

Shabbat Hagadol 2024



The Raven

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December.
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow.
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before.
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating.
"Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger, hesitating then no longer,

"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore.
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering,
fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before.
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice.
Let me see, then, what thence is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In that stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed
he.
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no
craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore.
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only.
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown
before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store.
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster.
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore'."

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door.
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking.
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing.
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core.
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining.
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen
censer.
Swung by Seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath
sent thee.
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore.
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

**“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”**

**“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked,
upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart and take thy form from off my door!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”**

**And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is sitting.
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door.
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the
floor.
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor.
Shall be lifted—nevermore!**

Edgar Allan Poe¹

Midnight in the Garden of Delight

**Below I a supply the footnotes and sources for building my meditation
on the midnight moment of the seder.**

**The kabbalah makes this the high point (along with Shmini Azeret
night) of the hebrew calendar.**

¹<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=the+raven+edgar+allan+poe&mid=6ABC0C11B55F01D3B7126ABC0C11B55F01D3B712&FORM=VIRE>

I see this moment as the darkest moment of the night where things can only get better.

It is precisely here that Moshe (NOT Hashem) located the moment of revelation where Hashem smote the Egyptians and liberated the Jews.

I split the night into pre and post-midnight.

The way the Rebbe split the mitzva of eating Matza before and after midnight and the dual nature of matza as Lechem Oni and Matza of liberation.

I suggest that until midnight the Mitzva annually (beside seeing oneself as he or she is literally liberated from the bondage of ego) of sippur yetzias Mitzrayim involves speech (besides the 4 cups etc) - once the midnight hour comes and Hashem is revealed there is only silence in the face of the ultimate Presence.

I also suggest that this moment of "Gilui Schechinah" which is the midrashic interpretation of "uvemoreh gadol" in the Haggadah and midrash, requires "shtikah" as in God's response to Moshe when seeing R Akiva crucified and his skin flailed with iron rods.

This the gilui of Shechinah requires silence rather than speech , rather than logic and language which fails at this moment of revelation.

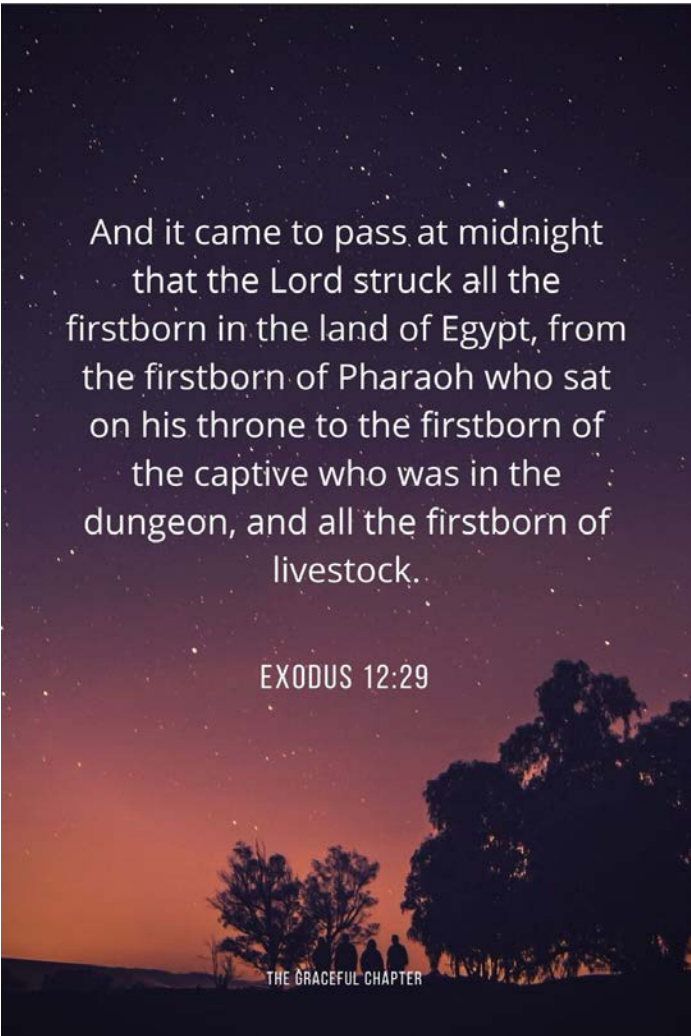
The response is beyond language both when we face theodicy and the inexplicable human suffering around us and also when we face the divine saving acts like yetzias mitzrayim.

Both the dark night of the soul and the night of miracle of exodus demand shtikah.



[WhatsApp Ptt 2024-04-21 at 11.11.36 AM.ogg](#)

SOURCES



And it came to pass at midnight
that the Lord struck all the
firstborn in the land of Egypt, from
the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat
on his throne to the firstborn of
the captive who was in the
dungeon, and all the firstborn of
livestock.

EXODUS 12:29

THE GRACEFUL CHAPTER

וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ ה' כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵי בְּאֶרֶץ
 מִצְרַיִם מִבְּכֹר פְּרֹעֹה הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־כִּסְאוֹ עַד בְּכוֹר
 הַשֶּׁבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית הַבּוֹר וְכֹל בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה:

In the middle of the night יהוה struck down all the [male] first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle.

RASHI

□ כְּחֻצַת הַלַּיְלָה □ — AT MIDNIGHT. This means כְּחֻצַת הַלַּיְלָה — when the night is divided;⁷ that is, at the exact midpoint of the night. ⁸ „כְּעֹלֹת” — The word כְּחֻצוֹת is a verb form, having the same structure as the word כְּעֹלֹת in the phrase, “as the offering was ascending”;⁸ ⁹ „בְּחֵרוֹת אַפָּם בָּנוּ” — and as the word בְּחֵרוֹת in the phrase, “when their anger was burning against us.”⁹ וְהוּא פְּשוּטוֹ — This is its simple meaning, לְיֹשְׁבֵי עַל אִתְּנִיּוֹ — which fits in with its context; שֶׁאֵין חֻצוֹת שֶׁם דָּבָר שֶׁל חֻצֵי — for חֻצוֹת is not a noun meaning “half.”

□ — But our Rabbis have interpreted it כְּמוֹ בְּחֻצֵי הַלַּיְלָה — as if it were “at approximately midnight.”¹⁰ וְאָמְרוּ שֶׁאָמַר מֹשֶׁה „כְּחֻצוֹת” — They state that Moses said “at approximately midnight,” או לְפָנָיו או לְאַחֲרָיו — either before or after it — שֶׁמִּשְׁמַע סְמוּךְ לוֹ — which means “close to it” — וְלֹא אָמַר „כְּחֻצוֹת” — and he did not say “at midnight,” — שֶׁמֶא יִטְעוּ אֲצַטְגִּינִי — lest Pharaoh’s astrologers err in their calculation of the precise midpoint of the night, פְּרֹעֹה —

Maor Vashemesh

ובזה מבואר פירוש רש"י: כחצות הלילה -
 כהחלק הלילה, כלומר, כמו העת שיש התחלקות
 בלילות של כל השנה, באותו העת בלילה הזאת
 לא תהיה התחלקות - שאני יוצא בתוך מצרים
 וישלטו הגבורות במצרים כמו בחצי הלילה
 הראשונה. וגמר אומר שאין חצות שם דבר,
 פירוש, שכאן אין חצות פירושו שתחלק הלילה
 לחצאין, שבלילה זו לא תהיה התחלקות, רק
 'כחצות' פירושו: כמו עת שהלילה מתחלקת
 בלילות אחרות - באותו הלילה ילקו המצרים
 בבכוריהם אותו העת, וד"ל.

Mechilta deRabbi Yishmael :Tractate Pischa, Chapter 13

(שמות יב, כט) [וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה, וַיִּי הַכָּה כָּל
 בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, מִבְּכֹר פְּרֹעָה הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל
 כֶּסֶא, עַד בְּכוֹר הַשָּׂבִי אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית הַבּוֹר, וְכֹל
 בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה."] "וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה", יוֹצְרוֹ חֲלָקוֹ.
 לְמָה נֶאֱמַר? לְפִי שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: (שמות יא, ד) "וַיֹּאמֶר
 מֹשֶׁה: כֹּה אָמַר יי: כַּחֲצֹת הַלַּיְלָה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ
 מִצְרַיִם." שְׂאֵי אֶפְשֶׁר לְבָשֶׁר וְדָם לְעַמֵּד עַל חֲצִי
 שְׁלֵלִיָּה, אֵלָּא כֵן, יוֹצְרוֹ חֲלָקוֹ.

(Exodus 12:29) "And it was in the middle of the night": Its Creator divided it.
 What is the intent of this? It is written (Ibid. 11:4) "And Moses said (to
 Pharaoh): Thus said the L-rd: When the night is divided (i.e., at midnight) I

shall go out into the midst of Egypt." Now is it possible for flesh and blood to ascertain the middle of the night? It must be, then, that its Creator divided it.

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּן בֵּיתְרָה אָמַר: הַיּוֹדֵעַ שְׁעוֹתָיו וְעוֹנוֹתָיו,
הוּא חֲלָקוֹ.

R. Yehudah b. Betheira says: He who knows its hours and its times — He divided it.

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אָמַר: נֶאֱמַר כֹּן 'לַיְלָה', וְנֶאֱמַר לְהֶלֶן
'לַיְלָה', מֵה לְהֶלֶן עַד חֲצוֹת, אִף כֹּן עַד חֲצוֹת.

R. Eliezer says: It is written here "And it was in the middle of the night," and elsewhere (Genesis 14:15) "And they 'divided' against them at night." Just as here the plague did not begin until the middle of the night, there, too, (their attack) occurred in the middle of the night.

"וַיִּי הַכָּה כָּל בְּכוֹרִים". שׁוֹמֵעַ אֲנִי, עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ אוֹ
עַל יְדֵי שְׁלִיחַ! תִּלְמַד לֹמַר (שְׁמוֹת יב, יב) "וְהִכִּיתִי
כָּל בְּכוֹרִים", לֹא עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי הַשְּׁלִיחַ.

"And the Lord smote every first-born": I might think through an angel or through an emissary. It is, therefore, written (Ibid. 12:12) "and I shall smite every first-born, etc." — not through an angel and not through an emissary.

Hagadda

וַיּוֹצֵאֲנוּ יְיָ מִמִּצְרַיִם. לֹא עַל-יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ, וְלֹא עַל-יְדֵי
 שָׂרָף, וְלֹא עַל-יְדֵי שְׁלִיחַ, אֲלֵא הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
 בְּכַבּוֹדוֹ וּבְעֲצָמוֹ. שְׁנֵאמַר: וְעַבְרַתִּי בְּאֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם
 בְּלִילָהּ הַזֶּה, וְהִפִּיתִי כָּל-בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם
 וְעַד-בְּהֵמָה, וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים, אֲנִי
 יְיָ.

“AND THE LORD BROUGHT US OUT OF EGYPT” –
 Not through an angel,
 not through a seraph,
 not through any emissary.
 No, it was the Holy One, His glory, His own presence.
 As it is said:
 “I shall pass through the land of Egypt on that night;
 I shall kill every firstborn son in the land of Egypt,
 man and beast,
 and I shall pass judgment on all the gods of Egypt:
 I am the LORD.”

וּבְמִוֶּרְא גָדֹל. זו גְּלוֹי שְׁכִינָה, כְּמָה שְׁנֵאמַר: או
 הַנִּסָּה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לְקַחַת לוֹ גּוֹי מִקְרֵב גּוֹי בְּמִסַּת
 בְּאִתָּת וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבְיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזִרְוֹעַ
 גְּטוּיָה וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדוֹלִים כָּל אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה לָכֶם יְיָ
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ.

“IN AN AWESOME HAPPENING” –
 This refers to the revelation of His Presence,
 as it is said:
 “Has any god ever tried to come
 and take a nation out of the midst of another,
 with trials

and with signs
and wonders,
in war
and with a strong hand,
with an outstretched arm,
inspiring *great awe*,
as the LORD your God has done all this
for you in Egypt,
before your eyes?"

Sifre Devarim 301

ובמורא גדול. זו גלוי שכינה, כמ"ש או הנסה
א-להים לבוא לקחת לו גוי מקרב גוי, במסות
באותות ובמופתים ובמלחמה וביד חזקה ובזרוע
נטויה ובמוראים גדולים, ככל אשר עשה לכם ה'
א-להיכם במצרים לעיניך.

"And with great fear": This is *revelation* of the Shechinah, as it is written.

"Or has a god ever done miracles to come and take for himself a nation with trials, with signs, and with wonders, and with war, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and *with great fears, before your eyes?*"

(Devarim 4:34)



What Time Should the Seder Finish?

Rabbi Daniel Roselaar writes:²

For many years I was always careful to eat the afikoman by chatzot [midnight, 1am with daylight savings] on Seder night, and if possible I regarded it as a hiddur [extra-meritorious practice] to drink the fourth of the cups by that time also. I believed that I was conducting a halachically optimal Seder and this also ensured that I didn't fall asleep in shul on yom tov morning (which could have been embarrassing for a shul rabbi). But then my children started complaining that all the friends had much more exciting Sedarim and finished far later than we did. I thought it was super-frum to finish the Seder early but they felt as if they were the religious lightweights amongst all their friends. So I decided to reinvestigate the sugya [subject] in order to decide whether or not my stringencies were justified.

The Talmud (Pesachim 120b) records a Tannaitic dispute regarding the latest time for eating the Korban Pesach [Passover sacrifice]. According to Rav

² <https://www.torahmusings.com/2010/03/what-time-should-seder-finish/>

Elazar ben Azaria it must be consumed by (halachic) midnight whereas Rav Akiva maintains that it can be consumed until dawn. The Talmud also notes that though it is an independent mitzvah, there is an association between the Korban Pesach and matzah, and thus the timeframe that applies to the former also applies to the latter.[1] Accordingly, Rav Elazar ben Azaria requires one to eat matzah by chatzot whereas Rav Akiva holds that it may be eaten any time until the morning.

Unsurprisingly, the Rishonim are divided about how to rule in practice. Tosafot (Megillah 21a) conclude that since there are several anonymous mishnayot that reflect the view of Rav Elazar ben Azaria, both the Korban Pesach and the matzah must be consumed by midnight.[2] On the other hand, other Rishonim (including Baal HaIttur, Maggid Mishneh and probably the Rif) maintain that since there is a general rule that the halacha follows Rav Akiva when he is in dispute with another sage, these mitzvot can be fulfilled until daybreak. The Rosh and others cite both possibilities but conclude that because the mitzvot under consideration are Biblical requirements a strict approach should be followed.

Rambam (Korban Pesach 8:15) rules that mid'orayta [biblically] the halacha is in accordance with , but the sages restricted the timeframe so that the Korban Pesach be eaten by midnight, in order that one not err and mistakenly eat the sacrifice after daybreak (thereby not only missing the mitzvah but also incurring the punishment of karet). However, as far as matzah is concerned no such restriction was instituted and the mitzvah of matzah can be fulfilled any time up till daybreak (Chametz Umatzah 6:1).[3]

The Shulchan Aruch (477:1) adopts a stringent view and rules that even the afikoman must be eaten by midnight. The Mishnah Berurah (Biur Halacha) advises that if one has not eaten the first kezayit [olive size] of matzah by this time one should still make sure to eat it (in case the halacha is in accordance with Rav Akiva) but that the brachah of *Al achilat matzaha* [blessing on the mitzvah of matzah] should not be recited (in case the halacha is in accordance with Rav Elazar ben Azaria).

The Shulchan Aruch also cites the view of the Ran that Hallel should also be recited before midnight. The Gra notes that this is in order that the fourth cup can be drunk before this time, and this view reflects the ruling of the Terumat Hadeshen (1:137) that the four cups reflect the four expressions of redemption which are in turn associated with the matzah as a symbol of

freedom. Rav Soloveitchik further suggested that Hallel can be regarded as a part of the mitzvah of recounting the story of the Exodus and that mitzvah itself only applies when the mitzvot of matzah and marror are applicable (Siach HaGrid p. 31).

Clearly then, the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch indicates that one should be stringent. I did however come across various sources that mentioned that neither the Chatam Sofer nor the Netziv were strict in this regard. Furthermore, it occurred to me that the very inclusion of the story with the five rabbis in Bnei Brak, where they continued discussing Yetziat Mitzrayim until well after midnight, suggests that perhaps the author of the Haggadah cited it as a proof that the halacha is in accordance with Rav Akiva.

Perhaps I should have shared my findings with my children and taught them why I wish to finish the Seder early. But instead I reached a compromise. On the first evening we make sure to eat the afikoman by midnight, and if it looks like time is on our side we try to drink the fourth cup by that time also. On the second night (when the Seder usually commences rather later as well) we rely on the lenient opinions and only make sure that we fulfil motzi-matzah and marror by midnight^[4] and we try to continue discussing Yetziat Mitzrayim until we are overcome by tiredness.

[1] However, whilst the Korban Pesach may not be eaten after a certain time, the matzah may be eaten after this time. Regarding matzah the timeframe means that it must also be eaten before this time.

[2] Tosafot add that even the afikoman should be eaten by this time since that is the real matzat mitzvah.

[3] Rav Chayim Brisker noted a certain paradox in the Rambam's ruling. Since the Rambam holds that the afikoman commemorates the Korban Pesach the afikoman must be eaten by midnight as a function of Korban Pesach even though the mitzvah of matzah could be fulfilled later. Accordingly, maybe one who delayed his Seder until after midnight could still fulfil the mitzvah of matzah (according to the Rambam) but should not eat the afikoman at the end of the meal!

[4] Some of us also employ the suggestion of the Avnei Nezer and eat a kezayit of matzah just before chatzot as well as afikoman at the end of the meal.

[I would just add that according to the Avnei Nezer, cited above in note 4, if your seder is running late you can do the following: Eat a kezayis (olive size) of matzah before midnight/1 am with an explicit condition that if the halakhah is that you have to eat afikoman before midnight, then this is the afikoman. But if the halakhah is that you can eat it all night, then this is not the afikoman and you will eat it later. Then you continue with your seder and eat a kezayis at the end which is either the afikoman (if the halakhah is that you can eat it

all night) or not (if the halakhah is that you must eat it before midnight, in which case you already did). The Brisker Rav (quoted in Haggadah Shel Pesach Mi-Beis Ha-Levi, p. 210) said that you don't even need to make the explicit condition because either way, you eat the kezayis of matzah before midnight and then again at the end. If the later one kezayis no good then it does not undermine the earlier kezayis. – Gil]



Rav Dovid Silberberg writes:³

The *Haggadah* famously teaches that the *mitzva* of eating *matza* on Pesach commemorates the fact that “the dough of our forefathers did not have a chance to ferment before the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them.” Indeed, the Torah tells in Parashat Bo (12:33-34) that the Egyptians pressured *Benei Yisrael* to leave quickly, and thus *Benei Yisrael* were forced to carry their unfermented dough with them as they left Egypt. It seems that the people wanted to wait for the dough to rise so they could bake proper bread in preparation for their journey, but they were rushed out of Egypt before this could happen. Therefore, they left with dough that had not yet risen.

³ <https://etzion.org.il/en/holidays/pesach/salt-2018-pesach>

Interestingly, however, the *Haggadah* cites a different verse as the source of this reason for eating *matza*. Several verses later (12:37-39), we read that *Benei Yisrael* left Egypt, journeying from the city of Raamses – where they had apparently assembled for their departure – towards Sukkot. At that time, the Torah relates, “they baked the dough which they had brought from Egypt as unleavened cakes, rather than leaven, because they were rushed from Egypt and could not delay...” This verse tells *Benei Yisrael* baked the dough before it had an opportunity to rise, thus resulting in what we call *matza*, as opposed to proper bread. The earlier verse told us that *Benei Yisrael* were forced to leave Egypt before their dough had a chance to rise and be baked; this verse tells us that as they left, they baked it in its unleavened form. The *Haggadah* cites the latter verse as its source, seemingly because it maintained that the *mitzva* of *matza* commemorates not the unleavened condition of the dough brought out of Egypt, but rather the final product that the people ate after their departure when they baked their dough before it rose.

However, this later verse itself requires explanation. It is understandable that the people were forced to leave Egypt before the dough had an opportunity to ferment, such that bread could not be baked at that time. But why were they compelled to later bake this dough as *matza*? It is clear from the text that the dough was baked after the people’s departure from Egypt – “They baked the dough **which they had brought from Egypt.**” At that point, quite obviously, the Egyptians were not rushing them. Why, then, did the people bake the dough as *matza*, rather than wait and allow it to rise so they could bake proper bread?

This question led the Ramban to an entirely different reading of the verse. He explained that the reason why *Benei Yisrael* baked and ate *matzot* had nothing at all to do with their having been hastily driven from Egypt. Already before the night of the Exodus, *Benei Yisrael* were given the command to refrain from *chametz* on Pesach (Shemot 12:15). Different views exist as to whether this prohibition applied already in the year of the Exodus, and, if so, for how long. (See Pesachim 96a; Rav Menachem Kasher, in *Haggadah Sheleima*, pp. 195-201, cites five different opinions on this subject.) The Ramban writes explicitly that *Benei Yisrael* were forbidden from eating *chametz* on the day of the Exodus, and it is for this reason that they baked their dough before it rose. When the Torah attributes the baking of *matzot* to the fact that they were hastily chased from Egypt, the Ramban explains, it gives the reason why they needed to bake while journeying. The haste from Egypt is not what forced them to bake *matza* instead of bread, but what forced them to bake during travel, as they did not have time to prepare anything before they left.

The *Haggadah*, however, clearly did not follow this interpretation. As mentioned, the *Haggadah* cites this verse as the source for its comment that we eat *matza* on Pesach to recall that “the dough of our forefathers did not have a chance to ferment before the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them.” For the authors of the *Haggadah*, this verse, which tells of *Benei Yisrael* baking *matzot* after departing Egypt, indicates that *matzot* were prepared because the people’s dough did not have a chance to rise. This seems very difficult to understand, for, as noted, the *matzot* were baked after *Benei Yisrael*’s departure from Egypt, when they were no longer being rushed.

Above, we noted the difficulty that arises from the verse that tells of *Benei Yisrael* baking *matzot* after departing Egypt. We read that after *Benei Yisrael* journeyed from Egypt at the time of the Exodus, “they baked the dough which they had brought from Egypt as unleavened cakes, rather than leaven, because they were rushed from Egypt and could not delay...” (Shemot 12:39). The *Haggadah* famously explains this verse to mean that “the dough of our forefathers did not have a chance to ferment before the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them.” In other words, *Benei Yisrael* baked *matza* because the dough did not have a chance to rise before the redemption, as they were rushed out of Egypt. However, this interpretation seems untenable, as the Torah here speaks of *Benei Yisrael* baking the *matzot* after leaving Egypt, when, seemingly, they were no longer under any sort of pressure. Why, then, were they forced to bake *matzot*? Why did they not wait for the dough to rise, so they could prepare proper bread? (Yesterday, we saw the Ramban’s interpretation of this verse, which quite clearly differs from the *Haggadah*’s understanding. Our question is how to understand this verse according to the *Haggadah*’s reading.)

A novel explanation of this verse, and of the aforementioned passage from the *Haggadah*, is offered by Seforno. He boldly asserts that when the *Haggadah* speaks of the moment when “the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them,” it refers not to the plague of the firstborn, which prompted the Egyptians to drive *Benei Yisrael* from their country, but to a later event. The Torah tells that *Benei Yisrael*’s first stop after leaving Egypt was a place called Sukkot: “The Israelites journeyed from Ramses to Sukkot” (12:37). Two verses later, the Torah tells of *Benei Yisrael* baking their dough, and it appears that this took place in Sukkot, where they encamped and thus for the first time had an opportunity to prepare food. Seforno contends that it was in Sukkot when God, in the *Haggadah*’s words, “appeared to them and

redeemed them.” Later in Sefer Shemot (13:20-21), the Torah tells of *Benei Yisrael*’s departure from Sukkot, describing how they were led by God Himself, who had a pillar of cloud guide the nation by day and a pillar of fire by night. These miraculous phenomena, which constituted a sort of revelation of God, began at Sukkot. Seforno thus points to this event as the “revelation” spoke of by the *Haggadah*. He explains that, as *Chazal* relate in the *Mekhilta* (cited by Rashi to 12:37), *Benei Yisrael* miraculously journeyed from Egypt to Sukkot in a very brief period of time, such that the dough still hadn’t risen by their arrival in Sukkot. Then, at Sukkot, God revealed Himself in the form of a pillar of cloud, and *Benei Yisrael* were compelled at that moment to bake their dough. As the dough had not yet risen, they baked *matzot*. (This approach was also taken by Abarbanel, in his *Zevach Pesach* commentary to the *Haggadah*.)

Seforno does not explain why God’s “revelation” at Sukkot necessitated that the people immediately bake rather than wait for the dough to rise. We might speculate that the appearance of the cloud signified to the people that they needed to travel. The Torah tells in Sefer Bamidbar (9:15-23) that the rise of the cloud announced to *Benei Yisrael* that they needed to journey, and it is thus likely that when the cloud appeared for the first time, in Sukkot, it was understood as making this announcement. Seeing that it was time to leave, the people quickly baked their dough – despite its having not yet risen – so they would have food for the journey ahead.

The flaw in Seforno’s creative reading of this verse is that it does not account for the emphasis on the nation’s having been rushed out of Egypt. This factor resulted in the dough’s being unleavened, but it is not the reason why the people baked the dough in Sukkot as *matzot*. The need to bake without delay was due to an entirely different factor – God’s unexpected revelation in Sukkot – which the verse does not even mention. The verse instead stresses the point that the people were rushed out of Egypt, which does not explain the need to bake the dough later in its unleavened form. Hence, this interpretation seems somewhat difficult to accept.

Now we will continue our discussion about the difficult verse in Sefer Shemot that tells of *Benei Yisrael* baking their unleavened dough after leaving Egypt at the time of the Exodus: “They baked the dough which they had brought from Egypt as unleavened cakes, rather than leaven, because they were rushed from Egypt and could not delay...” (Shemot 12:39). The verse seems to say that *Benei Yisrael* were compelled to bake “*ugot matzot*” – unleavened products – because they were hastily driven from Egypt. Indeed, the *Haggadah* cites this verse as the source for its statement that we eat *matza* on Pesach because “the dough of our forefathers did not have a

chance to ferment before the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them.” The clear indication is that *Benei Yisrael* were compelled to bake *matzot* because the Egyptians frantically drove them from their land, such that their dough did not have time to rise to allow the baking of regular, leavened bread. As we noted, however, the verse clearly states that *Benei Yisrael* baked the dough only after they left Egypt, once they were no longer any under any sort of pressure. While we understand why the dough they brought from Egypt was unleavened, why did they then need to bake *matzot*, rather than waiting for the dough to rise before baking it?

The Ritva, in his commentary to the *Haggadah*, implicitly answers this question by offering a startling reading of this verse. He writes that *Benei Yisrael* did, in fact, bake leavened bread after leaving Egypt. In his view, the Torah in this verse means that the dough which *Benei Yisrael* had taken from Egypt in an unleavened condition was now baked as *chametz*. We eat *matza* to commemorate the unleavened state of the dough at the time of *Benei Yisrael's* departure, not what they produced from that dough when they finally had an opportunity to bake it – because they in fact baked ordinary bread, and not *matza*, as the dough leavened by the time *Benei Yisrael* got around to baking. (It should be noted that the Ritva says that the dough became *chametz* by the time *Benei Yisrael* arrived in “Refidim.” This is certainly an error, as *Benei Yisrael* arrived in Refidim much later, after crossing the sea and journeying through the wilderness. Presumably, the Ritva meant Sukkot, the place where, as implied in the verse, the dough was baked.)

The obvious difficulty that arises is how to read the verse according to the Ritva’s theory. The verse states that the people “baked the dough which they had taken from Egypt, unleavened cakes [*ugot matzot*].” If the Torah tells that the people baked “*ugot matzot*,” how can the Ritva claim that they baked ordinary bread?

Apparently (as explained in Rav Mordechai Dermer’s *Mor Deror – Moadim*, p. 22), the Ritva understood the expression “*ugot matzot*” as referring not to baked *matzot*, but rather to unleavened dough. Although the term “*ugot*” is commonly used to refer to baked products (as in Bereishit 18:6), there is at least one source which suggests that it can also be used to refer to raw batter. The Gemara in Masekhet Yoma (75a) teaches that the manna that fell in the wilderness came in different forms for different groups of people. Whereas the especially righteous received manna in the form of readymade food, others received the manna in the form of “*ugot*,” as mentioned by the Torah in Sefer Bamidbar (11:8). Rashi explains that the word “*ugot*” means “dough,” and thus indicates that this group received manna in the form of dough that needed baking. It appears that the Ritva

similarly understood the term “*ugot matzot*” in Sefer Shemot as referring to the unleavened state of the dough at the time of the Exodus, rather than the food prepared by *Benei Yisrael* with that dough.

The difficulty with the Ritva’s reading, however, is that it fails to account for the Torah’s elaborate emphasis in this verse on the fact that *Benei Yisrael*’s dough was unleavened at the time they left Egypt. This point was already made several verses earlier (12:34), where we read that because the Egyptians pressured the people to leave, they ended up carrying their dough before it rose. It seems unnecessary to repeat this point again several verses later when telling that *Benei Yisrael* baked this dough. If, as the Ritva suggests, the dough was baked normally, producing ordinary bread, why would the Torah emphasize that the dough was unleavened at the time the people left Egypt? This point does not seem worthy of such accentuation if in the end the dough was used to produce ordinary bread.

As we’ve discussed in our last several installments, the Torah in Sefer Shemot (12:33-39) tells how *Benei Yisrael* did not have time to prepare bread when they were driven from Egypt, and they thus journeyed out of the country with raw dough, which had not even risen. Later, after their departure, they baked the dough as *matza*.

Targum Yonatan ben Uziel (12:39) presents a surprising description of *Benei Yisrael*’s baking, stating that they placed the dough on their heads and had it bake in the sun. Earlier (12:34), the Torah writes that *Benei Yisrael* carried their dough, and then adds, “*misharotam tzerurot be-simlotam al shikhmam,*” which seems to mean that utensils with the dough were carried on the people’s shoulders. (As noted by Ibn Ezra, the word “*misharot*” refers to some sort of storage utensil, as in the verse, “*Barukh tan’akha u-mish’artekha*” – Devarim 28:5.) However, *Targum Yonatan* follows the Midrashic reading cited by Rashi (from the *Mekhilta*), explaining that in addition to their raw dough, *Benei Yisrael* also carried with them their leftover *matza* and *marror* from the previous night. They were commanded to eat the meat of their sacrifice the previous night together with *matza* and *marror* (12:8), and according to the Midrash, *Benei Yisrael* carried the leftover *matza* and *marror* with them when they left Egypt. (The Midrash interprets the word “*misharotam*” to mean “their leftovers.”) *Targum Yonatan* thus explains that *Benei Yisrael* carried their raw dough on their heads and carried the leftover *matza* and *marror* on their shoulders.

This description is also found in one of the special *Yotzrot* hymns which some communities have the custom to recite on Shabbat Ha-gadol (the

Shabbat immediately preceding Pesach). The hymn that begins, "Yotze'ei Chipazon" describes how the unleavened dough was placed on the people's heads as they left Egypt, and then "shemesh shezaftah ve-akhluha matza" – "the sun baked it and they ate it as *matzot*."

A variation of this theory appears in the commentary of Malbim, who suggests that *Benei Yisrael* placed the dough in open containers which were carried on their shoulders, thus exposing the dough to the searing desert sun so it would bake.

This notion, that the people baked *matzot* in the sun as they traveled, could perhaps provide an answer to the question we've addressed in our last several installments. The Torah appears to attribute the baking of unleavened *matza* at the time of the Exodus to the fact that the Egyptians rushed *Benei Yisrael* from Egypt, such that the people's dough did not have the opportunity to rise: "They baked the dough which they had brought from Egypt as unleavened cakes, rather than leaven, because they were rushed from Egypt and could not delay..." (Shemot 12:39). The Ramban, as we saw, offers a much different interpretation of the verse, but the *Haggadah* clearly understood this verse to mean that *Benei Yisrael* baked *matzot* because of the pressure imposed by the Egyptians. This seems very difficult to understand, given the fact that, as the Torah clearly indicates, the dough was baked after *Benei Yisrael* left Egypt, at which point, presumably, they were no longer in any sort of rush.

According to *Tagum Yonatan's* theory, however, we could perhaps explain that indeed, the baking of *matzot* resulted from the Egyptians' rushing *Benei Yisrael* from the country. As *Benei Yisrael* did not have the opportunity to prepare provisions before they traveled, and they did know where, when or how they would be able to bake the dough they had kneaded before being driven from Egypt, they had no choice but to bake the dough in the sun during their journey. Since the dough never had a chance to rise, due to the haste with which *Benei Yisrael* were driven from Egypt, it ended up becoming unleavened *matza*, rather than ordinary bread. Thus, it was, in fact, a direct result of the Egyptians' rushing *Benei Yisrael* that they ended up baking *matzot*.

Above, we noted the description presented in *Targum Yonatan Ben Uziel* (Shemot 12:39) of *Benei Yisrael's* baking of *matza* when they left Egypt, telling us that the dough was baked in the sun. Apparently, *Targum Yonatan* found it difficult to imagine *Benei Yisrael* having the materials needed to bake normally, and so he wrote that they simply placed the raw dough on their heads as they traveled so it would bake in the sun.

Several later writers noted the seeming irony that arises from this description, in light of the fact that, at least according to some opinions, one does not fulfill the *mitzva* of *matza* with *matza* that was baked in the sun. Several sources indicate an association between the properties of *matza* and those of bread with respect to the obligation of *challa* – the requirement to separate a piece of dough when baking and give it to a *kohen*. The Torah in Sefer Devarim (16:3) refers to *matza* as “*lechem*” (“bread”), a term that is also used in reference to the *challa* obligation (“*be-okhlehem mi-lechem ha-aretz*” – Bamidbar 15:19). The Gemara in Masekhet Pesachim (37a) cites the view of Rabbi Yochanan that bread which is baked in the sun is not subject to the obligation of *challa*, as it does not formally qualify as “*lechem*,” and this is the view codified as *Halakha* by the *Shulchan Arukh* (Y.D. 329:6). Accordingly, the *Shiltei Gibborim* (Pesachim 11b in the Rif), as cited by *Chok Yaakov* (468:8), rules that *matza* which was baked in the sun is not suitable for fulfilling the obligation to eat *matza* on the night of Pesach. This ruling seems ironic in light of *Targum Yonatan’s* description of *Benei Yisrael* baking *matza* in the sun after leaving Egypt. It appears from the *Haggadah* that the obligation to eat *matza* specifically commemorates the *matza* eaten by *Benei Yisrael* at the time of the Exodus, as the *Haggadah* explains that we eat *matza* “because the dough of our forefathers did not have a chance to ferment before the King of kings appeared to them and redeemed them.” We might have thus naturally expected *Halakha* to allow fulfilling the *mitzva* with the same kind of *matza* that this *mitzva* commemorates.

A number of writers suggested that we may reconcile *Targum Yonatan’s* account with the disqualification of sun-baked *matza* on the basis of Rabbeinu Tam’s ruling cited by several *Rishonim* regarding *challa*.

Rabbeinu Tam was of the opinion that if one prepared an ordinarily thick batter, the kind of batter normally made in the standard baking process, then it requires *challa* even if the dough is baked in the sun. The exemption stated by the Gemara, according to Rabbeinu Tam, applied only to loose batter, which was baked in the sun, due to its unusual consistency, but not to regular dough which is precisely the same as the kind of dough used when baking in an oven. (This is also the view of Maharam Chalawa in his commentary to Pesachim.) Although *Halakha* does not accept this opinion (see *Shulchan Arukh*, Y.D. 329:3), it perhaps accounts for the tradition expressed by *Targum Yonatan*, that *Benei Yisrael* baked their dough in the sun at the time of the Exodus. (This theory is proposed by, among others, Rav Akiva Menachem Sofer, in his *Ikvei Sofer* annotation to his grandfather’s *Hitorerut Teshuva*, 236.)

The *Shulchan Arukh* (O.C. 477:1) famously rules that one should ensure (“*yehei zahir*”) to eat the *afikoman* – the piece of *matza* eaten at the end of the *seder* in commemoration of the *pesach* sacrifice – before *chatzot* (halakhic midnight). The background to this ruling is the Gemara’s discussion in Masekhet Pesachim (120b) regarding the consumption of the *pesach* sacrifice. Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya maintained that the *mitzva* to eat the meat of the sacrifice may be fulfilled only until *chatzot*, based on the command, “*Ve-akhelu et ha-basar ba-layla ha-zeh*” – “They shall eat the meat on this night” (Shemot 12:8). The word “*ba-layla*” is also used several verses later (12:12) in reference to the plague of the firstborn, which took place at *chatzot* (“*Va-yehi ba-chatzi ha-layla*” – Shemot 12:29), leading Rabbi Elazar to conclude that the meat of the sacrifice must be eaten by *chatzot*. Rabbi Akiva disagreed, claiming that the command to eat the *pesach* sacrifice “on this night” is intended to teach that it may not be eaten the following day. According to Rabbi Akiva, then, the obligation to eat the *korban pesach* may be fulfilled throughout the night. The Gemara cites Rava as commenting that this debate affects the observance of Pesach even nowadays when we eat *afikoman* in commemoration of the *korban pesach*. According to Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, Rava states, one must ensure to eat the *afikoman* before *chatzot*.

The *Shulchan Arukh*’s ruling – “One should be careful to eat it before *chatzot*” – reflects the view of some *Rishonim* that Rabbi Elazar’s position is accepted as *Halakha*. Although we generally follow Rabbi Akiva’s rulings in his disputes with individual colleagues, several passages in the Mishna and Gemara appear to presume Rabbi Elazar’s view, suggesting that his is the accepted position. Others, however, followed Rabbi Akiva’s view. (See *Bei’ur Halakha* who summarizes the various opinions among the *Rishonim* on the matter.) In light of the different views that exist, the *Shulchan Arukh* rules that one should endeavor to eat the *afikoman* before *chatzot*.

Due to the length of most traditional *sedarim*, this requirement often poses a problem, as many people prolong the reading of *maggid* with extensive discussion, and then enjoy an elaborate, multicourse meal. Rav Avraham Borenstein of Sochatchov, in his *Avnei Neizer* (O.C. 381), offered a famous, controversial solution to this problem, one which resulted in an entire literature of debate and discussion. The *Avnei Neizer*’s proposal is based upon his novel approach to explain Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya’s position. As we noted, Rabbi Elazar understood that the Torah’s command to eat the *pesach* sacrifice “on this night” refers to midnight, the time when the plague of the firstborn struck the Egyptians. However, the *Avnei Neizer* asks, if this is true, then why does Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya not require eating the *pesach* sacrifice precisely

at *chatzot*? Why does he consider *chatzot* – the moment of the plague of the firstborn – as the deadline for fulfilling the *mitzva*, rather than the time when the *mitzva* must be fulfilled?

The answer to this question, the *Avnei Neizer's* contends, is found in the well-known rule of "*ein maftirin achar ha-pesach afikoman*," which is established by the Mishna (Pesachim 119b) and forbids eating after eating the *korban pesach*. The Gemara indicates that the purpose of this prohibition is to ensure that the taste of the sacrifice remains in one's mouth after the *seder*. The *Avnei Neizer* explains that according to Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, the Torah could not require eating the *korban pesach* at the precise moment of *chatzot*, as this would be impractical, and so it instead required partaking of the sacrifice sometime before *chatzot* and then having the taste in one's mouth until *chatzot*. The taste in the mouth in a sense marks the continuation of the act of eating, such that one can be considered as though he eats the sacrifice at the precise moment of *chatzot*.

This theory led the *Avnei Neizer* to the conclusion that according to Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, the prohibition against eating after partaking of the *korban pesach* extends only until the moment of *chatzot*. After *chatzot*, it is entirely permissible to eat. This is relevant nowadays, as well, in light of the fact that *Halakha* forbids eating after eating the *afikoman*, just as it was forbidden to eat after partaking of the *korban pesach* (*Shulchan Arukh*, O.C. 478:1). According to the view requiring eating the *afikoman* before *chatzot*, it would be permissible to eat other food after *chatzot*.

On this basis, the *Avnei Neizer* proposed an ingenious solution for those who fear they will be unable to eat the *afikoman* before *chatzot*.

Several minutes before *chatzot*, they should interrupt their meal, take a piece of *matza*, and stipulate that this piece should be considered the *afikoman* according to the view that the *afikoman* must be eaten before *chatzot*.

After eating the *matza*, they should wait until after *chatzot* and then resume their meal. Then, after the meal, they should eat an additional piece of *matza*, stipulating that it should be considered the *afikoman* according to Rabbi Akiva's position, allowing eating the *afikoman* even after *chatzot*. This way, the *mitzva* is certainly fulfilled.

Since the deadline for eating the *afikoman* is also the final time when eating after the *afikoman* is forbidden, one can satisfy the stringent view of Rabbi Elazar by eating the *afikoman* just before *chatzot* and then resuming the meal after *chatzot*.

Rabbi Akiva's view is then satisfied by partaking of the *afikoman* after the meal.



When on the night of the 15th must the Matzah be eaten?

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When on the night of the 15th must the Matzah be eaten?



Not before nightfall/Tzeis Hakochavim:^[1] One does not fulfill the Mitzvah of eating Matzah prior to nightfall [i.e. Tzeis Hakochavim].^[2] [Thus, if he ate Matzah prior to nightfall, even during Bein Hashamshos, he must repeat and eat a Kezayis of Matzah at night. Nevertheless, if he ate the Matzah during Bein Hashamshos, it is questionable whether a blessing is to be recited.]^[3] Thus, in such a case one should be Yotzei with the blessing of another person.^[4]

Before midnight:^[5] One is required to fulfill the Mitzvah of eating Matzah prior to midnight.^[6] [If one eats the Matzah only after midnight, some Poskim^[7] rule he does not fulfill his obligation and has thus lost the Mitzvah. Other Poskim^[8] rule he can nevertheless fulfill the Biblical Mitzvah up until Alos Hashachar. Other Poskim^[9] rule that this matter is left in question, and hence one is to be stringent like both opinions, and eat Matzah without a blessing. Practically, if one did not yet eat the Matzah and it is already after midnight, he is to eat the Matzah without the blessing of “Al Achilas Matzah.”^[10] If it is already close to midnight and one did not yet eat the Matzah, he is to skip from wherever he is holding and perform Motzi Matzah before midnight. The same applies to a person who awoke from a sleep moments before midnight that he should say Kadesh and immediately afterwards recite Motzi Matzah.^[11] This applies for both the first and second Seder.^[12]

[1] Admur 472:2; Levush 472:1; Terumas Hadeshen 137; Tosafus Pesachim 99b in name of Mahariy Krubil; Rosh 10:2; Shulchan Gavoa 472:3; P”M 472 M”Z 1; Kaf Hachaim 472:7

[2] The reason: The eating of Matzah is connected [Hekesh] to the eating of the Pesach lamb, as the verse [Bamidbar 9:11] states “Al Matzos Umerorim Yochluhu,” and by the Pesach lamb it states [Shemos 12:8] “Veachlu Es Habasar Balayla Haze” from which we learn it must be eaten by actual night. Now, since the eating of the Pesach lamb can only be fulfilled at night so too the eating of Matzah. [Admur 472:2; Levush 472:1; Terumas Hadeshen 137; Tosafus Pesachim 99b in name of Mahariy Krubil; Rosh 10:2]

[3] P”M 472 M”Z 1

[4] Kaf Hachaim 472:7

[5] Admur 458:2 “One is required to eat the Matzah prior to midnight, just like the law regarding the Karban Pesach which may only be eaten until midnight.”; Admur 639:20 “And one is to beware to eat in the Sukkan prior to midnight, just as is required regarding eating Matzah”; 477:6 regarding Afikoman; See 472:2 regarding the Hekesh being used to obligate eating Matzah after Tzeis Hakochavim [Vetzaruch Iyun why the end time was not mentioned in this Hekesh, and why we make the Hekesh for the end time only regarding Matzah and not the four cups, also Tzaruch Iyun why in 475:20-23 no mention of Chatzos was made; See here: http://shulchanharav.com:8080/text.asp?index=128712&arc_id=138425]; Michaber 477:1 and Beis Yosef 477 regarding Afikoman; Degul Merivava 477; Shaarei Teshuvah 477:1; M”B 477:6 “One must be very careful”; Biur Halacha 477; Kaf Hachaim 475:64; 477; Piskeiy Teshuvos 477:4

[6] The reason: As just like the Karban Pesach may only be eaten until midnight, so too the Matzah may only be eaten until midnight, as the verse states Al Matzos Umerorim Yochluhu, thus teaching us that the eating of Matzah is connected, and follows similar laws, to the Pesach [Admur 458:2] This follows the opinion of Rebbe Elazar Ben Azaria, brought next.

[7] Reb Elazar Ben Azaria in Pesachim 120b; Zevachim 57b; Tosafus Zevachim ibid; Megillah 21a; Piskeiy Tosafus Pesachim 334; Zevachim 33; Rabbeinu Chananel in Arvei Pesachim; Semag in name of Riy; Mordechai end of Pesachim; Rabbeinu Yerucham 5:4; Conclusion of Or Zarua; Hapardes 9:16-26 “It is forbidden to eat Matzah after midnight”; Kol Bo 90 in name of Riy; See Biur Halacha 477:1 “Viyihe Zahir”

[8] Rebbe Akiva in Pesachim and Zevachim ibid; Rambam Karban Pesach 8:15; Chametz Umatzah 6; Rif [brought in Mishkanos Yaakov 139] Rav Hamaggid; Baal Haitur; Or Zarua in name of Rav Yaakov of Krubil; Kol Bo 90 in name of Rav Shmuel Shkli; See Biur Halacha 477:1 “Viyihe Zahir”

[9] Rosh; Rashba; Ran end of Megillah chapter 2; Rokeiach

[10] Degul Merivava 477; Shaarei Teshuvah 477:1; P”M 477 M”Z 1; Derech Hachaim; Tov Ayin 38:87; Ikarei Hadat 19:14; Misgeres Hashulchan 119:11; Aruch Hashulchan 477:5; M”B 477:6; Biur Halacha ibid; Kaf Hachaim 473:16; 475:64; Beis Halevi 1:34; Nitei Gavriel 91:1; Piskeiy Teshuvos ibid

Other opinions: Some Poskim rule that the final ruling of the Talmud is like Rebbe Akiva that the Mitzvah of Matzah applies throughout the night, until Alos Hashachar. [Mishkanos Yaakov 139; Or Yisrael 475; Or Sameiach 6:1; Sdei Chemed Mareches Chametz Umatzah 14:11; See Nitei Gavriel ibid footnote 1] According to all, the blessing may no longer be said once Alos Hashachar has arrived. [Hisorerus Teshuvah 269; Piskeiy Teshuvos ibid]

[11] Degul Merivava 477; Shaarei Teshuvah ibid; M”B 477:6; Ashel Avraham Butchach 477; Kaf Hachaim 477:10

[12] Admur 481:1 “There is no difference between the first and second night in any other matter”; Nitei Gavriel 91:5

Other opinions: Some Poskim defend the practice of those who recite a blessing over the Matzah even after midday. [Darkei Chaim Veshalom 605; See Nitei Gavriel ibid footnote 6]



Peninei Halakha

31. The Time for Eating the Matza, Maror, and Afikoman

The matza and **maror**⁴ must be eaten by midnight (the midpoint of the night, regardless of the time on the clock), and **le-khatila**, even the **afikoman** should be eaten before midnight. One who did not manage to eat the matza and **maror** before midnight should eat them after midnight without a **berakha**.

The basis for this law lies in a dispute between two Sages of the Mishna, R. Elazar b. Azarya and R. Akiva. According to R. Elazar b. Azarya, the Paschal sacrifice could be eaten only until midnight, and no later, because it was at midnight that the firstborns of Egypt were struck down, and the Egyptians began frantically trying to send the Israelites out of Egypt. According to R. Akiva, the matza may be eaten all night, until dawn, because it was at this time that the Israelites hurried to leave Egypt (**Pesahim** 120b).

From a spiritual perspective, we must explain that the offering and eating of the Paschal sacrifice revealed the unique quality of Israel, and this therefore constituted a preparation for the redemption. Accordingly, the meat of

⁴ <https://ph.yhb.org.il/en/04-16-31/>

the **korban Pesah** is eaten each year until the time of the redemption's onset. The question is: Which phase of redemption determines the time to stop eating the Paschal sacrifice? According to R. Elazar b. Azarya, the redemption started at midnight, when the firstborns of Egypt were struck down, for it was then that Egyptians' power was broken and they could no longer enslave us. Therefore, the Paschal sacrifice is eaten until midnight. However, according to R. Akiva, the complete redemption did not arrive until morning, when we went forth to freedom. Therefore, the entire night is a preparation for redemption, and it follows that one may eat the meat of the **korban Pesah** all night.

Let us now return to the **halakha**. The time for eating the Paschal sacrifice also determines the time for eating matza and **maror**, because matza and **maror** were eaten together with the Paschal sacrifice, as it is stated, "They shall eat it with **matzot** and **merorim**" (Bamidbar 9:11). It follows that the time for eating matza is the same as the time for eating the Paschal sacrifice. The **afikoman**, which is eaten in commemoration of the **korban Pesah**, must also be eaten at a time that is appropriate for eating the Paschal sacrifice.

Leading Rishonim disagree about which opinion to follow in practice. According to Rambam and **Itur**, the **halakha** follows R. Akiva, because, as a rule, we follow R. Akiva whenever he takes issue with one of his contemporaries. Thus, the **korban Pesah** may be eaten throughout the entire night, and by extension so can matza, **maror**, and the **afikoman**. On the other hand, Rabbeinu Ḥananel and Rosh maintain that because the Mishna, in several places, states without dissent that the time for eating the **korban Pesah** is until midnight, we may conclude that R. Yehuda Ha-Nasi, who compiled the Mishna, rules that on this issue the **halakha** follows R. Elazar b. Azarya.

Since this issue is subject to dispute, a **kezayit** of matza must be eaten before midnight, because according to those who maintain that the Paschal sacrifice may be eaten until midnight, eating it after midnight fails to fulfill the Torah commandment. Since the destruction of the Temple, **maror** has been a rabbinic enactment, and although we generally follow the lenient opinion with regard to rabbinic laws, **maror** must nevertheless be eaten before midnight since we recite a **berakha** over it. If circumstances prevented one from eating the matza and **maror** before midnight, he should eat them after midnight, in order to fulfill the mitzva according to R. Akiva's opinion. However, he should not recite the **berakhot** of "**al akhilat matza**" and "**al akhilat maror**" over them so as to avoid reciting a **berakha** in vain ("**le-vatala**") according to the opinion of R. Elazar b. Azarya (MB 477:6; **Kaf Ha-ḥayim** 10 **ad loc.**).

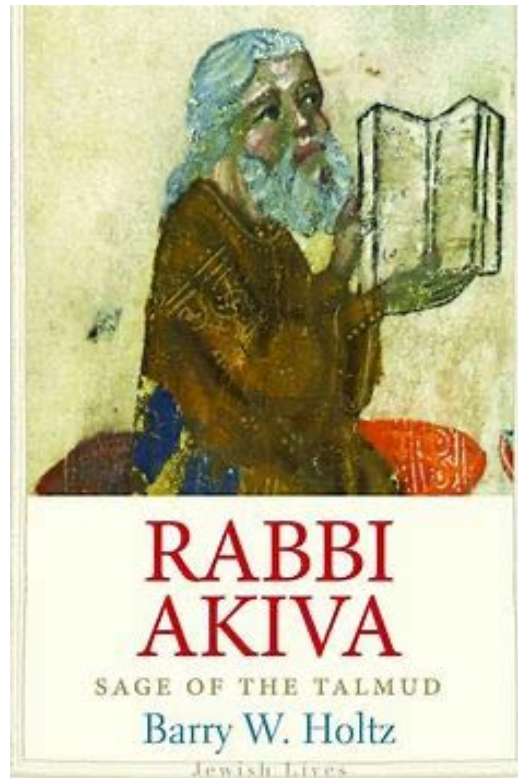
Regarding the **afikoman** as well, **le-khatila** one must take care to eat it before midnight, in order to fulfill the mitzva according to all **poskim** (SA

477:1). Similarly, **Hallel** should also be completed before midnight **le-khaṭila** because it is connected to the telling of the Exodus story, which must be told at a time appropriate for eating matza (Rema **ad loc.**).

There were Torah scholars who, **le-khaṭila**, ate the **afikoman** after midnight, reasoning that the **afikoman** is a rabbinic enactment and we may thus rely upon the lenient opinion that it may be eaten after midnight. However, with regard to the initial **kezayit** of matza, which is a Torah commandment, and the **maror**, over which we recite a **berakha**, one may not adopt the lenient position and eat them before midnight. [\[29\]](#)

On three occasions, the Mishna quotes the opinion of R. Elazar b. Azarya anonymously and without dissent – **Berakhot** 2a, **Pesahim** 120b, and **Zevahim** 56b – and R. Akiva’s opinion anonymously and without dissent only once, in **Megilla** 20b. Rosh (**Pesahim** 10:38) wonders how that single **mishna** in **Megilla** could outweigh the three **mishnayot** that follow the opinion of R. Elazar b. Azarya. Consequently, Rosh says that although R. Akiva maintains that on the Torah level, the mitzva of eating the **korban Pesah** applies all night, he concurs that, on the rabbinic level, one must finish eating it before midnight. Therefore, Rosh states that one must eat the **afikoman** before midnight, and this is the ruling of SA 477:1. However, it is said that ḥatam Sofer, Netziv, and other great scholars were not scrupulous about finishing the **afikoman** before midnight. Since this is a dispute about a matter of rabbinic law, one may be lenient. Even SA might mean that one should finish the **afikoman** before midnight **le-khaṭila**, but it is not an absolute requirement. **Responsa Avnei Nezer** §381 recommends that one who is in the middle of his meal and sees that midnight is approaching should eat a **kezayit** of matza while reclining and make the following stipulation: if the **halakha** follows the opinion of R. Elazar b. Azarya, this **kezayit** should be the **afikoman**, but if the **halakha** follows R. Akiva, the **kezayit** that will be eaten after the meal (at its normal place in the meal) should be the **afikoman**. This stipulation is based on a novel interpretation: the requirement that the taste of the matza remains in one’s mouth only applies during the time of the mitzva, which according to R. Elazar b. Azarya ends at midnight. Thus, according to R. Elazar b. Azarya, one would be able to continue eating after midnight, when the time for the mitzva of **afikoman** ends.

However, one certainly must ensure that he eats a **kezayit** of matza before midnight, since eating a **kezayit** of matza is a Torah commandment, and hence one must be stringent. One must even be stringent vis-à-vis the mitzva of **maror**, since he cannot recite the **berakha** on it after midnight, as explained in MB 477:6 and BHL **ad loc.** **Responsa Mishkenot Yaakov** §139 and other Aḥaronim attempt to prove that the **halakha** follows Rambam. Nonetheless, the law still remains unclear, so one should not recite the **berakhot** on matza or **maror** after midnight and must likewise take care to fulfill the Torah obligation of matza before midnight. MB further states that if one begins late and does not have time to complete the recitation of the Hagada before midnight, he should eat the matza and **maror**, with **berakhot**, right after **kiddush**, and then recite the Hagada. **Kaf Ha-ḥayim** 477:10 echoes this idea, but rules that one may not recite the **Birkat Ha-ge’ula** (just before the second cup) after midnight, since we are lenient in a case of uncertainty regarding **berakhot**. See **ḥazon Ovadia** vol. 2 p. 166, which agrees with MB and rules that one may recite **Birkat Ha-ge’ula** after midnight. Regarding the concluding **berakha** of **Hallel**, MB 477:7 and SHT 6 **ad loc.** cite **ḥok Yaakov** that one may recite it after midnight.



Moshe Rabbeinu in R Akiva's Class

הלך וישב בסוף שמונה עשרה שורות לא
 היה יודע מהן או [מרין] תשש כחו וכיון
 שהגיעו לדבר אמרו לו תלמידיו מניין לך
 אמ[ר] להן הלכה למשה מסיני נתיישרה
 [דעתו]. [4]

He (Moses) sat behind eighteen rows, and he didn't
 understand what they were saying. He felt weak. When
 they came to a certain point, the students said to him
 (Rabbi Akiva): "How do you know this?" He said to
 them: "It is a halakha given to Moses at Sinai." He
 (Moses) found tranquility of mind. [5]

A prominent Talmudic association of Moshe and R. Akiva is the story in *Menahot* 29b in which God anachronistically sends Moshe to one of R. Akiva's classes. The Gemara there also relates how Moshe witnessed the brutal murder of R. Akiva:

[Moshe] said before Him, "Master of the Universe, you have shown me his Torah, now show me his reward." [God] said to him, "Turn around and see what is behind you." [Moshe] turned around and saw that people were weighing the flesh from [R. Akiva's body] in the butcher's meat market in order to sell it. [Moshe] said before him, "Master of the Universe! This is Torah and this is its reward?!" [God] said to him, "Quiet! This is part of My greater plan to which you are not privy."

Menahot 29b.

The simple explanation for God's reply "such is My decree" is, as the prophet Yeshayahu ([55:8](#)) teaches, that God's thoughts are unlike those of man, and, indeed, are incomprehensible to man. In his *Tzon Kodashim*, Rabbi Avraham Hayyim Schorr suggests that this can be understood based on the idea of the Sages that God's original decree was to create a world of total justice, but that was changed when He recognized that such a world could not exist. Thus, the righteous Sages like Rabbi Akiva and his companions are not judged with mercy like ordinary people but are treated according to the letter of the law, according to God's original decree of creation.



The Value of Silence

Rabbi Daniel Reich writes:⁵

— A number of years ago, I remember hearing a profoundly insightful commentary related to this week's parsha from Rav Meir Goldwicht Shlit"a (parenthetically, Rabbi Goldwicht was the officiating Rabbi who married us). I'd like to share that idea here:

The deaths of Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, who offered a foreign fire which Hashem had not commanded, appear in the Torah four times. Certainly, the Torah wishes us to contemplate this episode and to analyze it in-depth and try to understand its relevance. Perhaps, one way is by looking at it from the vantage point of their father Aharon.

Aharon's reaction to the deaths of his sons, the Torah tells us, is silence: "vayidom Aharon" (Vayikra 10:3). The midrash (quoted in the Torah Shleimah) explains: "The Torah didn't say 'vayishtok Aharon,' which would indicate refraining from speaking and crying, but 'vayidom Aharon,' indicating emotional calm and spiritual tranquility. How are we to understand Aharon's spiritual tranquility despite the deaths of two of his sons?

Immediately after the Torah informs us of Aharon's reaction, the Torah says that Hashem taught Aharon the law that a kohein may not drink wine when he comes to perform the service in the temple. Rashi explains that this was Aharon's reward for his silence. In other words, according to Rashi, God gave Aharon a special connection with Him for his reaction to the death by speaking to Aharon alone and not, as He usually did, by speaking to Moshe and Aharon together or to Moshe alone. Almost as a form of comfort to Aharon.

The question that arises, however, is that the parsha which Hashem teaches Aharon basically comes to warn the kohen doing the Avodah that if he comes to the Beit HaMikdash after drinking wine, he will die! Is this the comfort that one gives to a person who has just lost two sons? "Be careful or else you and your other two sons will die too"? What is the meaning behind Rashi's comment that this parsha was Aharon's comfort for his silence?

These questions lead us to the topic of shtikah (silence). Shtikah generally indicates one of two things: 1) Fear, such as when a person who is yelled at remains silent; or 2) acquiescence, as in shtikah k'hoda'ah, when one person claims money from another and the latter is silent, essentially admitting that he owes the claimant money. Aharon teaches us that shtikah (silence) can indicate something else as well.

⁵ <https://www.sdjewishworld.com/2024/04/03/parsha-shemini-the-value-of-silence/>

We can understand this third type of shtikah from the following gemara (Menachot 29b): When God showed Moshe the true greatness of R' Akiva, Moshe asked God, "If You have such a great person, why don't You give the Torah through him?" Hakadosh Baruch Hu responded, "Shtok, be silent!" Moshe continued, asking to see R' Akiva's reward for his Torah. God showed Moshe the markets of Rome, where R' Akiva's flesh was being weighed and sold. Moshe challenged, "This is the Torah and this is its reward?!" God again responded, "Shtok! This is what I have decided". What kind of response is "Shtok!?" How does that answer the question? Rather, God was teaching Moshe that there are things that one can understand only if one sees the entire picture. This can only be done when one is silent because when one speaks, one concentrates only on what he's saying, ignoring the surroundings. Shtikah allows one to evaluate his surroundings and to see the entire picture.

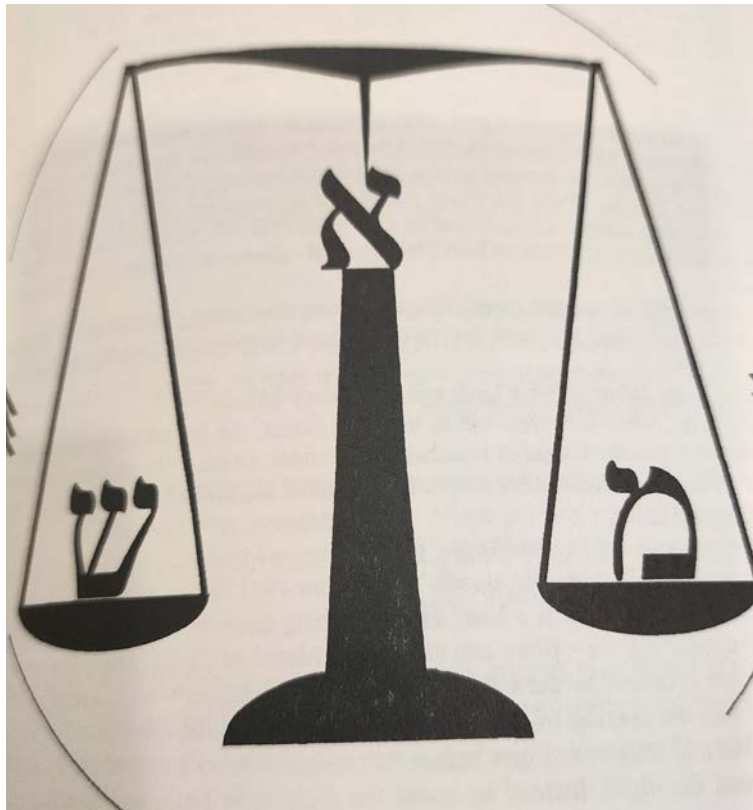
R' Akiva teaches us this lesson in Pirkei Avot as well: "Seyag lachochmah, shtikah – Silence leads one to wisdom" instead of Silence is a guarantee for wisdom because through shtikah one is able to perceive the entire picture.

This was the greatness of Aharon's silence. His silence doesn't represent emotional coldness, for he certainly cried over the loss of his two sons. Rather, Aharon had the ma'alah (positive trait) of shtikah, which let him see the entire picture, enabling him to accept the deaths of his sons with tranquility and love for Hashem. This is essentially a halacha in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim §222), which rules that one must have a tranquil frame of mind and full desire when blessing Hashem for the bad just as one has when blessing Him for the good because when bad things happen to those who serve Hashem, they accept it with love.

That is perhaps why the commandment not to drink wine comes right after this story. Because Aharon was being told by God not to let loose of his incredible ability to come close to God through deep concentration like silence. Wine, especially during the service of Hashem can lead a person to lose this grip of true reality. This commandment is not a warning that Aharon may die too, but rather an emphasis of Aharon's intimacy with Hashem. We now understand how this parsha served as a source of comfort to Aharon.

The concept of shtikah relates to all of us. No matter how often we become angry, rightfully, or otherwise, if we possess the skill of shtikah, remaining silent until we have calmed down, we will always be happy in hindsight that we did not react immediately. Shtikah has the power to prevent machloket, to prevent anger, and to allow one to see the greater picture. The greatness of shtikah allows us to consider the whole situation and to weigh our reaction with the proper balance rather than reacting impulsively. Through shtikah, we

arrive at wisdom. Chochmah, which allows us to see the whole picture, leads to elevate our lives, individually and communally, to new heights.



Pesach – The Silence of the Lamb

Dafei Tang writes:⁶

Three Mother Letters

Mem ך is deep water, the wisdom, that which is too deep to be uttered in speech, i.e. silence.

⁶ <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/pesach-the-silence-of-the-lamb/>

Shin ך is hissing fire, the understanding, the beginning of sound from silence.

Alef א is air, the knowledge as expressed in speech.

Moses was drawn from water, received the mission from the burning bush (fire), but he was deficient in speech, with uncircumcised lips ([Ex 4:10](#)) until the giving of Torah at Mt Sinai (Zohar).

Speech in Exile

The speech was in exile until the Pesach night.

There are two types of blood that must be shed for Pesach: 1) that of the lamb which is for the household, or the House of Israel; 2) that of the circumcision of the foreskin of each male.

The lamb is called Pesach פֶּסַח, which can also mean Peh Sach פֶּה סָח, i.e. a speaking mouth.

Circumcision is called Milah מִילָה, which has the same gematria (85) as mouth Peh פֶּה and is cognate with speak מִלַּל.

The lamb was roasted on fire, and the circumcision is called "covenant of fire", for it hurts like a burning fire.

Speaking is the act through which one's thought is revealed; and circumcision is the act through which one's inner crown is revealed.

The gematria:

Circumcision מִילָה **85**
Pesach lamb פֶּסַח 148
233

233 is exactly the gematria of "It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover" - זְבַח-פֶּסַח הוּא לַיהוָה (Ex 12:27). This comes to teach us that Pesach is symbolized by the blood of the lamb and the foreskin.

Moses, being the prototype of Mashiach, had difficulty with speaking. Moses represented the primordial voice that couldn't be articulated in speech, and Aaron represented Moses' speech in bringing down the primordial voice to the people's level:

And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him in God's stead (Ex 4:16)

וְהָיָה אֲלֵהֶם; וְהָיָה הוּא יְהִי-לָךְ לִפֶּה, וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה-לוֹ לְאֵלֵהִים וְדִבַּר-הוּא לָךְ, אֶל-הָעָם; וְהָיָה הוּא יְהִי-לָךְ לִפֶּה, וְאַתָּה תִּהְיֶה-לוֹ לְאֵלֵהִים

In above verse, Aaron was called the Word דְבָר, and Moses was called God אֱלֹהִים, this is because Moses represented that which is transcendent, i.e. the voice, and Aaron represented that which is down to earth, i.e. the speech. This is the same concept of Mashiach, which is called Word of God, i.e. that which can't be seen is now seen, and that which is without form is now clothed in form.

Mashiach מְשִׁיחַ can also mean talk שִׁיחַ, which symbolizes the descent of the primordial voice into speech, as such Mashiach has the exact same gematria of the voice and the speech:

The voice 141 הקול
The speech 217 הדבור
358

Immediately after Pesach the Omer is counted by mouth, for Omer עֹמֶר to Word אָמַר is vessel to light (Ayin to Alef). The counting of the Omer by mouth continues for 49 days until Shavuot, the giving of Torah, which symbolizes the revelation of the primordial light in speech.

The Primordial Light

The primordial light was called forth on the first day:

And God said: 'Let there be light.'
And there was light. (Gen 1:2)

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, יְהִי אוֹר; וַיְהִי אוֹר

The primordial light is Mashiach, who is called the "Light of the World" אור העולם (John 8:12), the gematria of this phrase is 358, exactly the gematria of Mashiach משיח.

"Let there be light" יְהִי אוֹר has a gematria of 232, which is exactly the gematria of "Word of YHVH" דְבַר-יְהוָה. This term in this exact form appears in the Hebrew Bible exactly 173 times, alluding to the 173 words in the 10 commandments, which is also the gematria of the first three words of the 10 commandments: אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, I am the LORD your God (Ex 20:2). This was the moment when Moses' speech difficulty was healed (Zohar), i.e. the primordial light clothed in Torah.

The Silence of Speech

Cloth in Hebrew is מַלְבוּשׁ, the gematria is 378, the same gematria of Chasmal חֶשְׁמַל, a mystical word associated with Ezekiel's vision. The concept of Chasmal is light (Mashiach) clothed in a lower expression, as will be discussed below.

The model is now clear. First there was silence, for speech was in exile, the primordial light was concealed, until Moses came who was called "Ki Tov" כִּי-טוֹב, (Ex 2:2), in the same manner as the primordial light was so called (Gen 1:4).

Moses had a speech difficulty, for the light was too great to be contained in the vessel, hence the voice of Moses must be brought down through the speech of Aaron who was at a lower level.

The Pesach night is the birth of a nation with two types of blood: 1) the blood of the Pesach lamb for the redemption of the House of Israel at the collective level; 2) the blood of the foreskin for the circumcision of male, whether home born or stranger, at the individual level, prior to partaking of the Pesach lamb (Ex 12:48).

In other word, whosoever circumcised himself that night and entered into the house would be saved and called Israel, יִשְׂרָאֵל, the gematria is 541.

Astonishingly, this is exactly the sum of the “blood of the Pesach lamb” and the “blood of the foreskin”:

Blood of the Pesach lamb דם פסח 182
Blood of the foreskin דם ערלה 349
 541

On the same night, the exodus from Egypt took place, leading up to the giving of Torah at which time speech was redeemed from the exile.

This is the secret of the Hebrew word Chashmal, as it is written:

And I saw as the colour of Chashmal, as the appearance of fire round about enclosing it... (Ezekiel 1:27)

וַאֲרָא כְּעֵיִן חֲשָׁמַל, כְּמֵרְאָה-אֵשׁ בַּיִת-לֵה סָבִיב

The secret of Chashmal חֲשָׁמַל was revealed by Baal Shem Tov as a process involving three steps:

reading from right to left

חֲשָׁמַל		
3	2	1
מ	ל	ח
speak	circumcision	silence
44870	70	308

To explain:

1. The first two letters correspond to חֶשֶׁה, meaning silence, this is the concealment of the primordial light, being manifested as speech in exile.
2. The final two letters מְל literally means to circumcise, representing the blood of the Pesach night.

3. The final two letters can also mean "speak", as in מלל, and is repeated as such, representing the redemption after the Pesach night.

The gematria of these three steps is 448 (as in above table), which is exactly the gematria of King Mashiach מלך משיח. This comes to teach us that the secret of the Pesach lamb and of Chashmal is Mashiach.

To build on this model, we can develop step 3 further as follows: Instead of repeating the final two letters, another path is to inverse the first two letters which would now become שח, as in שיה, meaning to speak, or Mashiach משיח, also representing the redemption at and after Pesach.

reading from right to left

חשמל		
3	2	1
שח	מל	שח
speak	circumcision	silence
696318	70	308

The average number of the three stages is: $696 / 3 = 232$, which is exactly the gematria of "Let there be light" יהי אור, i.e. the primordial light.

696 is also the gematria of Atik Yomin עתיק יומין, meaning the Ancient of Days in Daniel's vision who sits on a throne (Daniel 7:9):

**I beheld till thrones were placed,
and one that was ancient of
days... (Daniel 7:9)**

תנה תניתי, עד די כרסון רמיו, ועתיק יומין

In Ezekiel's vision, the "likeness as the appearance of a man" also sits on a throne:

**...and upon the likeness of the
throne was a likeness as the
appearance of a man upon it
above (Ezekiel 1:27)**

ועל, דמות הכסא, דמות כמראה אדם עליו, מלמעלה

The eight Aramaic words quoted above in Daniel's vision have a gematria of 1823, which is exactly the gematria of the following prophecy about Mashiach:

יהי שמו, לעולם לפני-שמש, יבין שמו
May his name endure forever; may his name be continued as long as the sun... (Psalm 72:17)

It stands to reason that the form of man perceived in both Daniel and Ezekiel's vision is Mashiach.

The Silence of the Lamb

It is now evident that Mashiach was prototyped by the lamb that was slaughtered for Pesach, the lamb that opened not his mouth, i.e. the silence of the lamb:

לפני גזזיה נאלמה; ולא יפתח, פיו
He was oppressed, though he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; yea, he opened not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

"He was afflicted" נענה, this is Matzah (unleavened bread), which is called the bread of affliction מצות לחם עני (Deu 16:3), the gematria is 744, which is exactly the gematria of Yeshua Mashiach:

Yeshua ישוע 386
Mashiach משיח 358
 744

"He was oppressed" נגש והוא, by adding a definite article Hey, the gematria of הנגש becomes 358, exactly that of the Mashiach.

"He opened not his mouth" פיו ולא יפתח, has a gematria of 631, which is exactly the gematria of King of Israel מלך ישראל.

Silence – Circumcision – Speech

It is now evident that the coming of Mashiach involved three steps by Divine design:

1. **Silence** – this is why the identity of Mashiach had to be concealed prior to the Pesach night such that the lamb could be offered as the Korban Pesach, i.e. Passover offering.
2. **Circumcision** – this is the removing of the veil, i.e. the revelation of Mashiach as the Light of the World, in the similar manner when the foreskin (flesh) is removed, the crown is revealed. This is symbolized by the veil of the temple being rent in twin from the top to the bottom (Mat 27:51). The veil is interpreted as the flesh of Mashiach: “Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh” (Hebrew 10:20) would be rendered in Hebrew as בפְּרִקַת הַיָּא בְּשָׂרוֹ, the gematria is 1226. By tearing the veil in half: $1226 / 2 = 613$, which alludes to the 613 commandments of Torah as taught by Mashiach, to parallel the giving of Torah at Mt. Sinai.
3. **Speech** – this is the era when the good news is preached to the end of the world.

Astonishingly, the Hebrew word for “flesh” בְּשָׂר is of the same root as מְבַשֵּׂר “bringing a message”, i.e. the good news, commonly known as the gospel:

**How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him that bringeth
good tidings, that publisheth peace;
that bringeth good tidings of good,
that publisheth salvation; that saith
unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! (Isaiah
52:7)**

טוֹב-מְשַׁמֵּיעַ יְשׁוּעָה; אָמַר לְצִיּוֹן, מְלֶכֶךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ
מְשַׁמֵּיעַ שְׁלוֹם מִבְּשָׂר, מְשַׁמֵּיעַ שְׁלוֹם מִבְּשָׂר

The preaching of this good news is through the act of speaking, i.e. speech, after the Pesach night, at a lower level so that it can go to the end of the world:

Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (Psalm 19:4)

בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ, יָצָא קוֹם, וּבְקֶצֶה תִּבְל, מְלִיָּהֶם

The gematria of this verse is 1355, which is 5 x 271.

In Kabbalah, the "line" קו represents the descent of light into the world (tzimtzum), this is the exile of speech in silence preceding Pesach. This line is interpreted by Paul as sound (Roman 10:18), i.e. voice, קול, fittingly, to clarify that the "line" at the deeper level represents the primordial light.



"It Came to Pass at Midnight" poem in the *Hagaddah Comites Latentes* 69, Simmel ben Moses, Vienna, 1756, ff.

25v-26r. E-codices

There is a famous teaching of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev which explains the meaning of the Passover holiday (Pesach). "Pesach" literally means peh-sach, "the mouth (פה *peh*) talks (שח *sach*).” On Pesach, the mouth talks about the wonders and miracles of God. Pesach represents the antithesis of Pharaoh, who, as the Megaleh Amukos explains, signifies פה רע *peh-ra*, a "bad mouth." Pharaoh was someone who denied God's providence in every act of nature. Our mouths were not given to us to slander or denigrate others, but to speak of God's greatness and wonders.

וזהו פירוש ח"ש מ"ל: מצד שרשו למעלה
נקרא ח"ש, לשון שתיקה. כי "אבא ואמא
תרין ריעין" ³³, ו"סייג לחכמה שתיקה" ³⁴
מחמת השראת אור אין-סוף שבה שלפניו
מתבטלים הכל. ומצד ירידתו למטה נקרא
מ"ל, לשון "רוח ממללא" ³⁵, כי הוא בחינת
האותיות שעל-ידן יורדת שפע המדות
ומתגלית למקבלים.

Tzemach Tzedek Derech Mitzvosecah

We are told that midnight on Pesach⁷ there was a revelation of Divine Light⁸ (the bechina of Atika) aside from the halachic moment in time⁹ and the ways to circumvent the moment of chazot¹⁰

Yanki Tauber writes:¹¹

At midnight of 15 Nissan 2448 (1313 BCE), G-d broke the last manacle of Egyptian bondage by killing all Egyptian firstborn, and the nation of Israel was born as a free people. The time is significant: twice¹ the Torah emphasizes that the event occurred exactly at midnight, and to this day, midnight is a factor in our annual re-experience of the Exodus at the Seder held each year on the eve of 15 Nissan. (Midnight is the deadline for the eating of the matzah and the bitter herbs, for the eating of the meat of the Passover offering, and for eating the *afikoman* which today represents the Passover offering at our Seder.)

But can an event actually take place at midnight? It would seem not. If midnight is the line that divides the night in two, then it is not a time period of any duration. No matter how minute a time-particle we might envision as occupying the center of the night, this particle can itself be halved—its first half would belong to the first half of the night, and its second half to the post-midnight half of the night. Indeed, a more literal translation of the Hebrew words *kachatzot halailah*, rendered above as “at midnight,” would read “as the night divides.” How, then, can anything be said to occur at the time that the night divides?

The Midrash cites two opinions as to the nature of the night’s division that first Passover eve. According to Rabbi Yishmael, “The night’s Creator halved it”; according to Rabbi Yehudah ben Beteira, “He who knows His times and moments halved it.”²

⁷ https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4361097/jewish/In-the-Evening-They-Shell-Eat-Matzot-The-Commandment-to-Eat-Matzot.htm

⁸ <https://astillsmallvoice.org/tsafun-afikoman/>

⁹ <https://dinonline.org/2018/03/16/midday-and-midnight-halachos-of-chatzos/>

¹⁰ <https://www.koltorah.org/halachah/finishing-the-afikoman-before-chatzot-by-rabbi-howard-jachter>

¹¹ https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/2759/jewish/The-Midnight-Mystery.htm

The sixteenth-century sage Rabbi David ibn Zimra (Radbaz) explains the meaning behind the words of these two sages. Rabbi Yishmael is saying that G-d, who created night, day and time itself, can obviously manipulate them at will. G-d literally split the night in two, opening an expanse of timelessness between its halves. In this time-vacuum, G-d smote the Egyptian firstborn and freed the children of Israel. Rabbi Yehudah, however, is of the opinion that G-d effected the Exodus within physical time, not in some time-transcendent reality. What G-d did was to coordinate His action with the exact midpoint of the night, so that the initial state ended with the night's first half, and the state effected by His action began with the onset of its second half. This He was able to do because He knows His times and moments absolutely.

[In other words, every action is the effecting of a change from state A to state B. So in truth, no time duration is required in which to effect a change, only a point in time to mark the end of state A and the beginning of state B. But since no physical instrument, human or artificial, can measure time with absolute accuracy, man in timing his deeds can at best define a stretch of time (perhaps even a very small stretch of time) within which the change will take place. G-d, however, who has absolute knowledge of His times and moments, can position His deed (in this case, the taking of the lives of the Egyptian firstborn and Israel's transformation from slavery to freedom) exactly on the duration less line that halves the night, effecting a change at the very point that lies between the night's former and latter parts.]

What is the point of all this? Why did the plague of the firstborn have to transpire precisely at midnight? And what is the significance behind the differing scenarios of Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Yehudah?

The Tenth Plague

The plague of the firstborn was the tenth of a series of plagues visited upon the Egyptians. But there was a basic difference between this plague and the first nine—a difference that touches on the very nature and function of the plagues themselves.

The primary objective of the first nine plagues was to prove a point—to instill an awareness among the Egyptians. In Moses' words to Pharaoh:

So said G-d: "With this you shall know that I am G-d: behold, I shall strike . . . the waters of the Nile, and they shall turn to blood."

If you do not let My people go, I will send swarms of wild beasts at you . . . in order that you know that I am G-d.

Once again, I am sending all My plagues . . . in order that you know that there is none like Me in the land.³

The tenth plague, however, was more than a demonstration of divine power: it came to punish and destroy, to break Egypt and to free Israel from its midst.

This explains a puzzling difference between the first nine plagues and the plague of the firstborn. The first nine plagues threatened only the Egyptians; the children of Israel were immune to them.⁴ The Midrash tells us that during the plague of blood, if an Egyptian and a Jew drank from the same cup, the Jew drank water while the Egyptian drank blood; that during the plague of darkness a Jew could enter an Egyptian's home in broad daylight, while to the Egyptian the world was shrouded in darkness. But in the case of the plague of the firstborn, the Jews were as vulnerable to the plague as their Egyptian neighbors, and a series of protective measures had to be taken so that the Jewish firstborn would not also die.

The Jews were commanded to make a Passover offering (*korban pesach*) to G-d—slaughter a lamb or goat, sprinkle its blood on the two doorposts and the lintel of their homes, and eat its meat that night with matzah and bitter herbs. That night the Jewish people also circumcised themselves. It was only in the merit of these two mitzvot that the Jewish firstborn were spared. (To this day, all Jewish firstborns are obligated to fast on the day before Passover in acknowledgment that they too deserved to die in the plague of the firstborn.) In the words of the prophet, "I passed over you, and I saw you weltering in your blood (i.e., the blood of circumcision and the blood of the *korban pesach*), and I said to you: 'By your blood you shall live!'"⁵

Our sages describe the Jews in Egypt as a people meritorious in faith but deficient in behavior. On the one hand, we are told that their faith in G-d and His promise of redemption never wavered, even in the darkest moments of their ordeal; on the other hand, they had assumed the pagan practices of their enslavers.⁶ Thus, the first nine plagues, whose function was "in order that you know that I am G-d," had no cause to afflict the Jewish people, whose awareness of the divine truth was beyond reproach. But when the tenth plague came to punish and destroy the Egyptians for their sins, and to take out "a nation from the womb of a nation"—to extract the Jew from the society of which he was part, and forge him into a holy people—here, G-d's attribute of

justice had cause to argue: "How are these any different from these? These are idol worshipers, and these are idol worshipers!"

Thus, on the night of 15 Nissan, it was necessary to differentiate between Egyptian and Jew. G-d had to *pass over* the homes of the Jews when the Egyptian firstborn were killed—indeed, it is this divine discrimination that gives Passover (*Pesach*, in the Hebrew) its name. To this end, G-d clothed a nation bare and naked of virtues⁷ with mitzvot, in order to distinguish them from their neighbors.

Two Visions of Midnight

However, there is still much that requires clarification. If we were no less deserving of punishment, and no more deserving of redemption, than our enslavers—if the divine sense of justice dictated that "these are no different than these"—what moved G-d to grant us the mitzvot to distinguish us from the Egyptians? And if, on the other hand, G-d wished to redeem us despite all, why the need for these special mitzvot to protect us from the plague of the firstborn?

Indeed, G-d chose to redeem us not because we were any better than the Egyptians, but because of His intrinsic love for us. In the words of the prophet Malachi: "Is not Esau a brother to Jacob? . . . But I love Jacob."⁸ Even when there is no cause to distinguish between Jacob and Esau, G-d chooses Jacob. At the very onset of Moses' mission to free the Jewish people, G-d told him to communicate to Pharaoh that "Israel is My child, my firstborn."⁹ I love him with a father's unconditional love, G-d is saying, a love that transcends considerations of virtue and deservedness.

This, explain the Kabbalistic masters, is the reason why the Exodus took place at midnight. The first half of the night embodies the divine attribute of justice (*din* or *gevurah*), and its second half, the divine attribute of benevolence (*chessed*). Midnight is the juncture that fuses and supersedes them both, since the power to join two opposites can come only from a point that transcends their differences. Midnight is thus an expression of a divine involvement in creation that transcends all standard criteria for punishment or reward.

"At midnight," said G-d to Moses, "I shall go out into the midst of Egypt."¹⁰ As interpreted by the Sifri, this means, "I—and not an angel; I—and not a messenger." At midnight I shall disregard all the attributes, norms, and

processes I have established to define My governance of the world and relate to you as I am and as I choose.¹¹

At the same time, G-d provided us with mitzvot with which to *deserve* our redemption. For a most basic feature of the covenant that G-d desired to forge with us is that the deepest aspects of our relationship with Him should be manifested in our daily lives via the mitzvot of the Torah; that the most sublime spiritual truths be actualized by the means of physical deeds. So although G-d superseded all standards of deservedness and undeservedness to redeem us, He granted us the means by which to deserve our redemption—the mitzvot of *korban pesach* and circumcision.

[Indeed, both these mitzvot embody, on a human scale, the divine response they were designed to elicit. The offering of the *korban pesach* was an act that defied all conventions of logic and feasibility. The Jews were commanded to take a lamb—one of the deities of Egypt—and keep it bound in their homes for four days, slaughter it, sprinkle its blood on their doorposts and eat its flesh. Reason argued, “Can we slaughter the idol of Egypt before their eyes, and they won’t stone us?”¹² But reason was set aside to do the will of G-d. G-d responded in kind, setting aside the norms of His justice and benevolence.

Circumcision, the bodily sign of our covenant with G-d, also emphasizes its supra-rational basis. The Jewish child is circumcised at the age of eight days, when he cannot possibly appreciate the significance of the deed or even be aware of it. Why don’t we wait until the age of intellectual maturity (as we do, for example, with the mitzvah of *tefillin*)? Again, this is a mitzvah given to us by the Almighty to access the reason- and rule-transcending essence of our relationship.]

Halving the Night

Hence the alternate interpretations offered by Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Yehudah as to the nature of the midnight of the Exodus.

Rabbi Yishmael sees the Exodus as a supra-natural, supra-rational event. To him, midnight of 15 Nissan is no temporal landmark in time. To take the Jews out of Egypt, G-d stopped the clocks of creation, splitting night, time, and natural order apart to reveal the divine essence and will that underlie and transcends all.

Rabbi Yehudah, on the other hand, focuses on the natural dimension to the Exodus. True, to pass over the homes of the Israelites as their Egyptian peers

were destroyed, to extract a nation from a nation it all but resembled morally and spiritually, there had to be a divine choice that superseded the rules and standards that G-d has built into creation. But is it not also true that this choice had to be accessed and actualized from within the terms of these rules and standards themselves? Is not the entire point of the Exodus, and of the revelation at Sinai to which it led, that man make himself a worthy vessel to the divine, and that our finite, physical world be developed as a receptacle to the infinite goodness and perfection of its Creator?

To Rabbi Yehudah, midnight of 15 Nissan is a point in time—a point of entry for the all-transcending truth of G-d, but an integral part of our conventional existence all the same.¹²

FOOTNOTES

1. [Exodus 11:4](#) and [12:29](#).
2. Mechilta, [Exodus 12:29](#).
3. [Exodus 7:17](#), [8:17–18](#) and [9:14](#).
4. See [Exodus 8:18–19](#), [9:6](#), [9:26](#) and [10:23](#).
5. [Ezekiel 16:6](#).
6. See [Exodus 4:31](#); Mechilta, [Shemot 14:31](#); Zohar Chadash, beginning of Yitro; Yalkut Reuveni, [Shemot 14:27](#); Zohar 2:170b.
7. [Ezekiel 16:7](#) and Rashi ad loc.
8. [Malachi 1:2](#).
9. [Exodus 4:22](#).
10. [Exodus 11:4](#).
11. Nevertheless, at the Exodus G-d did insist on one condition in His choice of us—that we desire to be chosen. Those who did not wish to be taken out of Egypt to become G-d's people, were not redeemed. It was only at Sinai that G-d's truly unconditional choice of Israel took place: there we entered a covenant with Him which supersedes even the desire to be chosen.
12. [Exodus 8:22](#).

¹² Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe



Art by Sefira Lightstone

Maamar Matzah Zu

*From the writings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*

From the Sichos in English Collection¹³

1. "This *matzah* that we eat — for what reason? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them."¹

In the discourses of the *Rebbeim* it is explained why this reason — "it did not have time to become leavened" — is given for why we eat *matzah* on Pesach. [This reason seems superfluous] because the commandment to eat *matzah* was already given before [they left Egypt].²

¹³ https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/2505737/jewish/Maamar-Matzah-Zu-Eve-following-the-13th-Day-of-Nissan-5749-1989.htm

They explain that this particular reason is given] because in the commandment to eat *matzah* it is written,³ "In the evening you must eat *matzos*," the word *matzos* written without the letter *vav*. However, in the verse [quoted in the *Haggadah*]⁴ "They baked *matzos* from the dough that they brought out of Egypt," the word *matzos* is written with the letter *vav*.

[The reason for the absence of the letter vav] is because the commandment to eat matzah was before midnight, when they were still in Egypt, "before the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them." Therefore, in this reference to matzah, the word matzos is spelled without the letter vav [which would indicate a special G-dly revelation].

However, the verse, "They baked *matzos* from the dough that they brought out of Egypt" speaks about the *matzah* which they baked (and ate) after they came out of Egypt ("the dough that they brought out of Egypt") — which occurred after midnight, and after "the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them." Therefore, [because at this time there was this special G-dly revelation,] in this reference to *matzah*, the word *matzos* is spelled with the letter *vav*.

This also explains why regarding the *matzah* which was before midnight it is written,⁵ "Be careful regarding the *matzos*," i.e. that one must be careful to prevent them from becoming leavened; whereas regarding the *matzah* which was after midnight it is written,⁶ "They baked *matzos* from the dough...because it was not leavened," which indicates that by itself it would not become leavened [even if one wasn't careful. The explanation of this is] because the *matzah* of after midnight is on the level of *matzos* as it is spelled with the letter *vav*, which is the revelation of "the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He." Therefore, [because of this special revelation this *matzah*] one does not need special precautions to prevent it from becoming leavened.

However, this distinction between the *matzah* before and after midnight was only on the first Pesach, before *Matan Torah*, not [with the *matzah* eaten] after *Matan Torah*. This is so because although the *matzah* that we eat on Pesach night is before midnight, it is nevertheless on the level of *matzos* as spelled with a *vav* — i.e. that it (also) has the quality of the revelation of "the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He."

This explains why the *Haggadah* says, "This *matzah* that we eat — for what reason? Because the dough... did not have time to become leavened, (i.e. that by itself it would not become leavened) before the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them."

2. One can say that the *matzah* that we eat today after *Matan Torah* is even higher than those *matzos* from the first Pesach, with the letter *vav*, which were before *Matan Torah*. The revelation of "the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He" associated with our *matzah* is a higher revelation because it follows our fulfillment of Torah and *mitzvos* the entire year (before Pesach).

This is similar to the advantage of the revelation of Shavuos *Z'man Matan Toraseinu* — which follows the counting of the *Omer* — over the revelation of Pesach. Although the revelation of Pesach was extremely high ([G-d Himself] "in His glory and His essence"), nevertheless, since this revelation came from above, it was only temporary.

Through our service from below of counting the *Omer* (after the revelation of the Exodus from Egypt), we draw down the 49 Gates [of *Binah*]. In addition, after the *shleimus* of these 49 Gates, we also draw down the 50th Gate (which we also draw down through our service, as the verse says,⁷ "You shall count 50 days"). In the 50th Gate itself, in addition to drawing down the lower level, which has a connection with the 49 Gates (similar to *Arich*); we draw down also the higher level, which is higher than any connection with the 49 Gates (similar to *Atik*).

This revelation is even higher than that of the Exodus from Egypt.

There is another advantage of our *matzah* of after *Matan Torah* over their *matzah* (in addition to the fact that the revelation of our *matzah* follows our service of Torah and *mitzvos* before Pesach.) This is because the eating of *matzah* is itself a *mitzvah*. Their *matzah* of after midnight was (primarily) "because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened" (due to the revelation from Above) and did not involve any effort (associated with the fulfillment of *mitzvos*). However, the *matzah* that we eat after *Matan Torah* is connected with human effort, i.e. fulfilling the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah*.

3. We still must understand, however, why we say "This *matzah* that we eat — for what reason? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to

become leavened.” [This is puzzling because] the *matzah* that we eat (after *Matan Torah*) does have the advantage of human effort and that of fulfilling a *mitzvah* (and among *mitzvos* themselves, the *mitzvos* after *Matan Torah*). How then can we say that the *matzah* we eat is because “it did not have time to become leavened” (i.e. that it was *matzah* instead of *chametz* automatically, because there was no time [not because of their efforts])?

The explanation is [first of all] because the *mitzvah* of relating the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* is to tell about the Exodus from Egypt as it was then. Another (and the main) reason is because “If the Holy One, Blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of Egypt...we would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt.”⁸ Therefore, although we are already after the Exodus from Egypt and after *Matan Torah*, the previous situation exists even now (and particularly on the night of Pesach).

Therefore (in telling the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* in the *Haggadah*) we say, “This *matzah* that we eat...is because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of the king of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them.” This is because the *matzah* that we eat today before midnight [has both advantages:] it has the advantage of *matzah* which is eaten before midnight — which is the advantage of service from below through fulfilling G-d’s command (as it was before *Matan Torah*); and in addition, the advantage of the *matzah* eaten after midnight — which is the advantage that “it did not have time to become leavened” (i.e. that it was impossible for leaven to be in it) because of the revelation from Above.

In addition, the *matzah* that we eat also has the advantage of *Matan Torah*, i.e. the fulfillment of a *mitzvah* after the Torah was given.

Even moreso, this *matzah* has an advantage like that of the *matzah* eaten on the Seventh Day of Pesach, which is optional (*reshus*, higher than something obligatory) — similar to the eating of *l’asid lavo*.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Haggadah for Pesach* (Kehot, 5745, p.30).
2. Therefore, even if there would have been time to make leavened bread, we still would eat *matzah* on Pesach because of the commandment which had been given previously.
3. *Ex. 12:18*.
4. *Ex. 12:39*.
5. *Ex. 12:17*.
6. *Ex. 12:18*.
7. *Lev. 23:16*.
8. *Haggadah for Pesach* (Kehot, 5745, p.14).
9. *Isaiah 11:11*.
10. *Ibid.*, 11:9.

Based on Ma'amar of Alter Rebbe Parshas Tzav¹⁴

L'havin Ma Shekasuv B'hagadah, "Matzah Zo She'anu Ochlin..."

¹⁴ <http://likkuteitorah.com/24%20Tzav%20Pesach%20web.htm>

שששת ימים תאכל מצות וביום השביעי עצרת להוי' אלקיך וגו'.
 וצריך להבין אומרו ית' שששת ימים תאכל מצות, והלא לעיל מיני' אמר
 שבעת ימים תאכל עליו מצות*. אך הענין דכאן אין הכוונה להזהיר על אזהרת
 אכילת מצה אלא על שביום הו' עצרת כו'. אך מה שהקדים שששת ימים תאכל
 מצות משמעות הכתוב הוא דעי"ז ששששת ימים תאכל מצות עי"ז יהיה אח"כ
 וביום השביעי עצרת כו'. ולהבין מהו ענין השייכות דאכילת מצה שששת ימים
 להיות עי"ז וביום השביעי עצרת. ועוד, דהנה ענין וביום השביעי עצרת להוי'
 אלקיך היינו לפי שבשביעי של פסח היה הגם דקריעת ים סוף. והנה פסח מצרים
 היה הימוצו נוהג רק יום אחד*, וא"כ הרי זכו לקריעת ים סוף י"ם שלא עי"
 אכילת מצה כל שששת הימים, ומדוע לדורות נאמר שבעת ימים תאכל עליו
 מצות, וגם דדוקא עי"י ששששת ימים תאכל מצות עי"ז הוא שיוכלו לבוא להיות
 וביום השביעי עצרת כו'. וגם להבין מה דבשביעי של פסח נאמר עצרת להוי'
 אלקיך ובשמיני עצרת נאמר עצרת תהיה לכם*.

גם להבין מ"ש ויאפו את הבצק אשר הוציאו ממצרים עוגות מצות כי לא חמץ
 כי גורשו ממצרים ולא יכלו להתמהמה כו', דמשמע שזהו נתינת טעם למה
 שאפו מצות ולא חמץ לפי שגורשו ממצרים ולא הספיק להחמיץ, וזה תמוה דהרי
 נאסר להם אכילת חמץ יום האחד עכ"פ*, וא"כ איך היו יכולים לאפות חמץ עד
 שצריך נתינת טעם כי גורשו כו'. גם להבין מ"ש בהגדה מצה זו שאנו אוכלים
 על שום מה על שום שלא הספיק בצקת של אבותינו להחמיץ עד שנגלה עליהם
 מלך מלכי המלכים הקב"ה וגאלם, והרי בלאו הכי נמי כבר נצטוו על מצות
 ומרורים יאכלוהו*. ועוד דזה שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים היה אחר חצות
 לילה, וצווי על מצות ומרורים יאכלוהו היינו קודם חצות לילה, שהפסח אינו
 נאכל אלא עד חצות*, וכן מצה זו שאנו אוכלים הוא ג"כ קודם חצות דוקא*,
 וא"כ איך הוא על שום כו' שנגלה כו'.

והענין הוא, דהנה גבי בערב תאכלו מצת* כתיב מצת חסר וי"ו, וגבי ויאפו כו'
 עוגות מצות כתיב מצות מלא בוי"ו. והיינו, כי הוי"ו זהו ההמשכה,

שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים. וא"כ היה ב' בחינות מצה. הא', מ"ש בערב תאכלו מצת, שהיא מצה דקודם חצות, והיא מצת חסר וי"ו. והב', מ"ש ויאפו כו' מצות כו', והוא המצה שאחר חצות, והוא מלא בוי"ו, דהיינו אחר שנגלה עליהם כו'. ועל כן אמר בהגדה מצה זו שאנו אוכלים על שום מה על שום שלא הספיק בצקת של אבותינו להחמיץ עד שנגלה עליהם מלך מלכי המלכים כו', שהוא ענין מצות מלא בוי"ו שהיה אחר חצות דוקא. דהמצה זו שאנו אוכלים הוא ג"כ מבחינה זו, והיינו מדכתיב ששת ימים תאכל מצות בוי"ו, שמזה מוכח דמצה זו שאנו אוכלים היא ג"כ מבחינה ומדרגה זו. ולכן עי"ז יומשך להיות וביום השביעי עצרת כו':

Parashat Tsav

from Likutei Torah

by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi

Translation and Commentary by Rabbi Gedalia Potash and William Schecter, MD

This Kabbalistic commentary on Parashat Tsav deals with the commandment to eat Matzot on Passover. The Elter Rebbe in his commentary demonstrates how eating the Passover Matzah leads to a nullification of the material and ascendancy of the soul spiritually achieving an intimate connection to G-d. Let us follow his analysis.

"Six days you shall eat Matzot and on the seventh day there will be an Atzeret for the L-rd Your G-d etc". (Deuteronomy 16:8) We must understand that the L-rd saying "for six days you shall eat matzot and he did not say seven days you shall eat Matzot. But the point here is that there is no intention to caution against eating Matzah but rather the intention is to point out that the seventh day is an Atzeret.

Comment: What does the word Atzeret mean? In many English translations, it appears as "Assembly". Others liken it to a Chag, a Holiday. And indeed, the seventh day of Passover is a Holiday like the first day (In the Diaspora, the first two days are Holidays as well as the last two days). But the root of the word Atzeret (עצרת) is עצר which means stop. In other words, after the excitement of Passover and the Chol Hamoed (the intermediate days) we are

supposed to stop, relax, and contemplate the meaning of Passover before it ends.

The significance of the passage which preceded the commandment to eat Matzot for six days of eating Matzot is that afterwards there is an Atzeret on the seventh day. What is the relationship between eating matzah for six days and the Atzeret on the seventh day? The seventh day is an Atzeret for the L-rd your G-d meaning that on the seventh day of Passover the miracle of the splitting of the Sea of Reeds occurred. In the Torah itself, we are instructed to eat Matzah only on the first day of Passover. After the Exodus on the first day until the splitting of the sea on the seventh day there originally was no requirement to eat Matzah. So, why in future generations are we commanded to eat Matzot for seven days and then on the seventh day have an Atzeret?

Furthermore, why does the Torah say that on Passover there will be an Atzeret on the seventh day for the L-rd your G-d and yet on Sukkot the Torah says that there will be an Atzeret for you on the eighth day? The Elter Rebbe then raises an additional question about another passage in the Torah: We must also understand the passage in the Hagadah which states "They baked the Matzot and it did not rise because they were exiled from Egypt and there was not enough time for the dough to rise." This passage, he says, is strange because in the Talmud it says that the Children of Israel were forbidden to eat Hametz on the first day only (Pesachim 96: b). If so, how could they have baked chametz until it had the taste of bread because they were exiled and could not delay for the dough to rise? If so, how were they able to bake the Hametz until it gave taste because they were exiled?

Also, we must understand the passage in the Hagadah: "We eat this Matzah because our forefather's dough did not leaven until G-d was revealed to them and they were redeemed". Ein Hachi nami (it is certainly true) that they were already commanded to eat matzah and maror and that the L-rd was revealed to them after midnight, meaning the commandment to eat matzah and maror preceded the midnight of the Passover and yet we eat the Matzah both prior to and after midnight.

Comment: The Elter Rebbe is raising a series of questions and apparent contradictions in our texts. He now goes on to explain the apparent contradictions.

The commandments about eating Matzot and Maror refer to the time prior to the midnight of the Passover. The Matza is only eaten prior to midnight. And

this Matzah which we eat is also prior to midnight. If so, why in the Hagadah does it say that we ate Matzah until G-d was revealed to the Children of Israel and they were redeemed? The issue, says the Elter Rebbe, is that in the passage stating, "in the evening prior to midnight you shall eat Matzot", the word Matzot is written without a vav.

The point is that in the passage which states "You shall eat Matzot in the evening, the word Matzot (מצת) is written without a Vav. And in the passage which states "they baked Matzot...", the word Matzot (מצות) is written with a Vav. This means that the Vav is the drawing down of the revelation of G-d. If so, there were two attributes of Matzah.

The first, represented by the passage "and in the evening you shall eat Matzot – refers to the Matzah prior to midnight which is the Matzah lacking the Vav. And the second "They baked Matzot...." Refers to the matzah after midnight which contains the Vav meaning after the revelation of G-d.

Therefore, it is said in the Hagadah "Why do we eat this matzah? Because the dough of our forefathers did not leaven until G-d was revealed." which is the point of the Matzot written with the Vav which was after midnight. This Matzah which we eat also had this attribute meaning that the passage "Six days you shall eat matzot". The word matzot is also written with a Vav. This proves that the Matza that we eat also has this attribute (of revelation) And therefore, because of this, the seventh day (of Passover) is an Atzeret for the L-rd you G-d.

In order to understand this, it is necessary to discuss the passage "Man does not live by bread alone". This passage explains the question "how does food have the power to vitalize man?" Does not bread have the attribute of vegetation and man the attribute of speech? If so, how does vegetation have the attribute of giving life to a human who is so far above vegetation in terms of spirituality? Rather because "not by bread alone" refers to the essence of the bread which gives life to man. All the utterances of G-d are en clothed within the bread. This means that the utterance "The land will be covered with vegetation", as is written in Likutei Torah Parashat Ekev, indicates that the word of G-d enters the food and it is the word of G-d that gives life to man. But isn't the word of G-d also en clothed within man for G-d said, "We shall make man ..."? If this is the case, why does man receive life from the bread

which enclothes the utterance “the land will be covered with vegetation”? The explanation appears in several places. The root of the inanimate, the vegetation and the animal is the world of “Tohu” which preceded the creation of the world of “Tikkun”. The energy of Tohu flowed down through the myriad of spiritual levels by the breaking of the vessels until they reached the lowest level (our physical world) and the physical entities were created from them.

Comment: The breaking of the vessels refers to the 10 Sefirot which are unable to contain the powerful G-duly energy which is unorganized. The vessels shatter and 288 sparks fly down from the supernal world of Tohu until they reach our world. No one knows the exact definition of the word Tohu and in fact the entire process of creation is beyond human comprehension. Tohu usually is translated as a void or chaos. We can think of it as unorganized infinitely powerful energy.

On the other hand, the root of man is in the world of Tikkun the main attribute of which is Chochmah D’Atzilut (the Attribute of Wisdom in the world of Atzilut—the highest of the spiritual worlds, the one closest to G-d).

Comment: This means that the paradoxically, the spiritual level of the world of Tohu is higher than the world of Tikkun and therefore the spirituality and energy in the vegetation from the world of Tohu is greater than man’s intellect and can vitalize him.

It is called the intellectual energy because through intellect the world will be refined and man has within him the intellectual soul which is capable of refining the world. The root of Hishtalshalut (downward flow) also has the attribute of wisdom. The breaking of the vessels occurred in the world of Tohu which has the attribute of the 7 attributes.

Comment: This refers to the 7 emotional attributes (chesed, tifferet, gvurah, netzach, hod, yesod, malchut). We have not encountered a detailed treatment of these 7 emotional attributes so far in our studies. These 7 emotional attributes are on a lower spiritual level than the three intellectual attributes (Chochmah, Bina and Da’at) which we have discussed extensively.

Indeed, the 7 emotional attributes are the attributes which are above the Chochma of Atzilut and are called the great beast

Because the attributes did not have within them the attribute of complete inclusion, they broke and fell below man and therefore it is necessary to be refined by man because the refinement occurs through wisdom as discussed

above. But after refinement, they vitalize man from the side of their root which is above man (that is in the world of Tohu)

This is what is meant by the expression man lives by all the utterances of G-d's mouth. The meaning of the utterances of G-d's mouth is that they are the source and root from which G-d's Energy is drawn to be revealed the utterances of G-d's mouth. Bread, however, is taken from an even higher attribute as discussed above. This is the reason that the utterance "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26) is the last of the 10 utterances and the utterances "Let the earth sprout vegetation" (Genesis 1:11) and "The earth brought forth vegetation" Genesis 1:12) etc. all precede the utterance "Let Us make man in our image". The reason for this was discussed above: the root of vegetation is in the world of Tohu which preceded the world of Tikkun which is the root of man.

Therefore, Rav Nahman said "the reason I didn't tell you in the beginning of the night (earlier) is that I did not eat the meat of the bull". (Baba Kama 72:a)

Comment: What is this quotation doing here? The answer is found in the Talmud portion from which it is taken. Rava and Rav Nahman are discussing a case of a son who steals his father's bull and slaughters it. The details are not important for our purposes. If you are interested, the discussion starts in Baba Kama 71: b and the quotation is from the beginning of 72: a. The point is that Rav Nahman changed his position on a point they were discussing the night before. The reason he put forth for his change of position is that he had not eaten and therefore was unable to concentrate. The Elter Rebbe then continues.

This (the quotation) teaches us that food adds the power of the wisdom and the intellect in addition to vitality to man. The Rabbis said that a baby does not know how to say father until he has tasted grain (that is he has been weaned from the breast) due to the reason cited above. The root of the food is above in the world of Tohu which is above the Chochma (wisdom) in the world of Tikkun. Therefore, food has the power and the ability to strengthen and add to both the strength and wisdom of man.

As it is written here, it is understood that the Service of G-d is the issue the refinement of the 288 sparks of Tohu which are invested in material entities what are refined (by man) and ascend on high to the world of Tikkun, the root of the G-dly Soul in man. Meaning that through service to G-d by recitation of the Sh'ma and prayer, the attributes of power and vitality which are added to

it through eating for the purpose of Heaven are included in the “One” and “You shall love” and increases the power of contemplation and excitement of the love of G-d to be the contemplation and the knowledge and the assertive love and fear and the connection greater than the power of the G-duly soul itself for the reason cited above to be invested in them with the attribute of the 288 sparks of Tohu which are above the attribute of Tikkun. Therefore, they also have the ability to add supernality to the attribute of Chochma and the seven emotional attributes that are in the G-duly Soul by recitation of the Sh’ma, and prayer and engagement in Torah study and commandments.

Comment: The passage above explains that according to Kabbalah the purpose of man is refinement of the 288 sparks which fell to earth after the shattering of the vessels containing the disordered G-duly Energy. This refinement occurs through contemplation of the Sh’ma, Tfilah (prayer), Torah study and Mitzvot. The spirituality of food, as represented by Matzah, comes from the Tohu which is higher spiritually than the world of Tikkun (which is the source of man’s G-dly Soul. Therefore, both spiritually and materially, food adds to the power of man to fulfill the Mitzvot and refine the 288 sparks and by extension the world making it a dwelling place for G-d.

When the Elter Rebbe talks about “the One” and “And you shall love...”, he is referring to the first two paragraphs of the Sh’ma—the powerful declaration of monotheism and the duty of man to love and serve G-d.

It is understood also regarding the issue of the Mitzva of eating Matzot on Passover as explained in the Zohar (Parashat Veyatsah, 157: b) the following: Just as a baby does not know or contemplate anything until he has tasted the bread as explained above, similarly when the Children of Israel left Egypt, they did not know how to contemplate the Greatness of G-d until they ate Matzah, which has the attribute of the bread which is brought forth from the supernal earth. For man will be vitalized by the word of G-d brought down by this bread, and the G-duly Soul will truly know the One who spoke following which the world came into existence. Similarly, the vitality was brought down to the intellectual soul from the material bread referred to above. Therefore, eating Matzah during Passover draws down to our world the knowledge to truly know and connect with the G-duly Soul.

Comment: The Elter Rebbe uses two words in the last sentence to express the concept of to know: Leyedah (לידע) and Lehakir (להכיר). Leyedah implies knowing something intellectually. Lehakir implies a more personal and

intimate connection. Therefore, I have translated Lehakir using the word connect.

The leavened bread has the attribute of pridefulness and haughtiness which swells, ascends, and elevates itself. If this is so, Matzah lacks any condescending quality. Similarly, in the service of G-d, leavening has the attribute of the pride and vulgarity of the Klipah.

Comment: Recall that the Elter Rebbe uses the word Klipah to refer to the Klipat Nogah, the fourth material layer surrounding the G-duly Soul which contains elements of the Yetzer HaRa (the physical material inclinations) as well as G-duly elements.

Matzah has the attribute of lowering and bending with the attribute of nullification of your will...

Comment: Matzah, says the Elter Rebbe, represents humility. By eating Matzah, man nullifies his material desires and impulses in favor of service to G-d.

The Children of Israel were bound tightly below (in the material world) by the Exile in Egypt. Their intellect and emotional attributes had the attributes of material borders and limitations causing them to come into physical existence and be separate. The King of Kings was revealed to the Children of Israel by the Exodus from with the attribute of the Eternal Light which is above the order of Hishtalshalut and through the attribute of nullification was drawn down to them. The revelation of the Shechinah caused great fear and through the nullification and the supernal fear (vision) they left all the limitations and boundaries of Egypt.

Comment: Rabbi Potash pointed out the root of the words for "fear" (יראה) and "see" (ראה) is the same: ראה. So that the revelation of G-d that occurred during the Exodus (the splitting of the Reed Sea, the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai) caused the Children of Israel to be released from their material bonds and boundaries, to see (metaphorically) G-d and to experience awe and fear in His Presence.

The physical Exodus from Egypt occurred after midnight. Indeed, the Children of Israel were first commanded to eat matzah prior to midnight as it is written "in the evening you shall eat matzah" which has the attribute of nullification of will, submission and baseness, flowing down with the attribute of lower Yirah (Fear) which is the preparation and the vessels for the attribute of

revelation and supernal yirah (Fear-Awe) which flowed down and was revealed to them after midnight.

Comment: The Galut (Exile) in Egypt was not only a physical but also an emotional and psychological exile. The Exodus was one level of revelation. The Children of Israel were at least aware of greater possibilities (in terms of spiritual elevation) but they still had to do the work for the revelation at Mt. Sinai.

They were still in the Egypt mindset initially. During the Exodus, they had a revelation from a world higher than Hishtalshalut (the process of flowing down of the G-duly Energy from the supernal heights to our world). When you see such greatness which is not yet a part of you, says Rabbi Potash, you experience a sense of Bitul (nullification). You nullify you own material desires in favor of humility before G-d.

Matzah is called Michlah Dmhimnuta (מיכלה דמהימנuta = Food of Faith) in the Zohar. Faith also has the attribute of nullification because faith nullifies one's intellect and doesn't require a reason, only belief in the truth of pure faith. This attribute of faith flows down to the Soul by way of the Mitzvah of eating Matzah.

How so? We previously discussed the analogy of bread giving life to man and the analogy of the baby who is able to call "Aba" (father) after knowledge flows into him and is renewed within him the taste of the bread. The baby's knowledge does not have the attribute of understanding, reason or complete knowledge for the baby does not know how this person came to be his his father, and why he must love him. Nevertheless, he calls his father and this cry is his connection with his intimate knowledge (Hakarah) of his father alone which is minute, below reason and knowledge (Da'at).

What does this mean? Because this knowledge is renewed in the baby by the taste of the bread, its root is from the root of the bread in the world of Tohu which has a higher spiritual level than knowledge and higher than wisdom, as discussed above. Therefore, it flows down below the conceptual mind. If so, the connection is very strong. The situation is similar to the issue of eating Matzah for Matzah is called the Bread of Faith in the Zohar. Faith is the intimate knowledge, the conceptual knowledge and the connection to G-d and all Israel believes He alone is the One who preceded the creation of the world as it is written: "I am G-d, I have not changed" (Malachi 3:6). This flowing

down has the attribute of supernal knowledge because G-d is above Wisdom, etc. Therefore, the G-duly Energy is drawn down and en clothed in Faith.

That is the reason that Matzah is the bread of faith for the root of the bread in the world of Tohu discussed above enables the baby to call father because of the bread. But this is with education of this material world which is drawn from the material bread drawn from the physical earth. In contrast the “bread” of the Passover Matzah en clothes the power of the supernal earth from which the bread is derived. This bread (Matzah) draws down this attribute of true Divinity giving the knowledge to call the Father in Heaven etc. with a powerful connection until it exists in the Soul but it does not achieve true reason and understanding. This is the attribute of nullification. From this flowing from the Passover Matzah, we also achieve the nullification of human will and the attribute of baseness and “may my soul be like dust for all” (Brachot 17: a:4) which is the power of the earth from which the bread came forth.

Comment: Let’s try to unpack the ideas expressed in the paragraphs above. First let’s start with a play on Hebrew words employed by the Elter Rebbe. The word טעם (Ta’am) has two meanings: taste and reason. So, when the Elter Rebbe says that the taste of the bread gives the baby the knowledge to say “father”, he is alluding to the fact that the bread gives sustenance both to the body and the intellect. But even though in the process of development the child comes to an understanding, the child really doesn’t understand the process. So how does the baby achieve this deep connection. Rabbi Potash explains that according to Kabbalah, if you have a suspension of intellect, you can have a deeper connection to G-d. Chochma diminishes the connection.

You can have a relationship above chochma—like the emotions of Tohu—or you can have emotions that are lower, lesser, than chochma the common denominator is that there is no chochma to diminish the relationship. Ultimately there is a level of connection higher—a supernal intimate connection to G-d which is higher than Wisdom and reason. Similarly, by eating Matzah, the Jew develops a suprarational intimate connection with G-d. Spinoza, of course, rejected this concept of supernal knowledge, i.e., suprarational knowledge and connection but it is a central element of Kabbalistic and Chasidic thought.

Says Rabbi Potash: physical grain (bread) develops the physical brain. Spiritual grain-matzah-develops our intimate emotional connection to G-d.

Therefore, eating Matzah helps us nullify our physicality to reach a higher spiritual plane and an intimate connection to G-d.

This Matzah (that is the Matzah eaten before midnight) requires conservation (protection) as it is written “and you shall keep (protect) the Matzot (Exodus 12:17) meaning you should protect the Matzot from external influences which might lead to leavening which is analogous to vulgarity and haughtiness. This means that this Matzah has the attribute of lower fear and connection of faith alone below reason and knowledge and therefore it requires protection. Therefore, the word Matzot (מצות) is written without a Vav, referring to the Matzot eaten prior to midnight which requires protection. This Matzot written without a Vav is therefore “undeveloped” or “immature”. In addition, the Matzah lacking a Vav is related to the מצותא (Metsutah—an Aramaic word meaning argumentative) similar to Matzah and disputation. It is written in the Zohar that conflict is necessary to achieve nullification of material vulgarity. This is analogous to the continuous conflict in man between the Yetzer Hate (the good inclination) and the Yetzer Hara (the evil inclination) and therefore the Matzah lacking a Vav was eaten prior to midnight.

Comment: G-d revealed Himself to the Children of Israel at midnight on the 14th day of Nissan prior to the Exodus from Egypt. The Matzah eaten prior to the revelation spiritually has the attribute of fear and faith below Chochmah, Binah and Da’at—that is below reason. Therefore, it is undeveloped or unrefined and requires protection from external influences and the Yetzer HaRa (the evil inclination) present in all of us.

Rabbi Potash commented: When we speak about the positivity of Emunah (Faith), we are talking about a suspension of intellect. The danger is that we are not using the intellect to filter out what is right or wrong. Therefore, we have to guard that faith and protect it against haughtiness and vulgarity.

The second type of Matzah (מצות), written with a vav, is eaten after midnight, after the Passover Sacrifice and the revelation of G-d.

Comment: The Passover, that is the passing over the houses of the Children of Israel by G-d, Rabbi Potash commented, is in fact the revelation of G-d to the Jewish People.

Now, what is the meaning of this discussion of Matzot with or without a Vav? We have to go back to Mishnaic times to discuss a second-generation Tana (one of the Rabbis discussed in the Mishnah) named נחוניא בן הקנה (Nehunyah

Ben Hakanah). He spent most of his time searching for the secret hidden meaning of the Torah going so far as to posit that each letter has a spiritual meaning. The vav (ו) is a long straight letter and is thought to represent the drawing down of Divine Energy. So, writing Matzot (מצות) with a ו indicates that the Matzot has a higher level of spirituality than the Matzot (מצת) without the vav.

The Passover as it is written "And G-d passed over..." (Exodus 22:23) is a skipping and a drawing down of G-dly Energy outside the orderly Hishtalshalut (flowing down from one spiritual level to the next) and as it is written "And with great fear" (Deuteronomy 26:8) - this is revelation of the Shechinah" which is the attribute of the Divine Infinite Light which is far above the Hishtalshalut of the worlds.

Comment: The text in Deuteronomy cited above reads "G-d freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and great fear, and by signs and portents". The Biblical text uses the word Moreh (מורא) for fear instead of Yirah (יראה) which the Elter Rebbe has been using up until now. Both words mean "fear" and "see" and both have the shoresh (3 consent root) ראה. However, the word Yirah is feminine and the word Morah is masculine. The Elter Rebbe will soon comment on the significance (Kabbalistically) of the gender difference.

This Divine Eternal Light would illuminate and be revealed in their G-dly Souls until the King of the King of Kings was revealed to them. The meaning of the King of Kings is the four attributes of Malchut (Kingdom) that illuminates the 4 worlds of Atzilut, Briut, Yetzirah and Asiyah. The expression the King of the King of Kings refers to the Malchut of the Infinite which is far above Malchut of the Hishtalshalut of the four worlds.... For through this revelation they (the Children of Israel) were redeemed as it is written "And I passed in the Land of Egypt. I and not an angel" (Passover Haggadah)

Comment: The word Malchut needs some explanation. The definition of the word Malchut is Kingdom. It refers to the tenth Sefira in the Kabbalistic tree and the lowest of the ten Sefirot. As opposed to the other nine Sefirot which emanate directly from G-d, Kabbalah teaches that Malchut emanates from G-d's creation when that creation reveals the qualities of G-d's Glory. All ten Sefirot are present in the worlds of Atzilut, Briah, Yetzirah and Asiyah (our world) and therefore the Sefirah of Malchut is present in each of these worlds with levels of spirituality appropriate to the level of the particular world.

And therefore, this revelation is called and with great fear (במורא גדול) because the word יראה (fear-Yirah) is a feminine word and this is the attribute of lower fear which is brought down to each of the four worlds each according to its value.

Comment: The Elter Rebbe is saying that there were two types of fear experienced during the Exodus. The lower level of fear-Yirah-a feminine word below the intellectual attributes, occurred prior to the revelation of G-d during the midnight Passover. The supernal fear – Morah-a masculine word-occurred after the Divine Revelation during the Passover itself.

Great Fear (מורא גדול) is a masculine word and this has the attribute of supernal fear which is a masculine attribute brought down by revelation of the attribute of the King of the King of Kings referred to above. The second type of Matzah eaten after midnight has the attribute of nullification discussed above. The Matzah eaten prior to midnight has the attribute of lower fear and faith as was en clothed with the attribute lower than knowledge and understanding referred to above.
