

## קדש

### לא יאמר קידוש עד שתהשך

The Shulchan Aruch writes (ס' תעב) that one should not recite Kiddush on the first night of Pesach until after it is dark. The question is why not? The Gemara in Brochat (כז) says that רב צלי של שבת בערב שבת, Rav davened and made kiddush on Friday while it was still day. Apparently, if you make early Shabbat, you can even make Kiddush before nightfall. If this is so, why would Pesach night be any different? Why does the Shulchan Aruch say that you cannot make Kiddush at the סדר before nightfall?

I was zoche to hear a beautiful shiur from my Rebbi, Rabbi Yonason Sachs Shlita, where he explained this halacha based on the following analysis.

We know that the Gemara says that matzah must be eaten after dark. And the תרומת הדשן writes that מצוות סיפור יציאת מצרים must also not be done until after dark because it is determined by the time of the eating of the korban pesach, which wasn't eaten until after dark. But how this affects the mitzvah of Kiddush is not immediately clear. You could make kiddush by day and not reach סיפור יציאת מצרים until after dark. So why does the Shulchan Aruch not allow that?

The Magen Avraham says that the Rabbinic mitzvot of Pesach night were also determined by the time of the eating of the korban pesach, the זמן אכילת קרבן פסח. This was done based on the rule כל דתיקון רבנן כעין דאורייתא תיקון. Since one of the rabbinic mitzvot is the ד' כוסות, and kiddush is the first of the four cups, you must wait until dark to say it.

Two practical ramifications emerge from this position.

- 1) If we are patterning the rabbinic mitzvot based on the time of the korban pesach, then the last of the four cups must be finished by הצות. This is a הידוש, because Tosfot in Megillah only mention the need to finish Afikomen by הצות. Perhaps when the רמ"א adds that one should finish הלל by הצות, he is hinting to this requirement that the you must finish the 4<sup>th</sup> cup as well.
- 2) What would happen if someone inadvertently said Kiddush before nightfall and quickly was informed of the error? Would he have to repeat the entire Kiddush after nightfall, or would it suffice just to drink another cup after nightfall? According to the Magen Avraham, you have fulfilled the mitzvah of Kiddush, it's just wouldn't count as one of the four cups. Therefore, similar to drinking without reclining, you would just drink another cup after nightfall.

The Taz, however, has an entirely different understanding of the Shulchan Aruch's requiring us to wait unto nightfall for reciting kiddush. He says that it is a function of קידוש במקום סעודה.

The Pri Migadim explains this to mean that you can only fulfill kiddush at a time that you could fulfill the other mitzvot of the night, as the Gemara says, רק בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך. Since you only have the matzah and marror ready to eat after nightfall, making kiddush

by day would be kiddush סעודה שלא במקום סעודה. According to this, the Taz would argue with both of the practical ramifications above.

- 1) The requirement of reciting kiddush at night is only connected to the beginning time. Hence, there would be no need to finish the fourth cup by הצות.
- 2) Reciting kiddush early equals קידוש שלא במקום סעודה, which equals a zero. You would not have fulfilled anything not only would you have to drink another cup after dark, but you would have to repeat the entire kiddush.

### ותתן לנו ה' אלקנו...את יום חג המצות הזה

#### Rav Mirsky - הגדת הגיוני הגדה

Q: The Torah in (כג:טו) שמות and (כג:ו) ויקרא calls the yom tov חג המצות, so why did Chazal call it the yom tov of פסח?

A: Rav Levi Yizchak MiBerdichiv –explains that הקב"ה מתפאר בישראל, וישראל מתפאר בהקב"ה. We glorify each other. Just as we put on tefilin, Hashem puts on tefilin. In the tefilin of the Jews it says שמע ישראל ה' אחד, whereas in Hashem's tefilin it says מי כעמך ישראל גוי אחד בארץ.

Now we can understand that we call the yom tov, Pesach, to praise Hashem for what He did, passing over the home's of the Jews. While Hashem in the Torah calls it חג המצות to praise ישראל כלל for hurrying to keep the mitzvos by leaving Egypt immediately without delaying.

Perhaps this also explains why on Shavuos, in the davening we call it יום מתן תורתנו, whereas the Torah calls it חג הביכורים. Again, we call it יום מתן תורתנו to praise Hashem for giving us the Torah, whereas he calls it חג הביכורים to praise us for bringing our first fruits to Him.

## מגיד

### The Difference between זכירת יציאת מצרים and סיפור יציאת מצרים

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה

This is the text of the haggada, but the Mishna begins with the phrase מזכירין יציאת מצרים בלילות.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת ברכות דף יב עמוד ב

משנה. מזכירין יציאת מצרים בלילות. אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא. שנאמר: (דברים ט"ז) למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך. ימי חייך - הימים, כל ימי חייך - הלילות; וחכמים אומרים: ימי חייך - העולם הזה, כל - להביא לימות המשיח.

Q: What is this paragraph doing in the haggada? It has nothing to do with סיפור יציאת מצרים?

A: Rav Chaim Brisker says that this is here to show the contrast between the mitzvah of זכירת יציאת מצרים and סיפור יציאת מצרים.

With this in mind, it is important to distinguish between the mitzvah of זכירת יציאת מצרים which applies every day of the year, which we fulfill through reciting the last pasuk of שמע, and the mitzvah of סיפור יציאת מצרים of Pesach night. The following are some of the differences between the two mitzvos:

- a. פרי מגדים – a whole year each night you are יוצא by just thinking about י"מ, on Pesach you must verbalize it.
- b. מהר"ם שיק – a whole year all you need is a brief mention, (one פסוק), on Pesach you have to elaborate on the details.
- c. מהר"ל - חייב אדם לראות את עצמו – חייב להרגיש יציאת מצרים. עליו לרבוץ על המצות.
- d. Rav Chaim Brisker – On Pesach there are three essential components:
  1. מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח – פסח must show contrast
  2. Question and answer form
  3. Must be with the reasons for מצה, ומרור

רמב"ם הלכות חמץ ומצה פרק ז הלכה ה

כל מי שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בליל חמשה עשר לא יצא ידי חובתו ואלו הן, פסח מצה ומרור, פסח על שם שפסח המקום ב"ה על בתי אבותינו במצרים שנאמר (שמות י"ב) ואמרתם זבח פסח הוא לה' וגו', מרורים על שם שמררו המצרים את בני אבותינו במצרים, מצה על שם שנאלו, ודברים האלו כולן הן הנקראין

הגדה.

- e. הלל – On Pesach the discussion must end with הלל
- f. Rav Soloveitchik said that the mitzvah of זכירה is always done as part of קריאת שמע, part of קריאת שמע. On Pesach it is its own mitzvah.

**מה נשתנה****Rav Lopiansky in the name of the sefer שיר מען (Grandson of the Chasam Sofer)**

1. In the Gemara פסחים קטז. Where the original text of the מה נשתנה is found, we do not find the question of **ובין מסובין**, WHY?  
Furthermore, in that Gemara there is another question that we do not have; On all other nights we eat meat that is cooked in various ways (boiled, roasted, etc.) but tonight we only eat it roasted. WHY don't we have this in our haggada?
2. We know that the reason for הסיבה is to act like a king and to show we are בני חורין.
3. There is a halacha that whenever one eats קדשים (קרבות) he must eat it in a manner like a king.
4. The Gemara in Pesachim says that in the times of the המקדש בית the meat of the korban Pesach was eaten on the night of the seder.
5. Now we can answer our questions. The Mishna was talking in the times of the בית המקדש, where the children didn't ask about the reclining because everyone knew you had to recline for eating קדשים and that was not unusual. But nowadays, where we do not eat kodshim we do ask about the reclining. Furthermore, we omit the question of how the food is cooked because we do not eat the korban Pesach in the absence of the המקדש בית.

**עבדים היינו****שפתי חיים (דף שכג)****מעבדות פרעה לעבות ה'**

אנכי ה' אלקיך אשר הוצאתיך בארץ מצרים מבית עבדים (שמות כ:ב)

Hashem tells us that He saved us from being slaves to פרעה so that we can become 'עבדי ה'. Unlike the rest of the world who view not being slaves as the equivalent of freedom; in other words, free to do whatever you want whenever you want to. That is not how Judaism views חירות; we were freed to become slaves, but slaves of G-d.

We see this in the beginning of Hashem's appointment of Moshe, when it says,

"בהוצאתיך את העם ממצרים **תעבדון** את האלקים על ההר הזה..." (שמות ג:יב)

Rashi and the Sforno explain that Hashem says that the entire reason for taking the Jews out of Egypt was to bring them to הר סיני three months later to give them the Torah. We see עבדות = קבלת התורה.

Q: How exactly is עבדות about קבלת התורה?

A: Based on the Sforno you could say that עבדות = קבלת **עול** מלכות שמים. When a person accepts upon himself the entire Torah it is like an עול, a yoke, because I am accepting it whether it is easy for me or not, or whether it is good for me or not. Rather, like a slave who does what his master commands, without questioning why, or do I understand. That is what the Jewish people said at Har Sinai, נעשה ונשמע. First we will do and only afterwards will be try and learn the reasons for those commandments.

**המודה במצות ריבית מודה ביציאת מצרים**

פסיקתא זוטריתא פ' בהר

"את כספך לא תתן לו בנשך... אני ה' אלוקיכם אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים." (ויקרא כה:לז, לח)  
 From this פסוק, "we see that whoever accepts the yoke of the mitzvah of Ribis is accepting the yoke of עול מלכות שמים. And whoever rejects the mitzvah of Ribis is rejecting the yoke of עול מלכות שמים. And whoever accepts the mitzvah of Ribis is accepting יציאת מצרים, while those who reject the mitzvah of Ribis, are rejecting יציאת מצרים."

Q: What does this mean? What is the meaning of this comparison? Just because a person has issues with money and he can't forgo on charging his fellow Jew interest, does that mean that he denies the historical fact of יציאת מצרים?

A: The Maharal explains that Ribis is an עול on a person because it is against his טבע, his nature, and it is more of a yoke than any other mitzvah. Why? Because it is beneficial for both parties to charge interest; the lender obviously has to gain and the borrower would rather pay interest so he can get the loan. Therefore, it is a hard mitzvah because it is so beneficial to everyone involved. Therefore, when you lend money without charging interest, you are going against your nature and that is why it is compared to מקבל עולו של הקב"ה and it is like you are fulfilling the entire Torah. The opposite is also true. If you reject Ribis it is as if you reject עול מלכות שמים וכופר בכל התורה כולה. This is because the entire Torah is an עול של ה' and when you charge interest you reject the yoke of Hashem and with that you are considered rejecting the yoke of mitzvos because all mitzvos together = עולו של הקב"ה.

So rejecting Ribis does not mean you reject the historical facts of יציאת מצרים, but that is a rejection of the מהות של יציאת מצרים. Because had you felt what יציאת מצרים represents, then you would be prepared to accept the עול מצות in their completion, even mitzvos that you do not understand and that are against your nature.

**אדם לעמול יולד**

Rav Yisrael Salanter explains that this means that a person purpose in the world is to toil in fulfilling mitzvos and learning Torah. It is a lifelong battle of a מלחמת מצוה always trying to do what is expected of you. If you are rich, are you using your money the way Hashem wants you, if you are poor, how are you responding, etc. Our responsibility is to toil, the outcome is not always what is important, it is our effort that matters most. Our obligation is להתייגע בעבודת ה', but not just in the areas of things that are easy for us, but we have to toil in the areas that are harder for us and not in our nature to perform as well. G-d doesn't want our natures to be serving Him, he wants US to serve Him. That means or entire being.

R' Yisrael explains that that is the problem with many people. They do what is easy for them or they do what they seem to understand, but if it is against their nature or they do not understand, then they don't do it, they rationalize why they don't have to be concerned with it. But that is not serving Hashem! That is like serving your master half way. There is no such thing! So the חידוש is to serve Hashem in ways that are not as easy for us.

ואמרת לבנך עבדים היינו

"כי ישאלך בנך מחר לאמר מה העדות והחוקים והמשפטים אשר צוה ה' אלוקינו אתכם ואמרת לבנך עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים... (דברים ו:כ)

What do we answer our children? How do we answer the מה נשתנה?

We say עבדים היינו! That is it. We don't go into details, we just say that we are 'עבדי ה', that is the message to the children, that is what Pesach is all about. It is about קבלת עול מצוות. So going through Pesach without reaffirming our acceptance to improve in our mitzvah performance is to miss the entire point of the night. It is not an historical night. It is an experience. עצמו as the Rambam says. We have to relive the experience.

This also explains why it is so important to בשבה ומסיים בגנות. We have to start with the bad beginning so we can learn what real עבדות is all about. We don't really want to spend a happy night thinking about our idolatrous forefathers. But have to so that we can understand how to be עבדים. Especially for the generations that did not experience oppression. We need to learn how to be עבדים.

Our model for this is Moshe who was called an עבד נאמן.

We see this concept from Avraham in a similar way. The pasuk in בראשית יח:ב says, "...וישא עיניו וירא והנה שלשה אנשים נצבים עליו..." The meforshim all ask, why are the angels called men in the pasuk with Avraham, yet they are called angels in the pasuk by Lot?

Rashi gives two answers:

1. Because in Avraham's house the שכינה was present, so in comparison to Hashem, they were like men.
2. Since the angels were present by Avraham so often, אצלו קראם אנשים, to him they were like men.

What's Pshat?

Rav Soloveitchik in (עמוד 52) הרב דרשת says,

"Avraham lived his life as a true agent of G-d, totally dedicating himself to his assignment. Angels, whose very being is similarly dedicated, appeared to Avraham simply as peers, as men who did not seem extraordinary in any way. But in Sedom, a locale where man was completely self-centered, the concept of assignment was foreign. Lot had never construed his life as G-d's agent, and the strangers therefore appeared to him angelic."

The Rav further says (page 49) that,

"Every Jew was sent to earth as an agent of the creator. When a Jew sins, he violates not only the will of G-d but also the terms of his assignment. In halacha, a person's role as agent disappears the moment the sender wishes to terminate the agent's shlichut. A person exists on earth only as long as he pursues his mission.

There is a story from the שפת אמת that one sukkos he said that when you say הלל and say 'אנא ה', you have such incredible potential to influence the world. The next morning there was a מחלוקת amongst his חסידים whether he was talking about 'אנא ה' or הושיעה נא. So they had the שמש ask the Rebbi. He said everyone is wrong! He meant כי אני עבדך – אנא ה' – That is the point of life!

But we have to remember that in our service of Hashem not necessarily with our accomplishments, but with our effort. As The Rav says (דף 17) that "הקדושה נמדדת לא לפני מידת ההישגים ההיסטוריים, אלא לפי גודל מסירת נפש של היחיד."

### Rabbi Knobel

פרעה – Hashem took us out against the will of ביד חזקה

בזרוע נטויה - with supernatural manipulation – great miracles never to be seen again.

Ramban (Parshas Bo)

Q: Why are there so many מצוות מצרים ליציאת מצרים?

Why so much כרת relating to Pesach? The issar to eat chametz and someone who fails to eat the korban Pesach is חייב כרת, this and bris mila are the only עשה's for which there is a punishment of כרת.

A: אמונה בה' teaches us the fundamentals of יציאת מצרים.

There were all kinds of people who did not believe in Hashem. Some just didn't believe at all – the world has no creator. Others believe G-d created the world but chooses not to get involved. But יציאת מצרים teaches us that Hashem is involved and does care about us. If He made it, He can break it.

There are those people who say, if G-d really exists, let him do a miracle for me. No – He doesn't do miracles for anyone who wants it – rather, look at יציאת מצרים that shows us His involvement in the world.

But this may not be a lasting feeling, it has to be kept alive! That is why we have so many מצוות מצרים – לזכר יציאת מצרים – keep it alive! This is what זרוע נטויה

ואילו לא הוציא הקב"ה...עדין אנו ובנינו ובני בנינו משועבדים היינו במצרים

Q: How do you know we would still be slaves?

Q: How could it be true? Hashem promised Avraham at ברית בין הבתרים that we would be in Egypt for 400 years and then brought out?

A: Rabbi Yitzchak Knobel explains that it does not mean we would still be **enslaved**, for Pharoh could have let us out some other time. The word is not עבד, but משעבוד. Meaning indebted, had we gone out some other time we would be indebted to Pharoh for letting us go. In the way it happened we are forced to have gratitude to Hashem for taking us out. That is why the עשרת הדברות start with אשר הוצאתיך...אשר ה' אלקיך, to arouse our sense of gratitude towards Hashem.

Rabbi Sobolovsky added that משעבד means to the negative influences of Pharaoh and Egypt, we would have been so engrossed in that, we would not have been able to become כלל ישראל. This is the 49<sup>th</sup> level of טומאה. That's why it changes from עבדים to משעבדים.

**מצות סיפור יציאת מצרים כדי להרגיש כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים**  
**שפתי חיים דף שס"ג**

The הגדה states that “even if we were all wise,” we’d still have to discuss the story of יציאת מצרים. One might look at this line with bewilderment and question, what would have ever made me think that wise people do not have to discuss the story of the exodus? Are they not Jews with the Biblical obligation of סיפור יציאת מצרים?

Perhaps one might have thought that wise people only have the daily obligation of זכירת מצרים, but since the תורה says והיה כי ישאלך בנך and והגדת לבנך, perhaps the obligation on פסח night is just to teach people who do not know the story of the Exodus. For this reason the author of the הגדה says כולנו חכמים, כולנו נבונים, to teach us that even those who know every detail of the story must spend the night engrossed in the details of the story. A proof to this comes from the הגדה itself, when רבי אליעזר and the other Rabbis were up all night, they were alone, as it says עד שבאו תלמידים, until the students came in, implying they had not been there previously.

It is still possible to ask why are wise people obligated if they already know the story in full detail? The answer to this question, which is found in the גמרא, can really teach us the whole point of the seder. The גמרא in : פסחים דף קטז says, “ בכל דור חייב אדם ,” “In every generation, everyone must see himself as if he had gone out of Egypt.” This means that the עיקר מצוה of פסח is for man to understand the concept of reward and punishment. As the רמב"ן says in the end of פרשת בא, “ פרשת בא ,” “ לעמו ישראל בעבור ששבו אליו, ושמרו משמרתו, וזעקו אליו, והיה דבר שהיה לפני כמה שנים, שתעשה עליו רושם ההתפעלות הזאת שראוי להתפעל מזה.”

חז"ל gave us a way to feel this by painting a picture, our own picture of what it would be like if I were to be a slave. Then how would it feel to be freed, what would I be thinking about? I would ponder the greatness of the One who freed me. This is the way to fulfill the מצוה. Not by actually feeling as if I left, which is only possible for the great Rabbis of the generation. But for me, the average Jew, my obligation is to bring the miracles of יציאת מצרים as close to me as possible through painting my own individualized painting. This point is echoed in the writings of the רמב"ם where he uncharacteristically deviates from the exact language of the גמרא and writes “ בכל דור ודור חייב אדם ,” “ להראות את עצמו וכו' להראות ,” The גמרא had said להראות, to see. The רמב"ם is saying להראות, which means to do actions which will make us think and feel that we have gone from slavery to freedom. These actions are the מצוות הלילה , - סיפור י"מ, מרור, מצה,

and even reclining is done to help develop this feeling inside of us. To feel as if right now it is happening to us and by feeling this it should be מחזק us in our 'ה קבלת עבודת ה'.

The הגדה furthers this point by saying:

"וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משובח" that "the more one tells about the exodus, the more he is praiseworthy." Most מפרשים explain the word משובח to mean he is praised, but רב ירוחם the מיר משגיח מישבת מיר explains it in a completely different manner. משובח comes from the לשון משביח, that anyone who is מרבה ביציאת מצרים he himself is actually uplifted. This is because he has a clear picture in his mind and he reviews the details of the Exodus and this brings him to a הרגשת הלב that he has become a new and improved person.

Finally, once we have achieved this new level, we recognize what we must do next. "ה' לפיכך אנחנו חייבים להודות ולהלל" this helps us really feel the words of thanks to ה'. It is no longer just an abstract statement of seeing yourself come out of Egypt. It is now a growth experience of feeling the presence of ה' by doing the actions that help us paint a picture as if we actually are leaving Egypt at this very moment. May we all be זוכה to grow to such a level so that we can show ה' that we not only feel as if we left Egypt, but are also prepared to leave this גלות and return to our home in ירושלים.

#### הגדת מנחת אשר

אפילו כולנו חכמים...

Q: What is the difference between סיפור יציאת מצרים and זכירת י"מ?

A: זכירה = לדעת כדי להזכיר – is about knowledge

לספר כדי להרגיש = סיפור

Based on the Rambam, חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים,

And that is why even the elders and wise have to do this mitzvah – it is not about knowledge, they too have to feel it.

Q: What was the פטור הוה אמינה that they should be פטור?

Rabbi Sobolovsky suggested that one would have mistakenly thought that סיפור י"מ is just a subcategory of תלמוד תורה; so if you already know if, no need to do this. קמ"ל – no, it's not part of תלמוד תורה, it is a mitzvah of הכרת הטוב and the building of our emuna. This is not an intellectual mitzvah; it is a spiritual one.

### מעשה ברבי אליעזר...

#### הגדת חכמי ירושלים

1. Why did the הגדה בעל הגדה list the names of all five תנאים? Why not just say that there was a story with a few gedolim?
2. כהן? in תוספות quotes the Yerushalmi that says that רבי אליעזר was a כהן. The Gemara in (יא) בבא מציעא says that רבי יהושע was a לוי and רבי אליעזר בן עזריה was a כהן. The Gemara in (צו) סנהדרין says that רבי עקיבא was a גר.
3. Since גרים, לויים, and כהנים were not involved in the slavery of Egypt, you might think that they are not required to tell over the story. Therefore the Haggada tells us that these specific Rabbis were still required to tell over the story.
4. But after all, why are they obligated?  
Because the עיקר of מצרים is יציאת מצרים, and although they were not enslaved, כהנים and לויים were obligated to be עול מלכות שמים. And we know that הר סיני were with us at הר סיני. That is why they all are obligated.

#### הגדת מנחת אשר

מעשה ברבי אליעזר...

Q: Can you fulfill the mitzvah of סיפור י"מ by learning פסח הלכות פסח?

A: The Tosefta (ch.18) says that they were learning the laws of Pesach all night. Based on this, the גרי"י infers that you can fulfill the mitzvah with learning the laws.

However, others argue that if you were to only learn הלכות פסח you would not fulfill the mitzvah, rather you need to discuss the נסים ונפלאות that Hashem did for us. BUT the idea of הלכות פסח – that you can fulfill with learning הלכות פסח – is not the idea of משובח.

Q: If so, why were they learning the halachot all night?

A: you can say that רבי עקיבא ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה who were there had a dispute if the mitzvah of סיפור is up until הצות or is until השחר? As הצות approached, רבי אלעזר got up to go to the מדרש because according to him the mitzvah is over. Yet according to רבי עקיבא we have until dawn. So as a פשרה to keep רב"ע from leaving, they decided that since they were already יוצא סיפור, after הצות they learned only הלכות פסח which has within it תורה and סיפור י"מ.

(It is clear, however, that the story of the Tosefta is different from the story in the Hagaddah.)

**הגדת מהר"ל (דף סה')**

- Q: 1. Why these specific four sons?  
 2. Why is it a חכם רשע and not a צדיק רשע?  
 3. Why is the רשע discussed before the תם?

These describe four types of people:

1. A person who acquires knowledge because he constantly seeks it, looking for it even when it is not right in front of him and not so obviously there. This is the חכם because he acquires wisdom on his own accord. This is exactly how the Hagaddah describes his question. He asks about all the mitzvot! He asks not only what is in front of him and obvious, but he asks what does Hashem want of me?
  2. Another person just asks about what comes his way and what is in front of him. He does not seek out knowledge and seek to discover, but he asks the questions about what he sees. So he does not become a big חכם, but he also is not ignorant. This is the תם. Someone who does not want to lower himself, but he is also not seeking to grow higher. This is seen in his questions about what is different on this night of Pesach. Why is there Pesach, matzah, and marror?
  3. A third person is one who doesn't know to ask even if something weird goes on around him. He is the שאינו יודע לשאול. This explains why the Torah talks to him about the mitzvah of Matzah. He doesn't know anything, so we tell him about the matzah which is the quintessential mitzvah that sums up the miracles of יציאת מצרים.
  4. The fourth person is the exact opposite of the חכם. Just as the חכם goes out of his way to seek knowledge, the רשע seeks heretical thoughts and tries to convince himself and others why we should not believe in the Torah, or he distorts what the Torah really means. This is seen in his question about pesach, "what is this service?" This is "your" service, "I don't want any part in it."
1. This explains that we start with the חכם because this is what the Torah wants us to aspire to be. We do not have to all be wise or the biggest Rabbis in the world. The Torah simply wants us to emulate them and try to become as knowledgeable in Torah as possible. It is the personality that matters, not the actual knowledge.
  2. Then we talk about the exact opposite in the רשע. He has the same personality, but he uses it for the opposite goal.
  3. 4. After this we go in order.

**Rabbi Sobolovsky**

לפי שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל כפר בעיקר – רשע

Q: What's pshat? Why such a harsh description? Are all רשעים considered כופרים בעיקר?  
 The Rambam in hilchos Teshuva (based on ג"ם סנהדרין) says that כל ישראל יש להם חלק בעולם הבא, but there are a few exceptions. Even non-Jews can earn הבא, but they have to earn it; Jews get some share automatically unless they are in the following categories:

1. Someone who doesn't believe in the Torah



Most other Yomim Tovim are דווקא ביום and not at night (Shofar, Lulav, Megillah, Seudat Purim. Etc.) – but tonight is the exception. This is the only night that it is like יום. We even say הלל by night, even in many shuls! Hashem endowed this night with כחיות וכחות of יום – זמן גאולה – יום.

מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו...תרה אבי אברהם ואבי נחור

Q: What benefit do we gain by mentioning that our forefathers were idol worshipers? After all, Avraham rejected that and began monotheism? Why mention it on ליל פסח?

A: מכתב מאליהו - It is to teach us the strength of Avraham. That he stood up not only against his father and entire family, but he stood up against the entire world! We know how it feels to be an outsider, to be different from the group. That is true even in place where people are not so different. All the more so, when we stand out completely. That is why we mention this on ליל פסח, to teach us that the only way to represent Hashem is with complete stubbornness to only do the divine will. Avraham found G-d and then simply blocked everyone else out. He did not care what they thought. This is the formula for Jewish survival throughout the ages. We did not give in; we did not assimilate. We kept our clothes, language, and dress.

Q: Why does this pasuk focus on עשו and leave out ישמעאל?

The point of יציאת מצרים was to get the Jews to ארץ ישראל and ישמעאל was never part of the picture for that. The children of Eisav, however, had a chance to inherit part of Israel had they been ראוי. But the Gemara says that Eisav didn't want ארץ ישראל because of the high price tag of 210 years of שיעבוד. Instead, he got שעריר.

We are in ארץ ישראל because only the descendants of אברהם who had the rights to א"י! Eisav could have. ישמעאל never had a claim.

והיא שעמדה

ילקוט מעם לועז

Q: What is the connection between this and the previous paragraph? What is the "והיא"?

A: The previous paragraph discusses Hashem's appointment of Avraham and we know that at the הבתרים בין הבתרים Hashem promised Avraham he would become a great nation, he revealed to him all the future גליות, and that he would protect us from all future צרות.

That leads us into the next paragraph of צא ולמד, which discusses the harm לבן wanted to impose on Avraham's grandson Yaakov.

Rabbi Sobolovsky suggested a pshet'l that the "והיא" refers to the picking up of the wine. Wine has kept us alive because of the halacha of סתם יינם, it kept us separate from the non-Jews. סתם יינם אסור משום התנות. We have to always know our lines of demarcation.

ותמלא הארץ אתם – The בית הלוי explains that the Jews were getting caught up in the Egyptian culture and doing everything like the Egyptian. The Jews thought the more they assimilated and became friends with the non-Jews. But the more they got closer, the more

the Egyptians hated them. The story of Jewish History shows us that it is the opposite of what we might have thought.

## צא ולמד

### הגדת מנחת אשר

Q: What is the connection of Lavan to מצרים?

A: After saying בכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלתנו והקב"ה מצילנו מידם, we recognize that Hashem doesn't just save us from physical annihilation, but also from spiritual annihilation. In Egypt we were in danger of both; there was a decree against all the boys and we were kept from doing mitzvos. Tonight we are thanking Hashem for our physical פדות נשפנו as well as the גאולה.

Lavan, who only sought the to remove Torah is viewed as הכל לעקור את הכל.

Throughout Jewish history, we have had both of these dangers. Haman wanted to physically kill us, while the Greeks wanted to destroy us spiritually.

Similarly, the Nazis wanted the physical annihilation of the Jews, while Stalin and communism followed with the desire of our spiritual annihilation.

### ילקוט מעם לועז

In connection to previous paragraph, we see that Lavan wanted to harm Yaakov. When he chased after him, he says, "יש לאל ידי לעשות עמכם רע ואלקי אביכם אמש אמר לי לאמר השמר, לך מדבר עם יעקב מטוב ועד רע" (בראשית לא).

Lavan wanted to take everything from Yaakov and it was the promise to Avraham and that saved Yaakov.

We see this later when Yaakov tells his sons to go to Egypt,

"ויאמר הנה שמעתי כי יש שבר במצרים רדו שמה ושברו לנו מעט אוכל ונחיה ולא נמות. (בראשית מב) מצרים, but do not go down to ארם נהרים because that is where Lavan lived and he may try and get you into עבודה זרה. And I want ונחיה ולא נמות. בעולם הבא. So that phrase was not a fear of death from starvation, but of spiritual salvation if they go to ארם נהרים instead of מצרים.

### גדולי ישראל הגדה

The halacha is that if a man appoints an agent to betroth a women on his behalf, and the agent dies without ever informing him of who his betrothed is, the one appointing him may never marry. This is because we must be concerned that the women who he now wants to marry may be a close relative of the one to whom he is unknowingly betrothed (rendering his marriage incestuous). The Targum Yonasan 24:33, says that when Lavan placed food before Eliezer (who had come to betroth Rivka for Yitzchak), he intended to poison Eliezer. Had that plan succeeded, Yitzchak would have been forbidden to marry, and Avraham could not have had any descendants through him.

### ארמי אבד אבי, וירד מצרימה

Q: What is the connection between Lavan's attempt to destroy Yaakov and Yaakov's decent to Egypt?

A: גדולי ישראל הגדה – R' Yosef Beirav (Rebbi of R' Yosef Cairo) explains that had Lavan not deceitfully exchanged Leah for Rachel, Yaakov would have married Rachel first and Yosef would have been the firstborn. Then the other brothers would have accepted Yosef's right as firstborn. They would never had resented him nor sold him into slavery. Thus, the decent of Yaakov and his children to Egypt was a direct consequence of Lavan's deceitfulness.

Q: What would the Jews have looked like if פרעה had killed all the Jewish males?

A: Rabbi Sobolovsky quoted the בית הלוי who says that they would still have been Jewish because the קדושת ישראל goes by the mother (it is a מהלקת whether or not this began at or even before מתן תורה) – so imagine a people of Jewish woman and non-Jewish husbands. But the מלכות/כהונה goes by the father. So it was key that the מילדות saved us; they got מדה כנגד מדה. Jews would have lived on, but the כהונה would not have – so מדה כנגד מדה they inherited the כהונה

### ויגר שם

גר"א - had the distinct kavana to be there temporarily. Had he not, we would not have been able to leave.

### ויהי שם לגוי גדול...ובנ"י פרו וישרצו..

#### ילקוט מעם לועז

The Jews in Egypt were a unique nation in three ways:

1. שנעשו אומה מיוחדת – Even though they lived in Egypt and interacted with them on a daily basis, they did not assimilate with them as is most common amongst other nations. They were able to do this because they did not change their clothes, their Jewish names, and their language.
2. שנעשן אומה גדולה – Normally for a nation to grow, you need multiple groups of people to band together into one. The more people that come to the place the bigger it will get. But the Jews grew into a nation from within themselves.
3. שום אשה לא הפילה – in those days, women who gave birth to twins often lost one of them. Yet the entire time the Jews were in Egypt there was not one miscarriage and they delivered 6 at a time in many cases.

### ויעצמו במאד מאד

#### הגדת מנחת אשר

"וייטב אלקים למילדות וירב העם ויעצמו מאוד (שמות א:כ).

Q: What טובה did Hashem do to the midwives?

A: The אור החיים explains that when a person does a good deed, he is rewarded not only for the action, but anything else that sprouts forth from that action. So the midwives were not only rewarded for the lives they saved, but they were rewarded for all the generations that came from those children.

**ויענונו**

**הגדת מנחת אשר**

וישימו עליו שרי מסים למען ענותו בסבלותם (שמות א:יא)

Q: What is the big deal, all countries collect taxes? Why are we bemoaning the taxes we had to pay in Egypt?

A: Normally you pay taxes for the benefit of the citizens. This was not the case in Egypt; Pharaoh collected from us just to make the work harder for us, nothing was for our benefit.

**ואת עמלנו**

**הגדת מנחת אשר**

"אלו הבנים – כמה שנאמר, כל הבן הילוד היארה תשליכוהו וכל הבת תחיון" (שמות א:כב)

A few pesukim earlier it says ותראן המילדות את האלקים ולא עשו כאשר דבר אליהן מלך מצרים ותחיון את הילדים" (שמות א:יז)

Q: How does this show they feared Hashem? Even people who don't fear Hashem wouldn't kill innocent children?

A: The midwives knew that if it became known that they didn't kill the boys and they saved them, they would be killed themselves. They were מוסר נפש to save the boys. מסירה נפש is only a result of fear of Hashem. You could be the nicest person in the world with the best middos, but when faced with the choice of kill or be killed, only someone who fears Hashem could withstand that test.

**ובזרוע נטויה – זו החרב**

**הגדת מנחת אשר**

Q: What is חרב? There was no מכת חרב as part of the ten makkos?

A: Tosfos in Shabbos (פז: ד"ה ואותו) - says that the בכורי מצרים came to Pharaoh and told him to send out the Jews, but he did not listen to them. He didn't listen to them so they waged war on their fathers and killed many Egyptians – this was חרב.

**ובאתות זה המטה**

**הגדת מנחת אשר**

"לך אל פרעה הנה יוצא המימה ונצבת לקראתו על שפת היאור והמטה אשר נהפך לנחש תקח בידך" (שמות ז:טז)

כה אמר ה' בזאת תדע כי אני ה', הנה אנכי מכה במטה אשר בידי על המים אשר ביאור ונהפכו לדם (שם:יז)

Q: Why did Hashem have to say to take the stick נהפך לנחש, who cares about that now? And when Moshe spoke to Pharaoh he said במטה אשר בידי, הנה אנכי מכה במטה אשר בידי, why does Moshe feel the need to tell Pharaoh with what he will use to perform מכת דם?

A: The ספר פרדס יוסף על התורה says that Egyptians wouldn't believe a stick could turn into a snake, swallow the other snakes, and turn back into a stick. They would think that it was originally a snake, Moshe's "magic" turned it into a stick so that it would be normal when returning to a snake to swallow the others. That is why Moshe uses the staff now to hit the water, and since it did not switch back to a snake, it was showing the Egyptians that in fact the original act was a miracle and in fact it was a staff turned into a snake and it was all אצבע אלקים היא. This is why Hashem commanded Moshe to take the staff that was turned into a snake.

## דיינן

### הגדת מהר"ל

#### כמה מעלות...

They are called מעלות because they are steps, one building on the next, eventually leading to the building of the בית המקדש to atone for all of our sins. The number 15 is no coincidence. There are also 15 steps in the בית המקדש leading up from the עזרת נשים לעזרת ישראל and they correspond to the 15 שיר המעלות של תהילים. It is also the same 15 in the name of Hashem – י"ה. So too here, there are 15 levels that Hashem took us from the depths of our מצרים until finally the building of the בית המקדש. The 15 can be split into three groups of 5:

1-5) are all discussing what happened to us as we left the slavery of Egypt. All about our ending the slavery and oppression of the Egyptians.

6-10) Describes our elevation due to the miracles Hashem did for us all after we left Egypt. Starting with the splitting of the sea and leading to the מן in the מדבר.

11-15) Describe the whole purpose for Hashem taking us out and connecting to us – the מצות. That is the end of the list because there is nothing greater.

#### אילו קרבנו להר סיני ולא נתן לנו את התורה דיינן

#### ספר הררי קדם

Q: What is the pshat? What good is coming to the mountain without getting the Torah?

A: The pshat is that קרבנו להר סיני means had we gotten the תורה שבכתב, but not gotten the Torah She Beal Peh

## פסח in בית המקדש The Centrality of the

Based on a Shiur given by Rabbi Tzvi Romm in Bat Torah on Rosh Chodesh Nisaan 5763.  
He attributed much of the content of the shiur to Rav Meir Twerski.

Q: 1. לשנה הבאה בירושלים is said both at the end of the הגדה and at the conclusion of בני"כ. We always say אני מאמין משיח every day, why are these two days unique to require us to say ...באה?

Q: 2. The theme of דיינו is if Hashem had only done \_\_\_\_\_, that would have been enough, but since He did all these things we have to be that much more thankful. But דינו ends with if Hashem had just brought us to ארץ ישראל and built the בית הבחירה that would have been enough. It seems strange to include the building of the בית המקדש which happened so long after יציאת מצרים, and then we stop. Why not mention all the other great things Hashem has done for us throughout history?

Q: 3. זכר למקדש כהלל - כורך. There are other mitzvot we do throughout the year as a זכר למקדש, for example לולב. התורה מן הגדה it is only a mitzvah on the 1st day of Succot, but since in the בית המקדש they took the לולב all seven days, we make a זכר למקדש all seven too. So why don't we say a זכר למקדש paragraph by לולב or any other similar type of mitzvot and yet we do it by כורך?

Q: 4. If you were to write the הגדה for someone who knew nothing about יציאת מצרים, you probably would not choose the parts that we have in our הגדה, because they do not really explain יציאת מצרים. Our הגדה uses the portion dealing with בכורים where you have a passage describing יציאת מצרים, but I would probably have chosen פרשת שמות, which more directly and thoroughly explains the story and process of יציאת מצרים. So why did the הגדה בעל choose the portion of בכורים?

A: When the Jews crossed the ים סוף, we perceive that to be the גאולה, we were free and the Egyptians are gone. But that is not true, we were only free physically, but we were not yet redeemed spiritually to become the people of Hashem. The fourth of the הגאולה is ולקחתי לכם לעם, based on the phrase ולקחתי לשונות הגאולה. So the culmination of יציאת מצרים was when the Jews were singled out as Hashem's nation. In one sense that is at מתן תורה - מלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש - But part two is through the building of the בית המקדש. Only after Hashem creates the vehicle for us to get to Him, only then are we finally redeemed from מצרים.

- מלכים א פרק ו פסוק א'  
ויהי בשמונים שנה וארבע מאות שנה לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים בשנה הרביעית בחדש זה הוא החודש השני למלך שלמה על ישראל ויבן הבית לדוד.

We see the **בית המקדש** בנין is dated 480 years after **יצאת מצרים** and not based the “x” year the King as is usual in נ”ך. Why date it to something that happened 480 years ago? Clearly the **נביא** is showing us that **יצאת מצרים** was not complete until בנין בית המקדש.

We are now prepared to answer the four questions.

1. **לשנה הבאה** - We say it on **פסח** because now we don’t have the **בית המקדש**, so on some level our seder is incomplete. So we say **לשנה הבאה בירושלים**; hoping to be in **ירושלים** for next year’s seder. So too on **יום כיפור**. **נעילת יום כיפור** The **עבודה של מוסף**, which is the hardest part of the davening, but yet the most important part of **יו”כ** because it brought automatic **כפרה** for us. We don’t have that anymore, so our **יו”כ** is lacking. So too, we pray **לשנה הבאה בירושלים** where we can keep **יו”כ** in its complete form. We say a **זכר למקדש** because tonight is all about the **בית המקדש**. We call attention to it as much as we can. **דיינו** stops at the **בית המקדש** because that is the conclusion of **יצאת מצרים**.

Why the parsha of **בכורים**? Because just learning **ספר שמות** would not be enough for it does not make any mention of the **בית המקדש**. The parsha of **בכורים** is the only place in the Torah that mentions **יצאת מצרים** with the **בית המקדש**.

We sit down at the seder with the **בית המקדש** and the **פסח קרבן** missing. Our seder is incomplete; it is a half of a seder. That should help us realize the relevance of the **בית המקדש** in our lives.

We know **העומר** **ספירת העומר** is a sad period because of the loss of the 24,000 students of **רבי עקיבא** who were **זה בזה** **לא נוהגו כבוד זה בזה**. I agree that is tragic, but considering that we only have three weeks to mourn the **בית המקדש**, five weeks for the deaths of **ר”ע**’s students seems to be a bit much? During the time of the **בית המקדש**, the period between **פסח** and **שבועות** must have been the happiest time. But once we lost the **בית המקדש** that happiness was taken away. It was not neutralized, but it actually reversed to a depressing time. **למשל**, a wedding anniversary is the happiest day of the year for all married couples, yet when the spouse dies, it becomes the saddest day of the year for the surviving spouse. So during **ספירה** we are mourning the **בית המקדש**.

Then what do the **תלמידי ר”ע** have to do with it? The Gemara in **ברכות** says that after the **בית המקדש** was destroyed, Hashem’s presence can only be found in the **בית מדרש**. **ר”ע** was the one who was keeping the banner of Torah going in that time period. So when his 24,000 students died, the last vestage of Hashem’s presence was gone. It was the last bit of the **בית המקדש** and now it was gone. So we mourn the loss of the Torah that was the last peice we had of the **בית המקדש**.

## מוציא מצה

### בענין לחם משנה בליל הסדר

The custom of most Jews on Pesach night is to make a bracha on three matzot. This is based on the opinion of Tosfot (Pesachim 116) and is brought down in Shulchan Aruch as mainstream halacha. The apparent reason for three matzot is as follows. One matzah is required to fulfill the law of לחם עני, the poor mans bread, which is to eat broken pieces of bread. Hence, that is why we break one matzah at יחץ. But like all other Yomim Tovim, we need לחם משנה, and therefore we need an additional two matzot. This also explains why the practice is to take all three matzot in hand for the recital of the first bracha, לחם עוני מן הארץ, and then we drop the bottom matzah, no longer needing the לחם משנה, and make the מצה על אכילת מצה on just the top two.

However, an analysis of the Rambam (חמץ ומצה ח:ו) yields a different result.

"ולוקח שני ריקיין וחולק אחד מהן ומניח פרום לתוך שלם ומברך המוציא..."

It seems that the Ramabam's practice was to take just two matzot at the סדר, and nevertheless, he broke one of them at יחץ as well. What about the need to have two full matzot for לחם עוני? The Rambam explains that the special Pesach law of לחם עוני overrides the law of שלימות, or complete loaves that are normally required of לחם משנה. Therefore, only two matzot are necessary and the usual לחם משנה is not required in deference to the need of לחם עוני.

One could ask on the Rambam, if in fact there is no need of שלימות בלחם משנה, then why require two matzot, so that the bracha be made on one whole and one broken matzah? Just make the bracha on the two broken pieces? After all, לחם עוני overrides the need for full לחם משנה?

Rav Soloveitchik explains that an analysis of the Gemara in Brachot (39b) will shed light on the true meaning behind the opinion of the Ramabam. The Gemara there has a debate in the case where an individual has before him, during a weekday meal large broken pieces of bread and small whole loaves of bread. The Gemara questions over which one should the bracha be recited? One opinion says that you can choose whichever you prefer, while the other opinion says the complete loaves take precedence even if they are smaller. Yet, everyone would agree that if they were the same size, the complete loaves take precedence. The argument is only where the whole loaves are smaller than the broken pieces. The Rambam himself quotes this as halacha in hilchot brachot (7:4), that even during the week, it is preferable to make the bracha on a whole loaf.

Based on this, Rav Soloveitchik explained that the reason the Rambam requires one full matzah at the סדר to go along with the פרוסה has nothing to do with the law of לחם משנה, but rather, it has to do with the halacha that applies every day of the year, that it is always preferable to make a bracha over a whole loaf. So the law of לחם עוני has the ability to override the need for לחם משנה, having two loaves, but the need to have whole loaves is a weekday law, that cannot be overridden by the yom tov law of לחם עוני. The special yom tov law of Pesach can override the general law of yom tov, but it does not

have the power to override the general weekday law of שלימות. That explains why the Rambam required one full and one broken matzah and having two broken matzot would not be correct. It is one broken matzah for לחם עוני and one whole one for שלימות. Our custom based on Tosfot obviously assumes that the law of לחם עוני is an additional requirement, not one that should override the requirement of לחם משנה. Hence, we accomplish both. We take three matzot, one broken for לחם עוני and two whole for לחם משנה בשלימות.

## ספירת העומר

### Maintaining the Continuity

With Pesach in our rearview mirror we begin the race to Shavuot. We may not be sure if it is bubby's cheesecake or our internal desire for matan Torah; nevertheless, we eagerly count down the days to Shavuot. It is this countdown, or the mitzvah of Sefirat Haomer that occupies our thoughts as Shavuot approaches.

As we all know, there is a mitzvah to count the omer every night. However, on occasion it is possible that someone might forget to count one night and is then left with the dilemma of what to do from that night onward. Tosfot in Mesechet Menachot (66a) quotes the opinion of the Ba'al Halachot Gedolot who says that if you miss an entire days count (both that night and the entire next day) you can no longer continue to count. He reasons that the Torah describes these seven weeks of Sefirah to be Temmimot, or complete. Thus requiring you to have a complete count, so missing even one day will prevent you from fulfilling the mitzvah. Tosfot, however, disagrees and allow you to continue counting future days (even with a brocha) despite missing an entire day.

The classical approach to understanding this machloket is whether to look at the seven week period of the omer as one big seven week mitzvah with forty-nine little parts, or to view it as forty-nine separate and independent mitzvot. Apparently, the Ba'al Halachot Gedolot sees it as one big mitzvah, and therefore, once you miss one day you have lost out on the mitzvah entirely (even counting without a brocho would be meaningless according to this position). The Pri Migadim adds that according the Bahag, all the brochos from the days you counted before the missed day retroactively become brochos l'vatalot. Tosfot, on the other hand looks at Sefirah as forty-nine separate mitzvot and therefore, just because you missed out on one day, does not affect you on the next day. Therefore, one should continue to count with a brocha.

Halacha L'maaseh, the majority of the Rishonim rule like Tosfot that one should continue to count the remaining days of the omer. However, the Shulchan Aruch (489/7) rules that although we should continue to count, in deference to Bahag, we should not make a brocha. This is the accepted custom.

There is however, a difficulty that this classical interpretation encounters. Are we to believe that the Bahag really believes that if you miss one full day you have missed

your chance? Have you really lost the entire mitzvah of Sefirat Haomer? And are we to believe that if one misses day 49 that he now has rendered the first 48 brochos in vain?

Although I never had the great zechut of hearing the shiurim of Harav Hagaon Rav Yosef Dov Halevi Sloveitchik, I have had the opportunity to hear a number of my Rebbeim recount The Rav's novel approach to understanding the shita of the Ba'al Halachot Gedolot. The Rav maintained that even the Bahag agrees that each of the forty-nine days is a separate mitzvah, the best proof that everyone must agree to this is that Chazal declared that a brocha should be recited on each of the forty-nine nights. If the classical interpretation was correct, the Bahag should have held that only one brocha be recited for all forty-nine days. If this is true, then why does the Bahag not allow you to continue counting if you missed a complete day? The Rav explained that the Bahag was of the opinion that despite the fact that each day is a separate mitzvah, the counting must be *sequential*. If one were to count day 1,2,3,4,6, the sequence is impaired so by missing day 5 one can no longer continue to count in the future. However, that which you counted correctly maintains intact, those days (in our example days 1-4) were done in perfect sequence, the Bahag was only concerned about the future counting.

The Rav brings a proof to his explanation by looking at another comment of the Bahag. The Bahag rules that if one forgot to count at night, but realizes it the next day, he may count, but **without** a brocha. One should ask, what halachic opinion would say that you can fulfill the mitzvah during the day, just don't make a brocha? The Rav explained that this makes perfect sense with what we said before. You count during the day merely to maintain the continuity, the sequence, but you are not fulfilling that day's mitzvah. So although we missed out on that day's mitzvah by not counting at night, we at least maintain the sequence that allows us to continue counting in the future.

This novel explanation has a number of practical ramifications. There is a well known halacha that an Onen (a person who has lost a close relative who is lying in the period between the death and the burial) is not permitted to do mitzvos. The Nodah B'yehuda (siman 27) therefore asks, what is an Onen to do during sefirah? Many poskim maintain that if one becomes an Onen during sefirah he is not permitted to count the omer because doing so is a mitzvah. Moreover, if someone is in the unfortunate position Lo Aleinu, with a close relative on their death bed just before Pesach, perhaps the relative should not even begin to count Sefira from the first night? This is because according to the Pri Migadim cited above if on day ten this person becomes an Onen and may not have the ability to count, this would make the first ten brochos l'vatala. Similarly, if someone is scheduled for surgery during the Omer and due to the time of the procedure and the recovery period, it may be possible that he may miss an entire day's counting, once again, perhaps he should not even begin counting on day one? In fact, most Poskim would rule like the Pri Migadim.

However, if we understand the Bahag like Rav Soloveitchik did, then our conclusion would be completely different. First of all, an Onen does not have to ever miss out on counting Sefira. Tell him not to count at night since doing so would be performing a mitzvah which he is not allowed to do, rather let him count during the daytime **without** a brocha. In this way he can maintain his sequence which will allow him to continue counting normally when his Onen period ends. And furthermore, with a relative on their deathbed or with one scheduled to have surgery there is no reason not to count from the beginning. Even if they do miss a complete day, according to The Rav's

explanation of the Bahag what was counted originally is still intact contrary to the ruling of the Pri Migadim.

It goes without saying that in the above cases, one should consult with his posek to determine the correct path of action. Some may rule like Rav Soloveitchik, but I suppose many would be hesitant to dismiss the words of the great Pri Migadim. There is however, one practical point that I believe we can all glean from the explanation of Rav Soloveitchik. That is that even the Bahag agrees that it is a mitzvah each and every day to count the omer. And even if we miss a complete days counting, we must not give up and assume that we have lost our chance. We must strengthen ourselves and begin the count again showing that we can not wait to receive the Shechinah of Hashem on Shavuot.