one must ask a recognized Rabbinical authority

The Torah tells us that Passover must be celebrated in the spring. (Ex.Ch. 13 V. 4). The Jewish calendar is lunar, based on the cycle of the moon around the earth. The moon takes

about 29 days and 12 hours to circle the earth. With a year of twelve months, the year is therefore about eleven days short of the solar year which is recorded by the secular calendar, and which is based on the earth circling the sun. To keep both periods synchronized so that Passover always falls in the spring, 7 times during each period of 19 years an extra month is added so that in every 19-year period, we have a 13-month year 7 times. This extra month is always the month before Passover and is called the Second Adar

The Torah tells us that the Korban Pesach, the Passover Offering, is to be brought on the 14th of Nisan in the afternoon, and that day strictly speaking, is the Festival of Passover. The Bible calls what we nowadays call Passover the “Festival of Matzoth”. The Festival of Matzoth as mentioned above is celebrated on the 15th of the Hebrew month of Nisan., As the Jewish day begins at sunset, the Seder night is on the evening of the 14th of Nissan, which is the beginning of the 15th of Nissan and is when, in Temple times the Passover Offering was eaten.

There are therefore, two separate although joined festivals. One the Festival of Passover that is the 14th of Nisan in which we are to bring the Passover Offering, which today we cannot do since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, some two thousand years ago. And the Festival of Matzoth, which starts on the night of the 14th which is the beginning of the 15th, the Seder night. The festival of Matzoth lasts seven days in Israel and eight days in the rest of the world. During this time we are not permitted as mentioned above, to eat any food which contains chametz.

The Torah tells us that the Passover Offering may not be brought with chametz in our possession. (Ex.Ch. 34.V. 25) so today, from the time that the Passover offering would have been brought in Temple times, we may not have chametz in our possession. This means that we have to remove all chametz from our houses by the ceremony of B'dikat Chametz. This takes place on the night of the 13th of Nissan that is the evening of the day before the Passover Offering would have been brought and the night before the Seder night. Any chametz found during the ceremony together with all other chametz in our possession including that left over from breakfast, is burned the following morning.

All these dates may sound complicated. To simplify matters if for example, the 15th of Nisan, Passover is a Tuesday, the Seder night; the beginning of the 15th of Nissan is on Monday night. B'dikat Chametz would take place on Sunday night and the chametz would be burned (Biar Chametz) on Monday morning at about 10.00 a.m. The actual time is usually announced by the local religious authorities. About an hour before this, we must stop eating chametz.

The searching, “B'dika” is done as follows. After nightfall, one makes the appropriate blessing below, and with a lighted candle (some authorities permit using a flashlight) the husband (or someone else) examines every nook and cranny in the house. With his wife and children in solemn procession, he gathers up any chametz that he finds. To make sure that he finds some so that he does not make an unnecessary blessing, it is customary to place small pieces of bread in various places so that he can find them. Many people use 10 pieces of bread so that a known number can be collected and many wrap them in paper so that no crumbs escape. If the Seder night is on Saturday night this is done on the previous Thursday night and the Chametz is burned on Friday morning.

The following is the blessing made before the search "B'dikat Chametz"

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל בְּעוֹר
חֲמֵץ

Blessed are You O Lord our God King of the Universe who has sanctified us by His commandments and has commanded us to remove the chametz

After the search, whoever is making the search, makes this declaration. Although here it is in Aramaic, the person conducting the search must understand the meaning of the words

כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמֵא דְאֶכָּא בְּרִשׁוּתֵי דְלָא חֲמִיתָהּ וְדְלָא בְּעֵרְתָהּ וְדְלָא יִדְעָנָא
לִיה לְבִטְל וְלִהוּי הֶפְקֵר כְּעֵפְרָה דְאַרְעָא

The translation of the declaration.

May all Chametz in my possession which I have neither seen or removed be annulled and considered as the dust of the earth

This declaration is made in Aramaic the language of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael when the Haggadah was first compiled. However, as with most prayers or declarations this may be and even should be made in a language that one understands. The chametz that he has collected together with all chametz that still remains in the house is burned the following morning. To make sure that the house and kitchen are kept free of chametz, it is forbidden to eat bread or any other chametz products after about 9.30 a.m. of the 14th Nisan that is the morning of the Seder night (in our example Monday morning). The exact time is ascertained by the local Rabbinical authority. After approximately a further hour, all the remaining chametz is burned and another declaration "Biur Chametz" the 'clearing out of the Chametz' is made annulling all chametz in the owner's possession.

After it is burnt we make the following declaration the meaning of which must be understood

כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמֵא דְאֶכָּא בְּרִשׁוּתֵי דְחִזְתִּיתָהּ וְדְלָא חִזְתִּיתָהּ דְבְּעֵרְתָהּ וְדְלָא
בְּעֵרְתָהּ לְבִטְל וְלִהוּי הֶפְקֵר כְּעֵפְרָה דְאַרְעָא.

The translation of the declaration.

May all Chametz in my possession which I have seen or not seen which I have removed or not removed be annulled and considered as the dust of the earth.

If the Seder night is on Saturday night that is Motze Shabbat, the Biur is done on Thursday night and the Chametz burned on Friday morning. In that case one should be most careful about eating chametz on the Friday night. On Shabbat morning the Synagogue service starts much earlier than usual. One should be careful with the chametz at the morning meal which should be finished at the time when we are to stop eating the chametz. The rest of the chametz is disposed of.

Because we may not own any chametz over Passover and people may be reluctant to dispose of valuable chametz items such as, bottles of whisky, liqueurs, and canned products etc, the Rabbis instituted a special procedure called "selling the chametz". (Tosefot-Pes Ch. 2). This is done as follows, one locks away, or sets aside a cupboard in which all the chametz to be sold is placed and sealed. During the week or so before Passover, a declaration of this chametz is made to the local Rabbi who becomes your agent. He in turn sells your chametz to a non-Jew. After Pesach the non-Jew does not take up the option of the purchase and the goods revert to the previous owner*. This transaction is complicated and must be legal in every respect and therefore should ONLY be done through a recognized Rabbinical authority.

*Some people are confused believing that if some religious obligation is forbidden to a Jew it should likewise be forbidden to a non-Jew. The Eydoth and Chukim commandments, which will be explained later, only apply to the Jewish people and non-Jews are not obligated to keep them. For example, a non-Jew has no restrictions on what he may eat (except he may not eat a limb from a living animal) or on work that he does on Shabbat.

However, we may not yet eat any Matzah until the meal at the Seder so that the Matzah we eat then is eaten with zest and appetite. Fruit, eggs, fish and other foods may be eaten providing that they do not contain chametz. There is a further prohibition among Ashkenazi communities, and some Sephardi ones, not to eat rice or legumes (peas beans etc) or any derivation thereof such as Soya oil etc. during Passover

As is well known certain types of 'work', known by the technical term "M'lacha" (the word "work" is not an accurate translation for M'lacha. perhaps a better definition is 'creative work') is forbidden on the Sabbath (Shabbat) and the Festivals. However, the Festivals differ from Shabbat in that while on Shabbat cooking is not permitted, on Festivals falling on a weekday, cooking and the preparation of food is permitted (how this is done should be ascertained from a reliable Rabbinical authority). Nevertheless, one may not cook on a Festival for the following day, (in these days of freezers and refrigerators of course, much of the cooking could be done previously).

If therefore one of the days of any Festival, not only the Passover, occurs on a Friday it is prohibited to cook on that day for the Shabbat. To enable us to prepare for the Shabbat, we symbolically mix the Festival with the Shabbat by making an "Eruv Tavshilin". This is done by taking, on the eve of the Festival, i.e. on the Wednesday or the Thursday, a Matzah (on other festivals of course bread may be used) and a cooked food, fish, meat or hardboiled egg making the following blessing.

פְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל מִצְוֹת
 יְרוּב

Blessed are You O Lord our God King of the Universe who has sanctified us with His commandments and has given us the commandment of the Eruv

After the blessing we make the following declaration, we must understand what this declaration means

בְּהֵדִין עֲרוּבָה יְהִי שָׂרָא לְנָא לְאַפּוּיִי וּלְבִשׁוּלִי וּלְצִלוּיִי וּלְאַטְמוּיִי וּלְאַפּוּקִי
 וּלְאַדְלוּקִי שְׂרָגָא וּלְתַקְנָא וּלְמַעַבְדָּא כֹּל צְרָכְנָא מִיּוֹמָא טָבָא לְשַׁבְּתָא לָנוּ
 וּלְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַדְרִים בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת

Through this Eruv may it be permitted to us to bake cook keep food warm kindle lights and do anything necessary on the festival in preparation for the Shabbat for us and for all who live in this city.

Before the onset of the Festival the time of which can be ascertained by reference to a current Jewish calendar or local authority, it naturally differs according to the part of the world one is in, there are several things that must be prepared.

Obviously sufficient Matzoth, wine and other foods (all with a recognized Hechsher) have been bought beforehand. One should use "Shemurah Matzah" (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 17) that is made from flour which has been ground from wheat that was supervised from the time it was reaped, for the whole of the festival "Shemurah Matzah" should at least be used on the night of the Seder.

One should calculate that each participant in the Seder will require four to five sheets of machine made Matzoth or three to four of the hand made Matzoth. There should be sufficient 'Kosher-for-Pesach wine or grape juice, for those who prefer it, for each of the participants in the Seder to have four glasses. The four glasses of wine represent the four words expressing the redemption of the Children of Israel, as related in Exodus Ch 6 V 6-7.

“Thus say to the Children of Israel I am God and I will TAKE YOU OUT from under the burdens of Egypt, I will DELIVER you from their slavery, and I will REDEEM you with an outstretched arm and with great punishing judgments. And I will TAKE YOU TO ME for a people, and I will be to you a God and you will get to know that I am your God who brings you out from under the burdens of Egypt”. Verse 8 continues “And I will BRING you to the Land (of Israel) concerning which I lifted up My Hand to give it to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob I will give it to you as an inheritance I am the Lord”.

All the Rabbis agree that the first four, "take you out, deliver, redeem, and take you to me", are the four declarations and promises of redemption which are commemorated by the 4 cups of wine, However some authorities consider that the BRINGING of the Children of Israel to the Holy Land is also a declaration of redemption and say that we need 5 cups of wine. To accommodate this, we have another full cup on the table which we call the cup of Elijah, who when he comes to herald the coming of the Messiah, will resolve all difficulties. We do not drink this fifth cup; some people use it to replenish the fourth cup after drinking the third one.

The amount of wine or grape juice needed for each of the four glasses is at least 86 .c.c. or about 3 ounces (some say 146 c.c.). Most authorities agree that one should drink all or at least more than half this amount each time.

Also needed are;

The SEDER PLATE: this is a plate or dish which may be specially made, although this is not at all necessary, on which are placed the following;

1. ZEROAH. A roasted piece of meat usually on the bone of chicken or turkey or other piece of meat to symbolize the Passover offering of Temple times. (some vegetarians substitute a piece of beetroot!) This may not be eaten at the Seder table as one does not eat roasted meat on the Seder night. It should nevertheless not be thrown away or otherwise treated in a wasteful way but should be eaten some other time perhaps the next day

2. HARD-BOILED EGG also roasted over an open flame if possible. Do not try this with a raw egg otherwise you will be scraping egg yolk off the ceiling and walls of the kitchen, hard boil it first. The egg represents the ‘Hagiga’ the special Festival offering that was brought in the time of the Temple. This may be eaten at the Seder or some other time, it is also customary to eat plain hard-boiled eggs dipped or cut up in salt-water as a starter to the meal.

3. CHAROSETH. A paste made with grated apple, dates, ground up nuts, cinnamon, ginger, and wine. The proportions and even ingredients can be to ones own taste but it is usually sweet and needs to be paste-like. This is said to represent the mortar used by the children of Israel during their slavery in Egypt. It is used as a dip for the -

4. MAROR. Bitter herbs to remind us of the bitter times the Jews endured during their slavery. Many Ashkenazi Jews use grated horseradish (chrane) however, the stalk or leaves of lettuce which have a bitter taste, are really preferred as one needs to eat about 20 .c.c. of maror twice, or according to another opinion as much as 58 c.c. If one wishes to continue the tradition of using horseradish, it may be better to eat a smaller quantity of horseradish with lettuce to make up the amount. When using lettuce one should be scrupulous in making sure that there are no insects clinging to the leaves. If one uses horseradish it should be freshly grated and not cooked or pickled or left soaking in water for 24 hours. If the Seder night is on Friday night, it should be grated well before the onset of Shabbat, and kept sealed so it does not lose too much of its strength

5. KARPAS.. Parsley, celery, cucumber or boiled potato, onion, or any vegetable that grows in the ground for dipping in the bowl of: -

6. SALT WATER or some people prefer vinegar. If the Seder is on Friday night this should be prepared before the onset of Shabbat

7. THREE WHOLE MATZOTH, preferably Shemurah each one separated by a cloth or napkin, and all three covered by another.

Before the beginning of the Festival the Seder plate is placed on the table which should be set in as beautiful a manner as possible with a glass or cup at each place for the four glasses of wine, which each of us will drink during the proceedings.

The lady of the house lights the festival candles (at least two) and makes the two blessings. One for lighting the candles and the second, to thank the Almighty who has kept us so that we may celebrate the Festival. These blessings may be found in any festival or ordinary prayer book, as with all blessings, they may be said in the language which one understands the best. On Shabbat add the words in brackets.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר
(שָׁל שַׁבָּת וְ) שָׁל יוֹם טוֹב

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the lights of (Shabbat and) the Festivals.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּי וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה
Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has granted us life, sustained us and allowed us to reach this season.

It of course goes without saying that a festive meal would have been prepared ready to be served at the appropriate time.

And while the men go to the synagogue, she has a well-earned rest.

All is now ready; the table is laid with the best tablecloth and the special crockery cutlery and glasses, kept from one Pesach to another. The wine, the Matzoth and Seder Plate are placed on the table and for each participant a copy of the Haggadah. Because this is the Festival of Freedom, the Rabbis have decreed that we must eat the Seder meal as Free men, and not slaves. Free men have no need to hurry over their meal, while slaves eat while at their work. To differentiate this night from all other nights we eat our meal in a leaning position as they did during the time of the Temple, when free men ate on special couches. Nowadays cushions are provided for all the men in order that they may lean to the left when eating the Matzah and drinking the prescribed Four Glasses.

On returning from the synagogue

The **SEDER** begins.

הַגְּדָה שֶׁל פֶּסַח

It is customary to bless the children on the night of Shabbat and Festivals. The father or mother's hands are placed on the child's head and the following pronounced. For a boy one says

שְׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶפְרַיִם וּבְמְנַשֶּׁה

"May the Lord imbue you with the qualities of Ephraim and Menashe"

and for a girl

שְׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׂרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה

"May the Lord imbue you with the qualities of Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah".

.....

Ephraim and Menashe, the two sons of Joseph, the Viceroy of Egypt, were two Jewish children brought up in the idolatrous atmosphere of the Egyptian court yet never lost their Jewish identity and values, and never succumbed to the temptations of the then "modern" times. We trust that our boys will follow the example of Ephraim and Menashe, while it is our fervent hope that the girls would follow the example set by the Four Matriarchs of the Jewish people.

The meaning of the word Seder is 'Order' and everything done on the Seder night is in a traditional 'order' as laid out in the Haggadah. These are listed in the Haggadah and recited or sung by some people prior to the recital of the Haggadah. Instructions are printed in the Haggadah as to when all these take place..

1. KIDDUSH.

קִדּוּשׁ

A blessing over a cup of wine, making mention of the Sanctity of the Festival of Pesach. We make Kiddush that is we sanctify the holiness of the day, over wine on every Shabbat and Festival. This cup is counted as the first of the four cups, which we drink on the Seder night.

2. WASHING

וְרַחֵץ

The hands. Prior to eating the Karpas, a small piece of vegetable (celery, boiled potato, cucumber etc.)

3. KARPAS

בְּרֶפֶס

Is dipped in salt water, a blessing made prior to being eaten by all present. The amount of the Karpas should be less than 24 Grms.

4. DIVISION

יִחַץ

The middle one of the three matzoth is divided, half remains where it is, and the other half is hidden for the "Afikomen" which will be eaten at the end of the meal after which nothing else may be eaten except for the last two cups of wine.

5. RECITATION

מְגִיד

of the Haggadah.

6. WASHING

רְחִיצָה

The hands, together with the special blessing prior to the meal.

7. The BLESSING

מוֹצִיא

Thanking the Almighty for giving us bread, and the special Blessing on the commandment to eat the:

8. MATZAH

מַצָּה

9. MAROR

מָרוֹר

the bitter herbs usually the stalk or a leaf of lettuce or horseradish (Chrane) eaten dipped in the Charoseth.

10. KORECH	פּוֹרֵךְ
Another portion of Maror is eaten sandwiched between two pieces of Matzah.	
11. THE MEAL.	שֵׁלְחוֹ עוֹרֵךְ
After which the	
12. AFIKOMEN	צָפוֹן
is eaten to leave one with the taste of Matzah, nowadays the Afikomen takes the place of Passover offering which was eaten at the end of the meal.	
13. GRACE	בְּרַךְ
After meals	
14. HALLEL	הַלֵּל
Psalms of Praise recited on Festivals.	
15. ACCEPTED	נִרְצָה
That our rendering of the Seder Service was in accordance with the tradition of our Fathers and Forefathers throughout the ages	

KADDESH

קַדְשׁ

All take their place at the table open their Haggadah's and the wine glasses are filled. As on every other Festival and Shabbat we make Kiddush, that is we sanctify the Holiness of the Day. The Kiddush is over the first of the four cups of wine. In some families this is made by the person who is conducting the Seder, in others, all make their own; while in some families the Kiddush is recited in unison.

If the Seder is on a Friday night, the Kiddush begins with the Friday night introduction, the recitation of the Biblical account of the institution of the Sabbath at the end of the creation of the universe (Gen. Ch 2. V. 1-3). We make a 'blessing' over the wine next and then the blessing relating to the Festival of Pesach. If the Seder takes place at the termination of the Sabbath, the special blessing made at the termination of the Sabbath is added. On all occasions, we finish with the blessing thanking God for having allowed to reach this season

Kiddush should not be made until after dark.

We pour out the first of the 4 glasses of wine, which we drink during the Seder. On Shabbat we add the words in brackets and start here. In some families Kiddush is made by whoever is conducting the Seder. In some families this is said by all either separately or in unison.

.On Shabbat start here

בְּשַׁבָּת מִתְחִילִין

וַיְהִי עָרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֵר
 יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי. וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צָבָאָם. וַיִּכַּל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
 מַלְאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל מַלְאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. וַיְבָרֶךְ
 אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אוֹתוֹ כִּי בּו שָׁבֹת מִכָּל מַלְאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּרָא
 אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת.

And it was evening and it was morning

The sixth day, and the heavens and the earth were completed in its' entirety. And on the seventh day God had completed his work which He had made. And he rested on the seventh day from all the work He had done. And God blessed the Seventh Day and hallowed it, because on it He rested from all his work, that God in creating had made.

If the festival is on a weekday start here

בחול מתחילין

סְבָרֵי מְרַגְּוֹ וְרַבְּנֵי וְרַבּוֹתַי
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

With your permission my masters and teachers

Blessed are You, O Lord, our God King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל עַם וְרוּמְמָנוּ מִכָּל לְשׁוֹן וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו. וְתַתֵּן לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה (בשבת: שְׁבִתוֹת לְמִנוּחָה) מוֹעֲדִים לְשִׂמְחָה, חֲגִים וְזִמְנִים לְשִׂשׁוֹן, אֶת יוֹם (הַשְּׁבִת הַזֶּה וְאֶת יוֹם) חַג הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה, זְמַן חֲרוּתֵנוּ (בְּאַהֲבָה). מִקְרָא קִדְּשׁ, זִכָּר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם. כִּי בָנוּ בְּחַרְתָּ וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים (וְשִׁבְתָּ) וּמוֹעֲדֵי קִדְּשָׁתְךָ. בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׂשׁוֹן הִנְחַלְתָּנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מִקְדָּשׁ (הַשְּׁבִת וְ) יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַזִּמְנִים.

Blessed are You, O Lord our God King of the Universe, who has chosen us from all peoples and exalted us above all tongues and hallowed us with His commandments and has given us O Lord our God in love (*on Shabbat add: the Shabbat days for rest and*) Festivals for rejoicing, feasts on appointed times for joy. (This Shabbat and) this festival of Matzoth, the season of our freedom (in love) a holy gathering in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, Because You have chosen us and made us holy from all other peoples (and Shabbat) and the holy Festivals in joy and gladness You have given us as a heritage. Blessed are You O Lord our God who makes Holy (the Shabbat and) the people of Israel and the Festivals.

If the Seder commences after the termination of Shabbat add the following

במוצאי שבת מוסיפין

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe who creates the light of fire.

We indicate the lighted candles and continue

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קִדְּשׁ לְחָל, בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשִׁשִּׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בֵּין קִדְּשַׁת שְׁבִת לְקִדְּשַׁת יוֹם טוֹב הַבְּדִלְתָּ, וְאֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִשִּׁשִּׁת יְמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה קִדְּשָׁתָּ. הַבְּדִלְתָּ וְקִדְּשָׁתָּ אֶת עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִדְּשָׁתְךָ, בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין קִדְּשׁ לְקִדְּשׁ.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who makes a distinction between Holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and other peoples, between the Seventh Day and the sixth days of labour, You have made a distinction between the Holiness of the Shabbat and the Holiness of the Festivals and You have Sanctified the Seventh Day from the six days of labour. You have distinguished and made Holy your People of Israel with your Holiness. Blessed are You, O Lord who makes a distinction between the Holy (of the Shabbat) and the Holy (of the Festivals).

On all occasions say the following

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.
Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has kept us alive and sustained us and permitted us to reach this season.

שׁוֹתֵה רַב כּוֹס הַיַּיִן בְּהִסְבֵּיבָה שְׂמֹאל

All then sit and leaning to the left drink all or the greater part of the cup

◊

What is Kiddush and what is a blessing? The literal meaning of Kiddush is ‘sanctification’. In the beginning when God created the universe, we are told in Genesis chapter 1, that it took six days for the earth to reach its completion. On the sixth day, God had completed His m'lacha and on the seventh day, He ceased His m'lacha, “*And God Blessed the seventh day* (Gen. Ch. 1 V. 31) and *Sanctified it*. (Gen. Ch. 2 V. 3).

The Jewish people are also commanded in the Ten Commandments to “remember” (Ex. Ch. 20 V 8), and to “observe,” (Deut. Ch. 5 V. 12), the Shabbat. The Shabbat, is a special day of refraining from certain creative work known as "M'lacha"*and is ordained by God as a special gift to the Jewish People. Through them it has been adopted throughout the world and is probably the most valuable social advance in human society that has been introduced to the people of the world, by the Jewish people. However, it is only the Jewish people who have been commanded to elevate the Shabbat, not only as a day of rest, that is refraining from doing any M'lacha, but as a special day that is sacred. We recognize the holy - ness and special – ness of the day by sanctifying it. Our sages have decreed that this “sanctification” be done on Sabbaths and on Festivals with wine. (Pesachim 106a).

So, what is a blessing? Up to this point we have used the word ‘blessing’ which is the usual English translation of the Hebrew word ‘Bracha’. What is a Bracha? We make many Brachot (plural of Bracha), There are three categories of Brachot. A Bracha when we enjoy something such as when we eat or drink. A Bracha made when performing a Mitzvah that is commanded from the Torah** such as before putting on the Tefillin or Talith, when blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashana when taking the Lulav on Succoth, and eating Matzah on Passover. The third category of Brachot, we make is when we are confronted with the wonders of God’s Creation, such as on seeing a rainbow or the ocean or hearing thunder and on many, many other occasions.

Does God require our blessings to, as it were, satisfy His ego? Similarly, did He require offerings *** in the Temple of old to satisfy that same ‘ego’? The prophets referring to the people

* M'lacha is usually translated 'work' but this is not an accurate translation. One must learn what 'work' is not permitted on Shabbat and Festivals by learning from a qualified person

**The Bracha we make when we perform a mitzvah starts, ‘*Baruch ata ad-nai elo-hanu melech ha’olam*’ and continues ‘*asher kiddishanu*’ who has sanctified us ‘*b’mitzvosov*’ with His commandments ‘*vtzivanu*’ and commanded, us for example, ‘*al achilat Matzah*’ to eat Matzah. The commandments make us Holy and separate us from the other nations of the world who do not have this concept of being sanctified by God’s commandments. Each time we fulfill one of God’s Mitzvot to the Jewish people we as it were, advance higher in our endeavour to fulfill our destiny.

There are 6 other Brachot, which we make on Mitzvot which are not actually found in the Torah but which were ordained by our sages. They are 1). on the reading of the Megilla from a scroll 2) on the recitation of the Hallel 3) on washing the hands prior to a meal, 4), on lighting the Chanukah lights, 5) on lighting the Shabbat and Festival candles, and 6) on making an eruv

*** Maimonides says that offerings were a concession to the Children of Israel because the nations in ancient times among whom the Children of Israel lived, practiced animal and even human offerings to placate their gods. And God in the incident of the “Binding of Isaac” (Gen. Ch. 22) showed that He abhorred human offering. Maimonides goes on to say that God therefore limited offerings by confining them to one place, the Temple in Jerusalem. He goes on to say, in his “Guide to the Perplexed” (3:32) that Israel was to be led gradually and slowly to a deeper perception of religion and Divine worship. Abrabanel another philosopher and biblical commentator expanded on this and said, that the Torah limited offerings to one place, the Temple, while one could pray anywhere.

who offer sacrifices for the wrong reason castigated the people of Israel of old asking, does God require of you offerings of and the blood of animals. Were offerings used as a means of bribing or placating an angry god as the pagans used them? The prophets meant that man's proper behaviour to his fellow and the performance of the Mitzvoth were the important things, however important, were the laws regarding the offerings.

The prophet Samuel, in rebuking King Saul for not obeying God's will and making an excuse for his disobedience that he was keeping certain animals for a offering, said *"Has the Lord a great delight in burnt offerings and offerings/ as in listening to the voice of the Lord/ behold to obey is better than offerings/ and to hearken better than the fat of rams"* (Sam. I. Ch. 15 V. 22.).

Samuel meant that man's proper behaviour to his fellow and the performance of the Mitzvoth were the important things.

It must be that making a blessing is for our sake and not His. We always say we "make" a blessing and do not say "say" or "recite" a blessing. As in any language, Hebrew has words that are spelled the same, pronounced the same, and yet may have different meanings, for example the word 'tip' in English has at least three different meanings. The Hebrew word Bracha is a case in point. It is usually translated as 'blessing' and indeed when it is used by God as in Genesis Ch. 12 V. 2-3 when God speaks to Abraham, He says

*"I will make of you a great nation and I will **ble**ss you and make your name greatand I will **ble**ss them that **ble**ss you"*

In its simplest, it means that He will cause good things to happen to whoever is blessed. What is good however, may not be immediately recognizable to the one being blessed.. However, can we say the same about 'blessing' God? How can we 'ble^ss' God? God is so much above us, in what way can we 'cause good things to happen to' Him. The Hebrew word 'Bracha' is from the same root as 'berech' 'knee', and the word knee brings to mind 'bending the knee' or 'kneel'. In the Alenu prayer which we recite three times each day, we say *"All the worlds inhabitants will recognize and know that to You, every **knee should bend** and every tongue shall swear (allegiance)"*. In the light of this, let us examine a "Bracha

All Brachot, start in the same way. *"**Baruch Ata Ado-nai Elo-hainu melech ha-olam**"* and continues in various ways to fit the situation such as in the Bracha for eating bread ***Ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz..*** The usual translation being "Blessed art Thou O Lord, our God, King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the ground"

The problem here is that we are using the word "blessing" in addressing God, in addition to which, the construction of the sentence in its change from the second person to the third person presents a problem.

When we kneel or 'bend the knee' we are acknowledging that we submit ourselves to the higher authority of the one to whom we are 'bending the knee'. A subject will kneel or 'bend the knee' to his king. If we take the root of the word Bracha as 'knee' and we give it the meaning of 'we bend the knee' i.e. "I am acknowledging", the wording, construction and even meaning, of the Bracha, becomes much clearer.

When making Kiddush we make the following Bracha over the wine. Let us now assume that when we make a Bracha, any Bracha, that apart from the constant presence of God there is a silent human bystander.

The Bracha we make over wine is

*"**Baruch ata a-donai elohenu melech ha'olam borei pri hagafen**"*

Usually translated as

Blessed art thou O Lord King of the Universe who creates the fruit of the vine

What we are in essence doing is announcing:

“Baruch”	“I am (bending the knee) acknowledging *
“Ata”	“that You”
“Ado-nai”	“are our Lord”

The bystander then silently says	“Who is your Lord”?
	We then continue

”Elo-hainu, melech ha-olam”	“Our God, King, Supreme Ruler of the Universe, (to whom everything and every one is subject)”.
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The silent bystander then enquires	why are you making this announcement?”
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The maker of the Bracha silently replies	“I am going to drink this wine and I am acknowledging that it is by God’s goodness that He is the One, who:-
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“Borei pri hagafen”	“creates the fruit of the vine”
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These ‘Blessings’ of God, and our praises of Him in our prayers, are not for His sake, but for ours. The basic premise is the acknowledgement of God’s continuing creation and the joy we feel when we obey His commandments. The Rabbis say that if we eat food without first making a ‘blessing’ to God for the provision of His bounty, it is as if we were stealing it. It is true that it is by our hard work that we finally acquire it and eat it, but the miracle is, that He has made the world so that things grow from a tiny seed to a sheaf of wheat or a massive oak, and has given us the knowledge and ability to use these gifts

When we make a blessing over food or drink, in no way is the food or drink changed. The food has not been “blessed” it is us who are acknowledging the supremacy of God in His order of the world, and indeed the whole Universe, through whose daily miracles food and drink is available to us.

In the Bracha relating to the Festival we refer to the ‘Chosen-ness’ of the Jewish people as well as the Matzah Festival and our liberation and Exodus from Egypt. The concept of ‘chosen-ness’ is greatly misunderstood by non-Jews and even some Jews. It is a matter of pride to be a member of the ‘Chosen People’, but, the mistake must not be made of assuming that it denotes superiority, a notion that is patently false. In which way is one superior? Can a whole nation or race be superior to any other nation or race? How do we measure superiority, by wealth, health, education, intelligence? After all, all humankind is descended from Adam and Eve and no person or people or nation can claim that he, she, or it, is better than any other by virtue of superior birth.

“We must come to the conclusion that ‘chosen-ness’ does not in any way imply superiority. The concept of chosen-ness relating to the Jewish people appears in Ex. Ch. 19 V.3-6 immediately before the account of the Torah being given to the Children of Israel at Mt. Sinai. The Almighty says to Moses - *“...thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell to the children of Israel, you have seen what I did to Egypt and how I bore you on eagles wings and brought you to Myself., now therefore, if you will obey My voice and keep My covenant then you shall be a **special** people of all the nations because all the earth is Mine. And you shall be unto Me – **A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND A HOLY NATION...**”*

In Deut. Ch. 7 V. 6-9, we read Moses’ parting speech to the people of Israel, during which he says, *“For you are Holy people unto the Lord your God: The Lord your God has **chosen** you to be His own treasure out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor **choose** you because you were more in number than any people, for you were*

*For the sake of convention we will continue to use "blessing" when translating Berachot

the fewest of all peoples. But because the Lord loved you and because He would keep the oath that, he swore unto your fathers. The Lord brought you out (of Egypt) with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord your God He is God the faithful God who keeps His covenant and mercy with them that love Him, and keep His commandments for a thousand generations. To emphasize this, it is repeated a little further on. In Deut Ch.14 V 2 we read, "For you are a Holy people unto the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be his own treasure out of all peoples that are upon the face of the earth".

This then in all humility is the 'chosen-ness', this is the destiny of the Jewish people, the duty of every Jew to obey the voice of the Almighty, to keep His commandments and to honour our covenant with Him. In this way we will indeed become a "*Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation*", with the great and heavy responsibility of bringing the acknowledgement of God and the light of His word and Countenance to the nations of the Earth.

Unlike other religions, Judaism does not impose its own beliefs on other people. The commandments given to the Jewish people at Sinai, were meant for the Jewish people alone, and are the means by which we are to bring acknowledgement of God's One-ness as Creator of the Universe, to the nations. Although Judaism welcomes genuine converts, we do not harbour the belief that all people need to become Jews. The non-Jewish peoples of the world were given seven commandments to observe and obey. They are;

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1) Establishment of courts of justice, | 2) Prohibition of blasphemy, |
| 3) Prohibition of idolatry, | 4) Prohibition of immorality |
| 5) Prohibition of murder, | 6) Prohibition of robbery and |
| 7) Prohibition of eating the flesh cut from a living animal | |

These are known as the Seven Commandments of the sons of Noah (Sanh. 56a) and until the advent of Abraham and the subsequent election of the Jewish people, applied to all mankind. The Rabbis say that the righteous of all nations will inherit the world to come. In that time in the future when Israel becomes the "Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation, and all the peoples of the earth recognize the One True God, in that day as the prophet Isaiah says "*My House shall be called a House of Prayer for **All peoples***" .. (Isaiah Ch.56 V. 7)

The major difference between Judaism and other religions is that the Jewish people descended from Abraham, are singled out to perform God's commandments (Mitzvoth) that are enumerated in the Torah. Worship on one day a week is not enough.

"And it shall come to pass as the consequence of your hearing these laws and carefully carrying them out, that God your God will keep the covenant and the love with you that He swore to your forefathers," (Deut. Ch. 7 V. 12). As I understand it, what Rabbi Samuel Raphael Hirsch, the famous modern commentator of the Bible means in his commentary on this verse that, as a consequence and in the natural order of things, and *not* as a reward, *if* we keep God's commandments, all the promises that He made to the Patriarchs and to the Children of Israel will come to pass, as will God's promise to Abraham, in Genesis Ch.12 V.3 "*.....and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*" In other words if the Jewish people keep, observe and perform the commandments which God has commanded us, then will all the people of the earth be blessed and Israel will be indeed be a "*Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation*". That is the responsibility that we have to live up to in being a "Chosen Nation".

"In that day will the Lord be One and His name One". (Zecharia ch.14 v9) and, ... "*He shall judge between the nations and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*" (Isaiah Ch. 2:V. 4).

The concept of a personal God is very real in Judaism. The Bible sets out for us the way. We have the opportunity and the alternatives. The Bible tells us that by respecting and observing and performing God's commandments we are to, "*therefore choose life, that you and your children may live. To love the Lord thy God to hearken to his voice and to cleave unto Him; for that is*

your life and the length of your days that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob, to give them (Deut Ch. 30 V 19-20). Throughout the Torah the commandments are given to us for when “*You come into the Land*”, if we keep the commandments then we will always be privileged to live in the Holy Land.

Man is endowed with free will to observe the Commandments or not, and behave as he will. Nevertheless, the Bible and the prayer book deal with the Children of Israel as a whole, rather than as individuals. Prayers are almost always in the plural. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the supplicatory prayer "Avinu Malkeinu" (Our Father our King) and the "Viduy", confession, the "Al Chait" the recitation of our sins for which we ask forgiveness, are all in the plural. "All Israel are guarantors one for the other"* and we as individuals pray and ask forgiveness for all of the Jewish people as a unit. This means, that the aspect of the "Chosen-ness" of the people of Israel, and the realization of their destiny, will only come about when the whole, of the Nation recognizes that the Almighty is the Creator of all, and that His commandments are binding on all of the Children of Israel for all time.

The commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt is one that we would expect on this night of all nights. But this commemoration of an event, which brought about the forging of disparate tribes into one nation, resounds throughout our prayers and is mentioned time after time; indeed many of the commandments are connected to this event. It was this Exodus, and the freedom it brought, which enabled us to freely accept the Covenant and the Torah, which was revealed to the whole of the Children of Israel at Mount Sinai. Judaism is the only religion that was revealed to a nation as a whole rather than as in many other religions where one person claims to be a conduit to relay his own message as if it was the word of God.

Passover is commemorated as the Festival of Freedom as has been mentioned so far several times. It is true that a slave is not free and that we were rescued from slavery by God. However, freedom has its own responsibility. No one is completely free to do as he wishes. "No man is an island entire of himself" says the poet. From the time we are born we have certain responsibilities, to our parents, to ourselves, to our siblings, to our wives and children, to our people, and to society at large.

Prisons are full of people who thought that they could completely please themselves, as are the ruins of countless marriages. One of the commandments that all peoples are obliged to perform is to have a set of rules for the ordering of society. Without rules, there would be complete anarchy. Jews have a further responsibility and that is to observe the Mitzvoth which we received when we came out of Egypt and to pass them on to our children including the seeming restrictions of the Torah.

Many people feel that the laws and commandments of the Torah are restricting, and indeed, they were the first things jettisoned when Christianity broke away from Judaism and represents one of the many differences, that mark the vast gulf between Judaism and Christianity. The Torah gives us in the 613 commandments a set of rules, which frees us from the very sometimes difficult decisions of day to day living. The Torah tells us what our relationships should be between man and wife, between man and his neighbour, between man and his employer/ee it impinges on our social life how we should treat the widow and orphan, how we should care for the poor and those unable to care for themselves and so on and so forth and of course our relationship with the Almighty.

^In most cases, we do not have to rely on our own conscience to know how to act for the good of society and in our relationship with God. Maimonides says that a person who behaves kindly to another because it is his duty as it is laid out in the Torah is more worthy than the person who behaves kindly because he is acting according to his own conscience (Maim. Guide to the Perplexed, and Ex. Ch. 1 V. 17). The person who is naturally kindly, is acting in character, while the person who behaves kindly because it says (love your neighbour as yourself) so in the Torah, is acting not necessarily according to his own character and feeling, but is obeying God's will. (Ex. Ch 1 V 17.)

* The degree by which a Jew is responsible for another is explained by Rabbi Forst, in his book the "Laws of Brachot" Each Jew is a part of the whole Jewish people as a finger is part of the whole body, what affects the finger affects the whole body. If a finger is missing, then something is missing from the perfection of the whole. He says. "The commentaries explain that the failure of one Jew to perform a mitzvah is not merely a private affair. All Jews are guarantors for each other. Our souls are interlocked and we bear responsibility for one another. Thus although I may have fulfilled my own personal requirement to perform the mitzvah as long as another Jew has not yet fulfilled that mitzvah my own personal obligation remains wanting".

DIVISION

יחץ

בעל הבית יבצע את המצה האמצעית לשתיים ומצפין את החצי הגדול לאפיקומן.
We now break the middle Matzah in two. One half is left on the table and the other half hidden away for the AFIKOMEN. The Afikomen is eaten at the end of the meal (it is traditional for the children to "steal" the Afikomen and extract a prize from those present for its return, as the meal cannot be completed without it).

Uncover the top Matzah and raise the Seder dish

מגלה את המצות מגביה את הקערה ואומר בקול רם :

RECITAL

מגיד

The recital of the Haggadah now begins.

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים. כל דכפין ייתי ויכל,
כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח. השתא הך, לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל. השתא
עבדי, לשנה הבאה בני חורין.

This is the bread of affliction (poor bread) which our fathers ate in Egypt. Whoever is hungry let him come and eat, whoever is in need let him come and join us in celebrating the Pesach Festival. This year we are here, next year may it be in the Land of Israel. This year we are as slaves, next year as free men.

.....
הא לחמא

We start off by announcing that this is the "bread of affliction" ('lachma aniya') that our fathers ate in Egypt". Some translate the word "aniya" as poor bread. Either of these translations reminds us of the hardships that our forefathers suffered as slaves.

The Jewish people taking their cue from Abraham our forefather, (Gen. Ch. 18 V. 1-8), are famous for their hospitality. The commandment bidding us to celebrate the Passover suggests that families join together to eat the Passover offering (Exodus Ch. 12 V. 4). This famous invitation to join in the festive celebration is written not in Hebrew but in Aramaic, the vernacular of the Jews in the Holy Land and in Babylon some 2300 years ago. It is written in Aramaic so that everyone in those days could understand it. Indeed, we may pray in any language we understand, therefore there is no reason why we should not say this or even the whole Haggadah in English, or any other language that we naturally use. Generally speaking, we do not, perhaps because we feel that the flavour of the Seder may be lost if we do not use Hebrew. Nevertheless, one should understand what one is saying by referring to the translation.

Let us now examine this passage. This Matzah is the "bread of affliction", or as some translations have it "poor bread", that is, not the soft white bread that the rich people eat. This Matzah is the same as that, which our forefathers ate in Egypt at the time of the Exodus. We say "All those that are hungry or in need, let them come and join us". It is unthinkable that on this night of all nights when we celebrate our freedom and the birth of Israel as a Nation that any of our brethren should go without. It is meritorious to invite guests to join us at the Seder, particularly those that are old or lonely or who cannot, or do not know how, for any reason to make their own Seder.

In addition to the above, and as an illustration of the commandments "to love your neighbour as yourself" (Lev. Ch. 19 V. 18), and that 'every Jew is a guarantor for every other Jew' (Shavuot 39a), there is a very strong obligation on all Jewish communities, for Jews, before Passover to give money to a fund variously, called 'Kimcha d'pische' or Maot Chitin. (Mish. Ber. 429 1) both meaning 'flour for Passover'. This money is used to provide Matzah, wine, and other necessities for Passover to families who may be needy.

To celebrate Passover and the Seder with Matzoth and wine and a festive meal is a Torah commandment mandatory on all Jews. It would be disgrace for any Jewish community to allow, any needy family, being denied the means by which to purchase the mandatory Matzah and wine (and other things). Kimcha d'pischta should be given to the Rabbi or committee or whoever is appointed to collect it, in good time before the festival so that the money or goods may be distributed before the onset of Pesach

We continue this announcement, "this year we are here (in the Diaspora - exile) next year may we celebrate the Passover as it should be celebrated, in the Land of Israel, this year, we are as slaves, next year - free men". This declaration is also made in the State of Israel, as even there, without the Temple, we are not able, to celebrate Passover in the way that it is laid down in the Torah.

It is a sad commentary on modern times that there are countries in the world where we may not, or it is difficult, to carry out the tenets of our faith. There are some 'enlightened and democratic' countries where Shechita, the Jewish method of slaughter of animals for food and even circumcision is forbidden. Many of us live in a society where we have to conform to the ways and culture of the people among whom we live. We therefore express the hope that next year we may celebrate the festival in the reborn and rebuilt old/new Land of Israel. Where our faith may be practiced according to our own laws and customs.

As we say these words we can imagine the ancient Israelites in Egypt existing on the "poor bread", living amidst the gorgeous and wealthy culture of the Egyptians. An archeologist has said that there was so much gold used in Egypt that it bordered on the vulgar. The Israelites, being revolted by the Egyptians paganism and worship of animals and the dead, even before the revelation on Mount Sinai. Living with a perhaps hazy recollection of their Sainted Forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and perhaps with only a sketchy idea of the Almighty. We can also try to imagine the hardships and bitterness and persecutions of the Jewish people over the years, culminating in the unbelievable atrocities visited upon our brethren in the Holocaust by Nazi Germany helped by their Allies in Europe. We can only hope and pray that our future may be better than our recent past.

At Mount Sinai all Israel were thirsting for a new way of life, and were as a People invited to partake of the richness of the Torah and satisfy that thirst for the eternal truths expounded therein.

We should perhaps pause a moment and reflect about freedom, what does it mean? Does it mean that man is free to do exactly as he wishes? In every society there needs to be rules. A man is not free from hunger, from thirst or from the need of shelter. The acquisition of these and other necessities encourages man to live in the company of his fellows. There obviously has to be some framework in which society conducts itself.

The Torah puts this very succinctly in three Hebrew words, *"v'ahavta l'reacha k'omocho"*, *"and you shall love your neighbour (fellow man) as yourself"*. (Lev. Ch. 19 V. 18) Perhaps the most difficult commandment of all and at the same time the most sublime. Twice in the Torah are we instructed even commanded, to "love," once *"and you shall love the Lord your God"* (Deut. Ch. 6 .V. 5-9) and once as above, referring to our fellow man. This reflects the two aspects of the Ten Commandments (in Hebrew they are called the 'Ten Sayings', as they are not the only commandments we received. The Ten Sayings themselves are composed of at least thirteen commandments).

The Ten Commandments were written on two tablets of stone, the five on the first tablet relate to man's duty to God and our obligation to Him. The five on the second tablet relate to man's obligation to his fellow man. The Jewish way of life sees no difference between our obligation to God and our obligation to our fellow man. To worship and honour God and to fulfill our obligations to Him, and at the same time ignore our obligation to our fellow man is a violation of the Torah, as both aspects are indivisible. A man who diligently puts on Tefilin every day and cheats his customers is violating the very spirit of the Torah.

The responsibility of man to his fellow man is the basis of all civilized human behaviour; it is the gift of the Jewish people to the people of the world and has been accepted by all modern western civilized societies, as the ideal. The famous Sage, Hillel put it this way "what is hateful to you, do not do unto your neighbour". (Shabb 31a) Unfortunately, although accepted by all as the Golden Rule this is often more honoured in the breach.

It is a paradox that it is only when one has accepted the "yoke of the Torah", and has accepted living within its bounds that one feels really free and able to practice that which God demands of us. No longer do we have to worry about what is right, or what is the correct action to take. It is up to us to learn the commandments given at Mount Sinai and how to observe them. What

the Freedom of the Exodus means to the Jewish people is that they were freed from the yoke of forced labour and having to live within an alien culture. We are now at last free to fulfill our destiny and worship God in our own way able to perform the commandments without let or hindrance of an alien people.

Refill the wineglasses in preparation for the second cup of wine.

:מסיר הקערה מעל השלחן, מוזגין כוס שני וכאן הגון או אהד מן המסבים שואל:

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

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The second cup has now been filled and the children come into their own. There can be very few Jews who are so estranged from things Jewish that they have never heard of the "Ma Nishtane" the famous 'Four Questions'. "Why" we are asked by our children, is this night different from all the other nights in the year". "Why" do we eat Matzah, "Why" do we eat bitter vegetable. "Why" do we dip our food, and "Why" do we eat while leaning"?

These questions have been asked throughout the ages by generations of Jewish children. They are the very essence of the Seder and the rest of the evening is devoted to answering them. In some families, it is the custom for the youngest to do the asking, whereas in others all the children make the recitation, separately or in unison. Where there are no children present an adult will ask the questions, (Pesachim 116a) the Rabbis tell us that if a person is celebrating the Seder on his own he should ask himself (Mish. Ber. 473 .V.).

The purpose of the Seder is twofold. Firstly, to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt celebrating our freedom and the welding of the Children of Israel into one Jewish Nation. Secondly, to pass on to the next generation, our children, our Laws, traditions, customs and the fulfillment of the commandments so that they in their turn will do the same to their children and children's children thus continuing the unbroken chain reaching back to the founders of our nation Abraham and his wife Sarah (Ex. Ch. 12. V. 26).

We hope, that the whole of the preparation of the Seder together with the unusual display of items on the Seder dish, the Matzoth on the table instead of bread, the wine, the copies of the Haggadah at hand, and the general ambience and excitement will stimulate the children to ask what it all means. There is a view that says that if a child asks just a simple question "what does this all mean", the Seder can commence. However, it is traditional that the children should ask all the four questions. (Or. Ch. 7 Rema) And here they are:

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?
שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין חמץ ומצה, הלילה הזה - בלו מצה.
שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין שאר ירקות, -
הלילה הזה מרור.
שבכל הלילות אין אנו מטבילין אפילו פעם אחת, - הלילה הזה שתי
פעמים.
שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין בין יושבין ובין מסבין, - הלילה הזה בלנו
מסבין.

- Why is this night different from all other nights?
- (1) On all other nights we eat ordinary bread or Matzah, however tonight we eat only Matzah.
 - (2) On all other nights we eat all sorts of vegetables on this night we eat bitter vegetables.
 - (3) On all other nights, we do not dip our food even once, however tonight we dip our food twice.
 - (4) On all other nights we eat either sitting or leaning tonight we all lean.

So, why do we eat Matzah instead of bread? Why do we eat a bitter vegetable? Why do we dip our food (we have already done it once, the second time will be later on in the Seder)? Why do we eat and drink leaning?

1) The first question is the obvious one. There are two reasons. Firstly we eat Matzah because we are commanded to do so in the Torah (Ex. Ch. 12. V. 15-21), In addition it commemorates that first Pesach when on leaving Egypt in a hurry we baked the dough before it had time to rise. (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 34).

2) We eat bitter vegetables as a symbol of and a commemoration of our lives having been made bitter by the forced labour of the Egyptians when we were slaves in Egypt.

3) Dipping the food does not appear to have anything to do with the Seder night why therefore of all the seemingly strange things we do on the Seder night is this one singled out. The usual reason given is that it should prompt the children to ask about the Seder night and Pesach generally, however, there is another much more profound explanation.

The exile to Egypt while foretold to Abraham in the "covenant between the pieces" (Gen. Ch.15.V 7-14), really started when Joseph was put into the pit by his brothers as told in Gen. Ch. 37, and then spirited away to Egypt by a band of Midianite caravan traders. The brothers taking the striped coat of many colours given to Joseph by his father Jacob, slaughtered a male goat, *dipped* the coat into its blood and gave it to Jacob as 'proof' that Joseph had been devoured by wild beasts.

Over 200 years later in Egypt, the Jewish people are commanded by God to take a male lamb or goat, slaughter it and *dip* a bundle of hyssop branches in its blood and smear the blood on the doorpost and lintel of their houses (Ex. Ch. 12. V. 22). This was the first act of rebellion against the Egyptians and marked the end of their long servitude, the beginning of their freedom and the first declaration that they, as a people had put their trust in the Almighty

Perhaps the two dippings at the Seder night are an oblique reminder of these two events that mark the two most important milestones on the long road of the history of the Jewish people, the beginning and the end of slavery in Egypt.

(4) The last question is why on this night we eat leaning. It was the practice at the time the Haggadah was compiled for free people who ate their meal in a leisurely manner, not to sit at a table as we do nowadays, but at couches with each person eating from his own small table and being served by a servant. Although nowadays we do not eat in that manner, we still commemorate this practice.

These are all the simple answers but because we are Jews, we do not rely on simple answers to these questions. The whole Haggadah is devoted to answering them in its own way so that the events they commemorate are fixed in our minds and repeated every year throughout our lifetimes. Later on in the Haggadah it says, *'even if we are all clever or knowledgeable or learned we still have the duty of relating the story of the Exodus*, and its meaning for the Jewish people. The Haggadah then begins to give the answer to the children's questions.

Uncover the Matzoth

מניח את הקערה על השלחן. המצות תהיינה גלות בשעת אמירת ההגדה.

עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִשָּׁם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָהּ. וְאֵלֹהֵינוּ לֹא הוֹצִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, הָרִי אָנוּ וּבְנֵינוּ וּבְנֵי בְנֵינוּ מִשְׁעֶבְדִּים הָיִינוּ לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם. וְאֶפִּילוּ כָּלָנוּ חֲכָמִים, כָּלָנוּ נְבוֹנִים, כָּלָנוּ זְקֵנִים, כָּלָנוּ יוֹדְעִים אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, מִצָּנָה עָלֵינוּ לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם. וְכָל הַמְרַבֶּה לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם הָרִי זֶה מְשַׁבַּח.

We were once Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt. The Lord our God brought us out from there with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm. If the Holy one, Blessed be He had not brought our fathers out of Egypt, then we and our children and our children's children would have remained slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. Even if we are all wise, are all understanding, are all experienced, are all knowledgeable in the Torah, we would still be obliged to relate the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Whoever excels and expounds on relating the story of the Exodus from Egypt is praiseworthy..

oo

And now the Haggadah gives the answer to these four questions. We were slaves in Egypt and we obtained our freedom not by the goodwill of the Egyptians, not by our own efforts, but by Divine intervention *"The Lord our God brought us out of Egypt, with a strong hand"* (Deut. Ch. .6 V 21). If He had not, then we and our children and our children's children would have remained as slaves in Egypt.

"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt" (Deut. Ch. 6 V 21), the first anti-Semitic (better anti-Jew) manifestation even before the children of Israel, were a homogeneous nation. In Exodus Chap.1 V. 8 - 11 we are told *"now there arose a new King over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, behold the people of the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us, come let us deal wisely with them, in case they multiply and in the event of war they join with our enemies and fight against us...."*

Pharaoh says, "If there is a war, then the children of Israel will join with our enemies", There was no war and there were no enemies, yet Pharaoh uses that as an excuse to enslave the Children of Israel. Was Pharaoh so insecure on the throne that he had to resort to the device used since then throughout the ages, of diverting the attention of his subjects from their own troubles towards a people manifestly different, shepherds, minding their own business in Goshen?. Stirring up hatred of a different people because they didn't mix with the native population, wore different clothes, had different names, didn't intermarry with the Egyptians, didn't worship the native gods and had peculiar customs, in short did not assimilate and disappear.

The Jewish people *are* different. No other people or religion were privileged as the Jewish people were, to come face to face with God at Sinai when His demand for us to accept His way for us was presented to the whole nation. Some three million people were present, (600,000 men on foot (Ex Ch. 12 V. 37) plus the women and children, must amount to some three million) and accepted by all of them for themselves and for us their descendants for evermore by the enthusiastic shout of *"we will do, now tell us what to do"* (Ex. Ch. 24 V. 7). No other people has the same food regulations, no other people observe the Sabbath as the Jews do. No other people have commandments directly from God. No other people have the commandment to study the Torah to the point where it equals worship of the Almighty, and no other people's destiny and way of life is bound up so much with a country, Eretz Yisrael, and a city, Jerusalem. It seems that these differences frighten the people among whom we are dispersed, although we do not threaten them.

Had not God taken us out of Egypt and given us the Torah we would have remained slaves in Egypt, eventually no doubt, to have disappeared as a people as have the ancient Canaanites, Syrians, Hittites, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans etc. But, He did, and we were, and the whole world took on a new direction. A direction in which the Jewish people despite their small numbers were and continue to be a major factor in world events. Why do the Jews occupy such a disproportionate place in history? Is it because we have a peculiar destiny and a special role to play on the world's stage? .

The Haggadah goes on to say ", even if each of us is wise, and understanding, even if we are among the elders of our community and have celebrated many, many Passovers. Even if we are knowledgeable in the commandments and all that it entails, nevertheless, it is our duty to retell, explain and discuss this story of the Exodus from Egypt and the attainment of freedom, and the more we expound the more meritorious it is".

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְרַבִּי טַרְפוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ מְסֻבִּין בְּבֵית בְּרַק, וְהָיוּ מְסַפְּרִים בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם כָּל אוֹתוֹ הַלַּיְלָה עַד שֶׁבָּאוּ תַלְמִידֵיהֶם וְאָמְרוּ לָהֶם : רַבּוֹתֵינוּ, הֲגִיעַ זְמַן קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁל שַׁחֲרִית..

It once happened when Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarphon were celebrating the Seder in Bnei Brak. They were discussing the Exodus from Egypt during the whole night until their pupils came and said to them "Rabbis it is time for the recital of the morning Shema"

The 'Shema' continues *"AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT"*, in one other place is love mentioned as a commandment, in Leviticus, Ch. 19 V. 18 the sentence reads *"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR FELLOW MAN AS YOURSELF"* *

Both these commandments out of the 613 mentioned in the Torah are perhaps the most simple, and yet the most difficult to obey. To love God with all your heart, soul and might, means that every action in which we engage, every thought, and every word that we utter should be in accordance with what is required of us. Rabbi Akiva while being tortured to death said "all my life I did not understand the meaning of – "with all your soul" –, until now, when my soul is returning to my Maker, Blessed be He". The commandment to love your fellow man as yourself is perhaps much more difficult.

At its simplest it means that every action we do we should bear in mind how it will affect other people. Do we act selfishly, do we consider other people when we act in a certain way, do we take more of our share of scarce resources. Do we park our car where it infringes on some one else's rights. Do we overtake on the wrong side? Do we disturb other people by making too much noise at night? Do we take advantage of those weaker than ourselves? In short do we act as Hillel said 'do not to others what you would not have them do to you'? Most importantly, our sages say, it particularly applies to ones wife/husband. Do we consider her/him in our selfish actions? We should love honour and cherish her/him as much as we do ourselves.

The first part of the commandment *"not to take vengeance or to bear a grudge"* is frequently missed when mentioning 'love of our fellowman'. Rashi the most famous of biblical commentators says of these words, "if your fellow asks to borrow something from you, you should not say "last week when I wanted to borrow the very same thing from you, you would not lend it to me, therefore I am not going to lend it to you". That is taking vengeance and is something we are not to do. If on the other hand you say "although you did not lend it to me last week nevertheless I am going to lend it to you", that is bearing a grudge and is also not permitted.

These few words in one sentence are an insight into the many moral lessons that the Torah provides for the conduct between each and every one of us. If one ponders, these words one must think how different the world would be if we followed what the Torah says about how we should behave to our neighbour. The Shema continues, *"AND THESE WORDS WHICH I COMMAND YOU THIS DAY SHOULD BE ON YOUR HEART"*, the commandments are to be considered as being given afresh every day *"AND YOU SHALL TEACH THEM"*, by constant repetition, *"TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND SPEAK OF THEM, WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, AND WHEN YOU WALK ON THE WAY, AND WHEN YOU LIE DOWN"* at night, *"AND WHEN YOU GET UP"*, in the morning, (these last two, are the commandment to recite the Shema twice daily). *"AND YOU SHALL BIND THEM AS A SIGN ON YOUR HAND"*, the Tefillin worn on the arm, *"AND AS TOTAFOTH BETWEEN YOUR EYES"*, the Tefillin which are worn on the head. The Tefillin, square leather boxes containing parchment scrolls on which are written in four paragraphs, verses from the Torah (Ex. Ch. 13. V. 1-10, 11-16, Deut. Ch. 6 V. 4-9 and Ch. 11 V. 13-21)

And then *"AND YOU SHALL WRITE THEM ON THE DOOR-POSTS"* (Hebrew Mezuzoth) *OF YOUR HOUSE AND YOUR GATES"*, this refers to the Mezuzah, which is fixed to the door-posts of the doors in a Jewish home. The Mezuzah, is a parchment scroll fitted into a case usually of metal, wood or stone. Written on it are the verses Deut. Ch. 6 V. 4-9 and Ch. 11 V. 13-21. One of the greatest thrills of a visitor to Jerusalem is to see the Mezuzoth affixed to the gates of the Old City. The Tefillin and the Mezuzah are to remind us constantly of our Jewish-ness and our duties and obligations as such.

2. The next paragraph contains the promise to the Children of Israel if they fulfill the Commandments

"AND IT WILL COME TO PASS THAT IF YOU LISTEN AND PAY HEED TO MY COMMANDMENTS, WHICH I COMMAND YOU THIS DAY, TO LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM, WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL", then *"I WILL SEND THE RAIN ON YOUR LAND IN ITS' SEASON"*. In the Land of Israel it does not rain at all during the summer months so if the rain, does not come in the rainy

season, famine may follow. Nowadays when much of the land is irrigated it may be less of a problem nevertheless water in Israel is a scarce commodity and every drop should be conserved and used to the best advantage.

"THE EARLY RAIN", is eagerly awaited after the sunny summer months. The heaviest rains fall after Succoth in the first two or three months of autumn/winter. *"AND THE LATER RAIN"*, the lighter rain towards the end of the winter/spring period before Passover. So that *"YOU WILL GATHER YOUR GRAIN (wheat and barley) YOUR WINE (grapes) AND YOUR OIL (olives),* these are four of the seven Biblical products of Eretz Yisrael, the others are - figs, dates and pomegranates. Nowadays when milk comes in bottles or plastic bags, bread wrapped in plastic and oil in bottles or cans, and our gathering in of the harvest is done from the shelves of the nearest Super Market; it is all too easy to forget how dependent we are on the weather. The Bible many times refers to famine. We are all aware of conditions in Africa, Australia, and other places where lack of rain is a tragedy. In Eretz Yisrael from Passover (Spring) to Succoth (Autumn) it very rarely rains. Jews who live in the Diaspora may not realize that in Israel too, drought is an all too frequent occurrence. Many times, we read in the Bible "and there was a famine in the land". Indeed the very reason Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt was because of a drought.(Gen. Ch. 47. V. 4) *"AND" with the rain "I WILL GIVE GRASS IN YOUR FIELDS, FOR YOUR CATTLE, AND YOU WILL EAT AND BE SATISFIED"*.

Now the warning, *"BEWARE, IN CASE YOUR HEART GOES ASTRAY AND SERVE FALSE GODS OF OTHER peoples AND BOW DOWN TO THEM. AND GOD WILL BECOME ANGRY AND HE WILL CLOSE UP THE HEAVENS AND THERE WILL BE NO RAIN AND THE LAND WILL NOT GIVE OF ITS' CROPS AND YOU WILL BE QUICKLY BANISHED FROM THE GOOD LAND WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU"*. We now have a repetition of the commandment of Tefillin, this time it is in the plural as this paragraph is being addressed to the Children of Israel as a Nation. *"AND YOU SHALL BIND THEM AS A SIGN UPON YOUR HANDS AND THEY SHALL BE AS TOTAFOTH BETWEEN YOUR EYES AND YOU SHALL TEACH THEM, the Commandments, TO YOUR CHILDREN AND SPEAK OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, WHEN YOU WALK BY THE WAY, WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU RISE UP"*. The constant repetition of the importance of teaching our children illustrates the primary duty and importance of education in Jewish life, not only for our children but also for each and every Jew. In the Ethics of the Fathers Ch. 1 V. 13. Hillel says "He, who does not add to his learning, diminishes it". The Shema continues *"AND YOU SHALL WRITE THEM,, ON THE DOOR POSTS OF YOUR HOUSES AND YOUR GATES Mezuzoth SO THAT YOUR DAYS AND THE DAYS OF YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE PROLONGED UPON THE LAND* if we remember and observe the commandments which the Tefillin and the Mezuzah are there to remind us *WHICH THE LORD PROMISED TO GIVE TO YOUR FOREFATHERS"*, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. *"AS THE DAYS OF THE HEAVEN ON THE EARTH"*, forever.

3. The third and final paragraph begins, *"AND GOD SAID TO MOSES, SAYING, SPEAK TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL AND SAY TO THEM, THAT THEY ARE TO MAKE TZITZITH"*, a fringe made from four threads folded over and knotted in a certain way, *"ON THE four CORNERS OF THEIR GARMENTS,* any garment that has four corners halachically require tzitzith. The Tallith which we wear during prayer and the small tallith which we wear usually under our clothing is a constant reminder of this commandment which itself is a constant reminder of all the other commandments. *"IN ALL THEIR GENERATIONS, AND THEY SHOULD PUT UPON THE TZITZITH OF EACH CORNER"* one of the four threads in each of the corners *"A THREAD OF TEHELET"** colour. Techelet a colour of royalty. As the method of making the exact colour techelet is nowadays not known, we make all the threads white.

*The method of making the techelet colour, which is a shade of blue, has been lost for the last 2,000 years. The Rabbis decreed therefore that all the Tzitzith should be white. In the last few years it has been claimed that the method of making the Techelet colour which was known to have come from a species of shellfish has been rediscovered and many people have taken to wearing it in their Tallith.

AND THEY SHALL BE FOR YOU TZITZITH, AND WHEN YOU SEE THEM YOU SHALL REMEMBER ALL THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE ALMIGHTY AND YOU SHALL DO THEM", Obedience to, and performance of the commandments distinguishes us from other religions and other peoples. Most other religions consist of a particular or series of beliefs and a worship of a deity, usually on one day of the week. The Jew is completely different. We are the only people who have been given many commandments directly from God, which we are duty bound to perform the purpose of which are to help us climb higher and higher in our efforts to achieve that Holiness which God requires of us.

The Tzitzith which we tie on the corners of the large Tallith which men wear during prayers and the small tallith which is worn under our shirts during the daytime are, together with the Tefilin, a constant reminder to us of our obligation to obey the commandments. *'SO THAT YOU DO NOT FOLLOW YOUR OWN INCLINATIONS AND YOUR EYES*, to decide for yourselves which Mitzvot one needs to obey and which to ignore, *WHICH MAY LEAD YOU INTO FORBIDDEN TEMPTATIONS*. It is all too easy to rationalize and convince ourselves that our own actions are the correct ones *SO THAT YOU SHALL REMEMBER, AND PERFORM, ALL MY COMMANDMENTS, AND BE HOLY UNTO THE LORD. I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT TO BE YOUR LORD*; do not think you did it by yourself. *I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD*". The fact of the Exodus from Egypt is so important to Jews that we are commanded to repeat it with the "Shema" twice a day. Indeed many of the commandments are a remembrance of that uniquely important event in the history of the Jewish People.

The commandments referred to and which we have been commanded by God, in the Torah may be divided in various ways and into several categories. One way, is to divide them into positive and negative, that is, there are positive commandments, which we are obliged to perform such as putting on tefillin, and the negative ones, actions which we are forbidden to do, an example of which, is not to commit murder.

They can also be divided into three other groups the first is, "Mishpatim" that is laws that all civilized people will recognize and which are necessary for a regulated and civilized life. That is not to steal or murder, civil laws, laws relating to business, taxes, driving restrictions etc.

The next category of commandments are specifically for the Jewish people They are called "Aydot" that is they are a "witness" to God's special relationship with the Jewish people. They are concerned with the history of the Jewish people and their recognition that God is our God. They are the commandments relating to the festivals, Passover and the exodus from Egypt, Shavuot and laws of first fruits, Succoth and taking the Lulav and dwelling in the Succah and all those relating to tithes, the recitation of the Shema, Shabbat etc. (Ramban. Deut. Ch. 6 V. 20)

The third group is called "Chukim" and they seemingly have nothing to do with anything. They do not seemingly contribute to decent civilized behaviour, as do those in the first category they do not commemorate any particular historic event as do "Aydot", and they only affect the Jewish people to the exclusion of all others. All these will be discussed later when we discuss the four sons.

We have mentioned above the "Oral Torah". There are two 'Torahs' in one, in Jewish Law and Tradition. One, the 'Written Torah,' that is The Chumash or Pentateuch, the Five Books Moses. These are complemented by the other written books of the canon, the Prophets such as Isaiah, of Micah and others. And the Writings, that is the Psalms, the historical books such as Kings and the Five Megiloth (the books of Ruth, Esther, Song of Songs, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes). In addition to all these written works there is the 'Oral Torah', known as the Talmud. The Talmud is the tradition handed down from the time of the giving of the Torah, the Laws and Commandments at Sinai to the Jewish People, and is the complement by which the Written Torah is explained expounded and made much more comprehensible. The "Written Torah" very often contains ambiguities and vague commandments, which were understood quite well by Moses and the people who heard them but later generations forgot them or did not understand how they were to be followed.

This tradition and explanation was handed down from teacher to pupil by word of mouth that is 'Orally' for some 1,500 years. However, at the time of the Roman persecution some 2,000 years ago, when it was forbidden to teach the Torah, for fear of them being lost, they were written down (which is why even the Oral Torah came to be written) in what came to be called the Talmud, the root of the word being 'learning'.

The Talmud contains laws and their explanations handed down by our Sages throughout the ages. It is from the Talmud that we learn how the commandments should be observed. It quotes the Sages by name and their arguments and proofs as well as stories and examples. The style of the Talmud is very brief and can be compared to the notes of a student at a lecture who makes notes of what he hears. These may not be comprehensible to others but makes perfect sense to him. As he reads the notes he remembers the lecture. The Talmud is similar, it is written very concisely and must be learned and studied with a teacher, until, the student masters the method and the understanding of its logic and concepts together with the numerous commentaries written by our Sages over the ages

There are two Talmuds. The Talmud Bavli which is the distillation of the Oral Torah in the great academies of Babylon (present day Iraq) the great seat of learning for some 500 years from the beginning of the present era was written down in Aramaic, The other is the Jerusalem Talmud written down in Eretz Yisrael in Hebrew. There are sometimes differences of opinion in these two and generally speaking, the Talmud Bavli is given preference. This note should not be taken at face value as the understanding of the ideas, logic and concepts of the Talmud and its composition cannot be explained in this short note.

The Talmud was much maligned by Christians who were put up to it by renegade converted Jews wishing to curry favour with their new masters by saying that it was full of anti-Christian teachings. Moslem taking their cue from Christian attitudes were also contemptuous of it. Neither Christians nor Moslems however were/are really aware of its contents.

When studying the Talmud, which is the basis of all Jewish learning, one is struck by the humanity of our sages. Their knowledge of human psychology, human behaviour, their compassion and their complete and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible, of agriculture, mathematics, astronomy, and many, other things is a revelation to those who begin to study it.

The Talmud was publicly burned during the Middle Ages by mobs led by Popes and Bishops, and is still held up by many Christians to ridicule and as an anti-Christian work. It is held by them, without any understanding of Judaism, in contempt, as evidence of what they consider the strait laced legality of Judaism as opposed to Christianity which is based on a belief which is strange to Judaism.

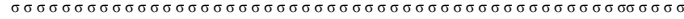
The invention of printing came just at this time. Until then the Talmud was, as all books were, written by hand. The invention of printing ensured the comparatively cheap and speedy reproduction of this basic Jewish work. Because of the hatred against some parts of the Talmud which were deemed anti-Christian by the renegades and through them the fanatic Christian clergy, certain words and phrases were censored from many of the books of the Talmud. Nowadays many of these censored concepts have been returned to their rightful place.

The Tefillin that are mentioned above are a classic example of the Oral Law. Tefillin are square leather boxes painted black, fitted with straps and made in a particular way. In the Tefillin of the hand, the passages from the Torah as mentioned above, are written on one piece of parchment and in the Tefillin of the head, these passages are written on four separate pieces, placed in four separate compartments

Nowhere in the written Torah are we told what they are or how they are to be made, or how they are actually to be worn and where exactly they are placed on the head and hand. The Oral Law teaches us how they are to be made and that between the eyes means on the forehead at the hairline and not actually between the eyes and the hand means on the muscle of the left arm opposite the heart.

אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה : הֲרִי אֲנִי כְּבֹן שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, וְלֹא זָכִיתִי
 שְׁתַּאֲמֵר יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלוֹת עַד שְׁדַרְשָׁה בֶן זֹמָא : שְׁנַאֲמַר, לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר
 אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ - הַיָּמִים, כָּל יְמֵי
 חַיֶּיךָ - הַלַּיְלוֹת. וְחֻכְמַי אֲוֹמְרִים : יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ - הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ
 - לְהַבִּיא לַיְמוֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ.

Rabbi Elazer Ben Azariah said "Behold I am as a man of seventy years old, but I have never yet understood why the exodus from Egypt should be mentioned at night, until Ben Zoma explained as it says in the verse 'that you may remember the day when you came out of Egypt *all* the days of your life.' (Deut. Ch. 16 V. 3) 'The days of your life means just the days. But, " *All* the days of your life means the nights as well". However the sages say 'the days of your life means this life, but *All* the days of your life means the days of the Messiah as well.



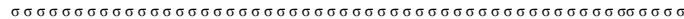
אמר רבי אלעזר

The following is an example of a typical type of Talmudic discourse,(Ber 12b) Rabbi Elazer Ben Azariah begins by saying, "I am *like* a man of seventy". Rabbi Elazer was 18 year old when because of his brilliance and vast knowledge of the Torah; he was elected as President of the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish court of 71. Of the finest intellects of the generation, he feared that his youth would have an adverse effect on the respect of the populace towards the Sanhedrin. The Talmud tells us that his hair and beard turned white overnight giving him the appearance of an old man, thus preserving the dignity of the Sanhedrin, that is why he begins by saying "I am *like* a man of seventy".

Rabbi Elazer Ben Azariah continues by saying that he was never able to understand that we have to particularly mention the Exodus from Egypt at night (by mentioning it in the Kriyat Shema in the evening), until his colleague Ben Zoma reminded him that the Torah, (Deut. Ch. 16 V. 3), says '*for in haste you came out of the land of Egypt; that you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life*', if it would say "the days of your life" it would mean during the daytime, but the word *.all* means, to include the nights as well. However, the other Sages say the days of your life means "this life", whereas *all* the days of your life include the Messianic time".

**בְּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
 כְּנֶגֶד אֲרֻבְעָה בָּנִים דְּבָרָה תּוֹרָה .
 אֶחָד חָכָם, וְאֶחָד רָשָׁע, וְאֶחָד תָּם, וְאֶחָד שְׂאִינּוֹ יוֹדֵעַ לְשֹׂאוֹל.**

Blessed is the Place (The Almighty, who is present in all places) Blessed is He, Blessed is He who gave the Torah to his people Israel. Blessed is He. The Torah speaks of four different types of children. One is wise, one is wicked, one is simple and one who does not even know how to ask.



ברוך המקום

Blessed is the "Place". What is meant here is Blessed is God. Jews, except in prayer never say the name of God as printed in the prayer book or Bible, instead a euphemism or circumlocution is used. The word 'God' is a word used to denote the Deity and is not the name of the Deity; it is itself just a word. Jews frequently use circumlocutions, so in speech, or in the written word, instead of the name of God we say "the Master of the Universe" or "The Above One" or "The Holy One Blessed be He" or most commonly "the Name". The word "Place" is used here. As God is everywhere, in every 'place' so the word "Place" can be used to refer to God. One commentator suggests that the alteration of one of the letters in the Hebrew 'Hamakom', to Hamakayaim infers that here we are speaking of the "One who makes everything exist"

"Place" also has a special meaning in Jewish thought. When Abraham obeys God's testing command to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen Ch 22 V 1-2), the Bible tells us that God tells Abraham to take his son and go to the land of Moriah and offer him up on one of the mountains which I (God) will show you (Abraham) the narrative continues "*On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the PLACE afar off*" (Gen. Ch. 22 V. 4).

When Jacob leaves his parents home to find a wife in Haran, he came to the "Place". The narrative continues with the story of his dream of a ladder going up to Heaven. When he wakes in the morning he says "*Surely the Lord is in this PLACE and I did not know it.*" And he was afraid and said "*How full of awe is this PLACE this is none other than the House of God and the Gate of Heaven*" (Gen.Ch 28.V.10-17

The Torah tells us when we are told about bringing of the first fruits, it says "*and you shall put them in a basket and you shall go to the PLACE that God will choose*" (Deut. Ch.26 V. 2). Our Rabbis tell us that all these "PLACES" are the site of the future Temple in Jerusalem.

It seems to imply that there is an esoteric connection between "Place" which we use instead of God's name and "The Place" meaning the Temple. The Rabbis tell us that "The Shechina" God's

The Rabbis say that only a fifth (חמושים)* of the Children of Israel left Egypt. (Rashi Ex. Ch. 13 V. 18) The other 4/5 did not have either the will or the faith in their own destiny, or refused to acknowledge their connection with the Children of Israel, to accompany Moses.

WHAT DOES THE SIMPLE ONE SAY – “What is all this”? And you say to him simply, “with a strong hand the Almighty brought us out of slavery in Egypt”.

AND FOR THE ONE WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO ASK - 'YOU' begin by telling him as it is said, "you shall tell your son on that day, because of this the Lord did for me when I went out of Egypt.

The discussion around these four children seemingly simple, is fundamental to our understanding of Judaism

The first one *really* does want to know, and is a seeker of knowledge about his heritage and his attachment to his Jewish-ness. The Rabbis say there are three types of Torah commandments and the wise son enumerates them all. He says, “What are the *testimonies*, the *statutes*, and the *laws* (of the Torah).

We arrived at Mt. Sinai some six weeks after the Exodus, and in the seventh week on Shavuoth, we were given 613 Commandments, Hebrew, ‘Mitzvoth’, to observe. Some are negative that is, we are commanded not to do something, such as not committing murder, not stealing, not doing any certain kinds of work termed "melacha" on the Sabbath or Festivals and so on. And some are positive, that is those which we are commanded to do. These are sub-divided into those concerned with man's duty towards God, remembering and keeping the Sabbath and Festivals, blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashana, prayer, etc, and those concerned with man's duty to his fellow man. To love your neighbour as yourself, (Lev. Ch. 19. V. 18) looking after the widow and orphan, (Deut. Ch. 14 V. 29) paying your employee promptly, (Deut. Ch. 24 V. 15) building a fence around the flat roof of your house, etc..(Deut. Ch. 22 V. 8)

There is no difference to a Jew in the merit of the commandments between man and God, and man and his neighbour, as they were all commanded at the same time and to the Nation as a whole. So that while each and every Jew is responsible for his own action, the Nation as a *whole* is also responsible for its action *as a Nation*. As the Rabbis put it, "Every Jew has a responsibility towards every other Jew". (Shavuot. 39a) If any Jew neglects his responsibilities, the Jewish nation as a whole suffers.

Performance and observance of the commandments distinguishes us from other religions and other peoples. Most other religions consist of a particular or series of beliefs and some sort of worship of a deity. The Jew is completely different. We have many commandments directly from God, which we are obliged to perform. For example, to a Jew, the payment of wages to an employee on time is not just the correct and decent thing to do but a direct God given Torah commandment. (Deut Ch. 24 V. 14-15)

These commandments are further divided into three categories. The first category is called “Mishpatim” which is third in the wise son’s question. They are laws that all civilized people will recognize and which are necessary for a regulated and civilized life. For example, among them are the commandments against murder, stealing, the necessity of setting up courts of law, laws relating to business, laws regulating ones relations with others and so on which are essential for living in an ordered civilized society.

The second group, are called “Aydot” which means witness, and which is the first on the wise son’s list. These commandments are specifically for the Jewish people and are *witness* to the special relationship of the Jewish People with God. They include among many others, the commandment to say the Kriyath Shema twice a day, to make a Succah and to live in it for the period of the Festival of Succoth. To take the Lulav and Etrog on Succoth, to keep the Sabbath, to eat Matzah on Passover, to make the Seder and all the other rules and regulations of the Passover, to remember Egypt and the Exodus, to hear the Shofar blown on Rosh Hashana. To keep the Festivals, the wearing of Tefillin and Tzitzith and all those commandments that identify us as Jews, and which connect us to our history. They are given to us so that we act as *witnesses* to the fact that God is our God and that He is the Creator and the One who took us out of Egypt.

The third group of commandments called “Chukim”, (statutes) second in the list of the wise son have nothing to do with anything that we can understand. They do not seem to commemorate anything, they do not seem to contribute to civilized behaviour as do those in the first category, they

*Another translation of the word חמושים is 'armed'

do not seem to commemorate any particular historic event as do the Aiydot and they only apply to the Jewish people to the exclusion of all others.

In this category are all the dietary laws, eating kosher meat and fish, the prohibition of eating and cooking meat and milk together, (Lev. Ch. 11), all the laws relating to mixed species, that is not wearing clothes made of a mixture of wool and linen, and the laws relating to the prohibition of planting different species together. (Lev Ch. 19 V. 19)

The most famous one in this category is the commandment of the “Red Heifer” (Num. Ch. 19. V. 1-22). We are commanded to take a heifer which had a completely red coat and which had never been worked. It is to be slaughtered and burnt. The ashes, which are then mixed with water, are to be used to purify those who, by being in contact with a dead body are ritually impure. And yet, all those engaged in the preparation of these ashes are rendered impure.

The whole concept of ritual purity relating to Jewish Law which has nothing whatsoever to do with your body being dirty, is strange. However, because they are commandments of the Torah they must be observed. The great sage Yochanan ben Zakai said “a corpse does not (to our own finite understanding) cause impurity, nor do the waters (of the Red Heifer, to our own finite understanding) purify, but it is a decree of the Supreme King of Kings” (and so must be obeyed). (Midrash Tanchuna, Chuka 8).

The laws of ritual impurity applied to all Israel and especially to the eating of the Passover offering, which had to be eaten by all in a state of purity. These laws were even more stringent for the Priests. The Priests were not allowed to serve or even enter the Temple in a state of impurity, neither was anyone else for that matter but the priests actually went into the Temple itself while non priests were only allowed into the outer courtyard. Therefore, the priests had to consciously be aware at all times, that, while they served in the Temple they were in a state of purity. This made them conscious at all times what they were doing, so that their actions and the service they were performing at all times did not descend into automatic behaviour and that they paid complete and meticulous attention to all their actions. The whole of the Temple service comes into the category of “Chukim”.

Understanding the commandments is not a requirement for their observance. Although the reasons for many of them are obvious, there are some, the reason for which, in our present state of knowledge, we cannot understand. It may be that in the future, as our knowledge increases, our understanding may become clearer. But we may not ascribe reasons for performing them or not. If we do, we may say that these reasons do not apply to modern times and we do not need therefore to perform or observe them. For example, some people may say that the laws of Kashrut, that is what may, or may not be eaten, are for hygienic reasons, and now as food laws are more regulated, they need not be observed. This argument is a complete negation of the laws and spirit of Judaism (Maim 13 Princ. 9) and was one of the reasons; there are many others, why the early gentile Christians split away from Judaism.

The Prophet Micah says *“What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God”* (Micah Ch.6 V.8). To be able to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God we must know what are the testimonies, the statutes and the laws, and it is up to each of us to learn, to apply, and to do.

Many of these “Chukim” laws are prefixed or suffixed in the Bible by the words “you shall be HOLY because I (God) am HOLY“. What does Holy mean and what does this seemingly strange Chukim category of Commandments have to do with us and with mankind generally.

Moses in his final speech to the Children of Israel before their going into the Land of Israel says. *“And it shall come to pass because you listen to these ordinances and **keep** them and **do** them, that the Lord thy God shall keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore unto your fathers. And He will love you, and bless you and multiply you. And He will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of the land the corn and the wine and the oil and the increase of your cattle and the young of the flock in the land which He swore to your fathers to give you.”* (Deut. Ch. 7 V. 12-15).

Rabbi S. R. Hirsch in his commentary on these sentences says that it is not a matter of reward and punishment either for the individual or the nation but as a consequence of the Jewish Nation keeping the God given commandments this promise of the redemption will come about. If we all loved our neighbour as ourselves, if we did not murder, steal, covet our neighbour's wife, etc, if we all smiled and said good-morning and good-afternoon, the world would be a much better place, if you

smile the world smiles with you. If you treat the land properly, the land will repay that trust. If we pollute the land, air and water, we will suffer in the long run. All these are duties, which we owe to God and our fellow man. It is therefore, as a consequence of right conduct by individuals and the Nation as a whole, which will bring us to be *"A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND A HOLY NATION"*, (Ex. Ch. 19 . 6).

We are so used to the word Holy, from saying it in our prayers from seeing it written and even using it in our daily life that we do not think about what it means. We feel vaguely that it has something to do with God, but how often do we think about its meaning. We say that God is 'Holy', the Temple Mount is 'Holy', the Sefer Torah is 'Holy' the Jewish people are meant to be "a kingdom of priests and a 'Holy' nation" " We are told to perform certain Mitzvoth and not to perform other actions because "I am **Holy**" says God "and therefore you should be **Holy**" (Lev. Ch. 19. V. 2).

There are three realms in the universe, the physical, the mundane, and the spiritual. The physical world is the world of physical science, of which some of us know more and many of us know little. The physical world is that which makes the universe go round. It came into existence at the instant of the creation of the universe. It is the world of atoms and radiation and forces, of the force of gravity and centrifugal force and much more. It is the reason that the earth, planets our solar system and others keep on their courses it provides us with light and the life force to grow our crops and ourselves. It is continuous and we have little or no control over it. It continues whether we are there or not. It is there for us to harness if we can and man is responsible for what he does with it when he does harness it. You can make a nuclear bomb or you can use nuclear fission to make electricity. The choice is man's.

The mundane realm is the one over which we have some measure of control. It is the realm that reacts to our actions. We live in a society, so we make laws which keeps the society functioning. We work, we make things, and we destroy things, we marry, we bring up children and all the thousand and one things that make up our everyday life. Although we do have some measure of control of the mundane world, nevertheless unplanned things are constantly happening; sometimes we approve and sometimes are sorry about them, sometimes sad and sometimes happy. Do these unforeseen things happen because we act in a certain way without realizing the consequences or are they random events? We can also ask ourselves whether there are such things as random events.

The third realm is the spiritual. It is something that we cannot see, unlike the physical and mundane worlds and only sometimes experience. It is completely 'different' and 'separate' from anything else. It is "THE separate". This spiritual universe or realm is "Holy". God is 'Holy' He is the fount of Holiness, because He is completely separate from both the physical and mundane world and yet at the same time somehow and we do not know with our limited human knowledge how, controls them. Things like the Temple Mount and Sifre Torah are Holy because of the relationship they have with the sanctity of God. They have a lesser Holiness.

The prophet Isaiah (Ch. 1 V. 4) describes God as 'the Holy One of Israel' denoting God's Supremacy, Omnipotence and Majesty. "Holiness is the attribute of Him Whose Presence cannot be approached or fully realized by mortals. Who alone is entitled to the adoration of all created beings" (Rabbi Slotki)

When we are told "you should be Holy because I (God) am Holy", we are being told to separate ourselves from the mundane, to attempt to raise ourselves up to somehow emulate the Creator. Which of course is impossible but that should not stop us from trying, what we may not do, is to give up. We cannot in our human understanding comprehend God. We can only get closer to Him through the commandments that He has transmitted to us through the Torah given to us in the desert soon after the exodus and the Festival of Freedom, which we are commemorating at the Seder.

Our Sages have said that we have been given many commandments to help us try and reach a higher and higher degree of Holiness. If I understand him correctly, the great biblical commentator of modern times, Samson Raphael Hirsch said on Deut. Ch. 7 V. 12, that the Jewish people, keeping the 'Chukim', the statute commandments, the ones that we cannot understand by using our rational minds, and which were given with all the others at Mt Sinai, are the warp and weft of the spiritual realm which in conjunction with the physical world and the mundane world keep the universe on an even keel. Without the Jewish people obeying God's Chukim, that is the commandments which to us, seem to have no reason or basis, the whole world will fall into chaos. (Jer. Ch. 33 V. 25. Eth. Ch. 1 V. 2).

With the destruction of the Temple some of these Chukim are in abeyance so that we cannot at the present time fulfill many of the commandments in that category. Because of this, is the balance of the world somehow incomplete? The harmony, which we strive for, seems constantly to elude us. If

the Jewish people as a whole, were to completely fulfill their obligations towards those commandments that are Chukim, would the others that we cannot now fulfill become within our reach, making the world the place of peace happiness and free from *"the illnesses of Egypt"* (Ex. Ch. 15 V. 26), that we all hope for.

The second son, called the 'wicked one', says "What does this service means to *you*?" excluding himself. He represents those Jews throughout the ages who have denied their Jewishness, who have become self hating and Anti-Semitic Jews, who take every opportunity of denigrating, abusing, slandering and heaping scorn on their own flesh and blood and by extension their own parents and grandparents, and on Eretz Yisrael and its renewal. It also includes those who have deliberately renounced their heritage by adopting other religions, many because they did not have the moral fibre to be separate, or for personal advancement, and who may have said "why swim against the tide let us join the majority among whom we live".

They are as guilty as the spies Moses sent to spy out the land, (Num. Chs. 13 and 14) who came back and frightened the people in the desert with their tales of the savagery of the inhabitants of the Land of Canaan, condemning them to spend 40 years wandering in the wilderness, until their descendants toughened by those 40 years in the wilderness and born free without any memory of the Ghetto like existence of their slave years in Egypt were able to eventually go up and conquer the Holy Land.

To these people, the author of the Haggadah says give them a sharp answer, disown them, and cut them off from the Jewish people.

The third son, "the simple" one, represents the one who is unlearned and makes no or very little effort to learn about Judaism. In this category are those who have neglected or abandoned the commandments either by laxity or laziness or by rationalizing that many of the commandments no longer apply or are out of place in modern society. Perhaps denying the sanctity of the basic laws and customs of Judaism, such as kashrut, the dietary laws, the sanctity of Shabbat and the Festivals and the distinctiveness of Jewish family life.

To him we say "with a strong hand did the Almighty bring us out of Egypt and slavery". In other words it is only by acknowledgment of the fact that the unity of the Jewish people can only be kept by adherence to the commandments of the Torah can we continue as an identifiable nation. It is interesting to consider that Judaism has always been 'out of step' with 'modern' society. When society worshipped idols, Abraham did not, when society condoned murder and theft, Judaism did and does not. When society accepts immorality and licentiousness Judaism does not. What the Torah advocates is a society and civilization that would keep the world from excesses in which every man would live at peace and harmony with his neighbour and in which man would *"beat his swords into ploughshares and pruning hooks"*, (Micah Ch..4 V. 3)

The fourth son, the one 'who does not even know what to ask', could relate to, two very different people. One, it could refer to those of our brethren who through no fault of their own have suffered persecution and segregation or who have lived under regimes that have denied them the opportunity of learning or even knowing about their heritage, such as we have seen in those living under the 70 years of the Soviet and its allies, communist regimes. Where millions of Jews had never even heard of Abraham or Moses or the Exodus. To them we have to teach not only the answers but the questions themselves.

The second would refer to the plain meaning, and relates to a child who is perhaps too young to appreciate what is going on. The text says *"And you shall relate to your son on that day"* We are told many times that we are to tell our children our history, how we went down to Egypt and our leaving it. In our prayers we mention our leaving Egypt frequently. Many times the Torah tells us to treat people with kindness because we know what it is to be treated badly as we were in Egypt. But we are especially commanded to tell our children when we celebrate the Festival of Passover the actual anniversary of our Exodus. Who is to tell the child on that day? And here we come to one of the fundamental building blocks of the Jewish family.

It is one word, or really the lack of one letter in the reply to the son 'who doesn't even know how to ask' that opens up for us the whole perspective of the woman in Judaism.

It says "And to the one who does not know how to ask, *YOU* shall introduce to him" (the laws and traditions of our people). The *YOU* in the Hebrew is written here, in the feminine form. Spelt אַתְּ "Aleph" and "Taff". The "Heh" (הַ-אֵתְּ) which would make the word masculine is missing.

The place of the wife and mother in Judaism is often seriously misunderstood. To properly understand this, one must know a little about the Halacha relating to the performance of the mitzvot.

At Mount Sinai the Jewish people were given not only the Ten Commandments (known in Hebrew as the 'Ten Utterances') which everyone knows about, but 613. Some of these Commandments are positive, things we must do, such as keeping the Festivals, making the Seder etc. And some are negative Commandments such as not eating bread on Pesach etc. Out of these 613 Commandments, many of them are matters relating to offerings and Temple worship which, since the destruction of the Temple are in abeyance.

Some of the positive Commandments, that is those that we must do, are time related. For example the Tallith is only worn during the day, Tephilin are not worn on Shabbat, statutory prayers must be said at certain time. The morning service is not said in the afternoon and the afternoon service is not said in the morning. The 'Lulav' is taken only on Succoth; the Shofar is blown on Rosh Hashana, and many other examples.

The Torah in its infinite wisdom has exempted women from the performance of many of these *positive* time related Mitzvoth (Kiddushin 29a). One should not take this statement in its simplest, as there are certain Mitzvoth which although time related are incumbent on a woman. For example, she must keep the Sabbath and Festivals she is required to make or hear Kiddush and so on. In addition women over the years have taken upon themselves the voluntary performance of certain time related Mitzvoth. In this as in so many other things, we must take Hillel's admonition "Go and Learn" to heart, so that we may know which time related mitzvoth are obligatory on women. The reason why women are exempt from many of these Mitzvoth is simple.

God created man and woman "*And a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.*" (Gen. Ch 2 V. 24). Husband and Wife complement each other and are partners in a relationship, which God has ordained for the continuation of human kind. "*Be fruitful and multiply*" says God. (Gen Ch 1 V 26). The propagation of all species including man is the first commandment of God to all creatures. Marriage, the ordered institution of family life is a fundamental rule of civilized life. Woman is a partner in marriage which is itself enjoined by the Torah she is the wife and the mother. The right attitude of a husband and wife to their marriage is of the utmost importance to its success.

Today when so many women are engaged in working outside the home, she is still the one, who in most cases runs the household. Although she should expect the help of the husband, it is generally speaking she who lights the Shabbat and Festival candles, it is she who runs the household and looks after the children, To her is given the miracle of birth, the bringing into the world of a human being. She is the one who in normal circumstances has the most to do with her child from birth onwards. It is she, who feeds the child, guides its first words and steps, wipes away its tears, kisses its wounds to take away the pain, and joins in its laughter. The mother is bound much more than the father biologically, physically, spiritually and mentally to her child

Bringing up a family is a sacred task ordained by God at creation. It therefore follows, that if a mother is occupied with this sacred task, she cannot stop in the middle of feeding the children with their breakfast and getting them ready for school to put on her Tallith and Tephilin and to say the morning prayers at the proper time.

There is another reason why women are exempt from positive commandments that are governed by time, and this has to do with the blessing made in the morning that has been the subject of much misunderstanding. This is the blessing said by men in the morning which ends ".....who has not made me a woman" women say "who has made me according to His will". Most of the commandments mentioned above such as Tallith and Tephilin are to remind us of our commitment and duty to God and man.

In the Kriyat Shema we are commanded "to bind the Tephilin on our arm and between the eyes", as a sign, and later on the Tzizith "....that you may look upon them and remember all the commandments to do them". The time related Commandments makes us conscious at all times of our duty to God and through Him to the Jewish people. For example, it is only at a certain time of the day that we have to put on our Tephilin and pray. We do not pray the morning service in the afternoon or the evening service in the morning

It is well known that women throughout the centuries have been the most steadfast in their belief and in their power of transmission of our faith. Going back to the earliest times it was not the women, but the men who gave the gold to Aaron to make the golden calf, (Ex Ch. 32). Even before that, it was the midwives in Egypt who saved the baby boys from Pharaoh's decree of drowning them in Nile (Ex Ch. 1.V. 15-17). Right throughout the ages from even before Temple times, in good times and in bad, during the bitter dispersion, in the confines of the ghetto, in the Shtetels of Eastern Europe and

North Africa, right down to the present day, it was, and still is, the mother, who first teaches the child the affirmation of the Jewish faith "*Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God the Lord the One and Only*" (Deut Ch. 6 v 4). It is the mother who guides her child and teaches it right from wrong. The father may be the one who learns the minutiae of the commandments and how to observe them, but it is the mother who is the backbone of the family's adherence to our great traditions.

In Hebrew the word for "you" in the feminine, has two letters **את** (aleph and taff). They are the first and last letters in the Hebrew alphabet, perhaps they signify that everything from the beginning to the end resides in womankind. There is no need therefore, for women to be constantly reminded as men are, of their duty by special signs and actions, as they have them instinctively. In addition, there is a concept in Judaism that if one is exempt from a certain action, it could be thought presumptuous and smacking of an unnecessary public display of piety to insist on performing a commandment which is not obligatory. (Ber. 17b.).

What the mother has to do is to introduce the subject to her child. Telling it, "it is soon going to be Pesach" allowing it to help with simple chores, allowing it to be swept up in the excitement of the Pesach preparations, so that Pesach, Shabbat, Kashrut and all those other things great and small that make up the Jewish tradition become second nature to it. It stands to reason therefore that she cannot do two things at once, that is see to her household and children and at the same time keep her eye on the clock to make sure that she does not go over the time for the morning prayers

That is why to the son who "does not know even what to ask", it is the mother who answers him. The mother's influence on the child cannot be too greatly emphasized. Judaism understands this and has given into the hands of the wife and mother the responsibility of introducing Judaism at the earliest age to her child thus ensuring that the continuation of the Jewish people is in safe hands.

יְכוֹל מִרְאֵשׁ חֹדֶשׁ, תִּלְמוּד לומר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, אִי בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְכוֹל מִבְּעוֹד
 יוֹם, תִּלְמוּד לומר בְּעֵבוֹר זֶה - בְּעֵבוֹר זֶה לֹא אָמַרְתִּי אֶלָּא בְּשָׁעָה שְׁיִישׁ מִצָּחָה
 וּמְרוֹר מִנְחִים לְפָנֶיךָ.

One would think (that we could relate the story of the Exodus from Egypt) from the beginning of the month (of Nissan, the month in which we celebrate Pesach) the Torah however, says *on that day* (Ex. Ch. 13 v. 8) and because "that day" might be understood to mean during the daytime, the Torah continues "because of this" and I say that "because of this" means at the time when the Matzah and the Maror are lying before us. (The Seder night)

מִתְחִלָּה עוֹבְדֵי עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, וְעַכְשָׁו קָרַבְנוּ הַמָּקוֹם לְעִבְדוֹתוֹ,
 שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל כָּל הָעָם, כֹּה אָמַר יי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּעֵבֶר
 אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים. וְאָקַח אֶת אֲבִיכֶם אֶת אַבְרָהָם מֵעֵבֶר הַנְּהָר וְאוֹלַךְ אוֹתוֹ
 בְּכָל אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, וְאַרְבָּה אֶת זָרְעוֹ וְאָתְּנוּ לוֹ אֶת יִצְחָק, וְאָתְּנוּ לְיִצְחָק אֶת יַעֲקֹב
 וְאָתְּנוּ לְעֵשָׂו אֶת הַר שְׁעִיר לְרֵשֶׁת אוֹתוֹ, וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבְנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם.

At first our ancestors (from after Noah until Abraham's father Terah) worshipped idols. But, now the Almighty has brought us to His service as it is said. "And Joshua said to all the people, thus says the God of Israel your ancestors lived on the other side of the River (Euphrates). Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor worshipped other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River and led him throughout the whole Land of Canaan and I multiplied his descendants. And I gave him (his son) Isaac and I gave Isaac (sons) Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau, Mount Seir as a possession and Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt". (Josh. Ch. 24. V. 2- 4)

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The next short section of the narrative refers to Abraham's (and our) forebears who worshipped idols. Joshua, on the Children of Israel's entry in to the Promised Land reminds them (Josh. Ch. 24) that our forefathers lived beyond the River Euphrates in Ur Chasdim. God spoke to Abraham telling him to leave his father's house and go to the Land which he would show him (Gen. Ch. 12.V 1). The promise to Abraham that his descendants through Isaac and Jacob (Israel) would inherit the Land of Israel and that his descendants through Esau, Isaac's other son and Jacob's twin brother, would inherit Mt. Seir, a region on the other side of the Jordan River in the present kingdom of Jordan and ends with his grandson Jacob and his family going down to Egypt.

They were to live there until the behaviour of the Canaanites and the other nations occupying the Land of Israel at that time became even more depraved than they were so that they would merit being dispossessed. (Gen. Ch. 15. V.16).

The question of why the descendants of Abraham went down to Egypt and did not inherit the land of Canaan immediately is explained like this. If the children of Jacob (Israel) Abraham's grandson continued to live in the Land of Canaan, would they have kept to themselves as a separate people, or would they, with increased prosperity, taken on the idolatrous and depraved culture of the surrounding peoples, become assimilated and intermarried with the inhabitants of the country. We see how easily it happens not only in our own time but in the story relating to Jacob's daughter Dina. (Gen. Ch. 34).

Why did Jacob and his children go down to Egypt? It is only when we are blessed with hindsight can we understand that certain things that seem to be unconnected are really God's planning which we cannot understand at the time they are happening. Some things that may appear to us to be bad or unpleasant often turn out to be in our best interests. The story as to why they did go to Egypt is narrated in the famous story of Joseph and his brothers as told in Gen. Ch 37 to Ch. 48. The whole of this narration leads eventually to the Exodus and Pesach.

Jacob was told by God to go down to Egypt, he was most reluctant, but God said to him "*do not be afraid to go down to Egypt*" (Gen. Ch. 46 V. 3). Although Jacob was told by God to go to Egypt, it was not a command he had the free will to go or not to. After he was comforted by God, he made his decision.

An important concept of Judaism is that we have 'Free Will' (Maim. Hilch Tshuv. 5: 1) that is we are at liberty to follow our inclinations in all our actions. However, we must be prepared to accept the consequences of those actions. The concept of Free Will is already established in Gen. Ch. 3 right at the beginning of the history of the human race. Adam was told by God (Gen. Ch.. 2 V. 17). Not to eat of the "*tree of the knowledge of good and evil*" However in Gen. Ch. 3, Eve is persuaded by the serpent (her evil inclination?) to defy God and eat its fruit.

All of us have a good inclination and an evil inclination, it is only too easy for our evil inclination to rationalize that what we are doing is really all right, although we know in our heart of hearts that it is not so. If we did not have 'Free Will' we could say that all our actions good or bad are pre-ordained, and that we have no control over what we do. If we disobeyed a commandment and/or committed a crime, we could say that we ourselves are not at fault as the act was in-built into us from birth. It is the consequences of our actions when we exercise this free will that has ramifications over not only our future, but the future of our families and of people we may not know and may never meet

The truth is that we all responsible for our own actions and for the consequences of those actions. The excuse that is made that somehow our upbringing or our environment controlled our actions is a negation of Judaism. They do have an effect on us but the Torah tells us how to behave and if we follow its teaching, we will not go wrong.

The Torah tells us in Moses final words (Deut. Ch. 30 V 16) on the eve of the Children of Israel leaving the wilderness to enter the Holy Land, "*In that I command you this day to love the Lord your God to walk in his ways and to keep His statutes and ordinances, then you shall live and multiply then the Lord shall bless you in the Land that you are going in to possess it*' and in Verse 19 it continues, "*choose life*". The choice is ours.

It turns out that it was only by going down to Egypt living in an alien environment where they were never really accepted that they were able to keep together as a separate nation. The fact that they were enslaved is a manifestation of man's inhumanity and fear by the local inhabitants, of strangers and people that were different and who kept themselves to themselves. This seems to be the basis of most anti-Semitism, which manifested itself even as early as that time. The 'New' Pharaoh,

who "knew not Joseph" (Ex Ch 1 V. 8), says without any justification whatsoever, "Behold the people of the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us..... and it will come to pass when we go to war THEY WILL JOIN OUR ENEMIES AND FIGHT AGAINST US" The assumption is that, they the Egyptians will go to war and that the Israelites will automatically join with their enemies.

Could it have been that the economy of Egypt was in dire straits, or that Pharaoh's power was being eroded or was he being threatened by his own courtiers? Is this then the typical call of a leader when things are not going well, to blame the country's troubles on someone else? A stranger, someone who is weak, someone whose beliefs are different, who believes in One God who is invisible, a people who have a different set of moral values, and best of all a people who could not answer back and at the same time enslave this people so that they had unpaid workers to build the grandiose cities and monuments that Pharaoh's vanity demanded

When we talk about our 'slavery' in Egypt, we tend to think that each individual Israelite was enslaved to an Egyptian. However, we read that Moses says to Pharaoh (Ex. Ch. 1. V. 9) "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters with our flocks and with our herds". We understand that the people as a whole nation, family unit by family unit, together with all their possessions were held in thrall by the Egyptians. What we can understand is that the Egyptians demanded so much work in so much time, which the people were obliged to provide. We are told that the Children of Israel built the cities of Pithom and Rhamses. While they lived together as a people in Goshen the whole people were obliged to provide a work force to make bricks and build these cities. At the same time as they had to work in their fields to provide their own food. It is probable that great squads of people in turn were drafted for the work, meaning that they had to work twice as hard

This bitter forced labour hardship and degradation, to which they were subjected, paradoxically made it easier, when the time came, for the children of Israel to wish to escape their bitter lot. By being brought out of Egypt by God's hand, by crossing the Reed Sea, and by receiving the commandments at Mt. Sinai, the descendants of Abraham were welded into a nation so strong and firm in its faith that it survives forever.

The question is often asked, in what way were the Egyptians to blame for enslaving the Children of Israel when God had told Abraham in the "covenant between the pieces" that his descendants would be a "Stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them and they shall afflict them" (Gen. Ch. 15 V 5 - 21). Maimonides the great medieval Biblical commentator, Halachic authority and philosopher, reminds us that the Almighty does not say in those verses that the Children of Israel would be slaves in Egypt, but be slaves in "a land not theirs". They may have gone down to Egypt stayed there a short while and perhaps gone on to Sudan, or Arabia or elsewhere. It was the Egyptians who exercised their free will and enslaved the people and that was why they were the ones to be punished. The Vilna Gaon, the 18th Cent. Torah giant, great Talmudic authority and leader of Eastern European Jewry said, "If Pharaoh was executing a Divine Decree, he would immediately have let the people go when asked by Moses. That he denied the existence of God shows that he enslaved the people only for his own betterment".

בְּרוּךְ שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּטָחָתוֹ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. שֶׁהִקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא חָשַׁב אֶת הַקֶּץ, לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ בְּבְרִית בֵּין הַבְּתָרִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם, יָדַע תֵּדַע כִּי גֵר יִהְיֶה זְרַעְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם, וְעַבְדוּם וְעָנוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה. וְגַם אֶת הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָן אֲנִי וְאַחֲרָי כֹּן יֵצְאוּ בְּרִכְשׁ גָּדוֹל.

Blessed is He who fulfills His promise to Israel. Blessed is He that the Holy One, Blessed is He planned the end, (of their slavery) in order to do what He said to our father Abraham in the "Covenant between the Pieces as it says "And He said to Abram, understand this that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will be enslaved and their lives will be made miserable for four hundred years, but I will judge the nation that oppresses them and afterwards they will leave with many possessions". (Gen. Ch. 15. V. 13-14).

ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל

Next we break off the narrative to praise God for not forgetting His people and for fulfilling His promise to Abraham in the "Covenant Between the Pieces" (Gen. Ch. 15 V. 5-21) that his descendants would first have to live in a strange land become stronger because of their trials and then go back and inherit the Land as was promised.

The fact that the people were exiled was part of the condition for inhabiting the Land "If you keep my commandments" said God then, you will have rain in its season and inhabit the Land etc. see the second paragraph of the Kriyat Shema (Deut. Ch. 11 V. 13-21). If not, "then the Land will cast you out" the situation is in our own hands. A contract is made between two parties; if one does not keep the conditions then the other side is not obliged to keep their part of the bargain. The establishment of the State of Israel is the third attempt by the Jewish people to inherit the Holy Promised Land. The outcome is entirely in our hands. Keep God's commandments, keep the Land. Disobey and ignore them, God forbid, lose the Land, it is as simple as that, as unpalatable as it sounds.

Cover the Matzoth and raise the cup of wine

מְכַסֶּה אֶת הַמַּצּוֹת וּמִגְבִּיחַ אֶת הַכּוֹס.

וְהִיא שְׁעֵמֻדָּה לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ שֶׁלֹּא אֶחָד בְּלֶבֶד עָמַד עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתָנוּ, אֶלָּא שְׁבָכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר עוֹמְדִים עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתָנוּ, וְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצִילָנוּ מֵיָדָם.

And it is this promise that has stood by our ancestors and us for not only once have people risen against us to annihilate us, but in every generation people have endeavoured to annihilate us, but the Holy One, Blessed be He delivers us (a majority) from their hands..

והיא שעמדה

In every generation, evil people exercising their free will have persecuted the Jewish People from those early days to this. This has been story of the Jewish people throughout the ages from the earliest times right through the Middle Ages until the 20th century with the unbelievable and inexplicable attempt by the highly sophisticated and supposedly cultured Germany together with their allies, to once and for all wipe out the Jewish people using the latest in scientific methods.

The Egyptians, the Persian Haman, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Church, Islam, all have persecuted the Jewish people for being different and keeping to themselves and worshiping God in their own way. The Jewish people have asked nothing more than to be allowed to be themselves, without interfering with the beliefs of other peoples. Jews do not say as others do "we are the only ones who are right and you must believe and worship as we do". It is a Jewish concept that the righteous of all peoples are assured of the 'world to come'

At different times, there were different approaches. Pharaoh for all his power felt that perhaps the Jews would undermine his authority. Haman tried to wipe out the Jewish people physically. (Meg. Esther). The Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans, in their quest for Empire tried to erase Jewish belief in the arrogant belief that their way of life was superior. The Roman Juggernaut wanted to crush those that were different.

Perhaps at first it was fear of strangers, then it was different beliefs, and then perhaps the Churches arrogant self-proclaimed adoption for itself and seeing itself as 'the 'new Israel' and the inheritors of Abraham, as do also the Moslems and that all who did not believe as they did were beyond the pale. Or perhaps it is jealousy that it was the Jews who introduced monotheism and a new morality. Or is it subconscious anger that the introduction of this monotheism and new morality is the negation of that paganism which they secretly hanker for and which they gave up when they adopted their version of monotheism

However, it was only in our times that science was wedded to ferocity and bloodthirstiness. The Germans even jeopardized their World War Two war effort in the frenzy of murdering the Jews of Europe. There is no rational explanation how it is that a country, which prided itself on being the acme of culture and civilization should have acted as it did unless it was because of blind hatred. Not only that but the countries that Germany over-ran, were willing and even enthusiastic, partners in this

So what did Laban do or want. Even before Pharaoh, Abraham's nephew Laban, whose two daughters Leah and Rachel and the two servant girls Bilhah and Zilpah were married to his, Abraham's, grandson Jacob (Israel) (Gen. Chs. 29-32). One of the translations of "Arami Avad Avi", is an Aramean, (Laban) tried to 'destroy my father' (Deut Ch. 26 V. 5). Not physically because after all, Jacob's children were his grandchildren, but morally by trying to seduce Jacob and his children to adopt the idol worship of his, Laban's fathers which Abraham had so vigorously denied.

If Laban had succeeded, there would be no Jewish people today. So that although Pharaoh wanted to dispose of only the male children, (Ex. Ch. V 16). The result of Laban's action would have resulted in there being no Jewish people, because Jacob's children would have disappeared by being absorbed in the local population, in a manner somewhat similar to the rest of Laban's grandchildren.

There are two ways of destroying us. Physically, as Haman in the book of Esther and the unmentionable Austrian and his thousands if not millions of willing helpers, tried to, in our own time. And the other, like the ancient Greeks and their emulators who wish to destroy us spiritually by denigrating us and our way of life and by trying to persuade us that their way is better. The ancient Greeks plans were frustrated by the Hasmonians which we commemorate during the Festival of Chanukah. In both cases the end product is the same the disappearance of the Jewish People.

These words "Arami Avad Avi" "*A wandering Aramaen, was my father*" (Deut. Ch. 26 V. 5) can be translated in two ways. It can mean an "Aramaen, (Laban), tried to kill my father" which is the meaning ascribed to the above, or "A wandering Aramaen, (Jacob), was my father" These words "Arami Avad Avi" are the beginning of the formula used when fulfilling the Mitzvah of bringing the first fruits to Jerusalem. The Children of Israel are commanded to bring the First Fruits (of the seven fruits of the Land e.g. wheat, barley, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, and olives) to Jerusalem, to present it to the Priest who would place it near the altar (Bikkurim. 3. 1-9).

The ceremony was conducted with great rejoicing with processions, music and dancing. The formula goes on to say that Jacob and his children went down to Egypt were made to serve there as slaves and that God brought them out of Egypt and has "*brought us unto this place, the Land of Israel, a land of milk and honey*". (Ex.Ch. 3.V.8). Although part of the Israel people resided on the east bank of the Jordan, the Rabbis decreed that the first fruits were only to be brought from the Israel side of the Jordan because the other side was not "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Bikkurim 1: 10).

The bringing of the "First Fruits" was a recognition of God's hand in the destiny of the Jewish People, and a thank offering for His Goodness in bringing us out of Egypt into a goodly land, and for fulfilling His promise, that the land would belong to the Jewish People for ever (Lev. Ch. 26. V 3 - 22). The fact that we were exiled is also in accord with His promise set out (Deut. Ch. 28) as to what would happen to us if we abandoned the Torah and disobeyed His Commandments. Even with the Exile however, the promise still holds good that the land will forever belong to the people of Israel and that in the right time "*The great Shofar will be blown and then will come those lost in the land of Assyria and those cast away in the land of Egypt and they shall prostrate themselves to the Lord on the Holy mountain of JERUSALEM*" (Isaiah. Ch. 27.V 13).

The reciting of these words the beginning of the "First Fruits" formula is particularly appropriate at the Seder night, when we celebrate the "Festival of Freedom" of the Nation of Israel. Had Laban been successful, the Jewish people would never have come into existence and world history would have taken a different turn. Pesach is the physical redemption of the Jewish people when they left Egypt and their servitude behind. They were not yet a people but had to put in .forty years in the wilderness (Num. Ch. 14 V. 33) before the tribes became a homogeneous nation (Deut. Ch.. 27. V. 9) and could enter Eretz Yisrael.

Pesach is thus the commemoration of physical redemption. It is the triumphant answer to Laban, to Egypt to Haman and their successors that no matter the hardships and the travail that Israel suffers no one can prevail against God's Promise that the Jewish People would in the end be the "Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation". Physical redemption however without a moral code, a system of laws leads only to chaos and anarchy where everyone does "what is right in his own eyes" (Judges Ch.17 V.6). A nation needs a constitution, people need to know who they are and where they are going, and this came about seven weeks after leaving Egypt, bringing us to the "Festival of the First Fruits".

The "Festival of the First Fruits" is the beginning of the period when the First Fruits were brought up to Jerusalem. The Festival known variously as 'Shavuoth' (Hebrew for *weeks*, that is seven weeks after Pesach) the 'Festival of the First Fruits' and perhaps of supreme significance

'Zman Matan Toratanu', The Time of the Giving of the Torah. It is the festival of the "Day of the Revelation", when the Children of Israel, exhausted and bewildered, after their exodus from Egypt, crossing the Reed Sea and traveling through the desert are finally gathered around Mt Sinai and saw the thunder and lightning (Ex Ch. 20 V. 15) and heard the voice of the Almighty saying *"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt"* (Ex. Ch. 20. V. 2).

The giving by God of the Torah, 'The Book' to his people Israel, containing the history of the Jewish people together with the Commandments of God defining the rules by which they should live, put the feet of the Jewish People on the path to the eventual Redemption for which we are all waiting.

A little while after the revelation at Sinai, Moses sent representatives of the tribes to spy out the Land (Num. Ch. 13) preparatory to going on to take up God's promise that the Land of Israel was to be the home of the Jewish people and the centre from which God's word was to flow and reach the four corners of the world, *"For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem"*. (Isaiah Ch. 2.V. 3). The spies returned bringing beautiful samples of the fruits of the Holy Land. However, they struck fear into the hearts of their listeners by saying that the land was inhabited by giants who would make short work of the Israelites. The people became so afraid they wailed to Moses to go back to Egypt. Even today, any one who denigrates Eretz Yisrael or complains that Eretz Yisrael is unsafe because of the ferocity of some of its non Jewish inhabitants is guilty of the "sin of the spies"

Two of the spies, Caleb the son of Yefuneh of the tribe of Judah, and Joshua the son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim, tried to persuade the people to go on, but they were threatened with being stoned to death. As a punishment for not going on and carrying out God's instructions to go up and conquer the Land, the Children of Israel were destined to wander in the desert for forty years until that generation, except for Caleb and Joshua had died out and only then would they be able to inherit the land. (Num. Ch. .14 V. 33).

On the Seder night, we are reminded of this painful episode by remembering that in spite of the spies, Israel did live in the Land of Israel and did bring the First Fruits to Jerusalem despite Laban's blandishments and the fears of the spies'. However in the midst of our joy of celebrating our exodus from Egypt we still have to remember that "because of our sins we have been exiled from our land" (Festival Musaph service). May the return to Israel in the 20th Century of the Common Era, of Jews from all over the world be a prelude to once again bringing the First Fruits in joy to a rebuilt Jerusalem.

The children of Jacob (Israel) as well as Jacob himself driven by famine in the land went down to Egypt. Not willingly but by Divine advice. As mentioned before, the time was not yet ripe for them to inherit the land. Going down to Egypt they asked Pharaoh to allow them to live in the part of Egypt most suitable for animal husbandry, and as the Egyptians were tillers of the soil and certainly not at that time shepherds, the Children of Israel were granted their request and settled in the land of Goshen. There they prospered and vastly increased in number so that the *"Land was filled with them"* (Ex. Ch. 1 V. 7) they became so numerous that the indigenous inhabitants began to murmur about the "foreigners" in their midst.

וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִם - אָנוּס עַל פִּי הַדְּבָר. וַיֵּרֶד שָׁם - מִלְּמַד שֶׁלֹּא יֵרֶד יַעֲקֹב
אֲבִינוּ לְהִשְׁתַּקֵּעַ בְּמִצְרַיִם אֶלָּא לְגוֹר שָׁם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל פַּרְעֹה, לְגוֹר
בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן, כִּי אֵין מְרֻעָה לְצֹאן אֲשֶׁר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ, כִּי כִבֵּד הָרַעַב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן.
וַעֲתָה יֵשְׁבוּ נָא עֲבָדֶיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן.

And he went down to Egypt compelled by the Divine word *and he lived there* from which we learn that Jacob did not intend to settle in Egypt but to live there for a short while, as it says in the Torah "And they said to Pharaoh we have come to live in the land for a short while as there is no pasture for your servants flocks, because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now may your servants dwell in the land of Goshen." (Gen. Ch. 47 V. 4)

בְּמַתִּי מֵעֵט - כְּמֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : בְּשַׁבָּעִים נָפֵשׁ יָרְדוּ אָבוֹתֶיךָ מִצְרָיִמָה וְעַתָּה שָׂמְךָ יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לְרַב.

וַיְהִי שָׁם לָגוֹי - מְלֵמֵד שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְצִינִים שָׁם.

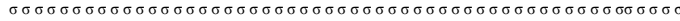
גְּדוּל, עָצוּם - כְּמֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׁרָצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעְצְמוּ בְּמֵאֵד מֵאֵד, וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם.

וְרַב - כְּמֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : רַבְּבָה כְּצֶמַח הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְתִּיךָ, וַתִּרְבִּי וַתִּגְדְּלִי וַתְּבַאֲנִי בְּעַדֵּי עַדְיִים, שְׂדֵים נִכְנּוּ וּשְׁעָרֶיךָ צִמְחָה, וְאַתָּה עָרָם וְעַרְיָה. וְאַעְבֹּר עָלֶיךָ וְאַרְאֶךָ מִתְּבוֹסְסֶת בְּדָמֶיךָ, וְאַמְרָ לְךָ בְּדָמֶיךָ חַיִּי, וְאַמְרָ לְךָ בְּדָמֶיךָ חַיִּי

Few in number. As it says (in the Torah) "the number of your ancestors who went down to Egypt were seventy souls, and now the Lord your God has made you as great in number as the stars in the heaven". (Deut. Ch. 10 V. 22)

And there became a Nation. From which we learn that the Israelites were a distinct people

Great, mighty. As it is said "and the children of Israel were fruitful and increased and multiplied and became exceedingly great, and the land was filled with them" (Ex. Ch. 1 V. 7) And numerous as it is said "And I made you as numerous as the plants in the field, and you increased and became great and came to great beauty, and your breasts were developed and your hair grew, yet you were naked and bare". (Ezek. Ch. 16 V. 7) "And I passed over you and I saw you wallowing in your blood and I said to you in your blood you shall live and I said to you, in your blood you shall live" (Ezek. Ch. 16 V. 6).



ורב כמה שנאמר

Rabbi Lehman in his wonderful commentary on the Haggadah, says that the quotation from Ezekiel Ch. 16 V. 7, likening Israel to the plants of the field, reminds us that just as the farmer has to care for and nurture his crops, so does the Jewish parent have to care for, and nurture his children so that they will "grow up as you want them to go". Rabbi Lehman continues, the children of Israel in Egypt for more than two centuries had become influenced by the Egyptian festivals and had become corrupted by the Egyptian pantheon. Nevertheless one thing distinguished them; they clung to the "covenant" between Israel and God, the 'Brith Mila', the covenant of circumcision, enjoined by God on Abraham's descendants and which has as a religious rite been jealously guarded by the Jewish people from that day to this.

The Haggadah says, "I pass over you and saw the blood". That is the blood of the Passover offering smeared on the door-posts on that first Passover in accordance with God's commandments, (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 7) and the blood of the Brith Mila (covenant of circumcision). (Gen. Ch. 17. V. 11) He cried "Through your blood shall you live, through your blood shall you live". (Ezekiel. Ch. 16. V. 6) While this covenant is assumed by us and borne by every male child, Judaism and the Jewish people will continue to exist no matter the hardship.

וַיַּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ, וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה.

And the Egyptians ill-treated us and afflicted us and forced hard labour on us.

(Deut. Ch. 26 V. 6)

וַיַּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם - כְּמֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : הֵבֵה נִתְחַכְמָה לּוּ פֹן יָרָבָה, וְהָיָה כִּי תִקְרָאנָה מְלַחְמָה וְנוֹסֵף גַּם הוּא עַל שְׂנְאֵינוּ וְנִלְחַם בָּנוּ, וְעָלָה מִן הָאָרֶץ.

And the Egyptians ill-treated us, as it is said "Come let us deal with them in a clever manner, in case they multiply and if a war will break out they side with our enemies and fight us and go up from the land." (Ex. Ch. 1 V. 10)

וְאֵת לַחֲצוֹנֵי - זוּ הַדָּחֵק, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : וְגַם רָאִיתִי אֶת הַלַּחֲץ אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם
לַחֲצִים אֹתָם

And our oppression, this is the pressure as it says "And I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them" (Ex. Ch. 3 V. 9).

וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ יי מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרָע נְטוּיָה, וּבַמַּרְא גְדֹל, וּבְאֹתוֹת
וּבְמִפְתִּים.

And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand, with an outstretched arm, with great fearfulness, and with signs and wonders. (Deut. Ch. 26 V. 8).

וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ יי מִמִּצְרַיִם - לֹא עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ, וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי שָׂרָף, וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי
שְׂלִיחַ, אֲלֵא הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּכַבּוּדוֹ וּבַעֲצָמוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : וְעִבְרַתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה, וְהִפִּיתִי כָל בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם וְעַד בְּהֵמָה,
וּבְכָל אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֲעֲשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים. אֲנִי יי.

And the Lord brought us out of Egypt Not through an angel not through a seraph, and not through a delegate, but the Holy One Blessed be He, by Himself and in His Glory, as it is said "And I will go through the land of Egypt that night and I will slay all the first born in the land of Egypt among men and among animals and on all the gods of Egypt I will mete out judgement, I am the Lord" (Ex.. Ch. 12 V. 12).

וְעִבְרַתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה - אֲנִי וְלֹא מַלְאָךְ וְהִפִּיתִי כָל בְּכוֹר
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם - אֲנִי וְלֹא שָׂרָף וּבְכָל אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֲעֲשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים - אֲנִי
וְלֹא הַשְּׂלִיחַ. אֲנִי יי - אֲנִי הוּא וְלֹא אַחֵר.

And I will go through the land of Egypt that night, I and not an angel, and I will slay all the first born in the land of Egypt, I and not a seraph and on all the gods of Egypt I will mete out judgement, I and not a delegate, I am the Lord, it is I and no other

בְּיַד חֲזָקָה - זוּ הַדָּבָר, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : הִנֵּה יָד יי הוֹיָה בְּמִקְנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה,
בַּסּוּסִים, בַּחֲמֹרִים, בַּגְּמֻלִים, בַּבָּקָר וּבַצֹּאן, דָּבָר כְּבִד מְאֹד.

With a strong hand This is the plague of the animal pestilence, as it says "Behold the hand of the Lord will be on the livestock in their field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the cattle, and the sheep with a very severe pestilence". (Ex. Ch. 9 V. 3).

וּבִזְרָע נְטוּיָה - זוּ הַחֲרֵב, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : וַחֲרַבּוּ שְׁלוֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ, נְטוּיָה עַל
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

With an outstretched arm This is the sword as it says "And His drawn sword in His hand stretched out over Jerusalem" (Chron. Ch. 21 V. 16).

וּבַמַּרְא גְדֹל - זוּ גְלוּי שְׂכִינָה, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר : אוּ הִנְסָה אֱלֹהִים לְבֵא
לְקַחַת לוֹ גוֹי מִקְרֵב גוֹי בְּמִסּוֹת בְּאֹתוֹת וּבְמוֹפְתִים, וּבְמַלְחָמָה וּבְיַד חֲזָקָה
וּבִזְרָע נְטוּיָה, וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים, כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לָכֶם יי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֵיכֶם.

With great fearfulness. This refers to the revelation of the Divine Presence as it says "Or has any god attempted to come and take for himself a nation from the midst of another nation with trials, with signs and wonders and with war and a mighty hand an outstretched arm with great fearfulness as the Lord your God did to you in Egypt before your eyes" (Deut. Ch. 4. V. 34).

וּבְאֵתוֹת - זֶה הַמַּטֵּה, כָּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְאֵת הַמַּטֵּה הַזֶּה תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ, אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ אֵת הָאֵתוֹת.

And with signs. This is the staff (of Moses') as it says "And this staff you shall take in your hand and you will do signs with it". (Ex. Ch. 4 V. 17).

וּבְמִפְתִּיּוֹת - זֶה הַדָּם, כָּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְנִתְּתִי מוֹפְתִים בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.
And with wonders. This is the blood as it says, "I will do wonders in heaven and on earth

It is customary to dip the forefinger in the wine and shake off the drops when mentioning 'blood and fire and pillars of smoke' and the ten plagues and 'd'tzach adash b'achav'

נוהגין להטין טפה מן הכוס באמירת דם נאש... עֲשֶׂר הַמַּכּוֹת דְּצ"ךְ עַד"ש בְּאֶחָב, בְּיָחַד, ט"ו פְּעַם

דָּם וְאֵשׁ וְתִימְרוֹת עֶשֶׂן.

Blood and Fire and Pillars of smoke". (Joel Ch. 3 V. 3).

.....

ונצק אל

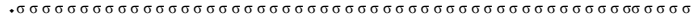
And the Children of Israel cried out to God in their misery (Ex. Ch. 2 V. 23) and He heard them and He remembered his covenant (Ex. Ch. 22 V. 4).

Because, as the Haggadah goes on to say, that it was God who brought us out of Egypt with "a MIGHTY HAND and an OUTSTRETCHED ARM and with GREAT TERROR and with SIGNS and WONDERS." (Deut. Ch. 26. V. 8). He brought us out of Egypt, not through an Angel and not through a Seraph and not by a Messenger, but He Himself in All His Glory. He tells them through Moses, that because of the intransigence of the Pharaoh, He, will visit upon the Egyptians all the Plagues including the last terrible one of the death of their first born, until finally the Egyptians will understand that God is indeed the Master of the Universe, that their gods are no gods, and that will finally convince them to allow the Children of Israel to leave. (Ex. Ch. 3 Vs. 19-20).

Why did all the Egyptians have to suffer because of the obstinacy of Pharaoh? The Bible tells us that God strengthened Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh considered himself the god and fount of all law in Egypt. There could not be anything greater than him. His obstinacy grew with each of the plagues. The ordinary Egyptians went along with this and as their European successors three thousand years later were, were enthusiastic in carrying out Pharaoh's decree of slavery and worse, of the Children of Israel.

An important concept in Judaism is repentance. We have free will but God has created the Universe with mercy as well as with justice. In the story of the Golden Calf where Israel sinned almost at the very moment that they accepted the Torah at Sinai (Ex.Ch.33 V.33-34), Moses pleads for mercy for the Children of Israel and in Ex. Ch. 34.V6. he calls on God with the 13 attributes among them being a God who is "Merciful, Long Suffering and Forgiving" The idea that once one has sinned there can be no forgiveness for someone who wholeheartedly repents of wrongdoing, would make the world an impossible place to live in. And God has made provision for forgiveness every day. The Rabbis say that we should repent the day before our death and as we do not know when we are going to die one should repent every day

The Torah even provides a special time of the year The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur for all of us to contemplate our past actions and think about our future ones and to sincerely repent of our wrong doing. Not only in our neglect of the Mitzvoth but in our actions towards our fellow man. The Rabbis make it quite clear however, that Yom Kippur is a vehicle for our repentance only for those sins that we have committed between us and God. It does not absolve us in our sins against our fellow man. For that we have to ask forgiveness from the person whom we have wronged. However, there are some people who are so evil, that no amount of repentance will exonerate them from their evil. Among these are Pharaoh, Haman and the Austrian whose name we cannot even bring ourselves to mention.



We now mention the plagues themselves, spilling a further ten drops of wine in the process. Why were the plagues necessary? Surely God can perform miracles and with a wave of His hand (as it were) make the Egyptians send away their slaves without any bother at all. However, two things had to happen. Firstly, if the Israelites just got up and left, it would seem that they did everything themselves. The prospective Jewish Nation would not believe that it was God's doing that they were released from bondage. They would think that what was achieved was by their own power and cleverness (as many still do when we see daily miracles). Secondly, the Egyptians would get off scot-free for their oppression of the Children of Israel.

Egypt, and Assyria-Babylon, were the two superpowers who ruled the ancient world. They were both highly civilized with highly developed complicated, bureaucratic forms of government. Beautiful buildings, monuments, and statues, abounded, the jewelry and other artifacts were of such high standard that we can only marvel at them today. Marble and ivory and gold were everywhere. Historians tell us that the Egyptians display and use of so much gold was vulgar even for those days.

Bezalel, who was appointed to oversee the carpenters, the dyers, the weavers the embroiderers, and the workers in gold and silver who made up the team of artisans who built the tabernacle in the desert, (Ex .Ch. ..31 Vs. 1 – 5). Probably developed his talents by being influenced by the artisans in Egypt

Pharaoh was the most powerful of rulers, commanding a powerful army. Six hundred chariots pursued the Israelites when they finally left Egypt. The chariot was the tank of those days drawn by three horses and with a crew of three, swords extending from the axles nothing could stand against them, together with cavalry and infantry, archers and spear-men they were invincible. When Moses appeared before him asking him to allow the people to go, the very idea was ludicrous. The Egyptian economy was dependent on slave labour. Pharaoh had in mind much more building work for the Israelites in addition to the cities of Pithom and Rhamses. When Moses asked Pharaoh to let the Children of Israel go, Pharaoh laughed out loud Pharaoh's word was law. He was the law. He was a **god** he and his people believed it implicitly.

It is no wonder then, that when Moses and Aaron appeared before him and said, "*The Lord God of Israel said let my people go*" he laughed out aloud and replied "*who is the Lord that I should listen to His voice to let the people go, I know not your Lord*" (Ex. Ch. V. 1-3)

He and his people had to be made to understand that the Lord God of Israel was the Master of the Universe and that it was His wish that the people of Israel were to leave to go to the Land which He had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to give to their descendants as an inheritance. .Moses appearing before Pharaoh at God's command told him of what would happen if he did not let the people go, all to no avail. Moses at God's bidding stretches his staff to the heavens.

Calamity after calamity fell upon the Egyptians. Plague after plague (Ex Ch 7 V 14 to Ex. Ch 10 V 29) descended upon them, at first to the Egyptian man in the street, they seemed to be natural disasters. The Nile turned a Blood red (1) and all the fish died, so they were not there to eat the Frog (2) spawn and frogs abounded, invading the Egyptians dwelling places. The frogs found little to eat so they died and from their carcasses arose clouds of Gnats (3) and other stinging insects. Wild animals .(4) became bold and entered the cities attacking whoever they could.. Cattle became sick (5) and the people eating the cattle came out in Boils. (6)

And still Pharaoh not believing that these plagues were the result of his not listening to God, and were directed at him, still refused to allow the people to go. And all the time the Hebrews living in Goshen near the Nile Delta were somehow free of all these visitations

Then the country suffered severe Hail storms and lightning (7) that flattened the crops. Pharaoh's advisers came to the realization that this was all unnatural and outside their experience and that something terrible was being visited upon them. Connecting all these calamities with Moses' constant warnings, they pleaded with Pharaoh to send the Israelites away. But Pharaoh's obstinacy turned his heart to stone. Was he not the god-king of Egypt, wasn't Egypt the most powerful country in the world and wasn't he the most powerful man in the world. How dare this alien God come and tell him what to do.

By now the people themselves, were beginning to realize that these were no ordinary disasters. Something outside their understanding was working against them. They realized that it must

have something to do with the Children of Israel. Indeed Moses and Aaron kept telling them that until the Israelites left Egypt, things would only go from bad to worse. The Egyptians begged Pharaoh to send the people away. But Pharaoh was adamant, he was the law of the land and whatever he said went. Nevertheless he relented a little and said that the Israelites could go into the desert to worship their God but only the men and children, but not their animals. “No” said Moses, we all go, our men our women our children our flocks and our herds. (Ex. Ch. 10 V. 9) Pharaoh once again refuses to let the people go.

A great cloud of the feared and dreaded Locusts (8) settled on the land and ate whatever was green, eating what the hail had left, leaving the land a great desert. Next a thick choking Darkness (9) settled on the land swirling and shifting, people stayed indoors to try to escape the worst effects. It was so thick many could not breathe, people died from the polluted air. Work was impossible social activity ceased, the markets were closed no food was available. Blight settled on the land of Egypt.

The final visit of Moses to the Pharaoh’s court results in Moses being once again banished with Pharaoh saying, “I don’t want to see you again” (Ex. Ch. 10 V. 28) Moses left but before going, told Pharaoh that a bigger disaster was to befall the Egyptians, the like of which they had never seen before.

At midnight the final crushing blow, the tenth visitation, The Death of the First Born. (10) (Ex. 11 Vs. 4 – 5). The first born who acted as the family priests suddenly died. Pharaoh’s eldest son, the eldest sons of the courtiers the eldest sons of the ordinary Egyptians even the eldest sons of the other slaves and captives and the eldest of the cattle that were holy to the Egyptians all died. Pharaoh finally realizing that a power greater than he, was punishing him and his subjects for their murder of the Israelites male children who he (or his father) had sentenced to be thrown into the Nile, his hard-hearted unjust treatment of the Jews, his hard-hearted intransigence, In terror, for he being the eldest son of his father was spared, and in grief over the death of his son, at last gave in and shrieked “Send them away, send them away!”

In the meantime, Moses tells the Israelites, to prepare for leaving Egypt but before that to make ready the Passover offering. They were to kill a lamb or goat in defiance of the Egyptians who worshipped them as gods, and smear its blood on the lintel and doorposts of their houses. They were to prepare matzoth for the journey and wait for the word to go (Ex. Ch. 12 Vs. 1 – 29)).

The Israelites standing ready with their wives and children and old people and their cattle, with their belongings and their Matzoth and with the gifts of gold and silver that the Egyptians had given them in the hope that that would stay the terrible tragedies that had befallen them, at Moses’ signal, trudged silently out of bondage into freedom and their destiny.

Forty years later, Moses in his speech to the people before his finally leaving them, admonishes them not to forget everything that God has done for them.

“For ask now of the days past, which were before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth and from the one end of heaven to the other, whether there has been any such thing as this great thing is, or has been heard anything like it. Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire as you heard (at Sinai) and live? Or has a god proved himself to come to take him a nation from the midst of another nation by trials by SIGNS by WONDERS and by war and by a MIGHTY HAND and by an OUTSTRETCHED ARM and by great TERRORS according to all that the Lord did for you in Egypt before your eyes. Unto you it was shown that you might know that the Lord He is God that There Is None beside Him. (Deut. Ch. 4 Vs. 32-35).

רְבִי יוֹסִי הַגְּלִילִי אוֹמֵר : מִנֵּינן אֶתָּה אוֹמֵר שֶׁלְּקוֹ הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חַמְשִׁים מִכּוֹת? בְּמִצְרַיִם מֶה הוּא אוֹמֵר? וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַחֲרָטָמִים אֶל פְּרַעֲהַ: אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים הִיא, וְעַל הַיָּם מֶה הוּא אוֹמֵר? וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יי בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת יי, וַיִּאֲמִינוּ בַּיּוֹם וּבַמָּשָׁה עֶבְדוֹ. כִּמָּה לָקוּ בְּאֶצְבַּע? עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת אָמַר מֵעַתָּה: בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חַמְשִׁים מִכּוֹת .

Rabbi Yose Haglili said, From what passage do we draw the conclusion that the Egyptians were smitten with only ten plagues in Egypt but with fifty plagues at the sea. What does it say in Egypt? "And the magicians said to Pharaoh, it is the finger of God". But at the sea it says "When Israel saw the Great Hand which God laid on the Egyptians. And the nation feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and his servant Moses".(Ex.Ch.14 V.31) So how many did they receive? With a 'finger' ten plagues Therefore that if there were ten plagues in Egypt there were fifty plagues at the sea. .

oo

Rabbi Yose Haglili said, in a typical Rabbinical argument, "How do we know that the Egyptians were smitten with ten Plagues in Egypt, but fifty at the Reed Sea". And explains it, by saying "That the magicians said to Pharaoh that the Plagues were *"the FINGER of God"* (Ex. Ch. 8 V. 15) and at the Reed Sea it says that Israel saw *"the GREAT HAND of God"* (Ex. Ch.14 V. 31). So that if the Finger of God denotes ten Plagues, then the Hand of God, which has as it were, five fingers, denotes fifty Plagues.

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר : מִנֵּיִן שֶׁכֹּל מַכָּה וּמַכָּה שֶׁהֵבִיִּא הַקֹּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמְצָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם הֵיטָה שֶׁל אַרְבַּע מַכּוֹת? שֵׁנָאֲמַר : יְשֻׁלַּח בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה, מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רַעִים. עֲבָרָה - אַחַת, וְזַעַם - שְׁתַּיִם, וְצָרָה - שְׁלֹשׁ, מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רַעִים - אַרְבַּע אֲמוֹר מַעֲתָה : בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ אַרְבַּעַיִם מַכּוֹת וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מֵאַתַּיִם מַכּוֹת .

Rabbi Eliezer said, From where do we deduce that each plague that the Holy One Blessed be He brought on the Egyptians in Egypt was in reality four plagues. For it says He sent forth upon the His burning anger, WRATH, INDIGNATION, TROUBLE and TROOPS OF EVIL ANGELS Wrath was one, Indignation two, Trouble three and Troops of evil angels four. therefore they were smitten forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the sea..

oo

Rabbi Eliezer goes a step further using the allegory of God's 'finger' and 'hand' in trying to prove God's Might, when he says that each Plague in Egypt was fourfold. As it says in Psalm. 78 V. 49 *"He sent forth upon them His burning anger, WRATH, INDIGNATION and TROUBLE, TROOPS OF EVIL ANGELS,"* Wrath, being one, Indignation, two, Trouble, three, Troops of Evil Angels, four, so that each Plague in Egypt and the Reed Sea was really four and therefore, there were forty Plagues in Egypt and two hundred at the Reed Sea.

רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אוֹמֵר : מִנֵּיִן שֶׁכֹּל מַכָּה.וּמַכָּה .שֶׁהֵבִיִּא הַקֹּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמְצָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם הֵיטָה שֶׁל חֲמֵשׁ מַכּוֹת? שֵׁנָאֲמַר : יְשֻׁלַּח בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה, מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רַעִים חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ- אַחַת, עֲבָרָה - שְׁתַּיִם, וְזַעַם - שְׁלוֹשׁ, וְצָרָה - אַרְבַּע, מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רַעִים - חֲמֵשׁ אֲמוֹר מַעֲתָה : בְּמִצְרַיִם לָקוּ חֲמֵשִׁים מַכּוֹת וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמֵשִׁים וּמֵאַתַּיִם מַכּוֹת .

Rabbi Akiva says "How do you know that each plague that the Holy One Blessed Be He, brought on the Egyptians in Egypt was in reality five plagues? For it is said "And He sent against them *His burning anger, wrath, fury and calamity, a mission of messengers of evil*". *His burning anger* - one, *wrath,* - two, *fury* – three, and *calamity* - four, *a mission of messengers of evil* – five. Therefore, we can say that in Egypt they were struck by fifty plagues and two hundred and fifty plagues at the Sea".

.....

Rabbi Akiva goes even further, when he said that we have to include His "BURNING ANGER". Therefore, there were fifty Plagues in Egypt and two hundred and fifty at the Reed Sea.

These expressions and proofs are intended to magnify God's power and might, in punishing our enemies and redeeming the Children of Israel.

כַּמָּה מַעֲלוֹת טוֹבוֹת לְמָקוֹם עָלֵינוּ!

אֱלוֹ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים, וְלֹא עָשָׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ עָשָׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, וְלֹא הָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ הָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם וְלֹא הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחָרְבָהּ, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחָרְבָהּ וְלֹא שָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ שָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ וְלֹא סַפַּק צָרְכָנוּ בַּמַּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ סַפַּק צָרְכָנוּ בַּמַּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וְלֹא הֶאֱכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמֶּן, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ הֶאֱכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמֶּן וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, וְלֹא קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינַי, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ קָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינַי, וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה וְלֹא הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דַּיָּנוּ .
אֱלוֹ הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא בָּנָה לָנוּ אֶת בַּיִת הַבְּחִירָה, דַּיָּנוּ .

For how many acts of kindness that He has bestowed on us, must we be thankful to God?

If He had brought us out of Egypt and not meted out judgment on them, it would have sufficed

If He meted out judgment on them and not on their gods it would have sufficed

If He had meted out judgment on the gods but not slain their first born it would have sufficed

If He had slain their first born but not given us their wealth it would have sufficed

If He had given us their wealth but not divided the Sea for us it would have sufficed

If He had divided the Sea but not brought us through it on dry land it would have sufficed

If He had brought us through it on dry land but not drowned our oppressors in the Sea it would have sufficed

If He had drowned our oppressors in the sea but not supplied us with our wants

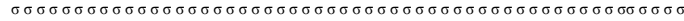
in the desert for forty years it would have sufficed.

If He had supplied us with our wants in the desert for forty years but had not fed us with manna it would have sufficed

If He had fed us with manna but not given us the Shabbat it would have sufficed

If He given us the Shabbat but not brought us to Mount Sinai it would have sufficed

If He had brought us to Mount Sinai but had not given us the Torah
it would have sufficed
 If He had given us the Torah but had not arranged our entry into the Land of Israel
it would have sufficed
 If He had arranged our entry into the Land of Israel but not built the Temple for us
it would have sufficed



DAYENU יְיָיָד-----it would have sufficed..

The Dayenu poem enumerates many of the things that happened to the Children of Israel. We are told that if only we had been given one of the following, it would have been sufficient. Had we been brought out of Egypt only, without the Egyptians being subject to justice, that would have been sufficient. If the Egyptians had been subject to justice without their gods being destroyed, that would have been sufficient. And so on and so forth.

However, we are overwhelmed with all the benefits conferred upon us through our ancestors. The poem begins with us being brought out of Egypt and progresses through the Reed Sea to the desert and being fed with manna for forty years, the gift of the Sabbath, the one day in every seven in which we leave our worldly cares and the race for more and more, to devote our time, the most precious of gifts, to our family and to God.

On to Mt. Sinai and the revelation and receipt of the Torah, and then the realization of the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The entry into the Land of Israel, the Land in which the destiny of the Jewish People is to be played out and which we have fumbled time after time, until now with the establishment of the State of Israel we have another chance to fulfill our side of the contract. And finally the building of the Temple twice built, twice destroyed as a result of our own stupidity.

What is the destiny of the Jewish people the Torah tells us in Ex. Ch. 19 Vs. 5-6 on the eve of receiving the Torah at Sinai God says to Moses *“Now if you listen to me.... and keep My covenant you shall be a special people.....and you shall be unto me a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND A HOLY NATION”*. Moses informs the people of God’s words and they accept for the Jewish people for all times *“all the Lord has spoken we will do”* (Ex Ch 19 V 8)

We know that all these things happened, and that they were all connected and contributed to our tradition and history and were all necessary. Why then do we say if ‘He had taken us out of Egypt that would have been sufficient, if He had organized us into tribes that would have been sufficient. With hindsight, we know that all these things occurred and we know that all of these were necessary. On the surface they simply state the order in which they happened, the Jews did not know that the next thing was to come until it happened and they were grateful for whatever they received.

There are 15 lines to this poem as there were 15 steps in the Temple. When we ascend stairs to a place we have never been before, we tend, and it is advisable, to go up them one at a time and not charge up them so as to get to the top as soon as possible. It is the same in life, in doing things that are important we should be cautious. How often have we seen people embracing a completely new way of life in one fell swoop as it were, wearying of it in the same haste that they embraced it. It is far better to progress slowly taking on one thing at a time feeling our way cautiously advancing one step at a time as we become more convinced as time goes on to the rightness of our actions.

The Exodus did not happen in a vacuum and was not an end in itself. The Exodus was the start of a journey that has not yet finished. First, we had to leave Egypt. Then we had to receive the Torah at Mt. Sinai. And then we have to accept the mantle of the commandments and our destiny. And finally to settle the Land of Israel in perpetuity.

We now await with patience the building of the final Temple and the final fulfillment of our destiny. To bring the knowledge of God, morality, peace, fairness and decency to the peoples of the world. But to do this we must examine ourselves and strive to improve ourselves so that we are worthy of doing so .It is very easy to tell others how to behave but much more difficult to take our own advice

עַל אַחַת, כַּמָּה, וּכְמָה, טוֹבָה כְּפוּלָה וּמְכַפֶּלֶת לַמָּקוֹם עָלֵינוּ: שְׁהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְעָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים, וְעָשָׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, וְהָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, וְקָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, וְהִעֲבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ בְּחַרְבָּה, וְשָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ, וְסַפֵּק צָרְכָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, וְהִאֲכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, וְקָרְבָנוּ לְפָנֵי הַר סִינַי, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, וְהִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבָנָה לָנוּ אֶת בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה לְכַפֵּר עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ.

So how much must we be to God for the very many favours He bestowed on us. That He has brought us out of Egypt and meted out judgments on them. He meted out judgment on their gods, slew their first born and gave us their wealth, and divided the Sea and brought us through it on dry land, and drowned our oppressors within it and supplied our wants in the desert and fed us with the manna and gave us the Shabbat and brought us to Mount Sinai and gave us the Torah and arranged our entry into the Land of Israel and built the Temple for us to atone for our sins.

רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הָיָה אוֹמֵר: כָּל שֶׁלֹּא אָמַר שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים אֵלוּ בַּפֶּסַח, לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חוֹבָתוֹ, וְאֵלוּ הֵן: פֶּסַח, מַצָּה, וּמָרֹר.

Rabban Gamliel used to say "whoever does not speak of these three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his obligation, and they are the Pesach Offering (the Paschal Lamb), Matzoth and Maror".

.....

רבן גמליאל

Rabban Gamliel, Head of the Sanhedrin the highest court of the land, is quoted in the Mishna (Pesachim 10: 5) as saying "that he who does not mention three things at the Seder does not fulfill his obligation on the Seder night, and they are the mentioning of the Passover offering, Matzah and Maror (bitter vegetable)

Point to the piece of roasted meat (representing the Passover offering)

מַרְאָה בָּיָד עַל הַזְרוּעַ וַיִּזְהַר שֶׁלֹּא לְהִגְבִּיהָ אוֹתָהּ.

פֶּסַח שֶׁהָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אוֹכְלִים בְּזִמְנוֹ שְׁפִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה קָיָם, עַל שׁוֹם מָה? עַל שׁוֹם שֶׁפֶסַח הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל בְּתֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְאִמְרַתֶּם זִבַּח פֶּסַח הוּא לִי, אֲשֶׁר פֶּסַח עַל בְּתֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנִגְפוֹ אֶת מִצְרַיִם, וְאֶת בְּתֵינֵנוּ הִצִּיל? וַיִּקַּד הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ.

The Pesach Offering that our forefathers ate in the Temple, when the Temple was standing, for what reason? Because the Holy One Blessed Be He, passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt. As it says "You shall say it is the Pesach Offering for the Lord who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck at Egypt and saved our houses and the people bowed down and prostrated themselves".(Ex. Ch. 12.V..27)

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PESACH - THE PASSOVER OFFERING. פסח

The Passover offering that our forefathers ate in Temple times, was a commemoration of the "Passing over" by God of the Jewish houses in Goshen at the time of the 'death of the first born' the tenth Plague visited upon the Egyptians. A lamb or young goat was to be slaughtered on the afternoon of the 14th of Nissan and roasted whole, it was to be eaten by the designated group, it could only be eaten by Jews, men and women, the men, would have had to have been circumcised. (Ex .Ch. 12V. 48) It was to be eaten in a state of ritual purity.

With the destruction of the Temple, we cannot bring this offering as the place it was to be brought, the Temple area, is in the hands of strangers. The actual site of the Temple and the Holy of Holies, is in doubt and as the actual site is permanently sacred, and as only Priests in a state of ritual purity are allowed to enter the part of the Temple where Holy of Holies was situated, most authorities agree that as under present circumstances we are unable to become 'ritually pure,' we are Halachically not permitted to go onto the Temple Mount, so the Passover offering is in abeyance and put on hold until the Temple is rebuilt

Point to the Matzoth

מראה את המצות למסבים ואומר :

מַצָּה זוּ. שְׁאָנוּ אוֹכְלִים, עַל שׁוּם מָה? עַל שׁוּם שֶׁלֹּא הִסְפִּיק בְּצֶקֶם שֶׁל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְהַחְמִיץ עַד שֶׁנִּגְלָה עֲלֵיהֶם מְלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְנִאָּמַר: וַיֹּאפּוּ אֶת הַבֶּצֶק אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם עִגְת מַצוֹת, כִּי לֹא חָמֵץ, כִּי גִרְשׁוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַתְמַהֵמָה, וְגַם צִדָּה לֹא עָשׂוּ לָהֶם.

The Matzah that we eat, why do we eat it? Because the dough of our ancestors (at the time of the exodus) did not have time to rise, when the King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed Be He, redeemed them (took them out of Egypt). As it says *“And they baked the dough which they took out of Egypt as Matzoth and not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and they could not delay their leaving and prepare provisions.”* (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 39).

The Matzoth are replaced on the table

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מצה Matzah

However, the purity and place laws which apply to the Passover Offering do not apply to Matzah, which must be eaten during Pesach wherever we are (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 15). Matzah is eaten during Pesach in accordance with the commandment by God to eat the Passover Offering with this "Poor Bread", at the time of the first Passover festival celebrated in Egypt on the eve of the Exodus.(Ex. Ch 12 V s34– 39)

There is some confusion that eating Matzah during the seven days (eight outside Israel) of Pesach is due to the fact that the Children of Israel, leaving Egypt in a hurry took the dough with them, on their shoulders, as there was no time to bake ordinary bread and that the dough on their shoulders became baked in the hot sun producing Matzoth*. This is a nice story but is not what the Bible tells us is what actually happened.

Bread in ancient times was not made with yeast as it is today, rather the flour and water mixture was left for 24 hours or more when the natural yeast's in the air caused the dough to rise or leaven. It was kneaded in kneading troughs, which had a residue of leaven from the previous bread making, this residue in turn helped to leaven the new batch of dough. This method is still used today in making "sourdough" bread. and was not the result of an accident. A reference to the Scriptures shows that it was not the dough that was carried on the shoulders of the Israelites but the kneading troughs, (another meaning may be, the Matzoth wrapped in cloth) (Ex.Ch.12.V.34). With the kneading troughs on their shoulders the new dough did not receive the leaven and was also baked in a hurry in accordance with God's wishes

So eating Matzah on Pesach is by God's command (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 8) and not an accident caused by leaving Egypt in a hurry. A difference is made between the first Pesach called "Pesach Mitzrayim" (Mitzrayim - Egypt) and the subsequent celebration of Pesach in all future generations. According to our Sages the mitzvah of eating Matzah in accordance with God's commandment is on the Seder night when making the usual blessing over bread we add an extra blessing "who has commanded us to eat Matzah". We are not obliged to eat Matzah during the rest of Passover, but of course, we are strictly forbidden to eat leavened bread or any other food or drink containing chametz.

* The temperature needed to bake Matzoth is at least 180 degrees Centigrade much more than the heat of the sun even in the desert (Ex. 12 V. 8)

Point to the Maror

מְרֹאָה אֶת הַמְרוֹר לְמַסְבִּים וְאוֹמֵר :

מְרוֹר זֶה שְׁאַנּוּ אוֹכְלִים, עַל שׁוֹם מָה? עַל שׁוֹם שֶׁמְרָרוּ הַמִּצְרִים אֶת חַיֵּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם, שְׁנֹאֲמַר: וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת חַיֵּיהֶם בְּעִבְדָּה קָשָׁה, בְּחֹמֶר וּבְלִבְנִים וּבְכָל עִבְדָּה בְשָׂדֵה אֶת כָּל עִבְדָּתָם אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ בָּהֶם בְּפָרֶךְ.

This Maror that we eat. For what reason do we eat it? Because the Egyptians made the lives of our ancestors in Egypt bitter. As it says *“And their lives were made bitter with hard labour, with mortar and bricks and all kinds of work in the field, with all the backbreaking work they (the Egyptians) made them do with rigour”* (Ex. Ch. 1. V. 14.)

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מְרוֹר MAROR

Maror, meaning bitter. We eat bitter vegetables (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 8) to remind us of the bitter period that the Children of Israel went through while we were slaves in Egypt. The commemoration of our Festival of Freedom is not celebrated by parties, dancing or parades but rather in the confines of our own home and amidst our family and guests. We recall the blessings we have received from the Almighty in redeeming us from slavery in Egypt and making us into one nation. At the same time as we celebrate we remember not only the bitter times we passed through in Egypt but, also the very many bitter experiences, hatred, pogroms and persecution we have suffered through the ages for our faith.

The bitter vegetables, the maror eaten among Ashkenazi Jews is traditionally, horseradish (chrane), while Sephardi Jews usually eat lettuce, the stalk of which is bitter. Lettuce is the first of the five choices of maror in the Shulchan Aruch*. Horseradish was the only option to Ashkenazi Jews in Eastern Europe where no lettuce was available so early in the season. As one should eat an olive's bulk (about 20 Grms) of maror, it is best for even Ashkenazi Jews to eat lettuce or a mixture of horseradish and lettuce to prevent any damage to one's health by eating a large quantity of horseradish.

בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר חֲבַב אָדָם לְרְאוֹת אֶת עֲצָמוֹ כְּאִלוֹ הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם, שְׁנֹאֲמַר: וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלִבָּד גָּאַל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אֲלֵא אִף אוֹתָנוּ גָּאַל עִמָּהֶם, שְׁנֹאֲמַר: וְאוֹתָנוּ הוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם, לְמַעַן הִבִּיא אֶתְנוּ, לְתֶת לָנוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאֲבוֹתָנוּ.

In every generation a person is obliged to see himself as if he came out of Egypt. As it says *“And you shall tell your child on that day saying, because of this, that the Lord did for me that I left Egypt.”* (Ex Ch, 13 V. 8) Not only our fathers, the Holy One Blessed Be He redeemed, but we were also redeemed with them. As it says *“And us He brought out of there (Egypt) so that He could bring us to the Land which He swore to our forefathers, to give us.”* (Deut. Ch. .6. V. 23)

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בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר

We are enjoined that every individual in every generation should look upon themselves as if they themselves had been redeemed from Egypt and accepted upon themselves at Mount Sinai, when we received the Torah, "the yoke of Heaven". As a remembrance of this, we are commanded to teach our children that not only were our forefathers redeemed from Egypt, but us as well. (Ex. Ch. 13 V. 8) For had the redemption not occurred we would have long ago disappeared by assimilating into Egyptian society and would not have the *“Land that He swore unto our fathers to give us”* (Ex. Ch. 13 V. 5) as a sovereign nation.

. *The Shulchan Aruch is the code of Jewish laws compiled by Joseph Caro in the 16th Cent. It is a distillation and codifying of the laws of the Talmud and has become the premier work relating to the laws by which Jews live

Raise the cup of wine

מגביהים את הפוס עד הלליה.

לְפִיכֶן אֲנַחֲנו חַיִּים לְהוֹדוֹת, לְהַלֵּל, לְשַׁבַּח, לְפָאֵר, לְרוֹמֵם, לְהַדָּר, לְבָרֵךְ,
לְעֵלֶה וּלְקַלֵּס לְמִי שֶׁעָשָׂה לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ אֶת כָּל הַנִּסִּים הָאֵלֹהִים: הוֹצִיאָנוּ
מֵעֲבָדוֹת לְחֵירוֹת מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׁמְחָה, וּמֵאֲבֵל לְיוֹם טוֹב, וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹר גָּדוֹל,
וּמִשְׁעָבוֹד לְגֵאֻלָּה. וְנֹאמֵר לְפָנָיו שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה: הַלְלוּיָהּ.

Therefore, it is our duty to thank, to praise, to laud, to glorify, to exalt, to honour, to
bless, to extol and give respect to Him who performed for our forefathers and us all
these miracles. He brought us out of slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from
mourning to festivity, from darkness to great light and from bondage to redemption.
Therefore, let us recite a new song before Him,

Replace the cup of wine

The first part of the Seder closes with the first two Psalms of the Hallel, when we sing God's praises
(Psalms 113 and 114).

הַלְלוּיָהּ הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יי, הַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם יי יְהִי שֵׁם יי מְבָרֵךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד
עוֹלָם. מִמְּזֶרֶח שֶׁשָּׁשׁ עַד מְבוֹאוֹ מְהַלֵּל שֵׁם יי רַם עַל כָּל גּוֹיִם יי, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם
כְּבוֹדוֹ. מִי כִּי אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַמְּגַבִּיחַ לְשַׁבַּח, הַמְּשַׁפִּילֵי לְרְאוֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ,
מְקִימֵי מַעֲפָר דָּל, מְאַשְׁפֵּת יָרִים אֲבִיוֹן, לְהוֹשִׁיבֵי עִם נְדִיבִים, עִם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ
מוֹשִׁיבֵי עֶקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת, אִם הַבְּנִים שֶׁמְחָה הַלְלוּיָהּ.

Hallelujah, praise the servants of the Lord you servants of God, praise the name of
God. Blessed be the name of God, from now and forever. From the rising of the sun
until its' setting, may God's name be praised. The Lord is high above all nations; His
glory is above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, who dwells on high
looking down on heaven and earth? He raises up the poor from the dust and lifts up
the needy from the dunghills to seat them with the nobles, with the nobles of His
people. He turns the barren housewife into a joyful mother of children, Hallelujah.

בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, בַּיַּת יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֵעָז, הִיָּתָה יְהוּדָה לְקַדְשׁוֹ,
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְּשֻׁלוֹתָיו. הִיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנּוֹס, הִיָּרְדֵן יָסַב לְאַחֹר. הִהָרִים רָקְדוּ
כְּאֵילִים, גְּבַעוֹת - כְּבָנֵי צֶאֱן מֵה לֶךְ הִיָּם כִּי תִנּוֹס, הִיָּרְדֵן - תִּסַּב לְאַחֹר,
הִהָרִים - תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גְּבַעוֹת - כְּבָנֵי צֶאֱן. מִלְּפָנֵי אֲדוֹן חוֹלֵי אֲרֶץ,
מִלְּפָנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. הַהֲפֹכֵי הַצּוֹר אֲגַם מִיָּם, חֲלָמִישׁ - לְמַעַיְנוֹ מִיָּם.

When Israel left Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of a foreign language,
Judah became His sanctuary Israel His dominion. The sea saw and fled, the Jordan
flowed backwards. The mountains skipped like rams and the hills like the young of
the flocks. O sea why do you flee? O Jordan why do you flow backwards? The
mountains skip like rams the hills like the young of the flocks. Tremble O earth
before the Master, before the God of Jacob who turns the rock into a pool of water.
The flint into a spring of water. (Ps. 114).

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.הלל THE HALLEL

The Hallel is a paeon of praise to the Almighty and is called in Rabbinical literature "The 'Praise' of Egypt" It consists of six Psalms, numbers 113-118 with some additions and with some doubling of expressions

Hallel is recited on the three statutory festivals of Pesach, Shavuoth and Succoth and on Shemini Atzereth (this together with Simchat Torah is a festival in its own right and occurs at the end of the Succoth festival). It is also recited on Chanukah but not on Purim. It is recited in a shortened form on Rosh Chodesh, the beginning of each month. On the festivals, it is a song of thanks and praise for and to God for bringing us out of Egypt and for bringing us into the' Land which he promised our forefathers to give us'

On Chanukah, the Rabbis decreed that we should sing the Hallel as a thanksgiving for getting rid of the Hellenists in our midst and the defeat of the armies of Antiochus Epiphanies leader of the Greeks, and for the resultant rededication and cleansing of the Temple. (Shab. 21b) It is not sung on Purim, because Purim happened in a land far away from Eretz Yisrael and resulted in bloodshed outside of the Holy Land. (Arachim 10b) Purim had nothing to do with the Sanctity of 'The Land' although everything to do with the saving of the lives of the Jews then living in Exile.

By extension to the festivals, it became the custom to recite it on Rosh Chodesh, (Ta'anith. 28b) the first day of the month, which was celebrated by extra services in the Temple but was otherwise, an ordinary work day. The Hallel on Rosh Chodesh is recited in the shortened form.

But here is a strange thing. The Hallel is said on the festival, which commemorates the Exodus and the Jewish people gaining their freedom and people-hood, and on Shavuot, the revelation at Mt Sinai and on all the days of Succoth when we commemorate our sojourn in the desert. But the very festival on which we acquired our freedom and on which we commemorate leaving Egypt and slavery, we do say the Hallel in its entirety *but* only on the first day (the first two days outside the Land of Israel). For the rest of Pesach, we say only the truncated abbreviated form. Why is this? There is a famous Midrash (Sanh. 39b) which .explains this with the humanity which is the hallmark of the Jewish people. Imagine the Children of Israel recently escaped from Egypt and the slavery of 210 years. The men, their wives and children, the old people and the cattle they had acquired in Egypt. In front of them, the large expanse of the Reed Sea, with the sun glinting on the water and a fierce wind blowing. (Ex. Ch. 14). Behind them the might of Egypt, all the war chariots of Egypt, six hundred of them crewed by the cream of the Egyptian army, the Elite Palace Guard. Behind them, the Egyptian infantry with their dreaded spears and bows and arrows all of this army temporarily being held up by an unseasonable swirling impenetrable fog. The Children of Israel crying out for succour, are told by God through Moses *"Why are you crying to Me, go forward"* (Ex. Ch. 14 Vs. 9-15) "What" they wail "into the sea?"

The East wind has been blowing all that night, Moses at God's command stretches out his rod over the sea, a lone figure Nachshon ben Amminadav, demonstrates his faith in God and in Moses, jumps into the water (Sotah. 37a) which is now being piled up by the wind. A few daring souls follow him, the water recedes further, more people follow. The water continues to recede and more and more people follow on the now exposed sea bed crossing the whole expanse of the Reed Sea, which has now been miraculously revealed.

At last all the people have reached the other side, the fog lifts, and the Egyptians seeing the Israelites in the distance take no heed of the water piled up and charge into the now muddy bed of the sea. The mud makes for difficult going. The wheels of the chariots become trapped, many come off their axles. No amount of pushing seems to get the chariots moving again meanwhile more and more chariots are piling up behind, with the infantry crowding on behind pushing and shoving. Suddenly the wind drops and the sea begins to return to its place slowly at first and then with a devastating tidal wave. The sea rushes in covering the struggling army and the chariots, the men loaded down with their armour, sink like *'lead into the depths'* (Ex. Ch. 15 V 10). Nothing to be seen of the great Egyptian army except a few wooden arrows and spears floating on the turbulent waters.

Silence, the mighty Egyptian army is no more, the immediate danger is passed. Moses lifts his voice in song and in triumph and thanksgiving to God joined by the Children of Israel repeating his song phrase by phrase. *"I will sing to the Lord for He is highly exalted, Horse and rider has He thrown into the Sea"* this song (Ex. Ch. 15 Vs. 1-19) which is called the 'Song of the Sea' is recited at every morning service.

In the heavens, the heavenly choir of angels takes up the refrain and joins in with the Children of Israel in their song of triumph, but are halted by God who rebukes them saying “The work of My hands (the Egyptians) are drowning in the sea and you dare to sing a song of praise and triumph”. (Sanh. 39b) The fact that I had to do what needed doing to save the Children of Israel, does not mean that I rejoiced in doing what had to be done, and I certainly do not want you to sing and remind me of the terrible waste of lives that was brought about by the stupidity of man. That the Israelites are triumphant because of My actions and the realization that I helped them is only reasonable seeing that they are only human but you, you should know better. The Heavenly choir was silenced.

In honour of that rebuke and in recognition that all human being are made in God's image as we learn from the Bible that Adam and Eve were the first human beings. Therefore, all mankind with no exception is descended from them. To remind us that all men are interrelated and from one family we, on the very festival that celebrates our redemption and our birth as a nation, mute our joy so as to speak in awe of the Creators concern for all his creatures and sing the shorter version of the Hallel.

Nevertheless, as the first day is a festival, and the destruction of the Egyptian army took place on the seventh day of our going out of Egypt, on the first day (two days outside Israel) we sing with fervour the complete Hallel. The custom in Israel is also to sing the Hallel on the first night in the synagogue after the evening service. It is of course also said at this point during the Seder but without the preceding and ending blessings.

We also learn a lesson from God's adjuration “*why cry unto Me, speak to the Children of Israel that they go forward*” (Ex. Ch. 14 V. 15) Although we must trust in God, we must also at times take our fate into our own hands and do what needs to be done (in accordance with the law). Nachshon ben Amminadav took the first step and God did the rest.

The Hallel is inserted here as a reminder of its singing by the Levites in the Temple while the many Paschal lambs were being slaughtered for eating later at the festive meal. It was also sung during the eating of the Paschal Lamb at the Seder. The Hallel is very appropriate too for its praises of the Almighty in the words of the Haggadah's own introduction "To Thank, To Praise, To Pay Tribute, To Glorify, To Exalt, To Acclaim, To Bless, To Esteem, To Honour" (Mish. Pes. 10:5) and also for its mention in the second psalm of the Hallel (Ps. 114), of the Exodus.

We now make the blessing of redemption, in which we remind ourselves that God redeemed us from Egypt and allowed us to reach this night when we can celebrate the Passover, and an entreaty that He allows us to reach other anniversaries and festivals and that we look forward to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple

The second cup of wine is now taken and after the blessing, we drink the greater part of the cup leaning.

Raise the cup of wine and say the following

מגביהים את הכוס עד גאל ישראל.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר גאלנו וגאל את אבותינו ממצרים
והגיענו הלילה הזה לאכל בו מצה ומרור. כן יי אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו
נגיענו למועדים ולרגלים אחרים הבאים לקראתנו לשלום, שמחים בבנין
עירך וששים בעבודתך ונאכל שם מן הזבחים ומן הפסחים אשר יגיע
דמם על קיר מזבחך לרצון, ונודה לך שיר חדש על גאלתנו ועל פדות
נפשנו. ברוך אתה יי גאל ישראל

Blessed are you O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has redeemed us and redeemed our forefathers from Egypt. And has brought us this night to eat Matzoth and Maror. So our God the God of our fathers may You bring us to future Holy days and Festivals that may come to us in peace. Rejoicing in the rebuilding of Your city and joyful in Your service and there we will eat from the Sacrifices and from the Pesach Offering. Whose blood will be sprinkled on the sides of the Altar for Your acceptance and we will give thanks to You with a new song on our redemption and the salvation of our souls. Blessed are You O Lord, who redeems Israel.

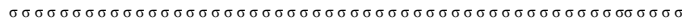
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who creates the fruit of the vine.

We now drink cup of wine or most of it while leaning to the left

שׁוֹתִין אֶת הַכּוֹס בְּהִסָּבֵת שְׂמָאל.

This concludes the first part of the Seder and we proceed to the meal.



THE SEDER MEAL

שלחן עורך

Prior to eating any food or drinking any liquid, we are commanded by our Sages to bless the Almighty who provides us with food and drink. Although it is man who plants and reaps, it is the Almighty's design that what we plant grows into fruit, vegetables and vegetation that is the basis of all life. The blessing varies the blessing for fruit grown on trees, ends with "who creates the fruit of the trees", while the blessing for vegetables grown on the ground, ends with "who creates the fruit of the ground". Food that is neither fruit nor vegetables, such as meat, fish, cheese, eggs etc., and liquids, apart from wine, have their own blessing, which ends "by whose word all things exist". Food made of any of the five species of grain such as for example cake or pasta, have their own special blessing "who creates all kinds of food"

However, bread is of such importance called "the staff of life" that it has its own blessing, and ends "who brings forth bread from the earth". Bread is considered such an essential part of all meals that the Sages have decreed that the blessing on bread includes all the food that we eat in that meal.

Wine which is an important part of our lives in that we sanctify the Sabbath and Festivals with wine and is an essential part of the wedding and circumcision services, of all liquids has its own blessing which does not mention wine, but ends "who has created the fruit of the vine". Incidentally, the blessing for grapes from which wine is made is the standard one for fruit of the tree.

The table on which we eat our meals is compared to the Altar in the Temple and we give thanks to the Almighty for providing the meal we eat on it. By eating bread with the meal, we make what we eat into a "proper meal" as it were, as distinct from a snack. In the Temple of old the Priest would wash his hands before eating the Terumah, (the gift of the grain given to the Priest) To stress the importance of this "proper meal", and to commemorate the action of the priest we also wash our hands, prior to the blessing we make over the bread. Washing the hands prior to a "proper meal" converts the blessing over bread into a blessing over all the individual foods and types of food we eat in that "proper meal"

This washing of our hands before a meal is called in Hebrew, נטילת ידים ('netilat yadayim') and is done by pouring water from a vessel twice (some say 3 times) over each hand in turn making the special blessing which appears next in the Haggadah. Between this blessing and the two which we make next, one over the Matzah as bread and one which we make only on the Seder night on eating Matzah in accordance with the commandment to eat Matzah, there should not be any distraction such as talking or untoward or unnecessary gesturing

WASHING THE HANDS

רְחֻצָה

Prior to the meal we now wash our hands and say the following. Between washing the hands and making the blessing we may not be distracted by speaking etc.

נוֹטְלִים אֶת הַיָּדַיִם וּמְבָרְכִים

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצָנְנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has made us Holy with His commandments and commanded us concerning the washing of the hands.

THE BLESSING ON (matzah as) BREAD

מוציא

The person who is conducting the Seder, picks up the Matzah and makes the following two blessings, the first is the usual one we make on eating bread and the second one for the mitzvah special to the Seder night of eating Matzah. He then breaks off a piece of the upper and a piece of the middle Matzah, he adds to this enough of another sheet of Matzah to make three quarters of a whole sheet (of the square machine made Matzah, which equals about a half of a sheet of the round hand made Matzah) together being about 25 Grms and eats it all together while leaning to the left. While eating, he distributes the same to all those present. If more than one family is celebrating the Seder together; it is customary for each head of a family to have their own three matzos before them. This is not only polite but takes less time in the distribution to all present who must eat an olives bulk (25 Grms) of Matzah while leaning to the left.

קח המצות בסדר שהניחן, הפרוסה בין שתי השלמות, ויאחז שלשתן בידו ויברך "המוציא" בכוונה על העליונה ו"על אכילת מצה" בכוונה על הפרוסה. אחר כך יבצע כזית מן העליונה השלמה וכזית שני מן הפרוסה ויטבלם במלח, ויאכל בהסבה שני הזיתים

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

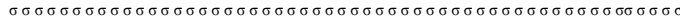
Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the earth

THE BLESSING ON MATZAH (as matzah)

מצה

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצננו על אכילת מצה.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has made us Holy by His commandments and has commanded us to eat Matzoth.



When the Temple stood in Jerusalem the Chagiga the festival offering represented by the egg on the Seder Plate would now be eaten. The Paschal lamb represented by the piece of roasted meat on the Seder Plate would be eaten later on when we have eaten enough to "be satisfied". Today we eat the Afikomen instead of the Paschal Lamb at the end of the meal. The custom is not to eat grilled or roasted meat at the Seder so that people should not think that we are actually eating the Passover offering which can only take place in Jerusalem, and only there, when the Temple is rebuilt.

MAROR

מרור

In accordance with the commandment to eat bitter herbs in remembrance of the bitter times experienced in Egypt, everyone takes about 20 Grms of Maror either lettuce or lettuce together with some horseradish, however they prefer it, dip it into the Charoseth and make the following blessing and eats it

כל אחד מהמסבים לוקח כזית מרור ומטבלו בחרוסת, חוזר ומנער החרוסת, מברך ואוכל בלי הסבה.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצננו על אכילת מרור.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has made us Holy by His commandments and has commanded us to eat Maror

KORACH

כּוֹרַחַךְ

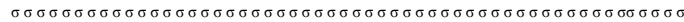
The great sage Hillel, who lived at the time that the Temple stood in Jerusalem, said that one should eat the Maror the Matzah and the Passover lamb together. Today we do not have the Passover lamb nevertheless to satisfy Hillel's instructions as far as possible we now take two pieces of Matzah place about 20 Grms of Maror between them and say the following after which we eat the Matzah and Maror together.

כָּל אֶחָד מֵהַמַּסֻּבִּים לֹקֵחַ כְּזֵית מִן הַמַּצָּה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית עִם כְּזֵית מְרוֹר וְכוֹרַחַם יַחַד, אוֹכְלִים בְּהֶסְבָּה וּבְלֵי בְרָכָה. לִפְנֵי אֲכָלוֹ אוֹמֵר.

זָכַר לְמִקְדָּשׁ כְּהִלְלֵךְ. כֵּן עָשָׂה הַלֵּל בְּזִמְן שִׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה קָיָם: הָיָה כּוֹרַחַךְ מַצָּה וּמְרוֹר וְאוֹכֵל בְּיַחַד, לְקַיֵּם מֵה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: עַל מִצּוֹת וּמְרָרִים יֹאכְלֵהוּ.

In remembrance of the Temple according to Hillel's custom when the Temple stood, he would sandwich (some of the Pesach Offering) and Maror between the Matzoth and eat them all together to fulfill what is said, "With Matzoth and Maror they shall eat it". (Num. Ch. 9 V. 11).

אוֹכְלִים וְשׁוֹתִים הַסְּעוּדָה הָעֲרוּכָה וְנוֹהֲגִים לְאָכֵל תְּחִלָּה בִּיצִים מְבֻשְׁלוֹת. וְלֹא יֹאכֵל יוֹתֵר מִדֵּי, שֶׁלֹּא תִהְיֶה עָלָיו אֲכִילַת אַפִּיקוֹמֵן אֲכִילָה גְּסָה.



The meal is now served. It is customary to start with hard-boiled eggs in or with salt water, various explanations have been made for this custom such as, the roundness of the egg symbolizes life, The salt water has also been connected to the Reed Sea over which we passed on our way out of Egypt to the Promised Land so indirectly reminding us of the Song of the Sea as mentioned earlier.. It has also been compared to the tears shed during our long and difficult Exile.

Hard-boiled eggs are also eaten as a sign of mourning. The first day of Pesach is the same day of the week as is Tisha b'Av (the Ninth of Av), the day of the destruction of both Temples, which we commemorate by a 25 hour fast. We thus connect life and the time of our redemption from Egypt to the day of mourning for the Temple and exile from our Land to the redemption and return to Eretz Yisrael, thus coming a full circle as is the egg. Together with the piece of roasted meat on the Seder dish we also place a roasted egg as a symbol of the Chagiga offering which was brought on every festival, the egg that we eat is perhaps a reminder of that. This roasted egg may now be eaten. If not eaten now it should be eaten at some time and not thrown away as it symbolizes the special festival offering

At the end of the meal, we eat the Afikomen. This is the piece of the middle Matzah, which was broken in half and put away until now. Traditionally this has probably been "stolen" by somebody, most likely the youngest child and has to be "ransomed" because without it the Seder is unable to continue. The Master of the house will therefore, have to 'bribe' by a promise of a present to the culprit, to return the Afikomen. This adds to the excitement and participation of the children in the Seder. When it has been recovered it is distributed to all present who eat some of it together with a quantity of Matzah making up about half to three quarters of a sheet of Matzah..

TZAFON, (the Afikomen)

צָפוֹן

אַחַר גְּמַר הַסְּעוּדָה לֹקֵחַ כָּל אֶחָד מֵהַמַּסֻּבִּים כְּזֵית מִהַמַּצָּה שֶׁהִיְתָה צָפוֹנָה לְאַפִּיקוֹמֵן וְאוֹכֵל מִמֶּנָּה כְּזֵית בְּהֶסְבָּה. וְצָרִיךְ לְאָכֵלָה קִדְּם חֲצוֹת הַלַּיְלָה.

.....

Before we continue with the Seder service, as we do after every other meal, we fulfill the commandment in the Torah (Deut. Ch. 8.V. 10.) to thank and bless God for providing us with food to eat. Man in his conceit may think that it is by his efforts alone that he has amassed wealth, been successful and provided food for his table. But we believe that it is God's providence that has provided us with the brains, energy and with all the other things necessary for us to reach the position that we occupy today.

There is an amazingly prophetic warning about the conceit that we have in thinking that every thing is due to our own efforts, in Deut. Ch. 8 Vs 12-14, Moses in his final speech before his death on the eve of the Children of Israel's entry into the Promised Land, admonishes the people *"Lest when you have eaten and been satisfied and have built goodly homes, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold has multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied. Then your heart be lifted up and you forget the Lord who brought you out of Egypt."* It continues in verses 17-18 *"And then you will say in your heart, **my** power and the might of **my** hands has gotten me this wealth. But remember, that it is the Lord your God that has given you the power to get wealth....., and it shall be that if you forget the Lord your God and walk after other gods and serve them and worship them I warn you this day that you will surely perish, as the nations that the Lord make to perish before you, so will I make you perish because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God"*

Living as most of us do in towns far removed from the actual growing of our food, we tend to forget that it is not only our own hard work that provides the food we eat but also fertile land and the rain in its season and the God given ability of a seed to grow. The second paragraph of the Kriyat Shema is the source of the commandment to give thanks and not forget that God is the ultimate provider. *"If you will listen to My commandments I will give you the rain for your fields in its season.....and you will gather the crops and the oil and the wine, and I will give grass for your cattle.* (Deut. Ch. 11 Vs. 13 – 15) *and YOU SHALL EAT AND BE SATISFIED AND BLESS THE LORD YOUR GOD"* (Deut. Ch. 8. V. 10). None of the above however is an excuse for sitting back and waiting for things to happen or to fall into our laps, That ended when the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land and the manna stopped (Josh. Ch. 5. V. 12). We have to provide the effort and the faith and then God will provide.

The obvious example of this is at the Reed Sea when with the sea in front and the Egyptians behind the Children of Israel *"cried unto the Lord"* (Ex.Ch.14 V 10) for Him to save them. He replied to Moses *"Why do you cry out to Me speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward".* (Ex. Ch. 14 V. 15) It was only as mentioned above that when Nachshon ben Aminadav took the initiative and plunged into the water that the sea parted and allowed the Children of Israel to go through on the dry land.

No meal in a Jewish home should take place without a 'Dvar Torah' that is a homily or lesson drawn from Jewish tradition and that is what transforms a meal in a Jewish home from a purely animal like satisfying of hunger to an acknowledgment of the ever present presence of God.

This is not always possible so frequently we replace this by singing on Shabbat and Festivals "Shir Hama'alot". (Ps. 126). This has become so much a part of the Grace after Meals that on Shabbat and Festivals we include "Shir Hama'alot" even when a D'var Torah has been given. Many Haggadot do not therefore print "Shir Hama'alot" before the grace for the reason that the whole Haggadah is considered a D'var Torah. However there is absolutely no reason for it to be omitted and it should certainly be included.

On weekdays we preface the "Benching" as Grace after Meals is frequently called, by reciting Psalm 137, "By the rivers of Babylon". this psalm which includes the lament *"We hanged our harps on the willow trees, How could we sing the praises of God in a strange land, If I forget thee O Jerusalem let my right hand forget its cunning".* The Rabbis decreed that this Psalm should be recited after every meal so that we should never forget the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. However we are not to be sad on Sabbaths and Festivals so we substitute "Shir Hama'lot".

When three males over the age of Bar mitzvah are present, we are enjoined to begin the 'Grace' by inviting those present to join in. If three women eat a meal together with no males present, they may also recite the invitation formula. If there are ten men or more present, there is the addition

of God's name to the formula. It is a positive commandment and one of the 613 to say the 'Grace' after a meal. (Deut. Ch. 8 V. 10).

GRACE AFTER MEALS

בְּרַךְ

Pour out the third cup of wine

מוזגין כוס שלישי ומברכין ברפת המזון.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת : בְּשׁוּב יי אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הָיִינוּ כְּחֻלְמִים. אִזּוּ יִמְלֵא שְׂחֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵינוּ רִנָּה. אִזּוּ יֵאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם : הֲגִדִיל יי לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֱלֹהִים. הֲגִדִיל יי לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ, הָיִינוּ שְׂמֵחִים. שׁוּבָה יי אֶת שְׁבִיתֵנוּ כְּאֶפְיָקִים בְּנֶגֶב. הִזְרָעִים בְּדַמְעָה, בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ. הַלֹּדֶךְ יִלְדֵךְ וּבְכָה נִשְׂא מִשְׁךְ הַזָּרַע, בָּא יבֵא בְּרִנָּה נִשְׂא אֶלְמֵתֵינוּ.

A Song of Ascents.

When the Lord will bring back the exiles to Zion, we will be like dreamers. Then our mouth will be full of laughter and our tongue with songs of joy. Then the Nations will say to one another, the Lord has done great deeds for these people. The Lord has done great things for us and we are made joyful. Bring back O Lord our captives, like springs in the (dry) Negev. He who sows with tears will reap with songs of joy. The weeping one who goes carrying the basket of seeds, will return with songs of joy carrying the sheaves of wheat. (Ps, 126).

If three or more males over the age of Bar mitzvah are present, one of them (on the Seder night it is usually the one who presides over the Seder) invites all present to join him in saying Grace after meals. If there are not three males present, start at "Blessed are You O Lord our God".

שְׁלֹשָׁה שְׂאֲכָלוּ כְּאֶחָד חֲבִירוֹ לָזֶמֶר וְהִמְזִמֵּן פּוֹתַח :

The person leading the Grace says

רְבוֹתֵי, נְבָרַךְ

Gentlemen let us say Grace.

All reply : הַמְסַבִּים עֹנִים :

יְהִי שֵׁם יי מְבָרַךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

Let the name of the Lord be Blessed from now and for ever.

The leader says הַמְזִמֵּן אוֹמֵר

בְּרָשׁוֹת מְרַגְן וְרַבֵּן וְרְבוֹתֵי, נְבָרַךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכָלוּ מִשְׁלוֹ

With your permission, let us praise (if ten or more male adults are present add - our God) from Whose bounty we have eaten.

All present say הַמְסַבִּים עֹנִים

בְּרוּךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ).. שְׂאֲכָלוּ מִשְׁלוֹ וּבִטְוֵבוֹ חֵיֵינוּ

Blessed be He (if more than ten are present add - our God) from Whose bounty we have eaten and through Whose goodness we exist.

The leader repeats המזמן חוזר ואומר

ברוך (אלהינו)..ששכלנו משלו ובטובו חיינו

Blessed be He (our God) from Whose bounty we have eaten and through Whose goodness we exist.

All continue : בלם אומרים :

If there are not three males over the age of Bar mitzvah present, start here

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם הן את העולם כלו בטובו בן בן חסד וברחמים הוא נותן לחם לכל בשר כי לעולם חסדו ובטובו הגדול תמיד לא חסר לנו, ואל יחסר לנו מזון לעולם ועד בעבור שמו הגדול, כי הוא אל זן ומפרנס לכל ומטיב לכל, ומכין מזון לכל בריותיו אשר ברא ברוך אתה יי הן את הכל.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who sustains the whole world in His goodness, in grace, loving kindness and mercy, He "gives food to all living creatures, for His loving kindness endures forever. (Ps. 136. V, 25) And His ever-great goodness ensures that we have never lacked food, and may we never lack it ever, for the sake of His great Name. Because He is God. He feeds and provides for all, and does good to all, and prepares food for all His creatures which He created. Blessed are You O Lord, who provides food for all.

נודה לך יי אלהינו על שהנחלת לאבותינו ארץ חמדה טובה ורחבה ועל שהוצאתנו יי אלהינו מארץ מצרים, ופדיתנו מבית עבדים, ועל בריתך שהתמת בבשרנו, ועל תורתך שלמדנו, ועל חקיך שהודעתנו, ועל חיים חן וחסד שחוננתנו, ועל אכילת מזון שאתה זן ומפרנס אותנו תמיד, בכל יום ובכל עת ובכל שעה :

We thank You O Lord our God, that You gave to our fathers as a heritage, a Land desirable, good and spacious, and for bringing us out, O Lord our God, from the Land of Egypt and redeemed us from the house of bondage and on the covenant that You sealed in our flesh and for the Torah that You have taught us and for the Chukim (statutes) that You have made known to us. And for the life, grace and loving kindness which You have bestowed on us and for the food with which You constantly provide and sustain us every day, and at all times and at every hour.

ועל הכל יי אלהינו אנחנו מודים לך ומברכים אותך, יתברך שמך בפי כל חי תמיד לעולם ועד : בכתוב, ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את יי אלהיך על הארץ הטובה אשר נתן לך. ברוך אתה יי על הארץ ועל המזון :

And for all this, O Lord our God, we thank You and bless You. Blessed be Your Name in the mouths of all living things constantly and forever. As it is written, "And when you shall eat and be satisfied you shall bless the Lord your God for the good Land which He gave you". (Deut. Ch. 8 V. 10)

רחם נא יי אלהינו על ישראל עמך ועל ירושלים עירך ועל ציון משכן כבודך ועל מלכות בית דוד משיחך ועל הבית הגדול והקדוש שנקרא שמך עליו : אלהינו אבינו, רענו זוננו פרנסנו וכלכלנו והרויחנו, והרוח לנו יי אלהינו מהרה מכל צרותינו. ונא אל תצריכנו יי אלהינו, לא לידי מתנת

בְּשֵׁר וְדָם וְלֹא לִיְדֵי הַלְּנֹאֲתָם, כִּי אִם לְיָדְךָ הַמְּלֵאָה הַפְּתוּחָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה
וְהַרְחֲבָהּ, שֶׁלֹּא גְבוּשׁ וְלֹא נִפְלָם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Have mercy O Lord our God, on your people Israel and on Your city Jerusalem and on Zion the dwelling place of Your glory and on the Kingdom of the house of David Your anointed one, and on the great Holy house which bears Your Name. Our God, our Father provide for us, nourish us, sustain us, maintain us, and relieve us and speedily grant us relief O Lord our God, from all our troubles and let us never be in need O Lord our God from the gifts of man and from their loans. But only from Your full hand that is open, Holy and generous that we shall never, ever be shamed or humiliated.

On Shabbat add

בְּשַׁבָּת מוֹסִיפִין :

רְצֵה וְהַחֲלִיצֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וּבְמִצְוֹת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַשְּׁבֵת הַגָּדוֹל
וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה. כִּי יוֹם זֶה גָּדוֹל וְקְדוֹשׁ הוּא לְפָנֶיךָ לְשַׁבָּת בּוֹ וְלָנוּחַ בּוֹ
בְּאַהֲבָה כְּמִצְוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ. וּבְרְצוֹנְךָ הַנִּיחַ לָנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁלֹּא תִהְיֶה צָרָה וְיִגוֹן
וְאִנְחָה בְּיוֹם מְנוּחָתֵנוּ. וְהִרְאֵנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּנִחְמַת צִיּוֹן עִירְךָ וּבְבִנְיָן
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קְדוֹשְׁךָ כִּי אַתָּה הוּא בַּעַל הַיְשׁוּעוֹת וּבַעַל הַנְּחֻמוֹת.

May it be Your will, O Lord our God to strengthen us through Your commandments and the commandments of the seventh day, this great and Holy Sabbath, for this day is great and Holy before You, to cease our labours on it and to rest on it with love, according to the commandment of Your will. And may it be Your will, O Lord our God, that there shall not be trouble, grief or anguish on this our day of rest. And allow us to see the consolation of Zion Your city, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the city of Your Holiness, because You are the Master of salvations, and the Master of consolations.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, יַעֲלֶה וְיָבֵא וְיִגִּיעַ וְיִרְאֶה וְיִרְצֶה וְיִשְׁמַע
וְיִפְקֹד וְיִזְכֹּר זְכוּרֵינוּ וּפְקוּדוֹתֵינוּ, וְזָכְרוֹן אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, וְזָכְרוֹן מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד
עַבְדְּךָ, וְזָכְרוֹן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קְדוֹשְׁךָ, וְזָכְרוֹן כָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֶיךָ,
לְפִלִּיטָה לְטוֹבָה לְחַן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים, לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וּלְשָׁלוֹם בְּיוֹם חַג
הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה זְכָרְנוּ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ לְטוֹבָה וּפְקוּדָנוּ בּוֹ לְבִרְכָה וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ
לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים. וּבְדַבֵּר יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים חוּס וְחַנּוּן וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, כִּי
אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה.

Our God and God of our fathers, may there rise, come before You, reach You, be seen, find favour, be understood and be recalled and remembered before You the remembrance and consideration of ourselves and the remembrance of our Fathers and the remembrance of the anointed son of David Your servant. The remembrance of Jerusalem Your Holy city, and the remembrance of all Your people, the House of Israel before You for survival and wellbeing, for grace and loving kindness and mercy, for life and peace on this day, the Festival of Matzoth. Remember us on it O Lord our God, for good, and consider us on it for blessing, and save us on it for life, according to the promise of salvation and mercy. Have mercy upon us, and help and save us, because our eyes are turned to You, for You are God, the Great and Merciful King

וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְיָמֵינוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי בּוֹנֵה בְּרַחֲמֵינוּ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. אָמֵן.

And rebuild Jerusalem the Holy City soon in our days. Blessed are You O Lord, who in His mercy builds Jerusalem.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הָאֵל אֲבִינוּ מְלַכְנוּ אֲדִירָנוּ בּוֹרְאָנוּ גֹאֲלָנוּ יוֹצְרָנוּ קְדוֹשֵׁנוּ קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב רוֹעֵנוּ רוֹעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטּוֹב וְהַמְּטִיב לְכָל שֶׁבְכֵל יוֹם וַיּוֹם הוּא הַטֵּיב, הוּא מְטִיב, הוּא יֵטִיב לָנוּ. הוּא גֹמְלָנוּ הוּא גּוֹמְלָנוּ הוּא יְגַמְלָנוּ לְעַד, לַחַן וְלַחֲסֵד וְלִרְחֻמִּים וְלִרְנוּחַ הַצֶּלֶה וְהַצִּלָּה, בְּרַכָּה וַיְשׁוּעָה נַחֲמָה פְּרִנְסָה וְכִלְכֵּלָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם וְכָל טוֹב, וּמְכַל טוֹב לְעוֹלָם עַל יַחְסָרָנוּ.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe, the Almighty, our Father, our King, our Sovereign, our Creator, our Maker, our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, our Shepherd. The Shepherd of Israel, the good and beneficent King to all, who each day did good, does good and will do good to us. He has rewarded us, rewards us and will reward us forever, with grace, loving kindness and mercy and relief, success, blessing and salvation, consolation, food and sustenance, mercy, life and peace and all that is good, and of all good things may we never be lacking.

הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יְמַלֵּךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יִשְׁתַּבַּח לְדוֹר דּוֹרִים, וַיִּתְפָּאֵר בָּנוּ לְעַד וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים, וַיִּתְהַדָּר בָּנוּ לְעַד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יְפַרְנִסֵנוּ בְּכָבוֹד. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יִשְׁבֹּר עֲלֵנוּ מֵעַל צָנָאֲרָנוּ, וְהוּא יוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ בְּרַכָּה מְרֻבָּה בְּבֵית הַזֶּה, וְעַל שְׁלַחַן זֶה שְׂאֵכְלָנוּ עָלֵינוּ. הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַנְּבִיא זְכוֹר לְטוֹב, וַיְבַשֵּׁר לָנוּ בְּשׁוֹרֹת טוֹבוֹת יְשׁוּעוֹת וְנַחֲמוֹת.

May the Merciful One, reign over us for ever and ever. May the Merciful One, be Blessed in heaven and earth. May the Merciful One, be Praised through all the generations and be Glorified forever more, and Exalted among us for ever and ever, and for all eternity. May the Merciful grant us honourable sustenance, May the Merciful break off the yoke from our necks and lead us upright to our Land. May the Merciful One, send bountiful Blessings on this house and on this table on which we have eaten. May the Merciful One send to us Elijah the Prophet, may he be remembered for good, who will proclaim good tidings of salvation and comfort.

הַרְחֵמֵנוּ הוּא יְבָרַךְ אֶת

May the Merciful One Bless

Guests say the following, children adding the words in brackets if eating in their parent's home

(אָבִי מוֹרִי) בְּעַל הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה. וְאֶת (אִמִּי מוֹרֵתִי) בַּעֲלַת הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה, אוֹתָם וְאֶת בֵּיתָם וְאֶת זְרַעָם וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם.

(My father my teacher) the master of this house and (my mother my teacher) the mistress of this house, them their house, their children and all that is theirs.

All including the host and hostess say this adding the words in brackets if married / have children

אוֹתִי (וְאֶת אִשְׁתִּי / וְאֶת זְרַעִי) וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָנוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבְּרָכוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
אֲבֵרָהֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב בְּכָל מְכַל כָּל, כִּן יְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָנוּ כְּלָנוּ יַחַד בְּבִרְכָה
שְׁלֵמָה, וְנֹאמֵר, אָמֵן.

Me (and my, wife/husband/children) and all that I have.

All who are sitting here, them, their houses and their families and all that belongs to them, us and all that belongs to us as our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were blessed in all things, through all things and with all things so may He bless all of us together with a perfect blessing and let us say Amen.

בְּמָרוֹם יִלְמְדוּ עֲלֵיהֶם וְעָלֵינוּ זְכוֹת שְׁתֵּהָא לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת שְׁלוֹם. וְנִשָּׂא בְּרָכָה
מֵאֵת יי, וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנִמְצָא חַן וְשִׂכָל טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאָדָם.

On high may there be invoked in heaven our merits to assure peace and may we receive a blessing from the Lord and kindness from the God of our salvation and may we find favour and good understanding in the eyes of God and man.

On Shabbat add

בְּשַׁבָּת

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִנְחִילֵנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ שַׁבָּת וּמְנוּחָה לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָמִים.

May the Merciful One, cause us to inherit the day that will be Holy Shabbat and rest for eternal life.

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִנְחִילֵנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ טוֹב.

May the Merciful One, cause us to inherit the day that is completely good,

(יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ אָרוֹךְ. לַיּוֹם שֶׁצְדִיקִים יוֹשְׁבִים וְעֵטְרוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרָאשֵׁיהֶם וְנִהְיִים מְזִיזֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה וַיְהִי חֶלְקֵנוּ עִמָּהֶם)

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִזְכֵּנוּ לַיְמֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ וְלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

May the Merciful One, give us the merit to reach the Messianic times and eternal life in the world to come.

מְגִדוֹל יְשׁוּעוֹת מְלָכוֹ וְעֵשָׂה חֶסֶד לְמִשְׁיחוֹ לְדוֹד וּלְזָרְעוֹ עַד עוֹלָם. עֵשָׂה
שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ, אָמֵן.

He is a tower of His Kings salvation and does righteousness to His anointed one, to David and his descendants forever. He makes peace in His heights, may He also establish peace upon us and on all Israel and let us say Amen.

יִרְאוּ אֶת יי קְדוֹשֵׁיו, כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו. כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ, וְדַרְשֵׁי יי
לֹא יַחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב. הוֹדוּ לַיי כִּי טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד. פּוֹתַח אֶת יָדָךְ,
וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל חַי רָצוֹן. בְּרוּךְ הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בֵּי, וְהָיָה יי מְבִטָחוֹ. נַעַר
הָיִיתִי גַם זְקֵנָתִי, וְלֹא רָאִיתִי צְדִיק נֶעְזֵב, וְזָרְעוֹ מִבְּקֶשׁ לָחֵם. יי עַז לְעַמוֹ
יִתֵן, יי יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם.

O His Holy ones, fear God, because those who fear Him lack nothing, young lions may be deprived, and go hungry, but those who seek out God will not lack all goodness. Give thanks to the Lord for He is good and His righteousness is forever. Open Your hand and provide for all living things, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and the Lord will be his security. I was once a youth and am now grown old and I have never seen a righteous man forsaken or his children begging for bread. The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Raise the third cup of wine make the following Blessing and drink all or the greater amount of the cup of wine while leaning to the left.

הַנְּי מוֹכֵן וּמְזַמֵּן לְקַיֵּם מִצְוַת כּוֹס שְׁלִישִׁי שֶׁהוּא כְּנֻגַד בְּשׁוֹרֵת הַיְשׁוּעָה, שְׂאֵמֵר הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִאֲלַתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְשִׁפְטִים גְּדוּלִים.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are you O Lord our God King of the universe who has created the fruit of the vine.

שׁוֹתִין בְּהִסְבַּת שְׂמֹאל.

This is the cup of wine, which traditionally ends the Grace after meals and is also the third of the four cups we have to drink during the Seder,

.....

We are enjoined to drink four cups of wine at the Seder. There is however an opinion that we should drink five cups, this opinion was not accepted by the majority of the sages. However to accommodate those who advanced this opinion, we pour out another cup some people pour it out earlier. It is called the “Cup of Elijah” who when he will come to announce the coming of the Messiah, will resolve all the arguments of the sages.

Fill the fourth cup of wine

If one has not already done so fill the “fifth”, cup of Elijah

It is customary to open the door during the recitation of the following paragraph.

מוֹזְגִין כּוֹס רְבִיעִי.

פּוֹתְחִים הַדֶּלֶת וְאוֹמְרִים בְּקוֹל רֹם

שִׁפְךָ חֲמַתְךָ אֶל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדְעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלְכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ כִּי אֲכַל אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת נְהוּוֹ הַשָּׁמוּ שִׁפְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם זַעֲמַךְ וְחָרוֹן אַפְךָ יִשְׁיגֵם תִּרְדֹּף בְּאֵף וְתִשְׁמִידֵם מִתַּחַת שָׁמַי יי

Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not know You, and from the kingdoms that have not proclaimed Your Name. For they have devoured Jacob and made waste his abode. (Ps. 79 V. 67)

Pour out Your wrath over them and let the heat of Your anger overtake them. (Ps 69 V. 25) Pursue them with anger and destroy them from beneath the heavens of the Lord. (Lamen. Ch. 3 V. 66)

Close the door and resume sitting

סוֹגְרִים הַדֶּלֶת.

.....

We have opened the door, as it were, to invite Elijah the prophet in, while saying passages from the Psalms which modern minds may think controversial and not politically correct. It is a call to God to "Pour out thy wrath on the Nations who do not know Thee and on the kingdoms that do not call on Thy name, for they have devoured Jacob.(the children of Israel) and laid waste his dwelling place....etc." this is a quotation from Psalm 79 which was written in anguish after the destruction of the Temple with so many Jews being killed and many more taken into slavery.

We have mentioned before the connection that Passover has with Tisha b'Av the day on which we commemorate the destruction of both Temples. The first day of Passover is the same day of the week on which Tisha b'Av falls. Through the ages this Psalm was indeed recited by many on Tisha b'Av. It is so full of the anguish that the Jewish people have suffered so much through the ages from people and nations and other beliefs that it is natural for us to want retribution to fall upon them. But **note** that the call is for God to exact this retribution in His own time and if He wishes. It is not a call to us to take up arms or to take vengeance on these nations ourselves. Of course we may defend ourselves (Sanh. 72a) indeed it is obligatory to do so against attacks but not to exact vengeance. Jews it has been said are not good haters. Retribution if necessary is from God. "Vengeance is mine" says God, (Deut. Ch. 32 V. 35)

The completion of the

HALLEL

הַלֵּל

לא לנו, יי, לא לנו, כי לשמך תנו כבוד, על חסדך, על אמתך. למה לאמרו הגוים: איה נא אלהיהם? ואלהינו בשמים, כל אשר חפץ עשה. עצביהם כסף וזהב מעשה ידי אדם. פה להם ולא ידברו, עינים להם ולא יראו, אזנים להם ולא ישמעו, אף להם ולא יריחו, ודיהם ולא ימישו, רגליהם ולא יהלכו, לא יגו בגרונם כמוהם יהיו עשיהם, כל אשר בטח בהם ישראל בטח ביהוה, עזרם ומגנם הוא בית אהרן בטחו ביי עזרם ומגנם הוא. יראי יי בטחו ביי, עזרם ומגנם הוא.

Not for us O Lord, not for us, but for Your Name give glory for the sake of Your kindness and Your truth. Why should the nations say, "where then is their God?" Our God is in Heaven, whatever He wishes He does. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but do not speak, they have eyes, but do not see, they have ears, but do not hear, nostrils that cannot smell, they have hands, but do not feel, they have feet, but do not walk; no sound comes from their throats. Those that make them and have trust in them will be like them. Israel has trust in the Lord, He is their help and shield. House of Aaron trust in the Lord, He is their help and shield. Those who fear the Lord and trust in the Lord, He is their help and shield

יי זכרנו יברך את בית ישראל, יברך את בית אהרן, יברך יראי, יי, הקטנים עם הגדולים יסף יי עליכם, עליכם ועל בניכם ברוכים אתם ליי, עשה שמים וארץ השמים שמים ליי והארץ נתן לבני אדם לא המתים יהללוהו ולא כל ירדי דומה ואנחנו נברך יה מעתה ועד עולם הללויה

The Lord has been mindful of us, He will bless, He will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those that fear the Lord the small with the great. The Lord will increase you, you, and your children. You are blessed to the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth. The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth He gave to mankind. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do they, that go down to the silence of the grave. But we will bless the Lord from now and forever. Hallelujah (Ps.115)

אהבתי כי ישמע יי את קולי, תחנוני. כי הטוה אָזְנוֹ לִי וּבְיָמֵי אֶקְרָא אֶפְפוֹנֵי חֲבָלֵי מוֹת וּמְצָרֵי שְׂאוּל מְצֹאוֹנֵי, צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא. וּבָשָׂם יי אֶקְרָא: אָנָּה יי מְלֶטָה נַפְשִׁי! חֲנוּן יי וְצַדִּיק, וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם. שִׁמְר פְּתָאִים יי, דַּלְתֵי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ שׁוֹבֵי נַפְשִׁי לְמִנוּחַיְכִי, כִּי יי גָּמַל עָלַיְכִי. כִּי חֲלַצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמּוֹת, אֶת עֵינַי מִן דְּמָעָה, אֶת רַגְלֵי מִדְּחֵי אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יי בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים הָאֵמֶנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר, אָנֹכִי עָנִיתִי מֵאֵד אָנֹכִי אֶמְרָתִי בְּחַפְזִי: כָּל הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב

I love the Lord, because He hears my voice and supplications, He has inclined His ear to me, and I will call upon Him all the days of my life. The pangs of death encircled me and the anguish of dying came upon me. I was in distress and sorrow, and I called upon the name of the Lord. O Lord save my soul. The Lord is gracious and righteous and our God is merciful. The Lord watches over the simple people. I was brought low, but He saved me, return my soul to Your rest, for the Lord has dealt kindly with you. For You have saved my soul from death, my eye from tears,

and my foot from stumbling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I had faith when I said, I am suffering deeply. I said in my haste that all men are deceitful.

מָה אָשִׁיב לַיְי כֹּל תַּגְּמוּלוֹהִי עָלַי כּוֹס יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא וּבָשָׂם יי אֶקְרָא
 נְדָרֵי לַיְי אֲשַׁלֵּם נִגְדָה נָא לְכֹל עַמּוֹ יִקָּר בְּעֵינַי יי הַמְּוֹתָה לְחִסְדֵיךָ אָנָּה יי כִּי
 אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ, אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ בֶן אֶמְתָּךְ, פִּתְחֵת לְמוֹסְרֵי לְךָ אֲזַבַּח זָבַח תּוֹדָה וּבָשָׂם
 יי אֶקְרָא נְדָרֵי לַיְי אֲשַׁלֵּם נִגְדָה נָא לְכֹל עַמּוֹ בְּחִצְרוֹת בַּיִת יי, בְּתוֹכְכִי
 יְרוּשָׁלַיִם הַלְלוּיָהּ

How can I repay the Lord for all His kindness to me? I raise the cup of salvation and call the name of the Lord. My vows to the Lord, I will pay in the presence of all His people. Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful followers. O Lord for I am your servant, I am your servant the son of your maidservant. You have opened my bonds. To You I will offer a thanksgiving offering and I will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people. In the courtyards of the House of the Lord, in the midst of Jerusalem. Hallelujah. (Ps.116)

הַלְלוּ אֶת יי כָּל גּוֹיִם, שִׁבְחוּהוּ כָּל הָאֲמִים. כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חֶסֶדוֹ,
 וְאֶמֶת יי לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּיָהּ

Praise the Lord all nations, Laud Him all the peoples, because His kindness to us is great and the truth of the Lord is forever. Hallelujah. (Ps.117)

הוֹדוּ לַיְי כִּי טוֹב	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמֶר נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמְרוּ נָא בֵּית אַהֲרֹן	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ
יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִרְאֵי יי	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good
 Let Israel say
 Let the house of Aaron say
 Let those who fear God say

For His kindness is everlasting.
 For His kindness is everlasting.
 For His kindness is everlasting.
 For His kindness is everlasting.

מִן הַמִּצַּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחַב יְהוָה יי לִי, לֹא אֵירָא - מֶה יַעֲשֶׂה
 לִי אָדָם? יי לִי בְּעֵזְרִי וְאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשִׁנְאִי. טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בֵּי מִבְּטַח בְּאָדָם
 טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בֵּי מִבְּטַח בְּנְדִיבִים כָּל גּוֹיִם סָבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יי כִּי אֶמְלֵם סָבוּנִי
 גַּם סָבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יי כִּי אֶמְלֵם סָבוּנִי כְּדַבְּרִים, דַּעְכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים, בְּשֵׁם יי
 כִּי אֶמְלֵם דְּחֵה דְחֵה דְחֵה לְנַפְלִי, וַיִּי עֲזָרְנִי עֲזֵי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה קוֹל
 רְנָה וִישׁוּעָה בְּאֶהְלִי צְדִיקִים: יָמִין יי עֲשֵׂה חֵיל, יָמִין יי רֹמְמָה, יָמִין יי
 עֲשֵׂה חֵיל. לֹא אֲמוֹת כִּי אַחִיָּה, וְאֶסְפָּר מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה יִסֹּר יִסְרְנִי יְהוָה, וְלִמּוֹת לֹא
 נִתְּנִי פִתְחוּ לִי שַׁעֲרֵי צְדָקָה, אָבֹא בָם, אֹדְדָה יְהוָה הַשַּׁעַר לַיְי, צְדִיקִים יָבֹאוּ
 בוּ.

אוֹדְךָ כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי וַתְּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה
 אוֹדְךָ כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי וַתְּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה
 אָבוֹן מֵאֲסוֹ הַבּוֹנִים הִיתָה לְרֹאשׁ פְּנֵה
 אָבוֹן מֵאֲסוֹ הַבּוֹנִים הִיתָה לְרֹאשׁ פְּנֵה

מֵאֵת יי הַיְתָה זֵאת הִיא נִפְלְאֵת בְּעֵינֵינוּ
 מֵאֵת יי הַיְתָה זֵאת הִיא נִפְלְאֵת בְּעֵינֵינוּ
 זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יי נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בּוֹ
 זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יי נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמָחָה בּוֹ

I called on God from the straits, and God answered me with liberation. The Lord is with me, I will not fear. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me, through those who help me and I will see the downfall of my enemies. It is better to look to the Lord than to trust in men. It is better to look to the Lord than to trust in the highborn. All the nations are around me in the name of the Lord I cut them down. They surround me about; I will cut them down in the name of the Lord. They swarm around me like bees, and they are extinguished like a fire of thorns. I will cut them down in the name of the Lord. They keep pushing me, so that I might fall, but the Lord is my helper. The Lord is my strength and my song, and He will be my salvation. The sound of song and salvation is in the tents of the righteous. The right Hand of the Lord does valiantly. The right Hand of the Lord is exalted; the right Hand of the Lord does valiantly. I will not die but live to recount the works of the Lord. The Lord has afflicted me, but not given me over to death. Open for me the gates of righteousness, I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous will enter it.

I thank You because You have answered me, and You have been my salvation.

I thank You because You have answered me, and You have been my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone..

This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our sight.

This is the Lord's doing, it is marvelous in our sight.

This is the day, which the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it.

This is the day, which the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it.

אָנָּה יי, הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא

אָנָּה יי, הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא

אָנָּה יי, הַצְּלִיחָה נָּא

אָנָּה יי, הַצְּלִיחָה נָּא

O Lord, we beseech You, save us.

O Lord, we beseech You, save us.

O Lord, we beseech You, grant us success.

O Lord, we beseech You, grant us success.

בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּשֵׁם יי, בִּרְכָנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יי

בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּשֵׁם יי, בִּרְכָנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יי

אֵל יי וַיָּאָר לָנוּ אֶסְרוּ חַג בְּעַבְתִּים עַד קַרְנוֹת הַמְזֻבָּח

אֵל יי וַיָּאָר לָנוּ אֶסְרוּ חַג בְּעַבְתִּים עַד קַרְנוֹת הַמְזֻבָּח

אֵלֵי אַתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָ, אֱלֹהֵי - אֲרוּמְךָ

אֵלֵי אַתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָ, אֱלֹהֵי - אֲרוּמְךָ

הוֹדוּ לַיי כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ

הוֹדוּ לַיי כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדוֹ

Blessed is He, who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless You from the House of the Lord.

Blessed is He, who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless You from the House of the Lord.

God is the Lord, and He made the light to shine for us. Bind the Festival Offering up to the corners of the Altar.

God is the Lord, and He made the light to shine for us. Bind the Festival Offering up to the corners of the Altar.

You are my God and to You I will give thanks. I will exalt You my God.

You are my God and to You I will give thanks. I will exalt You my God.

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His kindness is forever.

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His kindness is forever. (Ps.118)

הַלְלוּךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְחִסְדֵיךָ צְדִיקִים עוֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנְךָ, וְכָל עַמְּךָ בֵּית
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרָנָה יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ, וַיִּשְׂבְּחוּ וַיְפָאֲרוּ, וַיְרַמְּמוּ וַיְעַרְצוּ, וַיְקַדְּשׁוּ
וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת שְׁמֹךָ, מִלְּפָנֶיךָ כִּי לָךְ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְשַׁמֵּךְ נֶאֱמָר, כִּי מֵעוֹלָם
וְעַד עוֹלָם אֲתָה אֵל

All Your works shall praise You O Lord our God. Your righteous followers who do Your will and all your people, the House of Israel with joy, thanks and bless, praise and glorify, extol and revere, sanctify and acclaim Your Name our King. It is indeed good to give thanks to You, and to Your Name it is fitting to sing, for from everlasting to everlasting you are our God.

.oo

We have now concluded the Hallel, which is followed by 'The Great Song' which includes praise and thanks for all the goodness we have received from God through the ages. Beginning with the creation of the universe. The redemption from Egypt, the giving of the Torah, His bringing us into the Holy Land and allowing us to eat of the fruits of the earth. All however tinged with the sadness, that through our own folly, stupidity, jealousy, and neglecting our duties to God and the people of Israel, we have lost it all. But at the same time confident that if we will turn over a new leaf in, God's good time He will return it to us This song is a universal one which includes all mankind as it mentions the creation of the sun and the moon which belongs to all, as well as the provision of food to all living creatures on earth

<p>כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">הוֹדוּ לַי כִּי טוֹב הוֹדוּ לַאֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים הוֹדוּ לְאֲדֹנָי הָאֲדֹנִים לַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדֻלוֹת לְבָדוֹ לַעֲשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּתַבּוּנָה לְרוֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֻלִים אֶת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמַמְשָׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם אֶת הַיָּרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים לְמַמְשָׁלוֹת בַּלַּיְלָה לְמַכָּה מְצָרִים בְּבִכּוֹרֵיהֶם וַיּוֹצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם</p>
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כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
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כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו
כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֲסָדֹו

בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזָרוּעַ נְטוּיָה
לָגִזַּר יַם סוּף לְגִזְרִים
וְהַעֲבִיר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹכוֹ
וַיַּעַר פְּרָעָה וַחִילוֹ בְּיַם סוּף
לְמוֹלִיךְ עַמּוֹ בַּמִּדְבָּר
לְמַכֵּה מַלְכִים גְּדֹלִים
וַיַּהַרְגַם מַלְכִים אֲדִירִים
לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי
וְלַעֲוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבְּשָׁן
וְנָתַן אֶרְצָם לְנַחֲלָה
נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדּוֹ
שֶׁבַשְׁפְּלָנוּ זָכַר לָנוּ
וַיַּפְּרֹקֵנוּ מִצַּרֵּינוּ
נָתַן לָחֵם לְכָל בֶּשֶׂר
הַזֹּאת לְאֵל הַשָּׁמַיִם

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good
Give thanks to the God of gods
Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
Who alone does great wonders,
Who made the heavens with understanding
Who stretched out the earth above the waters
Who made the great lights,
The sun to rule by day,
The moon and the stars to rule by night,
Who struck the Egyptians through their
first born,
And took Israel out from among them,
With a strong hand and an outstretched arm,
Who divided the Reed Sea, in its' divisions,
And allowed Israel to pass through it,
And overthrew Pharaoh and his army
into the Reed Sea,
Who led His people through the wilderness,
And smote great Kings,
And slew mighty Rulers,
Sichon King of the Amorites,
And Og King of the Bashan,
And gave their land as an inheritance,
An inheritance to Israel His servants,
Who remembered us in our lowliness,
And delivered us from our oppressors,
He gives food to all living creatures,
We give thanks to the God of the heavens,
(Ps.136)

For His kindness endures for ever.
For His kindness endures for ever.
For His kindness endures for ever.
For His kindness endures for ever.
For His kindness endures for ever.
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For His kindness endures for ever.

נשמת

We continue the service with the songs of praise and thanksgiving that are included in the Shabbat and Festival morning service when we are relaxed and can contemplate at length God's glory and the wonders He performs.

נְשַׁמַּת כָּל חַי תְּבָרַךְ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְרוּחַ כָּל בֶּשָׂר תִּפְאֵר וְתִרְוִימִם
 זְכָרְךָ, מְלַכְנוּ, תְּמִיד מִן הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם אֶתְּהָ אֵל, וּמִבְּלַעְדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ
 מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ, פּוֹדֶה וּמַצִּיל וּמַפְרִיחַ וּמַרְחֵם בְּכָל עֵת צָרָה וְצוּקָה. אֵין
 לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹה אֶתְּהָ. אֱלֹהֵי הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים וְהָאַחֲרוֹנִים, אֱלֹהֵי כָּל בְּרִיּוֹת, אֲדוֹן
 כָּל תּוֹלְדוֹת, הַמְהַלֵּל בְּרַב הַתְּשַׁבְּחוֹת, הַמְנַהֵג עוֹלָמוֹ בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרִיּוֹתָיו
 בְּרַחֲמִים. נִי לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן - הַמְעוֹרֵר יְשָׁנִים וְהַמְקִיץ נֹרְדָמִים,
 וְהַמְשִׁיחַ אֲלֵמִים וְהַמְתִּיר אֲסוּרִים וְהַסּוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים וְהַזֹּקֵף כְּפוּפִים לְךָ
 לְבַדְךָ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים אֵלֶיךָ פִּינוּ מֵלֹא שִׁיכָה כִּיָּם, וְלִשְׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה כְּהַמוֹן גְּלוֹי,
 וְשִׁפְתוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁבַח כְּמַרְחֵבֵי רִקִיעַ, וְעֵינֵינוּ מְאִירוֹת כְּשֶׁמֶשׁ וְכִיָּרַח, וְיָדֵינוּ
 פְּרוֹשׁוֹת כְּנִשְׂרֵי שָׁמַיִם, וְרַגְלֵינוּ קְלוֹת כְּאַיִלוֹת - אֵין אֲנַחְנוּ מְסַפִּיקִים
 לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, וְלְבָרְךָ, אֶת שְׁמֶךָ עַל אַחַת, מְאֻלָּף,
 אֲלֵפֵי אֲלֵפִים וְרַבֵּי רַבּוֹת פְּעָמִים, הַטּוֹבוֹת שְׁעֵשִׂית עִם אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְעִמָּנוּ
 מִמְּצָרִים גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פְּדִיתָנוּ, בְּרַעֲב זִנְתָנוּ וּבִשְׁבַע
 כְּלַפְלָתָנוּ, מִחֶרֶב הִצַּלְתָּנוּ וּמִדְּבַר מְלֻטְתָנוּ, וּמִחֲלָיִים רָעִים וּנְאֻמָּנִים דְּלִיתָנוּ
 עַד הִנֵּה עֲזָרוֹנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ וְלֹא עֲזָבוֹנוּ חֶסֶדְךָ, וְאֵל תִּטְשֵׁנוּ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְנֶצַח
 עַל כֵּן אֲבָרִים שֶׁפִּלְגַת בְּנוֹ וְרוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה שֶׁנִּפְחַת בְּאַפֵּינוּ וְלִשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שִׁמַּת
 בְּפִינוּ - הֵן הֵם יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ וַיִּשְׁבְּחוּ וַיִּפְאֲרוּ וַיְרֻמְמוּ וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיִּקְדִּישׁוּ
 וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ מְלַכְנוּ כִּי כָּל פֶּה לֵךְ יוֹדֶה, וְכָל לִשׁוֹן לֵךְ תִּשְׁבַּע, וְכָל בֶּרֶךְ
 לֵךְ תִּכְרַע, וְכָל קוֹמָה לִפְנֶיךָ תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, וְכָל לְבָבוֹת יִירָאוּךָ, וְכָל קֶרֶב וְכָלִיּוֹת
 יִזְמְרוּ לְשִׁמְךָ, בְּדָבָר שֶׁכְּתוּב, כָּל עֲצַמְתִּי תֵאמַרְנָה: יי, מִי כְמוֹךָ מַצִּיל עֲנִי
 מִחֶזֶק מִמֶּנּוּ וְעֲנִי וְאַבְיוֹן מִגְּזֹלוֹ מִי יִדְמָה לְךָ וּמִי יִשׁוּהָ לְךָ וּמִי יַעֲרֶךְ לְךָ הָאֵל
 הַגָּדוֹל, הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, קִנְיָה שָׁמַיִם וְאָרֶץ נְהַלְלֶךָ וּנְשַׁבְּחֶךָ וּנְפָאֶרְךָ
 וּנְבָרַךְ אֶת שֵׁם קְדוֹשְׁךָ, בְּאִמּוֹר: לְדוֹד, בְּרַכִּי נַפְשִׁי אֶת יי וְכָל קֶרֶבִי אֶת שֵׁם
 קְדוֹשׁ

The soul of all living creatures, will bless Your Name, O Lord our God, and the spirit of all flesh shall constantly extol and glorify the remembrance of You our King. For all eternity You are our God. Beside You, we have no other King, who redeems and saves, ransoms and rescues, sustains and saves, and shows mercy at all times of sorrow and distress. We have no other King, but You, God of the first and of the last, God of all creatures, Lord of all generations, who is lauded with a multitude of praises, who orders the world, with kindness and His creatures with compassion. The Lord neither slumbers nor sleeps; He wakes up the sleepers, and rouses those who slumber. He makes the dumb to speak, and frees the captives, supports the fallen, and straightens up those that are bowed down. To You alone we give thanks. Even if our mouths are full of song as the sea, and our tongues are full of songs of joy, as the multitude of the waves and our lips full of praise, as wide as the sky, and our eyes as sparkling as the sun and the moon, and our hands as spread out as the eagles of the heaven, and our feet as swift as the deer. We would not be able to sufficiently praise You, O Lord our God, and God of our fathers and bless Your Name for one part of the countless number of kindnesses that you have done for our fathers and us. O Lord

our God, You redeemed us from Egypt, and delivered us from slavery. During famine, You have fed us, and in times of plenty, You have nourished us. You have saved us from the sword, and rescued us from the plague. And freed us from severe diseases. Until now Your compassion has helped us, and Your righteousness has not abandoned us, O Lord our God may You never forsake us. Therefore the limbs that You have supplied us with and the spirit and the soul that You have breathed into our nostrils, and the tongue which You placed in our mouth, shall all thank, bless, praise, glorify, extol, revere and hallow, the sovereignty of Your Name, our King. For every mouth shall praise You. Every tongue shall swear allegiance to You, and every knee shall bend before You. Every person shall bow down before You and all hearts shall fear You and each of our organs shall sing to Your Name, as it is written, "All my bones say *, O Lord who is like You, You saved the poor from one that is stronger than him, the poor and needy from one who would rob him". (Ps. 35. V. 10) Who is like You, who is equal to You, who can be compared with You, O Great, Mighty and revered God, supreme God, the possessor of heaven and earth. We will praise, laud and glorify You and bless Your Holy Name, as it is says "By David may my soul bless the Lord, and let my whole being bless His Holy Name." (Ps. 103 V.1)

**הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצוּמוֹת עֲזָךְ, הַגָּדוֹל בְּכַבּוֹד שְׁמֶךָ, הַגָּבוֹר לְנֶצַח וְהַנּוֹרָא
בְּנוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ, הַמְלִיךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא רַם וְנִשְׂא שׁוֹכֵן עַד מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ
וְכָתוּב: רָנְנוּ צְדִיקִים בַּיהוָה, לִישְׂרָיִם נְאוּה תִּהְיֶה**

You are God in your tremendous power, mighty forever and awesome in Your awesome deeds. The King who sits on His high and lofty throne.

He who abides forever, exalted and Holy is His Name, as it is written, "Sing joyfully, you righteous ones to God, the upright ones to offer their praise". (Ps. 33. V. 1)

**בְּפִי יִשְׂרָיִם תִּתְהַלֵּל
וּבְדַבְרֵי צְדִיקִים תִּתְבָּרַךְ
וּבְלִשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים תִּתְרוֹמֵם
וּבִקְרֹב קְדוֹשִׁים תִּתְקַדֵּשׁ**

By the mouth of the upright You will be praised
In the words of the pious You will be blessed
By the tongue of the righteous You will be exalted
And among the Holy will You be sanctified

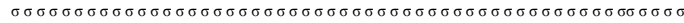
**וּבְמִקְהָלוֹת רַבּוֹת עִמָּךְ בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִנָּה יִתְפָּאֵר שְׁמֶךָ, מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, בְּכָל
דּוֹר וָדוֹר, שֶׁכֵּן חוֹבַת כָּל הַיְצוּרִים לְפָנֶיךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
לְהוֹדוֹת לְהַלֵּל לְשַׁבַּח, לְפָאֵר לְרוֹמֵם לְהַדָּר לְבָרַךְ, לְעִלָּה וּלְקַלֵּס עַל כָּל דַּבְרֵי
שִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבְּחוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן יִשִׁי עַבְדְּךָ, מְשִׁיחְךָ**

And in the assembly of the myriads of Your people, the house of Israel, Your Name will be glorified with joyful songs, our King in every generation, for this is the duty of all creatures before you O Lord our God and the God of our fathers, to thank, to praise, to laud, glorify, extol, to honour, to bless, exalt and sing praises with all the words of the songs of praise and glorification of David the son of Jesse, your servant, your anointed.

*This phrase "All my bones say" is the source of Jews swaying while praying,

יְשׁוּתְבַח שְׁמֶךָ לְעַד מְלִפְנֵינוּ, הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ, כִּי
לְךָ נָאָה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שִׁיר וְשִׁבְחָה, הִלֵּל וְזַמְרָה, עֲזֵר
וּמְשָׁלָה, נִצַּח, גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה, תְּהִלָּה וְתִפְאַרֶת, קְדוּשָׁה וּמַלְכוּת, בְּרָכוֹת
וְהוֹדָאוֹת מְעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בְּתִשְׁבָּחוֹת, אֵל
הַהוֹדָאוֹת, אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת, הַבוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זַמְרָה, מֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי הָעוֹלָמִים

May Your Name be praised forever, our King, the God and King, who is great and Holy in heaven and on earth, because to You O Lord our God, and God of our fathers are due songs and praises glorification and hymns, strength and dominion, eternity greatness, might, fame and glory, Holiness and Kingship, blessings and thanksgiving, from now and forever more. Blessed are You, O Lord, God and King, great in renown, God of thanksgiving, Lord of wonders, who is pleased with songs of praise. King Eternal God.



We are now nearing the end of the Seder. We say the blessing over the last of the four cups of wine and conclude with the grace which is said after partaking of one of the seven species of the Land of Israel mentioned in the Bible which constitute the bounty of Eretz Yisrael. Wheat, barley (also rye, oats, spelt) figs, olives, pomegranates, grapes (wine) and dates.

Raise the fourth cup of wine make the following blessing and drink all the wine while leaning to the left.

הֲנִי מוֹכֵן וּמוֹזֵם לְקִיָּם מִצֹּת כּוֹס רְבִיעִי שֶׁהוּא כְּנֻד בְּשׁוֹרֵת הִישׁוּעָה, שְׂאֵמֵר הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְלְקַחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעָם וְהֵייתִי לְכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, and King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine

וְשׁוֹתָהּ בְּהִסְיַבַּת שְׂמָאל

Grace after drinking wine

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עַל הַגֶּפֶן וְעַל פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן, עַל תְּנוּבַת
הַשָּׂדֶה וְעַל אֶרֶץ חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה וּרְחֹבָה שְׂרָצִית וְהִנְחַלְתָּ לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ לֶאֱכֹל
מִפְרִיהָ וְלִשְׁבֹּעַ מִטוֹבָה רַחֵם נָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמְּךָ וְעַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
עִירְךָ וְעַל צִיּוֹן מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ וְעַל מִזְבְּחֶךָ וְעַל הַיְכָלְךָ וּבִנְיַת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר
הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְהַעֲלֵנוּ לְתוֹכָהּ וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בְּבִנְיָנָהּ וְנֶאֱכַל מִפְרִיהָ וְנִשְׁבַּע
מִטוֹבָה וְנִבְרַכְךָ עָלֶיהָ בְּקְדוּשָׁה וּבְטָהָרָה (בשבת: וּרְצֵה וְהַחֲלִיצֵנוּ בַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת
הַזֶּה) וְשִׂמְחָנוּ בַיּוֹם חַג הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה, כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה טוֹב וּמִטִּיב לְכֹל וְנוֹדָה
לְךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ וְעַל פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן (בארץ ישראל אומרים- וְעַל פְּרֵי גִפְנָה) בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה עַל הַגֶּפֶן וְעַל פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן (בארץ ישראל אומרים- וְעַל פְּרֵי גִפְנָה)

Blessed are You O Lord, our God, King of the Universe, for the vine and for the fruit of the vine, for the produce of the field and for the desirable, goodly and spacious Land that you were pleased to give as an inheritance to our fathers, to eat of its' fruits and to be satisfied with its' goodness. Have mercy, O Lord, our God, on your people Israel and on Jerusalem Your City and on Zion, the dwelling place of Your Glory and on Your Altar and on Your Temple. Rebuild Jerusalem the Holy City speedily in our days, and bring us up into it and let us rejoice in its' rebuilding and eat of its' fruits and be satisfied with its' goodness and Bless You in Holiness and Purity.

(Shabbat add: May it be Your will to grant us strength on this day of the Shabbat) And let us rejoice on this day of the festival of Matzoth. For You O Lord, are good and does good to all and we thank You for the Land and for the fruit of the vine. (In Israel say: 'Its' vines') Blessed are You, O Lord for the Land and for the fruit of the vine *(In Israel say: 'Its' vines')*.

The conclusion

NIRTZA

נִרְצָה

חֲסִלְ סְדוּר פְּסַח כְּהַלְכְּתוּ, כְּכֹל מִשְׁפָּטוֹ וְחֻקָּתוֹ בְּאֶשֶׁר זָכִינוּ לְסִדֵּר אוֹתוֹ
 כֵּן נִזְכֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ זְךָ שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָה, קוֹיִמַם קָהֵל עַדְתִּי מִי מִנְּה בְּקָרוֹב נְהַל נְטָיעֵי
 כְּנֶה פְּדוּיִים לְצִיּוֹן בְּרְנָה

We have now completed the order of the Pesach Seder, according to all the regulations and in accordance with all its' laws and statutes and as we have merited to perform it, so may we merit to perform it in the future. Pure One who dwells on high, raise up the congregation which is without number. Soon lead the shoots of your vineyard, redeemed, to Zion with rejoicing.

Outside Israel say the following three times

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּירוּשָׁלַיִם. ג"פ

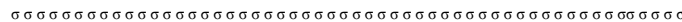
Next Year (May we celebrate the Seder) in Jerusalem.

In Israel say this instead

בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹמְרִים:

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּירוּשָׁלַיִם הַבְּנוּיָה

Next Year (May we celebrate the Seder) in the rebuilt Jerusalem



חֲסִל

We have now concluded the whole of the Seder celebration according to the regulations and precepts that have been laid down for us by our teachers. We have invited those who are needy to join us in our celebration. The children have asked why is this night different from all other nights. We have reviewed our history beginning with Laban who tried to stifle our faith almost at its inception. We have reviewed the four very different sons and their different approaches. We have mentioned the way that some of our greatest sages have celebrated the Passover very much in the way that we are doing. We have reviewed the wonder of the Ten Plagues that beset the Egyptians, tinged with regret that it was necessary, spilling the wine as a symbol of this regret, which at last forced them to let us go. We have recited the way our forefathers went out of Egypt under the care of God..

We have spoken about our crossing the Reed Sea. We spoke of the Matzah, which we ate then and still do. We ate the bitter vegetable in memory of the bitterness that our lives were in servitude. We drank the four cups of wine to commemorate the promise of salvation; we remembered the Paschal lamb offering which we are as yet unable to do. We ate a festive meal and gave thanks, we praised God for all his goodness that he has bestowed on us, and we have now come to the end of the Seder.

And now we make an appeal to God, an appeal that until the middle of the 20th Century of the Common Era was something that we could only hope for in the distant and almost unimaginable

future. An appeal that for so many generations living for so long in the Diaspora was only a dream, a heartfelt dream but only a dream. And now after two thousand years, is within our grasp. We say NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM! In Eretz Yisrael we say NEXT YEAR IN THE REBUILT JERUSALEM! Considering Jerusalem still not completely rebuilt until the Holy Temple once more stands proudly at its centre when we will once again be able to celebrate the Passover as we are commanded to in all its glory wonder and happiness

Jerusalem yearned for by our parents, grandparents, their grandparents, and their grandparents grandparents, for eighty generations.

The Psalmist mourns

By the waters of Babylon, There we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion

On its willow trees we hung our harps.....

How shall we sing the Lords song in a foreign land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning

Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I remember thee not

If I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy (Psalm 137)

There are two Jerusalems, the earthly city capital of Israel, and its heavenly counterpart (Ta'anith 5a) which is alive in our minds and dreams. The earthly thriving bustling modern city with its Synagogues, Yeshivot, the Knesset building, seat of the government, its' motor cars and buses, its' markets and malls and shops its' stores, its' supermarkets with escalators and lifts, banks, schools, university and all the trappings of a modern city.

During the most bitter times in Jewish history The Roman destruction of Jerusalem and expulsion of the Jews, the Byzantine persecutions, the crusades during which Christians did not wait to go to the Holy Land to kill "infidels" when the Jews "infidels" in their eyes were in every town and village in Europe, and when they did get to Jerusalem, murdered every Jew they could find. The Expulsion from Spain and the murderous Inquisition. The blood libels throughout the ages (even to the present day) where Jews were unbelievably and absurdly accused of using the blood of Christian children in the making of Matzoth. The pogroms in Russia, Poland and in every other country in Europe. Pogroms, oppressions, and blood libels in Moslem lands. The forced conversions to Christianity and Islam and finally the hideous and unspeakable, unbelievable, and still impossible to understand, murderous Holocaust by Germany and its many collaborators. And now the canard by Moslems which is believed by millions, that Jews have no connection to Jerusalem and that the Temple never stood there, although Jerusalem is mentioned in the scriptures some 700 times, and wept over for millennia

In all this time the concept, and the vision, and the idea, of the 'Heavenly Jerusalem'. The Heavenly Jerusalem yearned for by so many of our forefathers sustaining them for millennia, forever optimistic, the symbol of the Jews relationship with the Creator, the pinnacle of our religious fervour. The dream of our future. The *Place* of the Holy Temple. The *Place* to which we turn in our daily prayers. The *Place* at the centre of our Jewish aspirations, the *Place* where by Abraham's submitting himself to God made the world aware of the heinousness of the crime of human sacrifice. The *Place* of Jacob's dream The *Place* from which the word of God went out to the world,

"Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths for out of Zion will go the Torah and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem". (Isaiah Ch. 2 V. 3).

No other *Place* is regarded by any people as is Jerusalem by the Jews. During all this time the Jewish Nation's prayer was for salvation and the vision of "Next year in Jerusalem". Now from all parts of the world in a relatively few hours the Jew can make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to the centre of the world - Jerusalem. But, and there is nearly always a but, those fortunate enough to live in Eretz Yisrael and those even more fortunate to have the privilege of living in the Holy City, the Holiness is not complete. They say "Next year in the **rebuilt** Jerusalem". Jews still yearn for the completion of the prophecy so that we may once again celebrate Pesach in the Holy City as it should be.

There is a well known story in the Talmud (Makkot 24b) featuring the famous Rabbi Akiva. He was traveling to Jerusalem with Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer ben Azariyah two of his colleagues who we have met earlier in the Haggadah in Bnei Brak who were with Rabbi Akiva when their pupils came and reminded them that it was time to say the Kriyath Sh'ma. Stopping on Mount

Scopus they looked towards the ruins of the Temple and saw foxes running around in the ruins. Rabbi Akiva's companions burst into tears at the sight while he laughed with joy. "Why are you so happy?" asked his companions He told them that just as the prophets foretold the destruction of Jerusalem so had they foretold the rebuilding of it. Now the destruction has come to pass so will its rebuilding. (Zech Ch..8).

We are told by our sages never to forget the fact that Jerusalem is not yet complete. And one of the ways we do this as strangely enough at a wedding one of the happiest highlights of Jewish life. In the midst of this happiness and joy at the joining of two souls and the establishment and founding of another Jewish family in the long line of Jewish continuity, the bridegroom breaks a glass under the Chupa, (Or. Ch. 560:2). This strange-seeming custom is to remind us that our happiness is not complete and is tinged with our sadness for the destruction of Jerusalem.

Outside Israel say this on the second Seder night; if however the Omer has been counted in the Synagogue omit this

שׁוֹ נִהְגִּין בְּחוּץ לְאֶרֶץ בְּלֵיל שְׁנֵי שָׁל פֶּסַח לְסַפֵּר בְּאֵן סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר :

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר

Blessed are You our Lord O God King of the Universe who has sanctified us with his commandments and has commanded us to count the Omer (Lev Ch.23 V.15-16)

הַיּוֹם יוֹם אֶחָד בְּעֹמֶר

To day is one day of the Omer

.....
Have you noticed a strange thing? Moses who was God's instrument for bringing us out of Egypt, whose staff brought the plagues on to Egypt, whose staff stretched over the Reed Sea, was the signal for the waters to part. Who shepherded the Children of Israel through the desert for forty years. Who prayed to assuage God's wrath with his charges whenever they strayed. Whose status was so high that a mistake he made in the heat of the moment by striking the rock to bring forth water instead of talking to it as God had commanded was punished by not being allowed to enter the Holy land, (Num. Ch. 20 V. 7-12). Is mentioned only once in the text of the Haggadah as set down by our sages, and that only in a quotation in the paragraph beginning 'Rabbi Yose Haglili'

"And Israel saw the great Hand which the Lord laid upon the Egyptians and the people feared the Lord and they believed in the Lord and in His servant MOSES". (Ex Ch 14 V. 31)

Throughout history our sages have taken pains to remind us that Moses was no divine figure but a human being, with all the faults and frailties that a human is heir to. The Bible relates that Moses died; it also tells us that he was buried by God on the other side of the Jordan and his burial place is unknown. (Deut. Ch. 34. V. 6). The Rabbis tell us that the reason for this was so that his tomb should not become a place of pilgrimage to be worshipped at by the superstitious. He never made it to the Holy Land unlike those Jews today who do not have the privilege of living in Eretz Yisrael, of at least being able to jump on a plane and visit.

It has been explained that the compiler of the Haggadah wanted to emphasize that the exodus and redemption were completely and absolutely the work of the Holy One Blessed Be He and not brought about by Moses who all along only did what God commanded him. Judaism is very insistent that there is no intermediary between God who is the Creator and the Originator of all, and His creature man

Thank you for bearing with me all the way through my personal journey through the Haggadah, which I hope has been of interest and that some of my explanations have satisfied some of the questions associated with Pesach and the Haggadah. I have introduced and tried to explain some of the concepts of our Jewish faith and tradition that I have associated with the text.. I hope that some of the foregoing has been instrumental in whetting the reader's appetite for learning more about our heritage and reflecting on the history and future destiny of our people.

All that now remains is to conclude with some of the rousing songs, which have been composed throughout our long exile. The first one is a recital of all the things that happened at midnight. As the Jewish people left Egypt at midnight, so we remember all the other events which happened at midnight in the long history of our people. Legend has it that many things happened to our forebears at Pesach over the past millennia and are referred to in this song by hints and in a roundabout way.

בְּלֵיל רֵאשׁוֹן אוֹמְרִים :

This is sung on the first night outside Israel

וּבִכּוֹן וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה
אִז רֹב נְסִים הִפְלִאתָ בַּלַּיְלָה,
בְּרֵאשׁ אֲשֶׁמוֹרֶת זֶה הַלַּיְלָה,
גַּר צָדֵק נִצְחָתוֹ כְּנַחֲלֵק לוֹ לַיְלָה,
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

And it happened at midnight

Of old You performed many miracles by night
At the beginning of the first watch of this night
To the righteous convert (Abraham)
when there was divided for him the night

And it happened at midnight

דִּנְתָּ מֶלֶךְ גֵּרָר בַּחֲלוֹם הַלַּיְלָה,
הִפְחַדְתָּ אַרְמֵי בְּאֶמֶשׁ לַיְלָה,
וַיֵּשֶׁר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִלְאָךְ וַיִּוֹכַל לוֹ לַיְלָה,
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

You judged the King of Gerar (Avimelech) in a dream by night
You frightened the Aramean (Laban) in the dark of night
Israel (Jacob) fought an overcame the angel at night

And it happened at midnight

זָרַע בְּכוֹרֵי פִתְרוֹס מִחֲצַת בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה,
חִילָם לֹא מָצְאוּ בְּקוֹמָם בַּלַּיְלָה,
טִיסַת נְגִיד חֲרָשֶׁת סְלִית בְּכוֹכְבֵי לַיְלָה,
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

You crushed the Egyptian firstborn in the middle of the night
They did not find their hosts when they rose at night
You swept away the army of the prince of Charosheth (Sisera)
by the stars of the night

And it happened at midnight

יַעַץ מִחֶרֶף לְנוֹפֵף אוֹוִי, הוֹבֵשֶׁת פְּגָרֵיו בַּלַּיְלָה,
כָּרַע יַל וּמִצְבוֹ בְּאִישׁוֹן לַיְלָה,
לְאִישׁ חֲמוּדוֹת נִגְלָה כִּז חֲזוֹת לַיְלָה,
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

The blasphemer (Senacherib) had planned to raise his hand against
 the Temple, You laid low his corpses by night
 The idol Bel and its' watchmen were overthrown in the darkness of the night
 To the beloved man (Daniel) the secret vision was revealed at night
And it happened at midnight

מְשַׁתְּכֵר בְּכָלִי קִדְּשׁ נִהְרַג בּוֹ בַּלַּיְלָה,
 נוֹשַׁע מִבוֹר אַרְיֹת פּוֹתֵר בְּעֵתוֹתַי לַיְלָה,
 שְׁנֵאָה נֹטֵר אֲגַגִּי וְכַתֵּב סִפְרִים בַּלַּיְלָה,
 וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

The drunkard (Belshazar) who drank from the sacred vessels, was
 killed on that very night
 The one saved from the lions' den (Daniel) interpreted the meaning
 of the terrors of the night
 the Agagite (Haman) bore hatred in his heart and wrote the orders at night
And it happened at midnight

עוֹרֶרֶת נֶצְחָךְ עָלָיו בְּנֶדֶד שְׁנַת לַיְלָה,
 פּוֹרֵה תִדְרוֹךְ לְשׁוֹמֵר מֶה מַּלְיָה,
 צָרַח כְּשׁוֹמֵר וְשָׁח אֶתְּא בְּקֶר וְגַם לַיְלָה,
 וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

You launched Your triumph against him (Haman) when (Ahasuerus)
 sleep was disturbed at night
 You would trample the vintage of the one (Edom) of whom it was
 said, "Watchmen, what of the night"
 He (God) called like a watchman and said "morning (salvation) is
 coming but also night
And it happened at midnight

קָרַב יוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוּא לֹא יוֹם וְלֹא לַיְלָה,
 כִּס הוֹדַע כִּי לַךְ הַיּוֹם אֶף לַךְ הַלַּיְלָה,
 שׁוֹמְרִים הַפְּקִד לְעִירְךָ כָּל הַיּוֹם וְכָל הַלַּיְלָה,
 תִּאֲוֵר כְּאוֹר יוֹם חֲשַׁכְתָּ לַיְלָה,
 וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה

Bring the day nearer (of the Messianic era) which is neither day nor night
 O Most High, make it known that Yours is the day and Yours is the night
 Appoint watchmen to Your City (Jerusalem) all day and all night
 Illuminate like daylight, the darkness of the night
And it happened at midnight

*This is followed by a song where each verse tries to surpass the last in its description of the
 greatness of God. it is sung on the second night outside Israel* בְּלֵיל שְׁנֵי אוֹמְרִים

וּבִכְן וְאִמְרָתֶם זְבַח פֶּסַח
 אִמְץ גְּבוּרֹתֶיךָ הַפְּלֵאתָ בַּפֶּסַח,
 בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל מוֹעֲדוֹת נִשְׂאתָ פֶּסַח,
 גְּלִיתָ לְאֶזְרָחֵי חֲצוֹת לַיִל פֶּסַח,
 וְאִמְרָתֶם זְבַח פֶּסַח

And you shall say, "It is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

You demonstrated the power of Your might on Pesach
You bore up as the head of all Festivals Pesach
You revealed to the Easterner (Abraham) what
would happen at midnight on Pesach

And you shall say, "It is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

דָּלַתְיוּ דְּפָקַתְּ כָּחֵם הַיּוֹם בְּפֶסַח,
הִסְעִיד נּוֹצְצִים עֲגוֹת מַצּוֹת בְּפֶסַח,
וְאֶל הַבְּקָר רָץ זָכַר לְשׁוֹר עֶרְךָ פֶּסַח,
וְאַמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

You knocked on his (Abraham's) door on Pesach
He provided the angels with Matzoth on Pesach
And he ran to the cattle symbolizing the Festive Offering of Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

זוּעְמוּ סְדוֹמִים וְלוֹהֲטוּ בְּאֵשׁ בְּפֶסַח,
חֲלַץ לוֹט מֵהֶם וּמַצּוֹת אָפָה בְּקֶץ פֶּסַח,
טֹאטְאֵת אֲדָמַת מוֹף וְנוֹף בְּעֶבְרֶךָ בְּפֶסַח,
וְאַמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

The men of Sodom were punished by being burnt in fire on Pesach
Lot was rescued (by the angels) and he baked for them Matzoth on Pesach
You swept clean the provinces (in Egypt) of Moph and Noph
when You passed through them on Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

יְהִי רֹאשׁ כָּל אוֹן מְחַצֵּת בְּלֵיל שְׁמוֹר פֶּסַח,
כְּפִיר, עַל בֶּן בְּכוֹר פִּסְחָתְּ בְּדָם פֶּסַח,
לְבַלְתִּי תֵּת מְשַׁחִית לְבֹא בְּפִתְחֵי בְּפֶסַח,
וְאַמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

Lord You destroyed all the firstborn (in Egypt) on the night of
guarding on Pesach
He passed over your firstborn (the children of Israel) because of
The blood of the Offering of Pesach

Not allowing the destroyer to enter my doors on Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

מִסְגָּרַת סְגָרָה בְּעִתּוֹתַי פֶּסַח,
נְשַׁמְדָה מְדִין בְּצִלְלֵי שְׁעוֹרֵי עֵמֶר פֶּסַח,
שׁוֹרְפוֹ מְשַׁמְנֵי פוֹל וְלוֹד בִּיקָד יְקוֹד פֶּסַח,
וְאַמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

The sealed City (Jericho) was handed over during Pesach
Midian was destroyed through a barley cake representing
the Omer offered on Pesach

The captains of Pul and Lud (Assyria) were consumed
by fire on Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

עוד היום בָּנָב לְעִמּוּד עַד גָּעָה עוֹנֵת פֶּסַח,
פֶּס יָד כְּתִבָּה לְקַעֲקַע צוּל בַּפֶּסַח,
צָפָה הַצְּפִית עָרוֹךְ הַשְּׁלַחַן בַּפֶּסַח,
וְאִמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

(Senacherib) wanted to reach Nob that very day before the advent of Pesach

The hand wrote an inscription about the destruction of Zul (Babylonia) on Pesach

The watchers set the table (the downfall of Babylon) on Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

קָהַל בְּנֵי־הַדָּסָה לְשֵׁשׁ צוּם בַּפֶּסַח,
רֹאשׁ מַבֵּית רָשָׁע מְחַצֵּת בְּעֵץ חַמְשִׁים בַּפֶּסַח,
שְׁתֵּי אֱלֹהֵי רָגַע תִּבְיֵא לְעוֹצֵית בַּפֶּסַח,
תִּעֲזוּ יָדְךָ תְרוּם יְמִינְךָ כְּלִיל הַתְּקַדֵּשׁ חַג פֶּסַח,
וְאִמְרָתֶם זָבַח פֶּסַח

Hadassah (Esther) gathered the people together for a three day fast on Pesach

The head (Haman) of the wicked people (Amalek) You caused

to be hanged on a gallows fifty cubits high on Pesach

Two misfortunes may You bring on the Utzites (Edom) on Pesach

Let Your hand be strong and Your right hand raised on the

night on the sanctification of the Festival of Pesach

And you shall "Say it is a Festival Offering of Pesach"

כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֵאָמֵר

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

אֲדִיר בְּמְלוּכָה, בַּחֹר בְּהִלְכָה, גְּדוּדָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וּלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יֵי הַמְּמַלְכָה, כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֵאָמֵר

He is powerful in His kingdom; He is distinguished, His legions (angels) say to Him.

To You, to You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

דָּגוּל בְּמְלוּכָה, הַדּוֹר בְּהִלְכָה, וְתִיקוּ יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וּלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יֵי הַמְּמַלְכָה, כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֵאָמֵר

Supreme is He in his kingdom. Glorious is He. His devoted ones (Israel) say to Him

To You, to You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

זָבָאי בְּמְלוּכָה, חֲסִין בְּהִלְכָה טַפְסָרְיוֹ יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וּלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יֵי הַמְּמַלְכָה, כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֵאָמֵר

Pure and Majesty, mighty indeed, His officers (angels) say to Him
“To You, to You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

יְחִיד בְּמַלְכוּתָהּ, כְּבִיר בְּהַלְכָהּ לְמוֹדָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וְלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמַלְכָהּ, כִּי לוֹ נְאֻהָ, כִּי לוֹ יְאֻהָ

He is unique in kingship, omnipotent, His disciples (Israel) say unto Him

“To You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

מוֹשֵׁל בְּמַלְכוּתָהּ, נוֹרָא בְּהַלְכָהּ סְבִיבָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וְלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמַלְכָהּ, כִּי לוֹ נְאֻהָ, כִּי לוֹ יְאֻהָ

Exulted in Kingship, full of awe, those surrounding Him (angels) say unto Him “To You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

עֲנִיו בְּמַלְכוּתָהּ, פּוֹדֵה בְּהַלְכָהּ, צַדִּיקָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וְלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמַלְכָהּ,

כִּי לוֹ נְאֻהָ, כִּי לוֹ יְאֻהָ

Humble in kingship, truly the redeemer, the righteous ones (Israel) say unto Him

“To You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

קָדוֹשׁ בְּמַלְכוּתָהּ, רַחוּם בְּהַלְכָהּ שְׂנֵאָנָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וְלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמַלְכָהּ, כִּי לוֹ נְאֻהָ, כִּי לוֹ יְאֻהָ

Holy in kingship, merciful indeed His troops (angels) say unto Him,

“To You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

תְּקוּף בְּמַלְכוּתָהּ, תּוֹמֵךְ בְּהַלְכָהּ תְּמִימָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ :

לְךָ וְלְךָ, לְךָ כִּי לְךָ, לְךָ אֵף לְךָ, לְךָ יי הַמְּמַלְכָהּ, כִּי לוֹ נְאֻהָ, כִּי לוֹ יְאֻהָ

Almighty in kingship, supporting indeed, His perfect ones (Israel) say unto Him

“To You, to You, and indeed to You. To You and only to You, to You O Lord is the sovereignty”.

To Him songs of praise are due, to Him it is fitting to give praise and thanks.

The next song extols the greatness of God with the refrain that the Temple be built speedily.

אֲדִיר הוּא יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב
בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקֶרֶב
אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקֶרֶב

He is most mighty

May He soon rebuild the Temple, speedily, speedily, soon in our days. O God build, O God build, build Your Temple soon.

בְּחֹר הוּא, גָּדוֹל הוּא, דָּגוּל הוּא, יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב
בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקֶרֶב
אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקֶרֶב

He is supreme, great and exalted is He.

May He soon rebuild the Temple, speedily, speedily, soon in our days. O God build, O God build, build Your Temple soon.

הַדּוֹר הוּא, וְתִיק הוּא, זָכַאי הוּא, חָסִיד הוּא, יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב
בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקֶרֶב
אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקֶרֶב

.Glorious is He, Faithful is He all worthy is He, He is faultless

May He soon rebuild the Temple, speedily, speedily, soon in our days. O God build, O God build, build Your Temple soon.

טָהוֹר הוּא, יְחִיד הוּא, כְּבִיר הוּא, לְמוֹד הוּא, מְלַךְ הוּא, נוֹרָא הוּא, סְגִיב
הוּא, עֲזוּז הוּא, פּוֹדֶה הוּא, צַדִּיק הוּא, יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב
בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקֶרֶב
אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקֶרֶב.

Pure is He, He is unique, He is omnipotent, Learned is He, He is sovereign. Awesome is He, He is sublime, He is powerful, The redeemer is He, Righteous is He. May He soon rebuild the Temple, speedily, speedily, soon in our days. O God build, O God build, build Your Temple soon.

קְדוֹשׁ הוּא, רַחוּם הוּא, שְׂדֵי הוּא, תַּקִּיף הוּא, יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקֶרֶב
בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּמַהֲרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקֶרֶב
אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה, אֵל בְּנֵה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקֶרֶב

He is Holy, He is compassionate, He is the Almighty, Strong is He

May He soon rebuild the Temple, speedily, speedily, soon in our days. O God build, O God build, build Your Temple soon.

.....
The song following is one in which we give numbers one to thirteen to things Jewish. Number one of course, being reserved for the Oneness of God. Two refers to the two tablets of stone on which are recorded the Ten Commandments. Three our three forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Four our four matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. Five the five books of Moses, and so on and so forth.

אֶחָד מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

Who knows one?

אֶחָד אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows one?

I know one

One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שְׁנַיִם מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

שְׁנַיִם אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows two?

I know two

Two are the tablets of the Covenant. One is our God in heaven and on earth

שְׁלֹשָׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows three?

I know three

Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant; One is our God in heaven and on earth.

אַרְבַּע מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

אַרְבַּע אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows four?

I know four

Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant; One is our God in heaven and on earth.

חֲמִשָּׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

חֲמִשָּׁה אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows five?

I know five.

Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שֵׁשׁ מִי יוֹדֵעַ?

שֵׁשׁ אָנִי יוֹדֵעַ : שֵׁשׁ סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אִמּוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם וּבְאָרֶץ

Who knows six?

I know six.

Six are the orders of the Mishna, Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שְׁבַעַה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
שְׁבַעַה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: שְׁבַעַה יְמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי
תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows seven?

I know seven

Seven are the days of the week, Six are the orders of the Mishna, Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שְׁמוֹנָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
שְׁמוֹנָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: שְׁמוֹנָה יְמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַעַה יְמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה,
חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד
אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows eight?

I know eight

Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

תְּשַׁעָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
תְּשַׁעָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: תְּשַׁעָה יְרַחֵי לְדָה, שְׁמוֹנָה יְמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַעַה יְמֵי שַׁבָּתָא,
שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת,
שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows nine?

I know nine

Nine are the months of pregnancy Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week Six are the orders of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

עֶשְׂרֵה מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
עֶשְׂרֵה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: עֶשְׂרֵה דְבָרִיא, תְּשַׁעָה יְרַחֵי לְדָה, שְׁמוֹנָה יְמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַעַה
יְמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה
אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows ten?

I know ten

Ten are the Proclamations (the Ten Commandments!) Nine are the months of pregnancy Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week Six are the orders of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

אֶחָד עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
אֶחָד עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵי־אֵל, עֲשָׂרָה דְּבָרִים, תְּשֻׁעָה יָרַח לְדָה,
שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַע־יָמֵי שְׁבֻתָא, שֵׁשׁ סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי
תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבַע־מִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows eleven?

I know eleven

Eleven are the stars (of Joseph's dream). Ten are the Commandments. Nine are the months of pregnancy Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week Six are the orders of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שְׁבֻטֵי־אֵל, אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵי־אֵל, עֲשָׂרָה דְּבָרִים,
תְּשֻׁעָה יָרַח לְדָה, שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַע־יָמֵי שְׁבֻתָא, שֵׁשׁ סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה,
חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד
אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַע־מִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who knows twelve?

I know twelve

Twelve are the tribes. Eleven are the stars (of Joseph's dream). Ten are the Commandments Nine are the months of pregnancy Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week Six are the orders of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth.

שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ?
שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ: שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר מְדָיָא. שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שְׁבֻטֵי־אֵל, אֶחָד עָשָׂר
כּוֹכְבֵי־אֵל, עֲשָׂרָה דְּבָרִים, תְּשֻׁעָה יָרַח לְדָה, שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִילָה, שְׁבַע־יָמֵי
שְׁבֻתָא, שֵׁשׁ סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חוּמְשֵׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה
אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לְחוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַע־מִים וּבְאֶרֶץ

Who is knows thirteen?

I know thirteen

Thirteen are the Attributes of God's mercy, Twelve are the tribes. Eleven are the stars (of Joseph's dream). Ten are the Commandments Nine are the months of pregnancy Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week Six are the orders

of the Mishna Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the matriarchs. Three are the patriarchs. Two are the tablets of the Covenant, One is our God in heaven and on earth..

.....

The last song is probably the most famous of all. It is about the 'kid that my father bought for two zuzim'. This song has been interpreted as a potted history of the Jewish people.

חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא
דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.

One kid

One kid, one kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא שׁוּנְרָא וְאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא
Then came the cat and ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא כְּלָבָא וְנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.
Then came a dog and bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא חוּטְרָא וְהִכָּה לְכְלָבָא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.
Then came the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא נוֹרָא וְשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכְלָבָא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.
Then came the fire and burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא מַיָּא וְכָבֶה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכְלָבָא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.
Then water came and put out the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאַתָּא תוֹרָא וְשָׂתָה לְמַיָּא, דְּכָבֶה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכְלָבָא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוּנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָּא, דְּזַבִּין אָבִיא בְּתַרִּי זוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָּא, חַד גְּדִיָּא.
Then came an ox and drank the water that put out the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאֵתָא הַשׁוֹחֵט וְשָׁחַט לְתוֹרָא, דְּשָׂתָה לְמֵיָא, דְּכָבָה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא,
דְּהִפָּה לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאָכְלָה לְגַדְיָא, דְּזָבִין אַבָּא בְּתַרֵי זׁוּזִי, חַד
גְּדִיָא, חַד גְּדִיָא

Then came the slaughterer and slaughtered the ox that drank the water that put out the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאֵתָא מְלַאךְ הַמָּוֶת וְשָׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט, דְּשָׁחַט לְתוֹרָא, דְּשָׂתָה לְמֵיָא, דְּכָבָה
לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִפָּה לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁךְ לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאָכְלָה לְגַדְיָא,
דְּזָבִין אַבָּא בְּתַרֵי זׁוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָא, חַד גְּדִיָא

Then came the angel of death and slaughtered the slaughterer that slaughtered the ox that drank the water that put out the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

וְאֵתָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְשָׁחַט לְמְלַאךְ הַמָּוֶת, דְּשָׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט, דְּשָׁחַט
לְתוֹרָא, דְּשָׂתָה לְמֵיָא, דְּכָבָה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִפָּה לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁךְ
לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאָכְלָה לְגַדְיָא, דְּזָבִין אַבָּא בְּתַרֵי זׁוּזִי, חַד גְּדִיָא, חַד גְּדִיָא

Then came the Holy One, Blessed be He, who slaughtered the angel of death, who had slaughtered the slaughterer that slaughtered the ox that drank the water that put out the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog, that bit the cat that ate the kid that my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

**AND THAT IS THE END OF THE SEDER.
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM**

APPENDIX

Our Sages say that the Torah is written “in the language of men”. Language is the means by which communication is effected between humans. Animals use some sort of communication between members of their own species, but when we speak of language, we mean the method of communication between human beings. It is only humans as far as we know at present that are able to communicate abstract thoughts and ideas to each other. When we speak, our bodies, facial expressions, voices, nuances, and the way we pause in our speech, make a difference in what we communicate. Punctuation makes what we say, mean different things. Even different inflections in our speech convey different information.

There are hundreds of languages and they all have their own emphases. It is sometimes very difficult to translate an exact meaning from one language into another. In many cases the translator will convey his own understanding into the other language giving in effect his own commentary or interpretation¹

The Bible is a case in point. The Pentateuch or Five Books of Moses in its original is written by hand in Hebrew on parchment using only consonants, no vowels and with no punctuation. The Torah scroll is meticulously copied by the scribe, each Torah Scroll is an exact copy of every other Torah Scroll. It contains what seems to be odd spellings and grammatical differences, some letters are written larger and some smaller all this is transmitted faithfully from generation to generation. One day we will understand what they signify at present we think we understand some of them.

However, there is a tradition of what the Bible means and how it should be read. There was always a tradition as to how the Torah was to be chanted in the Synagogue, and about a thousand years ago this was finalized and signs, really, punctuation marks were added to the texts (but not in the scrolls used for Synagogue services). These mark the traditional way that the Torah is punctuated and are used as musical notation in its chanting. During the Middle Ages the printed Bibles were also divided into sentences, paragraphs and chapters, principally to enable the contestants in forced disputations with hostile Christian clergy to be able to refer to the same sentence or verse.

So what we have is a Torah that is written in the language of men and that language refers to that, which men are aware of in their own experience. Language cannot convey an idea or a concept of which we have no experience or conception. Language also has nuances, which can mean different things to different men. Some, according to their nurture and nature and various other attributes can see and perhaps understand, in the written word or in speech things that others cannot.

So, if we say that the Bible is written in the language of men, different men can ‘see’ what they read in different ways. And that of course is what the commentators of the Bible do. They bring to others, their concepts, ideas, and understanding of what the Bible means.

The most famous of commentators Rashi, *R. Shlomo ben Itzchaki* (it is virtually impossible to study Torah or Talmud without the help of his commentary) lived in France at the time that William was conquering England. In his famous comment on the Creation, Rashi asks why does the Torah begin with the Creation and not with the first Mitzvah that is given to the Children of Israel, (Ex. Ch. 12 V. 2) relating to the establishment of the Lunar Calendar, while they were still in Egypt and which was directly connected to the exodus.

Rashi says, that God puts the account of the Creation at the beginning of the Bible so that if the Nations of the world should say to Israel, you are robbers and you stole the land of Canaan, the Creation narrative shows that all the Earth belongs to the Holy One Blessed be He. He Created it and He can give it to whoever He chooses and the Bible states plainly that He promised the Land to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants for ever.

The Bible is not a scientific treatise; it is principally a work that brings to us the ideal way that we should behave in a perfect world. The Bible starts with its account of the Creation of the Universe by the Creator, and it does so in 35 short sentences. Most people

will tell you what they *think* this account says, but very few *know* what it actually says or have read it or examined every word and nuance in the original Hebrew and can say what it conveys. To even try to understand it, it must be read in the original.²

. As I said above the Bible is not a scientific treatise and most of us are content to leave it to the scientists to theorize on the scientific explanation of the creation, which they have been trying to do for centuries. Similarly, to what we said above, many people will tell you what they think scientists have said, without really knowing what scientists have actually said, or have even read any of the hundreds may be thousands of scientific books written

To illustrate what I said before that the Bible is written in the language of men and that it is not a scientific treatise but a guide as to how mankind should conduct itself, many things connected with Genesis, the first book, spring to mind and here are just three of them.

The first, God said after He created the heavens (space?)³ and the earth, “*LET THERE BE LIGHT*” (Gen. Ch. 1. V. 3). The Bible tells us that the sun and moon were put in place on the fourth day,⁴ we associate light with the sun. So, what was the light created on day one? (The bible says in the Hebrew, ‘day one’, and not ‘the first day’) We say that “light has been shone on a subject” light is very often used as a synonym for understanding. Is that what the Torah is telling us that understanding or the potential to understand came to the world at the very beginning? Every morning we say in our prayers “A new light shines on Zion and all of us benefit from it”. Is that the original light of the “let there be light”?

The second, when Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God's commandment not to do so, and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, their eyes were opened and they were afraid, so they hid in the forest among the trees and God said “*Ayeka*”, (where are you?).(Gen. Ch. 3 V. 1-9). Did God not know where they were? God knows every nano-second⁵ where each of us is. He said to Adam and Eve “*where are you*” did they really know where they *were* and what was the consequences of their sin, and where it had got them. They seem to have had some idea otherwise why did they hide? Do *we*, each and every one of us, *know* at all times *where we are, and what are the consequences of our actions*, perhaps we have an inkling, and that is why sometimes we also try to hide.

The third is the story of Cain and his brother Abel (Gen. Ch. 4 V. 1-9). Cain is jealous of his brother and at that very earliest stage of humankind he murders his brother Abel. God says to Cain “*where is your brother Abel*” and Cain lied and said “*I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?*” The whole of the Torah teaches us that we are indeed our brothers keeper and not only our brother or our neighbour's but all our fellow men in Lev Ch. 19. V. 18, we learn “*do not bear a grudge or take revenge but love your fellow man as yourself.*”

The Torah is written in the language of men, which is the language in which each of us understands it. The Ethics of the Fathers Ch. 5 V. 26 says, “Occupy yourself with it constantly (the learning of Torah) as everything is in it, and it is through it, that your view will gain clarity”. It is a truism that every time we read the Bible we find in it something that we have never noticed before. It might be a fact or a concept or a strange spelling or a strange punctuation. It might make things clearer or less clear but it makes or should make one think and try to find out what the inner meaning is.

It says in the Shemoth Rabba “Centuries ago other nations took over from us what they call the written Torah but, they could never really understand its inner meaning nor could they attain the spiritual height of Israel because they lacked the oral tradition which is the key and the indispensable complement to the written law”

In the Gemara, Shabbat 88b, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that the angels said to God when Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah that the Torah was in existence nine hundred and seventy generations before the creation of the universe! If we calculate that a generation is 25 years, they said that the Torah had been in existence for nearly 25,000 years, before the creation,. In other words a very long time. Did the angels mean that a Torah scroll such as we read from in the Synagogue made of parchment and written by a scribe was

suspended in the space, which we say did not yet exist. Is it a hint that the creation of the Universe as we know it today took an infinitely long time. Does it also mean that the eternal truths, the ideas, the concepts of Justice and Mercy, repentance and universal brotherhood that are enshrined in the Torah are the first cause and fundamental for the orderly management of the earth the universe and mankind? The Torah is written in the language of men it is composed of layers and layers of wisdom that all men must strive to understand, to fathom and to achieve. We must look between the lines and behind the sentences, "Occupy yourself with it constantly (the Torah learning) as everything is in it, and it is through it, that your view will gain clarity". (Ethics Ch.5 Mish. 26)

¹⁾ Much as our sages of old wished that the word of God should be spread in the world they were deeply convinced that the understanding of the Torah is bound up the Holy Tongue and the oral tradition within Israel. And that any translation opens the door to misunderstandings outside Israel which are bound to have repercussions also with our own people. ('Introduction to the English language edition of The Hirsch Chumash' by Dayan Dr I. Grunfeld).

Translations such as the King James Version or even later ones , do not accurately reflect the Hebrew. For example at the very beginning of Genesis when each 'day' is specified, while the Hebrew says 'and it was evening and it was morning *day one*' the KJ translates this as 'the first day' which is not what the Bible says. Further, each day in the KJ version is called *the* second day, *the* third day etc. The Hebrew does not give any of the days the definite article except for the sixth day when it says "and it was evening and it was morning *the* sixth day. It may not make very much difference here to the meaning, but on the other hand it might make a great deal of difference. No one can know how many other differences there are between the Hebrew and the many translations of the Bible. These differences have certainly contributed to the many errors by other religions founded on incorrect translations of the Hebrew.

²⁾ "We must read the Torah in Hebrew that is to say in accordance with the spirit of the language. It describes but little but through a rich significance of its verbal roots it paints in the word a picture of the thing. It only joins for us predicate to subject and sentence to sentence; but it presupposes the listening soul so watchful and attentive that the deeper sense and profounder meaning which lie not upon but below the surface". (Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch).

³⁾ Before anything existed there was no space, space is the distance between two objects and if there were no objects there can not be any space, so even space did not exist.

⁴⁾ The sun and moon and all the stars were set in place in the heavens on the fourth day. A day is a single revolution of the earth. A day is calculated from the setting of the sun to the next setting of the sun. How were the first three days "calculated" and how long were they?

⁵⁾ Nano-second, one thousandth or is it one millionth of a second. A billion years, in Britain this is a million million, in America it is a thousand million, take your pick. Both these lengths of time a nano-second and a billion years are unintelligible to us ordinary mortals and are periods of time used by scientists to explain certain theories. It may be that if you can travel faster than the speed of light both these periods can be the same. See Genesis and the Big Bang by Prof. Schroeder..