



One Nation, Under G-d

THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTOR: ALTER RAUBVOGEL

In every generation, a man is obligated to see himself as if he came out of Egypt, as [the Torah] says (Sh'mos 13:8), "Tell your son on that day, saying, 'It was for this that Hashem acted for me when I left Egypt.'" (Mishnayos, P'sachim 10:5)

THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH QUOTES THIS Mishnah and takes a similar approach:

The Holy One, blessed be He, didn't just redeem our forefathers; rather, he also redeemed us with them. (Conclusion of *Maggid*)

How can the Torah expect a person, living more than 3,300 years after the Exodus, to feel as if it really happened to him? Can we only fulfill this mitzvah if we have a vivid imagination?

Rabbi Shimon Schwab, in *Ma'ayan Beis haSho'eiva*, says no—in fact, we really did, ourselves, come out of Egypt, along with our forefathers!

He explains this with a very simple analogy. The human body is made of trillions of cells. Over the course of a lifetime, almost all of those cells die and are replaced by new ones. (The exceptions, by the way, are parts of the eyeballs and brain.) Some cells only live for three days, and others last seven to ten years, but by the time a person reaches old age, there is, literally, very little left of the body he started out with! Yet it's obvious that, even now, he is the same person he was several decades ago. When he points to an arthritic knuckle and says, "I broke this finger playing basketball in high school," he is not lying, even though not a single cell remains of his youthful bones, muscles, nerves, or skin.

The same is true of the Jewish People. Even though dozens of generations have

passed since the Exodus, we, today, are that same nation, forged in the crucible of Egypt and gathered by Hashem to be His Chosen People. So, in that sense, Hashem really did take us, each of us, out of Egypt!

Rabbi Schwab points out that there's a hint to this in *Chumash B'reishis*. In *Parashas Vayiggash*, the Torah counts Yaacov's family.

All of the souls who came with Yaakov to Egypt... were seventy. (B'reishis 46:26–27)

The word "souls" appears four times in these two verses, and every time the Torah uses the singular, *nefesh*, instead of the plural, *n'fashos*. Why?

Rashi answers,

I found [the following] in [Mi-drash] *Vayikra Rabba* (4:6): Esav had six souls [with him when he left Canaan], and the Torah calls them "*nafshos*, the souls, of his house," in the plural, because they worshipped many deities. [On the other hand,] Yaacov had seventy souls, but the Torah calls them *nefesh* [in the singular], because they all worshipped one G-d. (Commentary to 46:26)

The Torah considered Yaakov's family, which consisted at that point of at least three generations, to be one soul.

It was a common belief in Hashem which created that state. This helps explain the nature of the bond which all Jews—past, present, and future—share. It also sheds light on one of the Four Sons of the Haggadah.

What does the Wicked Son say? "What is this service to you?"

A Dichotomy in Destruction

I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will smite every firstborn... and I will exact judgement against all of the Egyptian gods. I am Hashem! (12:12)

HASHEM REFERS TO HIMSELF FOUR TIMES here, to exclude His usual agents:

"Hashem took us out of Egypt" (D'varim 26:8)—not through an angel, nor through a Seraph, nor through any proxy, but the Holy One, blessed be He, in His glory, Himself. (Haggadah)

In *Ma'ayan Beis haSho'eiva*, Rabbi Shimon Schwab points out that this doesn't seem to jive with the way Moshe presented it to the people:

Take a bundle of hyssop, dip it in the blood [of the Paschal lamb]... touch [it] to the lintel and the two doorposts... And as for you, not a man should go out of his house's door until morning! (13:22)

This tells us that once license has been granted [by Hashem] to an agent of destruction, it doesn't distinguish between the righteous and the wicked. (Rashi's commentary)

Why was this even relevant, if Hashem Himself was acting on that night?

On the other hand, the Haggadah itself says that every plague, including that of the firstborn, involved Hashem's emissaries!

Rabbi Eliezer says: How do we know that every plague...

At the Kollel

KEY: 🖐️ Beginners 🖐️🖐️ Intermediate 🖐️🖐️🖐️ Advanced 🚺🚻 for men and women

Looking for a chavrusa? See Coordinator Rabbi Chaim Heinemann!
Chavrusos are available noon–1 PM on weekdays, and 8–9:45 PM Sun.–Thurs.

Sunday *Free brunch!*

🖐️🖐️ **America Runs on Torah**
(Jewish Law & Parasha)
Rabbis Dani Schon
and Yisroel Kaufman.....10 AM
Grand Deluxe breakfast served

Tuesday

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Partners in Torah
at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Binyamin Teitelbaum.....8 PM

Wednesday

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Torah Treasures for
Seniors at the Mayerson JCC**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 10:30–11:15 AM

🚺🚻 🖐️ **Downtown Lunch-n-Learn
at Strauss & Troy**
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis..... 12–1 PM

Thursday

🖐️🖐️ **Halacha** (based on the parasha)
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....9:10–10 PM
Homemade refreshments served.

Minyanim for Standard Time

Shacharis
Sunday.....8:15 AM
Monday–Friday.....7:20 AM

Mincha
Sunday.....1:15 PM
Mon.–Thurs. thru January.....2:35 PM
Sun.–Thurs., Feb.–Mar.....5:45 PM
Shabbos.....2:40 PM

Ma'ariv
In the Beis Midrash:
Sunday–Wednesday.....9:45 PM
Thursday.....10 PM

Every Day

🖐️ **“Dirshu” Gemara Shiur**
(Maseches Sota)
Rabbi Yitzchok Preis.....
Sunday 7:15–8:15 AM
Monday–Friday 5:50–6:45 AM

🖐️🖐️ **Kollel Yisgaber K’ari**
(amud-a-day of Mishnah B’rurah)
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....
Monday–Friday 6:55–7:20 AM

🖐️🖐️ **Kitzur Shuchan Aruch**
Live video conference!
Rabbi Dani Schon.....
Monday–Friday 12:05–12:20 PM

🖐️ **Daf Yomi**
Rabbi Meir Minster.....
Sunday–Thursday 8–8:45 PM
Shabbos (at CZE) 1:00 pre-mincha

🖐️🖐️ **Nightly Halacha Chabura**
Rabbis Dani Schon
& Binyamin Teitelbaum.....
Monday–Thursday 9–9:45 PM

Chavrusa Learning
(private & small groups).....times vary



WINTER BREAK The Kollel will be on recess from Monday, January 19 till Monday afternoon, January 26.

One Nation... CONTINUED

Because he removes himself from the collective, he denies the fundamentals [of our religion]...

If Jewish unity is inextricably connected to the belief in Hashem, then by removing himself from the fold, the Wicked Son implies that he takes exception to our faith!

So it is that on Seder night, we declare that we are obligated to think of ourselves as directly affected by the Exodus—and that we do, in fact, feel that way. We take the name of Hashem and bless the One “who redeemed us, and redeemed our forefathers, from Egypt,” *putting ourselves first*. We are all one. 🚺

Dichotomy... CONTINUED

consisted of four plagues? Because [T'hilim 78:49] says, “He will send upon them His burning anger, wrath, fury, and trouble—a dispatch of agents of evil.”

Not only that, but the Torah records how Moshe told the people that angels of destruction would be on the loose:

Hashem... will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts... and He will not allow the destroyer to enter...” (12:23)

So how do we reconcile this?

Rabbi Schwab suggests that Hashem killed the firstborn Himself, but the destruction of Egypt’s idols was, in fact, carried out by Hashem’s emissaries.

There was no need for the Hebrew firstborn to take shelter. Hashem could, and would, steer clear of them.

However, the Children of Israel had themselves worshipped Egyptian gods over the course of their subjugation; the Midrash says so. They had good reason to fear on this last night in Egypt, when the crime of idolatry was being avenged.

It was only when the Israelites slaughtered a lamb, an Egyptian deity, that they proved they no longer followed the local religion. The lamb’s blood, placed like a banner on their front doors, was a sign to Hashem that they deserved His protection—but only so long as they stood behind it, as it were, within the confines of their homes. 🚺