

Fascinating INSIGHTS

יד ניסן תש"פ
April 8, 2020

פסח

7th year, edition 331

To join the thousands of recipients and receive these insights free on a weekly email, obtain previous articles, feedback, comments, suggestions (on how to spread the insights of this publication further, make it more appealing or anything else), to support or dedicate this publication which has been in six continents and over thirty-five countries, or if you know anyone who is interested in receiving these insights weekly, please contact the author, Rabbi Yehoshua Alt, at yalt3285@gmail.com. Thank you.

לרפואה שלמה אליעזר יהודה בן חיה

This newsletter can also be viewed at <https://www.dirshu.co.il/category/הורדות-עלונים/fascinating-insights/>
Archives: <https://parshasheets.com/?s=Rabbi+Yehoshua+Alt>

To view these essays in German, please visit <https://judentum.online/>

Please feel free to print some copies of this publication and distribute it in your local Shul for the public, having a hand in spreading Torah.

COMING SOON Bez"H

Fascinating Insights—The Sefer (in English)

[Pesach of Prayer](#)

In the story of Purim, Mordechai made a three day fast in the middle of Nissan, which included the night of Pesach.¹ This seems puzzling since he had until the next Adar to make this three day fast. Why did he pick the night of the Seder—the night we have Matza, Marror, the four cups and so on? Indeed, Rashi translates ויעבר מרדכי that he transgressed the law of fasting on Yom Tov.²

The Tiferes Shlomo says the word הגדה is related to המשכה, pull as the Targum Unkolos on וימשכו is ונגידו, since tremendous bounty come down on the night of the Seder.⁴ The Divrei Chaim says on the words in the Haggada לו פתח את פתח לו (all gates) are opened up on this night.⁵ וכאן הבן שואל מה נשתנה ה' it says ומה נשתנה ה' (1844) the father of the Beis Aharon said this also means here on the night of the Seder is where, we, the children of Hashem can make requests. כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח, for anything you need pour out your heart in Tefila.⁶

The Gemara⁷ tells us Matza is called לחם עני since לחם שעונין עליו דברים הרבה,⁸ we declare many things upon

¹ Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer, chapter 49. See the Midrash (Koheles Rabba 8:5, Yalkut Shimon 978) of Esther being busy with Biur Chametz (see the Maharzu).

² Megila 15a. Esther, 4:17, Rashi. See Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer, chapter 50. It says וצומו עלי ואל תאכלו ואל תשתו שלשת ימים, fast and don't eat or drink for three days (Esther 4:16). Isn't it obvious that if one fasts that there will be no eating or drinking? On Pesach we have the Mitzva of eating Matza and Marror and drinking the four cups. This is what is meant by ואל תאכלו, referring to not eating Matza and Marror and drinking the four cups (Taamai HaMinhagim, p. 371).

³ Breishis 37:28.

⁴ Pirkei Drebi Eliezer (chapter 32) tells us that on the night of Pesach, ואוצרות טללים נפתחים, storehouses of dew (bounty) are opened.

⁵ R' Moshe Kobriner says on לו פתח את פתח לו that he doesn't know how to daven so open him up.

⁶ Tiferes Shlomo, s.v. כל.

⁷ Pesachim 36a.

⁸ It is also called לחם עוני because it is made only with water. This is in contrast to לחם עשירה which can also be with oil, wine, milk and honey (see Yerushalmi Pesachim 2:4, Rambam in Hilchos Chametz Umatza 6:5).

the Matza like the Haggada and Hallel.⁹ עונין means to answer as in עניך ה' meaning Hashem answers our requests on this night. This is the meaning in לחמא עניא which refers to Matza and עניא means to answer. This explains why the Targum Unkolos on Matza is פטירה, to open up¹¹ as it opens up enormous abundance. With this we can comprehend why this was the time picked for the fast and Tefila to remove the decree of Haman. Let us all take advantage of the special opportunity the night of the Seder affords.

[Final Finish](#)

Many times we hear about a Siyum on some Mesachta of Gemara.¹² Can a Siyum be made on other parts of Torah as well?

One of the sources for a Siyum¹³ is from Abaye¹⁴—who was a Rosh Yeshiva—as when one of his students studied an entire Mesachta, he would make a party for all the students of the Yeshiva.¹⁵ This can't be talking about finishing a Mesachta of Gemara since they didn't learn Gemara then as it was before Ravina and Rav Ashi's time.¹⁶ The Mesachta that was finished was a Mesachta of Mishnayos.

What about making a Siyum on a Mesachta Ketana?¹⁷ On Erev Pesach (when there is a Taanis Bechorim) the Steipler was approached by someone who wanted to eat but didn't attend a Siyum. The Steipler

⁹ In the Sefer Darkei Chaim V'Shalom (אות תרכג) it brings the custom of the Minchas Elazar that after Pesach he wouldn't wash his Kittel that he wore on Pesach in order not to remove the uncleanness from the Matza and wine from Seder night. This was so that on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur when he wears his Kittel the merit of the Matza would be there. Only prior to Pesach did he wash it.

¹⁰ Tehillim 20:2.

¹¹ As in פטר רחם. See Shemos 13:6.

¹² The Aruch Hashulchan (Yoreh Deah 246:45) says that we don't say שהשמחה במעונו, Hashem's abode is this celebration, at a Siyum (See the Yam Shel Shlomo, Baba Kamma 7:37) because Talmud Torah is the greatest of all the Mitzvos so the Simcha is here in this world. If we would say שהשמחה במעונו it would infer that it's not a complete Simcha and that the Simcha is in the abode of Hashem. This is just like other Mitzvos where there is never a complete Simcha and therefore the real Simcha is in the upper world. A Simcha of a Siyum is so complete that you don't need to say שהשמחה במעונו.

¹³ See also the Biur Hagra, Orach Chaim, 669:4, the Beis Yosef, Orach Chaim 669, s.v. ונהגים and the Yam Shel Shlomo at the end of the 7th chapter of Baba Kamma, s.v. גרסינו.

¹⁴ This was Abaye who was a sickly person and frugal with food as the Gemara (Shabbos 33a) says Abaye was afflicted with *Hydrokan* and Rava remarked that Abaye was afflicted with it because he deprived himself of food and not because of sins. Despite this, when one of his students completed one Mesachta—which was just Mishnayos—he made a Siyum for the entire Yeshiva, because of his abundant love for the Mitzva (Yam Shel Shlomo, end of the 7th chapter to Baba Kamma, s.v. והנה פקה).

¹⁵ Shabbos 118b-119a with Rashi. Abaye teaches us from this that when one person in a Yeshiva makes a Simcha, it's a Simcha of the entire Yeshiva. This is different than other Simchos such as a Bris where you are at someone else's Simcha.

¹⁶ Ravina and Rav Ashi are responsible for Talmud Bavli.

¹⁷ These are the Mesachtos that appear after Horiyos and Idiyos, which include Mesachta Sofrim, Kalla, Geirim, Sefer Torah and Tefillin.

advised him to make a Siyum on one of the Mesachtos Ketanos so that he can eat.¹⁸

The Pnei Mavin says that one can even make a Siyum on a Perek of a Mesachta with a Hadran and Kadish. This is why there is a Hadran after each Perek.¹⁹

What about making a Siyum on a Sefer of Nach? According to the Pnei Yehoshua,²⁰ when R' Yochanan would finish Sefer Iyov he would make a Seudas Siyum.²¹ In his ruling on what constitutes a Seudas Mitzva to exempt firstborns from fasting Erev Pesach as well as eating meat during the nine days R' Moshe Feinstein²² writes that if one learns Sefarim of שבכתב in-depth, the Siyum is considered a Seudas Mitzva. It doesn't have to be for a Mesachta, rather there is a Simcha upon the completion of any Mitzva that takes a period of time.²³

R' Moshe Feinstein once attended a Siyum of an elderly Baal Teshuva from Russia, who was making a Siyum on one Daf of Gemara (the first Daf he ever learned). Soon after the Siyum, this man passed away. At the funeral, R' Moshe said that יש קונה עולמו בשעה אחת, some acquire the world to come in one moment, but others acquire it בהדרגה, with one page of Gemara.²⁵

Choiceless Redemption

There are 365 days in a year. The word נחש, snake has a Gematria of 358. Subtracting 358 from 365, we come to a total of 7 as it is during the 7 days of Pesach that we get the ability to fight the זוהמא, filth of the snake. This is the meaning in ביעור חמץ which refers to the Yetzer Hara.

There is a Machlokes if the sin of Adam was with wheat or wine.²⁶ For this reason, we have Matza (wheat) and wine (four cups) as it is to rectify the first sin of man. Through this we may merit משיח. In fact, משיח has the equivalent of 358!

We are taught that משיח (בן דוד) will come in a generation that is כולו חייב or כולו זכאי, entirely virtuous or entirely guilty.²⁷ How are we to understand that משיח can come in a generation that is כולו חייב? R' Elchonon Wasserman compares this to Mitzraim where we were at the point of no return and thus needed to be redeemed. Similarly, in the future if it is a generation that is כולו חייב.

¹⁸ Orchos Rabbeinu, Volume 2.

¹⁹ For example after the first Perek of Mesachta Brachos—which is הדרן עלך מאימתי—it says מאימתי.

²⁰ Brachos 17a, s.v. בגמרא רבי יוחנן.

²¹ See Minchas Pitim, Yoreh Deah, 246:26.

²² Orach Chaim 1, 157.

²³ See also Yabia Omer 1:26.

²⁴ R' Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer, Orach Chaim 4:13:4) points out that the little we learn nowadays and with the lack of depth, it is still considered so much (See also Shir Hashirim Rabba 7:11) like the Arizal told R' Chaim Vital in the 1500s (Shaar Hagilgulim, p. 62b) that a small act in our generation is equivalent to many great Mitzvos of other generations since the shells of impurity have increased tremendously. What would the Arizal say about our generation, close to 500 years later?

²⁵ This idea is borrowed from Avoda Zara 17a where it says there are those who acquire the next world through many years and others that acquire it in a single moment.

²⁶ Sanhedrin 70.

²⁷ Sanhedrin 98a. The Abarbenel (ישועות משיחו), p. 19) explains this to mean that even in a דור שכולו חייב (see Ohr Hachaim, Vayikra, 25:28).

The Chofetz Chaim²⁸ says the young will rebel against the old and one will be unable to transmit the fundamentals to the next generation. To prevent the tradition from being lost, the Geula will come.

Appetizing Afikoman

We are taught that the Brachos of Yitzchak were given on Pesach. This is why we take the אפיקומן on Pesach since Yaakov took the Brachos from Esav then. An allusion is found in במרמה, בך אחיך, ²⁹ your brother came with cleverness, as במרמה shares the same Gematria as אפיקומן, 287.

The אפיקומן is the middle Matza—the one that corresponds to Yitzchak, who is the one that gave the Brachos. One last hint is that חד גדיא חד גדיא (twice) alludes to the two עדים גדיי that Yaakov gave Yitzchak for the Brachos as this took place on Pesach.³⁰

A Seeing Sea

Why did the Yam Suf split? The Midrash teaches in the merit of the bones of Yosef which they were carrying when they left Mitzraim, the sea split.³¹ It says הים ראה וינס, the sea saw and fled, as it saw the הוצאה וינס, Yosef fled and went outside (by the test with Potifar's wife).³² Since Yosef went against his nature by overcoming the test with Potifar's wife, the sea went against its nature and split.³³ Is it any coincidence that when we rearrange the letters of ים סוף, it spells סוף ים? In light of this, we can comprehend why the 7th day of Pesach—the day the Yam Suf split—is the Sefira of חסד שביסוד, the trait of Yosef.³⁵

Mitzraim is given the title ערות הארץ. It therefore is fitting that we exited Mitzraim because of the one who succeeded in this area, Yosef. With this we can grasp why Shiduchim are compared to סוף ים קריעת ים סוף since marriage can save one in this area. We should all merit to succeed in this area thereby causing our own seas to split.

Rabbi Alt merited to learn under the tutelage of R' Mordechai Friedlander Ztz"l for close to five years. He received Semicha from R' Zalman Nechemia Goldberg. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications. He lives with his wife and family in a suburb of Yerushalayim where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

²⁸ ציפית לישועה, 1.

²⁹ Breishis 27:35. The word אפיקומן is a contraction of אפיק מן, take out the food, as this is what is done with the אפיקומן.

³⁰ Breishis 27:9, Rashi. Why were there two עדים גדיי, young goats? This alludes to Pesach as one was for the Korbon Pesach and the other for the Korbon Chagiga (see Targum Yonasan, Toldos 27:9, Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer, chapter 32, Zohar Toldos 142a). This is hinted to in וייה...בגדיו (Breishis 27:27) as ריה has the same Gematria as ליל פסח (218).

³¹ Breishis Rabba 87:8.

³² Tehillim 114:3. Breishis 39:12. The word וינס is rooted in נס which can mean a miracle or to flee. When one flees from sin (such as Yosef) he can bring about miracles (like the splitting of the Yam Suf).

³³ Even though there is no Sanhedrin, there is still the judgement of ארבע, burning, killing through a sword and choking). For one who deserves חנק, choking, he may drown in a river (Kesubos 30). The Mishna elsewhere says that one who sins with an איש gets חנק, choking (Sanhedrin 84b). Explains the Doresh Tov since Yosef overcame the test with the wife of Potifar, the sea split for him and no drowning occurred.

³⁴ Tangentially, water represents תאוה, desire. Since Yosef overcame תאוה, the water split.

³⁵ Shem Mishmuel, Vayikra, p. 118. See Sefas Emes, Pesach, תרמ"א, s.v. פקוד. The dipping at כרפס alludes to the selling of Yosef as his tunic was dipped in blood (Sefer Maaseh Hashem, Maaseh Avos, 24). It therefore comes as no surprise that כרפס is an acronym for פרעה רכב פרעה (Shemos 14:9) which is stated in the chapter that talks of the splitting of the Yam Suf.

³⁶ Sota 2a.