

מצות סיפור יציאת מצרים

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In the Halachos of Pesach the Rambam paskens that at the seder a person is מחויב to talk about and discuss all the נסים ונפלאות that happened to us when we went out of מצרים. Of course, this is what the Torah adjoins us to do, but the question that seems to arise is why isn't this true by other טובים יומים? What's the lesson to be learned from this special גזירת הכתוב by Pesach? On Sukkos we don't discuss how Hashem protected us in the Midbar with the ענני הכבוד or in סכות. Likewise, by Shavuos there is no halacha to sit around the table and discuss מתן תורה and קבלת התורה, with the קולות וברקים and all that took place there. What is special about Pesach that we have such a mitzvah to *discuss* what happened?

The first step in answering this is mentioning the special mitzvah on Pesach of מצרים - one must see himself as if he personally left מצרים. As the posuk (שמות יג, ח) says "בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי...", we tell our children that this is what Hashem did to **me** when He took **me** out of מצרים. Now, that in itself is a hard thing to accomplish. I can tell my children that I came out of England, or a person from Iran can tell his children he came out from Iran, or one who came out from Hungary, etc. How do we say that we came out of מצרים? Who are we kidding? That is a separate issue and perhaps we'll discuss that a different time. All in all, one must imagine that he himself came out of מצרים and this is why we must discuss it. How else could we imagine and picture ourselves as coming out of מצרים if we don't talk about it? This could be why there is an inyan of משובח הרי זה, the more the merrier, so to speak. There is no such inyan by shaking lulav, you don't get a bigger mitzvah for shaking it five or six times. Other mitzvos as well don't have this added dimension, why is סיפור יציאת מצרים different? פשוט is that the more you talk about it, the more you will feel it personally and the closer you will get to achieving the goal of seeing yourself as having left מצרים. In fact, the Rambam even says that if one has an עבד, he must point to him and tell his children that we were like that before we left מצרים.

It's well known, and I heard it for the first time from the ראש ישיבה ר' רודערמאן זצ"ל, that there's a יסוד in the Jewish calendar that dates are not merely historical commemorations, rather something much greater is present. In the secular calendar, historical events are celebrated simply as anniversaries of things that happened way back when. On July 4th America celebrates that the British gave independence to the colonies and people celebrate with fireworks and barbeques. In France, they have Bastille Day to commemorate the French Revolution. However, by the Jewish calendar it is a re-living of the event every single year. The השפעה of what happened in the original event returns at that particular time of the year. This is why we have

the halacha of pushing off a court case with a gentile until after the Nine Days, because in Av there is a negative השפעה and a zman of דין ועונש. This comes from the sad history we've had in this month. Conversely, Purim falling in Adar makes it the month that one should have his court case with a Gentile in, because of the השפעה of the זמן של שמחה. Whatever טוב יום happened, we are reliving its השפעה at present. I think this idea really explains the חיב אדם לראות את עצמו. Let's take Sukkos for example- what happened on Sukkos? Hashem protected us from the elements, the sun, the cold, the wind, therefore that zman became a time of protection. What better way could we have to be מקבל that השפעה than sitting outside in our Sukkah? We move from our דירת קבע into דירת עראי, under this shaky roof with frail walls, and we show הקב"ה that just as He protected us then He's protecting us again. By Shavuos, we were מקבל the תורה and we harness that השפעה by staying up all night and learning Torah. We all know from our yeshiva days that the night of Shavuos, staying up learning, has a totally different התמדה than the rest of the year. It's a whole different level of learning because it is the zman of נתינת התורה.

What happened of Pesach? What is the השפעה that took place on Pesach? The posuk (שמות ו, ז) says "ולקחתי אתכם לי לעם" - *I am going to take you and make you my nation*. Besides the physical יציאת מצרים that took place, we changed by becoming the עם ישראל - transitioning from בני יעקב to עם ישראל. That is the השפעה of Pesach. The marriage, כביכול, of Hashem to us, as the נצי"ב learns- Pesach was the נישואין and Shavuos was the שיר השירים on Pesach- this is the zman that started our relationship with הקב"ה.

How are we to be מקבל this השפעה? How do we reignite the fire within us to become the עם ה' ? We go back and see how we originally did it. We can only accomplish it by going back into and coming out of מצרים. The Exodus, the לכתך following Hashem into the desolate Midbar in blind faith, that is what made us עם ה'. Every Pesach this השפעה comes back and we must harness it by utilizing the seder as transporting ourselves to יציאת מצרים. We must relive it and do so with the medium of יצא ממצרים הוא יצא ממצרים. We eat maror, we lean, we do all these things to put us into the mentality that Hashem did it to (and for) us personally. From this comes a gevaltige zach: The whole seder and hagadah is not just a recounting of יציאת מצרים. It is an actual renewal of becoming עם ה', and we even sing שיר ושבח after going through and 'reliving' the יציאת מצרים at our seder. Our own relationship with Hashem becomes much more profound and develops a much deeper bond.

We should all be zoche to accomplish this חיב אדם לראות את עצמו and as we say at the end of the hagada- לשנה הבאה בירושלם. This should be the year in which we return to the בית המקדש and have the ultimate tie and relationship to the רבונו של עולם.

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