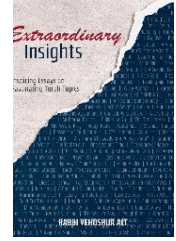
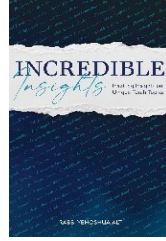
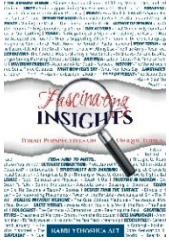


Fascinating INSIGHTS

יד' ניסן תשפ"ב
April 15, 2022

פסח
10th year, edition 432

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A Bright Night

1) We read in the Haggada that R' Eliezer, R' Yehoshua, R' Elazar Ben Azarya, R' Akiva and R' Tarfon were in Bnei Brak discussing Yetzias Mitzrayim the entire night until their students told them it was time for Krias Shema. How are we to understand that such holy people needed to be reminded to recite Shema?

2) We are taught that Hallel may be recited only by day.¹ The Sefas Emes² therefore asks how can we recite Hallel on the night of Pesach?

3) To get redeemed, Hashem gave us two commandments—the Korban Pesach and Bris Mila. Rashi³ tells us that they performed Bris Mila that night. This is problematic since Mila can only be performed during day?⁴

4) If the Mitzva of יציאת מצרים is at night, why does it say והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא?⁵

The Zohar informs us that the night of Pesach, was comparable to תקופת תמוז, light like the summer.⁶ This

is just as it says לילה כיום יאיר, night shines like the day.⁷ The following are some illustrations of this:

A) One interpretation given in הזה נשתנה הלילה הזה is why is this night different (since it is like the day).⁸

B) The story with Avraham and the Malachim occurred on Pesach. It says there כחם היום⁹, like the heat of the day, alluding to this night of light.

With this insight, we can answer our questions. The reason the aforementioned sages were told to recite Krias Shema is because it literally appeared as the daytime. In fact, the word בני ברק can be interpreted as light as in קלת וברקים, thunder and lighting.¹⁰ Additionally, מספרים is related to ספיר, shine, as it was like daylight.

Since the night of Pesach is like day, we can therefore recite Hallel at night.¹¹ For the same reason, Bris Mila was able to be performed that night. Following the same approach, this is why it states והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא.

¹ Megila 20.

² Pesach, תרמ"ד, s.v. בנוסח. An allusion to that Hallel is recited on the night of Pesach is found in להוציאם הוא לה' להוציאם, it is a night of anticipation for Hashem to them out of Mitzrayim, where the initials spell הלל (Chida in חומת אנך in the name of the Rokeach).

³ Shemos 12:6, s.v. והיה.

⁴ Yevamos 72.

⁵ Shemos, 13:8. See Ohr Hachaim there.

⁶ Zohar, Shemos 38a. This also explains הכותי כל בכור ביום, on the day I struck every firstborn (Bamidbar 8:17).

⁷ Tehillim 139:12. In this way, we can comprehend זה היום עשה ה' נגילה ושמחה בו (Tehillim 118:24) as Hashem made this night like day. We therefore should rejoice on this day.

⁸ See Oros Hagra.

⁹ Breishis 18:1.

¹⁰ Shemos 19:16. See also Yoma 28a, Rashi s.v. ברקאי.

¹¹ The intensity of the holiness of this night is so strong that it is guarded against harmful spirits (Rosh Hashana 11b, Shemos 12:42, Rashi. see Maharsha Pesachim 109b). We therefore only need to say the first paragraph of Shema and Hamapil (Orach Chaim 481:2 with the Mishna Brura and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 119:9).

That spiritual light was so clear and brilliant to the extent that the atmosphere at nighttime was actually light. Every year on Pesach night that light comes although we may not see it. The more spiritually cleansed we are, the more we can tap into it. We should all merit to feel this tremendous potent light and tap into it according to our ability.

A Morphed Move

On the first night of Pesach we have numerous Mitzvos: Pesach, Matza, Marror, the four cups, Hallel and so on. Indeed, it is called חג המצות (Chag Hamatzos) which can also be read as חג המצות (Chag Hamitzvos), the Yom Tov of Mitzvos. This is in contrast to פסח של פסח where we have no special Mitzvos associated with the day. The Chidushai Harim¹² tells us this is because פסח של פסח is holier than the first day of Pesach and therefore doesn't need Mitzvos like the first day has. This is similar to that of לעתיד לבא, the future, where there will be no Mitzvos.¹³

Afterlife Actions

After people die, we recount their actions that really made a difference, that which lives on eternally. That is, the Torah they learned¹⁴ and taught, the chessed they performed, and so on,¹⁵ and as the Mishna informs us, when one departs from this world, he is accompanied by his Torah and Maasim Tovim,¹⁶ not his money.¹⁷ This is hinted to in the Parshiyos in Sefer Vayikra, which are in the order of אהרן-מות, קדושים, אמור, as it can be expounded that after one dies (אהרן-מות), we say holy things about him (קדושים אמור). Let us spend time on that which will spend time with us eternally.¹⁸

When the Alter of Kelm was on his deathbed, he requested that his clothes be laundered before being given to the poor. This is what was on his mind before he died.¹⁹

A Jew named Jack was getting old so he told his rabbi that he wants to hire him to deliver his eulogy when the time comes for him to leave this world. He asked how much he charges. The rabbi told him that it depends on the eulogy. For the best eulogy which is delivered with emotion and relating praises of the deceased, it cost \$5,000. That was too expensive for Jack so he asked for the lower level eulogy. The rabbi told him that cost \$2,500. "For that one, I say how beloved you were by the community and what a great husband and father you were, but I don't cry." Since that was also expensive for Jack he asked for the cheapest one. The rabbi replied that cost \$1,000, and for that one I tell the truth!

This story is a segue for the following question: Can one exaggerate the praises of one who died? The halacha states that it is forbidden to overly exaggerate the praises of a dead person.²⁰ However, to say a little more than is actually true is okay.²¹ The Taz²² is bothered by this. Why is there a difference between lying a little or a lot? Let us take an example of one who performs a mitzva, for instance Tzedaka, by giving a specific amount of money. If there were a need to give a bit more, he would surely do so. Therefore, it is considered as if he actually did.

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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 ztz"l. Rabbi Alt has written on numerous topics for various websites and publications and is the author of three books including the recently released Extraordinary Insights, in addition to being the host of The Fascinating Insights Podcast. His writings, some of which have been translated into Yiddish, Hebrew, German and French, inspire people across the spectrum of Jewish observance to live with the vibrancy and beauty of Torah. He lives with his wife and family in Kiryat Yearim (where the Aron was for 20 years [Shmuel 1, 7:1,2]) where he studies, writes and teaches. The author is passionate about teaching Jews of all levels of observance.

¹² מה, שביעי של פסח, s.v.

¹³ Nida 61b.

¹⁴ In a commentary attributed to the ר"ש משאנץ (one of the Rishonim) on the Sifra (Kedoshim, Chapter 9), it says on והקיצות, היא תשיחך, when you awake, it will converse with you (Mishlei 6:22) that at times one has gone through half a mesachta and then dies. When he is resurrected at Techias Hamaisim, the mesachta will say to him, בכאן הנחת ומכאן תסיים אותי, this is where you left me, and from here you should finish me (אוצר פלאות התורה), Bamidbar, p. 696).

¹⁵ This is hinted to in (Bamidbar 5:10) ואיש את קדשיו לו יהיה, the holy acts one did in his lifetime are what truly belongs to him.

¹⁶ To propel us to accomplish what really matters, we should ask ourselves what people would say about us if we were to die now. What would they say at our funeral? Is it something we would be proud of or not? As the saying goes, "Fear not death, but rather un-lived life."

¹⁷ Avos 6:9. An allusion is found in the word מת, as its initials are the first letters for תורה and מעשים טובים.

¹⁸ The story is told of a dictator who ordered a citizen to come to his compound. The subject, knowing that he could be executed at a moment's notice, decided to get himself a good advocate. He went to those he was close to throughout his life—those with whom he had partied. They told him that although they were friends, they were not willing to go with him, since the dictator could kill them too. Then he went to those he didn't feel as close to, but decided to ask anyway. They said they would walk him to the compound, but not go all the way in to face the dictator. Then he went to those he wasn't close to at all, but since he was desperate, he decided to ask them. They said they would walk

him all the way and advocate on his behalf so that nothing bad would occur. This is what happened and he was saved. The same thing applies to life. That which many of us pursue—money—doesn't go with us beyond death. Then after we die, there are friends and family who walk with us until the grave. Then there is that which we might not have felt so close to—Torah and Maasim Tovim. This is what will not only escort us all the way through, but can truly save us (see Chofetz Chaim, Nasso, 5:10).

¹⁹ See Rashi in Bamidbar 27:15, who says when Tzadikim leave this world, they put aside their own needs and busy themselves with the needs of the public.

²⁰ Yoreh Deah, 344:1. Otherwise he causes evil to himself and also to the one who passed away.

²¹ The Yerushalmi says that the one who died knows and hears his praises just like in a dream (see Shabbos 152b).

²² Yoreh Deah, s.v. רומסיפין. The Taz lived from 1586 until 1667. He was born to a family renowned for wealth as well as scholarship. He married the daughter of the Bach and they had six children, four of whom died young. After the death of his wife, the Taz married the widow of one of the sons of the Bach. Several of the Taz's halachic rulings, as well as some liturgical poems he composed, reflect the horror of that time (decrees of 1648-49) and depict the escape of the Jews of Ulick from Chmielnitzki's troops. In 1666, when conflicting reports of the impending coming of Moshiach reached Poland, he sent his son and nephew to investigate. They arrived in Turkey in Tamuz and were received warmly by Shabsai Tzvi who gave them a letter for the Taz with a present. Two months later Shabsai Tzvi—the false Moshiach—converted to Islam.