

STORY

The Bread In The Pesach Water

There was a Yid who was not a chossid, but he was a G-d fearing Jew and he put in tremendous effort in preparing for Pesach. He even prepared special barrels of water to use only for Pesach.

One year, towards the end of Pesach, he passed by a chassidishe shul and he saw the chassidim streaming in to greet their Rebbe, the holy Tchernobler Magid. He suddenly felt a strong yearning or curiosity, and he joined the crowd. When he passed the Rebbe and was offered some shirayim, he refused to take it since he was not a chossid and he was makpid not to eat anything out of his house. The Rebbe looked at him and remarked, "You have *chometz* in your home!". He was quite skeptical to hear such a thing, knowing that he had cleaned and searched every corner of his home, but he felt a bit shaken by the experience and decided to go home and search once again. After looking around for a while, he could not believe his eyes when he found a full piece of bread in the bottom of the barrel of special Pesachdik water they had prepared!

He ran back to the Rebbe and asked him 3 questions.

Number 1, if the Rebbe has Ruach Hakodesh, why didn't he tell him about the *chometz* before Pesach?

Secondly, how did this happen? He had done everything possible to get rid of *chometz* from his home!

And lastly, why did he deserve such a punishment from heaven, after having tried so hard and doing all the chumros?

The Rebbe responded to each question lovingly. My son, he said, I don't look normally into other people's business, but when you passed by me and refused to accept shirayim, I looked and saw that

you had *chometz* in your home.

How did it happen? Well, said the Rebbe, the goyim that you hired to clean

your home, were not happy by the way you were making such a fuss and constantly telling them off, and they decided to spite you and placed a piece of bread right into the water barrel.

And why do you deserve this, you ask? Well, said the Rebbe, the Torah is *deracheha darchei noam*, and a person needs to know that as much effort as he may put in, if he doesn't have Hashem's help, he cannot succeed. You put so much effort into cleaning that you didn't even daven to Hashem for help, you were so sure that you had gotten rid of every last crumb of *chometz*. But Hashem doesn't expect us to go crazy - and make others crazy. He wants us to just do our normal *hishtadlus*, but at the same time, to know that without His help we can never succeed.

It is the same in the struggle with the Yetzer Hara. We are not expected to be angels or to go crazy and not to use the internet at all, even for things we need--and even with a good filter. And we are not asked to isolate ourselves in caves so that we shouldn't see anything questionable (even though Hashem has isolated us all these days). Hashem just asks us to do our normal *hishtadlus* to remain holy. But at the same time, we have to know that **without His help we could never succeed.**

May we all be zoche to do the *hishtadlus* we need, and offer the teffilos that need to go with it, and may Hashem cleanse us all from the *chometz* of the Yetzer Hara so we can truly leave Mitzrayim to serve Him with a full heart.



**SMILE!
IT'S CONTAGIOUS**

Pesach Seder 2020: Kadesh, Urchatz, Karpas, Urchatz, Maggid, Urchatz, etc...



How does NASA organize their Passover Seders in space? *They planet.*



The 5th Question Passover 2020: How are we going to let Eliyahu Hanavi into our houses if he's been to everyone else's house?



What did the Teddy Bear say when he was offered the afikomen? *No thanks, I'm stuffed*



A British Jew is waiting in line to be knighted by the Queen. When his turn comes, he recites the only sentence he knows in a foreign language: *"Ma nishtana ha layla ha zeh mi kol ha laylot."* Puzzled, Her Majesty turns to her advisor and whispers, *"Why is this knight different from all other knights?"*



A notice from the Psychiatric Association: "Dear Citizens: During the quarantine time it is considered normal to talk to your walls, plants and pots. Kindly contact us only if they reply."



Jewish Irony 2020: Communal Passover Seder cancelled because of a plague.

Why were we worthy?

Why is this Shabbos called Shabbos Hagadol? Explains the *Me'or Einayim* that the Yidden were in a state of "*katnus*" (smallness) before leaving Mitzrayim. They were at the 49th level of Tumah. And the Satan asked Hashem, "Why are you doing miracles for them, the Jewish people are idol worshipers just like the Egyptians!". But Hashem didn't listen to the Satan and took us out from "*katnus*" (smallness) to "*gadlus*" (greatness), as the Pasuk says וַתִּרְבֵּי וַתִּגְדָּלֵי, and that's why it's called Shabbos Hagadol.

So the *Me'or Einayim* asks, but why indeed didn't Hashem listen to the Satan? After all, we were at the lowest level and entrenched in idol worship just like the Egyptians? So he answers that in the merit that the Yidden made a seder night before they left and they believed that they would leave Mitzrayim, this merit was enough to uplift them to the state of "*gadlus*" and merit all those miracles.

And the *Me'or Einayim* goes on to explain that this is what differentiates the "*nekudah*" (core) between a Jew and a non-Jew. Even when a Jew is on the same level as the non-Jew and is entrenched in the lowest sins, he still wants to leave Mitzrayim some day. He wants to leave and he believes that Hashem can and will take him out.

This is such an important lesson for us. No matter how low we may have fallen, if we want to leave and we believe that we WILL leave "Mitzrayim", Hashem will do miracles for us **no matter where we stand!**

Yom Tom Preparation

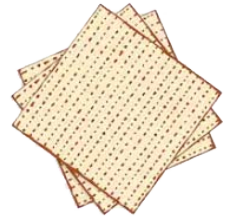
A balabusta spent several months learning how to cook. Until then, her husband would make the cholent, but on that erev Shabbos, diploma in hand, she told her husband she was ready to cook cholent herself. On Shabbos morning however, there was a bad odor coming from the kitchen.

The cholent had spoiled, and the food was inedible. Dismayed, she called her teacher on Motzei Shabbos to find out where she had gone wrong. Her teacher asked a few questions, but it seemed the pupil had done everything right. Then the teacher asked, "What did the pot look like, did you clean it beforehand?" She suddenly remembered that the pot she used had in it the remains of dinner from a few days earlier, together with strong dishwashing detergent.

Pesach is approaching and we all hope to achieve the "Freedom" from our personal Mitzrayims that this Yom Tov offers. But we must first clean the utensil — our heart, mind, and body — so we can receive the holiness of the yom tov. If the "utensil" isn't clean, the final product won't turn out right.

Hashem is on our side

The Yalkut Shimoni (226) relates that when Pharaoh was sent to Gehenom to be punished eternally, he was comforted in some small way when he saw that other wicked rulers who had persecuted the Jews would be joining him.



Hashem admonished Pharaoh for his reaction, telling him, "You are comforted!? I still am not comforted about what you did to My nation!"

Rabbi Henschel Leibowitz, zt"l, commented that within Hashem's reprimand of Pharaoh, we see a little of how far His love for us goes. The Jews had just been saved in a miraculous fashion, and their tormentors had been punished. Nevertheless, Hashem was not comforted from the pain He felt over the Jews' prior suffering. At the same moment that He miraculously saved His chosen nation — the greatest demonstration of His might and glory — Hashem still felt pain for the suffering we had endured.

But the lesson we take from this Midrash goes even further.

We know that Hashem knows better than we do what is best for us. This might make us mistakenly conclude that Hashem does not care how we feel. We might even imagine that He demands that we ignore whatever pain we suffer because everything is really for the best. Yet we see from this Midrash that this cannot be further from the truth. We did not end up suffering as slaves in Egypt by accident. Hashem made it happen, and He did it for very important reasons.

Though it might be difficult to understand, our enslavement was for our best. Nevertheless, Hashem

still felt our pain, and He continued feeling it while we were rejoicing over finally becoming free! This is but a minuscule demonstration of Hashem's great love for us.

Hashem's compassion is unlimited. He is never indifferent to our suffering, even if we really deserve much worse. He guides every detail of our lives with love and care. He is our biggest fan Who still believes in us and values us no matter what we have done. He is rooting for us to emerge victorious from the challenges He gave us so that we could reach greatness.

No one is more on our side than Hashem!

(Source: *The Battle of the Generation*)



**HASHEM
KNOWS BETTER
THAN WE DO
WHAT IS BEST
FOR US**

I am you and you are me

On Pesach we say *Bikesh Lavan La'akor es Hakol* - "Lavan tried to destroy everything" (even more than Pharaoh). The question is asked, where do we find in the scripture that Lavan tried to destroy everything? The holy sefer, the "*Ma'or Vashemesh*" writes that Lavan is symbolic of the evil inclination. When Yaakov first started working for Lavan, Lavan said to him *Ach atzmi uvisari ata* - "you are my own flesh and blood".

Lavan tried to include Yaakov in himself and thereby destroy him. The *Me'or Vashemesh* explains that the way the *Yetzer Hara* succeeds in totally destroying a person is by telling him "you are my own flesh and blood", in other words, he tells a person "I am not an outsider trying to get you to sin, rather I am you and you are me!".

A person falls the most when he says to himself "I can't change. This is who I am". NO! This is not who you are! You are the holy Yaakov. The *Yetzer Hara* is Lavan and he is telling you lies that this is who you are!

Learning to view these insidious desires in third person, not as yourself, is one of the most powerful tools in breaking free of the evil inclination. Recognize that he, and not you, i.e. the *yetzer hara*, is trying to *La'akor es Hakol* - "to destroy everything". When you separate yourself in your mind from these harmful desires and view them instead as an outside enemy, you have already made significant progress.



A Taste of Freedom

In the order of the Seder, we eat the matzah before the marmor (bitter herbs). Inasmuch as the marmor symbolizes the enslavement, would it not be proper that the marmor precede the matzah, which represents the liberation?

Herein lies an important concept. The Israelites had become so inured to being slaves that they did not recognize the bitterness of the condition. It was only after they had a taste of freedom that they realized how bitter it was to be a slave.

This can be applied directly to the *Yetzer Hara*. Very often, one is unaware of the brutality of his condition. It is only after one begins to break free that he can understand how dreadful his condition had been.

Is there a Shochet in the house?

In this week's *parshas Tzav*, we find the last *shalshelos* in the Torah (where the *baal koreh* reads a triple sound).

It appears on the word "*vayishchat* - and he slaughtered".

Why?

We find a *shalshelos* in the following 4 places in the Torah:

By the wife of Lot: "*Viyismama* - and she delayed"

By Eliezer: "*Vayomer* - and he said".

By Yosef: "*Vayima'en* - and he refused"

By Aharon: "*Vayishchat* - and he slaughtered".

The Torah is teaching us 4 ways to deal with the *Yetzer Hara*, in order:

"*Vayismama*" - Push him off. Tell him you'll give in to him later, but you're busy now.

"*Vayomer*" - Prayyyyyy. While he's gone, offer a sincere prayer to Hashem to be saved from him.

"*Vayima'en*" - REFUSE! HOLD baaaaaack! Hashem will help you.

"*Vayishchat*"! - You will succeed in SLAUGHTERING HIM! As we say at the end of the seder in Chad Gadya, after the *Yetzer Hara* slaughters the shochet, **Hashem will slaughter the Yetzer Hara!**

FOR THOSE WHO STRUGGLE WITH SHMIRAS EINAYIM. NOW IS HARDER THAN EVER!

Being confined to home without work, feeling anxious and stressed, as well as constantly checking our computers and phones, are breeding grounds for the Yetzer Hara.

Sign-Up to GYE's *Viral Chizuk* during these trying times by email and Whatsapp:

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Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Barditchov (1740-1810) was one of the great spiritual masters of his generation. One Passover, following an emotionally charged Seder, the Rebbe was told from heaven that Moshelele the water

carrier's Seder was superior to his. "This year," he was informed from above, "Hashem's most lovable Seder was that of the water-carrier of Barditchov."

The next day after services, the Rebbe's disciples went up to Moshelele the water carrier and asked him to come see the Rebbe. Moshelele came before the Rebbe, and he began to cry bitterly. He said, "Rebbe, I'll never do it again. I'm so sorry; I don't know what came over me." The poor man was devastated. The Rebbe said, "Listen, my dear Jew, don't worry so much; just tell us what you did last night."

The "problem" is that on Passover you can't drink whiskey. So Moshelele had a tremendous idea: He'll stay up the whole night before Passover and drink an amount of whisky that would keep him "high" for eight days straight, throughout the entire Passover holiday. This Moshelele did: When the night before Passover arrived he drank and drank, until the minute when you must stop eating Chametz (leaven) on the morning before Passover. When the clock struck twenty minutes after nine, he took his last "L'chayim" and he was out cold.

Seder night arrived. His wife came to wake him and said, "Moshelele, it's really not fair. Every Jewish home has a Seder. We have little children, and we are the only ones who don't have a Seder." Moshelele gazed at the Rebbe of Barditchov and continued relating his tale: "By then, did I regret that I drank so much the night before! Did I regret it! I would have done anything not to be drunk. But I couldn't help it. So I said to my wife: 'Please wake me up in an hour. I just can't get it together yet.'

My wife kept waking me every hour, and then every half-hour. Then, suddenly, she came to me and said, 'Moshelele, in twenty minutes the Seder night is gone and the children are all sleeping. Shame on you. You are a disgraceful father and husband!' "Gevald! I was so devastated," Moshelele told the Rebbe. "Here, my children are so precious and I am such a lousy alcoholic father, I didn't even give them a Seder. I realized how low I have fallen, how my addiction destroyed my life and my relationships, how I sold my soul to the devil of alcohol. So, with my last strength I got out

of bed and sat down at the Seder table. I said to my wife, 'Please, call our holy children.'

"She called the children and I said to them, 'Please sit down very close to me, I have to talk to you. 'I want you to know, children, that I am so sorry that I drank. I am so sorry that I am a drunkard. If my drinking can make me not have a Seder with you, then it's not worth it.' I said to my children, 'I swear to you, that I'll never drink again in my life. But, right now, it's Seder night, so let me just tell you the Passover story in a nutshell.'"

Moshelele said to the Rebbe, "You know, I was still drunk, and I barely know how to read Hebrew. But, I tried my best. I said, 'Children, I want you to know that Hashem created heaven and earth in seven days. Then Adam and Eve ate from the Tree and were thrown out of Paradise. Since then everything went downhill: There was a flood, there was a tower of Babel - that was as much as I knew. Then came Abraham and Sarah. They began fixing the world again. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel and Leah and their twelve holy sons. Then Pharaoh made slaves out of us, and tonight, Hashem took us out from Egypt."

"My Sweet children, now we are also in exile. And I want you to know that the same Hashem who took us out from Egypt is still alive and present and very soon He will liberate us from this exile too."

"I turned to Hashem, and said: 'Father in heaven, thank you so much for taking us out of Egypt. And I beg you, sweetest father, please take us out of our present exile very soon! Rebbe, I'm so sorry. I couldn't say anything more because I was still drunk."

"I Took the Matzah, Maror and Charoses situated on the table and ate it. I filled four cups and drunk them one after another, I turned over and I fell asleep again."

The holy master Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Barditchov was crying bitter tears. He said to his disciples, "Did you hear that? Did you hear that? I wish that one time in my life I should be able to communicate Yiddishkeit (the Jewish spirit) to my children in the way Moshelele the water carrier gave it over Seder night. I wish that one time in my life I should converse with Hashem like Moshelele did during his Seder."

As low as we may have fallen the whole year around, on the Seder night Hashem shines a great light down to the lowest places. If we are determined never to "drink again" and our hearts are broken, Hashem will surely take us out of Mitzrayim and rejoice with us as He did 3,000 years ago!