

**SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE****PESAH****APRIL 3-11, 2015 15-22 NISAN 5775****DEDICATIONS: In memory of Nisim Ben Sarah**For a text reminder to count the omer visit: <http://www.tizkor.com/sefira>

This weekend is the second half of the Pesah Holiday, with Shevi'el shel Pesah, which commemorates the Splitting of the Sea.

**WE EXPECT A LIGHT CROWD AND NEED HELP WITH MINYAN THIS EVENING AND THIS WEEKEND**

Please do not forget to make the Eruv Tavshilin click here in order to cook on Friday for Shabbat.

Candle lighting on Thursday is at 7:11 PM. Minha will be at 6:45 on Thursday afternoon. We should be finishing services at around 7:30 PM. ....Count Omer after 8 PM

**Thursday, April 9th**

**Sixth Day of Pesah- Hol Hamoed**

**Please remember to prepare Eruv Tavshilin**

**Candle Lighting 7:11 pm**

**Minha and Arbit 6:45 pm**

**Friday, April 10th**

**Happy Birthday to Chantelle and Hindy!**

**Second Day of Pesah**

**Tikun Shevii Shel Pesach – TBA**

**Shahrit 8:30 am ( no morning class)**

**Minha, Kabbalat Shabbat & Arbit 7:00 pm**

**Light Candles at 7:11PM**

**Shabbat, April 11th**

**Eighth Day of Pesah**

**Shahrit 8:30 am ( no morning class)**

**YIZKOR by 10:30AM – Please arrive early**

**Minha 6:30 pm**

**Seudat Shelishi 7:00 pm with a class with Rabbi David**

**Arbit 8:00PM**

**Holiday ends 8:11PM**

**Please wait until 10PM for Rabbi Mann to purchase back Hametz**

**Please sponsor a Kiddush or Seudah Shelishi or breakfast in memory or in honor of a loved one.**

**Our weekly Kiddush will be subject to sponsorship. We would love to see the sponsorship board filled.**

**Dairy Kiddush sponsorship will be \$300, \$400 for Deluxe and \$ 500 for Super Deluxe**

**Meat Kiddush sponsorship will be \$400, \$600 for Deluxe and \$1000 for Super Deluxe**

**Seuda Shelishi at \$100 for the class each week. And Sunday and weekday breakfasts are \$100 ea**

**Children's afternoon program with the Bach at Sephardic March, April and May will continue next week**

**Breakfast and Sunday morning class Sunday at 9AM**

**We would like to do Sunday Mincha and Arbit at 7:00PM**



Elianne

Rivka

David

Yehoshua

Moshe

Sarah

Yaacov

## TRAGEDY HAS STRUCK OUR COMMUNITY

**We must not let this message be lost.  
Please help perpetuate the neshamos of the 7 Sassoon  
children lost in the tragic fire.**

In memory of the children, the family has established a special memorial fund that is dedicated to families struggling under the extreme financial burden with Yeshiva tuition. The Sassoon Children Memorial Education Fund has no overhead or expenses. 100% of your donation will help children continue to receive the best education, in memory of those lost.

**Please donate generously today!**

\_\_\_ Sponsor one child for a Week \$180

\_\_\_ Sponsor one child for a Month \$3,600

\_\_\_ Sponsor one child for a Year \$12,000

**Every dollar counts, every donation is appreciated.**

**I want to help perpetuate the memories of the 7 children, charge my card  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ now, or \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month.**

**Credit Card Information** Visa/MasterCard/American Express/Discover

Name:	Phone:	Credit Card Number:	Exp Date: __/__/__
-------	--------	---------------------	--------------------

**Donate online: [sassoonchildrenfund.com](http://sassoonchildrenfund.com) or call 866-580-4523.**

**The Sassoon Children Memorial Education Fund**

**is the only fund approved by the victims' family.**

**Please make checks payable/or send this form to:**

**Sassoon Children Memorial Education Fund  
c/o Rabbi David Ozeri, 2220 Ave L, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210  
or fax 212-239-4277**

**Prominent community Rabbis will oversee the fund together with the Jemal family.**

**Please continue to pray for the injured family members:  
Gila bat Frances Tzipporah and Tzipporah bat Gila**

The 2015 World Zionist Congress – Ohavei Zion internal form  
Please fill out and either fax to 212-289-2101 or email to [ana.eliyahu@gmail.com](mailto:ana.eliyahu@gmail.com)

**We cast our vote for slate #5 - Ohavei Zion World Sephardic Zionist Org. - [www.wszo.org](http://www.wszo.org)**

**Required Personal Information (Please print clearly)**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Age, are you under 30 years: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Billing Address (Same as CC/Checking Acct):**

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address (if different than Billing):**

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fee: \$10.00 or \$5.00 (Age 30 and below)**

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse and Children**

1) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Under 30 yrs old? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Under 30 yrs old? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

3) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Under 30 yrs old? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Jerusalem Program**

I declare that I accept the Jerusalem Program (below); I am Jewish; I will be at least 18 years of age by June 30, 2015; my permanent residence is in the United States; and I will not/did not vote in the March 2015 Israeli Knesset election.

Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, brought about the establishment of the State of Israel, and views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future.

**The foundations of Zionism are:**

1. The unity of the Jewish people, its bond to its historic homeland Eretz Yisrael, and the centrality of the State of Israel and Jerusalem, its capital, in the life of the nation.
2. Aliyah to Israel from all countries and the effective integration of all immigrants into Israeli Society.
3. Strengthening Israel as a Jewish, Zionist and democratic state and shaping it as an exemplary society with a unique moral and spiritual character, marked by mutual respect for the multi-faceted Jewish people, rooted in the vision of the prophets, striving for peace and contributing to the betterment of the world.
4. Ensuring the future and the distinctiveness of the Jewish people by furthering Jewish, Hebrew and Zionist education, fostering spiritual and cultural values and teaching Hebrew as the national language.
5. Nurturing mutual Jewish responsibility, defending the rights of Jews as individuals and as a nation, representing the national Zionist interests of the Jewish people, and struggling against all manifestations of anti-Semitism.
6. Settling the country as an expression of practical Zionism.

**By checking this box, I certify that the above statement is true.**

To subscribe or to unsubscribe, please reply to  
[ShabbatShalomNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ShabbatShalomNewsletter@gmail.com)  
 Newsletter archives now at [BenaiAsher.Org](http://BenaiAsher.Org)

**Daily Minyan Mon – Thurs at 979 Third Avenue,  
 17th Floor, Artistic Frame at 4PM – Please join us!  
 212-289-2100 – Mincha– The most important  
 tefilah of the day –Give us 11 minutes and we'll  
 give you the World To Come!**

### Editors Notes

In memory of their nieces and nephews, and with a prayer towards a refuah shelemah for their sister Gilah Bat Frances and their niece Siporah bat Gilah, my dear friends, Elliott, Saul and Michael Jemal together with their extended effort would like to invite all of us to get involved in tackling a monumental problem - the tuition crisis.

Elliott writes: *We are starting with our community! We are the test pilot. Anyone that can join and contribute and not let the message pass by will be zoche BH – Please see the attached flyer which has been running in many orthodox periodicals. Everyone is invited to help in any way possible. We are working with the schools in our community on making this a long term commitment. All funds will be allocated back to ALL our schools equally on a per student basis. The message is Ahava and respect of each other's children and schools and religious level of observance. May we see the end of all Tzarot. Besorot Tovot*

So many of you asked, "What can I do"? So many asked, "Where can I donate to"? Realize that the Sassoon family is not asking for anything for themselves. They want to do what they can for others.

I was very moved when I heard Rabbi Yedid speak about the project last week and that each of us must do something. Rabbi Yedid suggested that if 5000 families each committed \$100 monthly to the fund, we would have \$6,000,000 in a year for the yeshivot. Chantelle and I are fully committed to be a part of this project and we will be one of those 5000, and we invite you to join as well.

Perhaps seeing that \$100 charge each month will be a steadfast reminder to us to do as Gabby Sassoon asked us, "to kiss, to hug and to love our own children".

The Sassoon Children Memorial Education Fund has no overhead or expenses. 100% of your donation will help children continue to receive the best education, in memory of those lost. In memory of Elianne, Rivka, David, Yehoshua, Moshe, Sara and Yaakov, won't you join?

Shabbat Shalom,  
 David Bibi

PS .... At the same time with only 20 days left consider voting and reaching out to others to vote for Ohavei Zion in the World Jewish Congress Elections. If you consider the thought that with only 35000 votes cast nationally to date, if we had 5000 families simply vote with four votes per family, that's 20,000 votes and we would have a major say in the distribution of hundreds of millions of dollars has been set aside for Jewish education in the Diaspora. If we really come together in the next three weeks it will mean that our Yeshivot might not get just 6 million, but possibly 60 million or more. It costs only \$10 to vote and still we are not convincing people.

As I have written again and again, with mounting scholarship requests, we long for assistance for our schools, our children and their parents. But help is there and we simply don't take it. Hundreds of millions of dollars has been set aside for Jewish education in the Diaspora. Because we don't step up and vote, that money is being directed by our reform and conservative neighbors to their schools, to their synagogues and to their programs. Isn't it time that we woke up and took our seat at the table? Vote in the World Zionist Organization's election.

Visit [www.myvoteourisrael.com](http://www.myvoteourisrael.com) and cast a ballot for the slate of our World Sephardic Zionist Organization – Ohavei Zion. For our children's sake, help us cash in that lottery ticket. Spread this message and get everyone on your own lists to vote. For more information visit [ohaveizion.com](http://ohaveizion.com) or contact Lana Eliyahu at [ana.eliyahu@gmail.com](mailto:ana.eliyahu@gmail.com). I have attached a form that you can use and either email back to Lana or fax to 212-289-2101. Its worth so much and takes so little!

**Post Editorial Board  
 April 7, 2015 | 7:13pm**

Thousands of Palestinians face a humanitarian crisis that one official calls "beyond inhumane," including rapes, beheadings and mass starvation.

Yet for once this suffering has brought no mass public outcry — no angry rallies in the streets or on college campuses, no calls for economic sanctions.

Not even a Twitter hashtag campaign.

Why? Because Israel has nothing to do with this nightmare. Not until Monday did the UN Security Council convene to discuss the ongoing tragedy at Yarmouk, a Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus,

Syria, just a few miles from President Bashar al-Assad's palace.

Set up decades ago, Yarmouk is now home to 18,000 Palestinians. They've been besieged throughout the long Syrian civil war — but now they've become virtual prisoners since ISIS entered the camp last week.

In that brief time, reports say, more than 1,000 have been killed. Those who remain are shut off without water and medical supplies, forced to live on a "bare survival" 400 calories a day.

One UN relief official calls the situation "beyond inhumane" and "completely catastrophic."

But the Security Council — which routinely convenes in a matter of hours to harangue Israel over what it perceives as the slightest infraction — has done little more than receive a video briefing.

The situation in Yarmouk, according to a spokesman for the UN's refugee agency, is "a test of the entire international system."

If so, it's a test the world community is failing — thanks to its own hypocrisy.

That's especially true of the left, and the officials, celebrities and political activists who are so quick to condemn Israel but can't be bothered to even peep over the crisis in Yarmouk.

So much for the rallying cry — heard at deafening volume during last summer's war in Gaza — that "Palestinian lives matter."

They do — but only, apparently, when Israel can be blamed

### **RABBI ELI MANSOUR Eliminating Hametz, Eliminating Complacency**

The prohibition of Hametz on Pesah differs fundamentally from other Torah prohibitions. The punishment for eating Hametz on Pesah is Karet (external excision from the Jewish people), the most severe of all the punishments. Furthermore, the Torah forbids not only eating Hametz, but even possessing Hametz. It is entirely permissible to keep ham in one's house; Hametz, however, must be eliminated before Pesah. Additionally, unlike other forbidden foods, Hametz is forbidden on Pesah in even the smallest quantity. If a tiny morsel of Hametz mixes with food, it is all forbidden. This is as opposed to other forbidden foods, which do not

render a mixture forbidden if they comprise one-sixtieth or less of the mixture.

Why does the Torah treat Hametz so severely? What message does the Torah convey by commanding us to completely eliminate Hametz during Pesah?

The answer lies in the difference between a Masa factory and a bakery.

Anyone who visits a Masa factory during operation will immediately be struck by the intense flurry of activity that characterizes this process. Dough is considered Hametz if it is left unbaked for eighteen minutes after the water has mixed with the flour, or if it is left alone for a few moments without being worked. Therefore, once the water is poured into the big bowl of flour, the factory staff works feverishly, without resting for a second, kneading the dough and preparing it for baking. The atmosphere in the factory is intense, active, energetic and exciting.

In a bakery, however, the atmosphere is far more relaxed. The workers are, generally, at ease. They in any event must wait for the dough to rise. There is no rush. Production proceeds at a calm, relaxed pace.

This is the symbolism of Hametz and Masa. During the week of Pesah, we are reminded that religious life must resemble a Masa factory, not a bakery. We must constantly be working and exerting ourselves to reach greater heights, to achieve more, to grow and become better. Like the dough in the Masa factory, we must not allow ourselves to rest, to stay put, to remain where we are without progressing and moving forward. Just like an airplane's engines must keep running, and if they don't the airplane will fall to the ground, we must likewise keep our engines churning, or else we will fall.

The human being is, by nature, lazy. We are all created from earth, the "laziest" element in the world. Earth just sits on the ground, in place, without ever moving. And this is man's natural inclination — to stay where he is, without making any effort to move forward and advance. The Yeser Hara (evil inclination) tells a person, "You're fine the way you are. You don't need to work any harder than you already do. Take it easy, relax. Why go through any more trouble? You're already observant, you attend synagogue, you keep Shabbat and you eat only kosher. How much more are you going to demand of yourself?"

On Pesah, we are told to eliminate the “Hametz,” the natural inclination toward complacency. We learn that we must continuously strive for greater heights and never be satisfied with what we’ve achieved. The Torah treats Hametz with such severity to teach us the danger of complacency. It cannot be tolerated, just as even the smallest quantity of Hametz cannot be tolerated. We must rid ourselves of this natural tendency just as we rid our homes of Hametz.

It is tempting to put ourselves into “neutral” with regard to religious observance, to say to ourselves, “I don’t know, I’ll just see how things go.” This is the attitude of the bakery, not the Masa factory. We must approach Torah and Mitzvot aggressively and proactively, with ambition and high goals. Some people advance faster than others, but what’s important is that we’re all moving forward, each according to his or her own pace. The message of Hametz is that we must assess our current direction and ask ourselves, honestly, if it is leading us toward spiritual growth, or the opposite.

The Sages teach, “The Sadikim have no rest, neither in this world nor in the next world.” Being a righteous person means constantly working and progressing, without ever feeling perfectly comfortable or at ease in his current position. May it be Hashem’s will that we follow this example of the Sadikim, and continuously strive for higher levels of Torah study and observance, each and every day of our lives, Amen.

#### **EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN “What is the reason behind the matzah which we eat?” (Hagadah shel Pesah)**

What is the precise answer to the question above, why do we eat matzah? If one would look up the pasuk in Debarim (16:3), one would see the exact reason, “Seven days you shall eat matzah, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste, in order that you will remember the day of your leaving the land of Egypt all the days of your life.”

Note that matzah does not commemorate only liberation – liberation is not even mentioned here – but it is to recall the haste, the rush in which we left. What was the rush? Rashi’s commentary explains: “The haste was not yours, but Egypt’s, as it says, ‘and Egypt pressed the people, to hasten to send them out’” (Shemot 12:33). The Egyptians pressed us to leave before they all died from the plague.

This is something that perhaps many of us never thought about. The Torah is saying that the essential point of matzah, more than freedom and more than miracles, is that it is to remember Egypt’s

haste, and this is something to remember “all the days of your life.” Why is this haste the most important thing to remember?

Rabbi Yisrael Miller answers our question with a remarkable insight. We celebrate Shabbat and celebrate Pesah. Shabbat teaches us that Hashem created the world. But Pesah teaches us that Hashem runs the world. But, once we know Hashem runs the world, why do we still need Shabbat to teach us He created the world?

Sometimes a person who believes in Hashem could have the following attitude. “Yes, Hashem can help me find a job – but there are no jobs to be found.” Or another might say, “Yes, Hashem can help, but He cannot make my wife love me.” Or, “I do have faith that Hashem could help me meet a marriage partner, if I lived in Jerusalem or Brooklyn. But since I am stuck here in the ‘sticks’ even Hashem does not make something out of nothing!” But that attitude is selling Hashem short. Pesah teaches us that Hashem actively controls. Once we know He controls, then Shabbat teaches us: if the necessary raw materials are absent, He creates. He can make a new solution out of nothing.

On Pesah we eat matzah to recall not only that He liberated us, but to recall how the same Pharaoh who had said, “Never,” Pharaoh who had warned Moshe, “Do not come to see me again,” it was the same Pharaoh who ended up running through the streets yelling, “Where is Moshe? Moshe, Aharon, leave, go, just as you said, and bless me too.” The haste of the Egyptians, the ones who swore they would not let us go, it was they who hastened to comply with the word of Hashem. Hashem, the Creator and the Controller, not only freed us, but He transformed the Egyptian will.

And the Torah commands us to remember this all the days of our lives. Hashem, Who can create a new attitude in Pharaoh, can surely change the attitudes of our employers, and our neighbors and relatives.

In Israel today, no one seems to have an answer as to what Israel should do with its Arab neighbors. The great Rabbis don’t seem to come out with a solution. The real answer is that we need Hashem to create a new solution where the Arabs will love us. Something like it used to be many years ago. That’s easy for Hashem to do. It’s all up to us to return to Him and Hashem will do His part, just like He did in Egypt. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

#### **THE OMER**

It seems that when we look forward to a big event we count down towards it in excitement. So why is it that we count up to Shabuot, aren’t we excited?

When people are counting down to an anticipated event, it is in the hope that the time in-between disappears; like the engaged couple who are desperately looking forward to their wedding day wish the interim engagement period would disappear. However, the Omer provides us with a special opportunity to spend forty-nine days working on our negative character traits in the build-up to Shabuot when we receive the Torah anew each year. Each day of the Omer is a precious gift and comes with special Divine assistance to help us reach great heights that we would not be able to reach on other days. Therefore, we count up towards Shabuot, because every day is a new opportunity to attain a higher level in our connection with Hashem, as Rav Pincus explains in the following analogy:

If someone were to tell his friend that he was going to give him one million dollars after one hundred days, his friend would be elated. During this waiting period he would become increasingly impatient and think only of the date when he was going to collect the money. However, if the deal was that he would get ten thousand dollars each day for one hundred days until he accumulates the million dollars, then each day would be a day to look forward to. Each day he would be exhilarated as he adds up his earnings and gets closer to his final goal.

The same is true of the Omer, where each day is worth even more than ten thousand dollars; it is worth a stronger connection with the Creator of the world – something that one could never put a price tag on. (Short Vort)

### Rabbi Wein

Someone remarked to me recently that he did not see or feel how anything new could be discussed at his Seder table – everything that could have been said and analyzed had been said over all of the past decades of his commemorating Pesach. I told him that I thought he had too narrow a view concerning the commemoration of Pesach.

The broad human and particularly Jewish issues of bondage, freedom, individual and national purpose and destiny, renew themselves in our lives on an almost daily basis. Our great young associate Rabbi, Itiel Goldvicht, had a discussion with me about the enslavement of the present younger generation to texting and to their smart phones. He pointed out to me that in spite of all bans, filters and other methods meant to free one from the grip and thrall of these devices, their constant use has become almost impulsive and obsessive, certainly amongst the student generation here in Israel. And, I am certain that this is true as well regarding the student population in the rest of the current Western world.

Slavery takes on different forms and disguises. There is a great difference between slavery and work. Slavery is a state of compulsion and obsession that stunts the creativity of the human mind and soul and leads to disenchantment, boredom and eventual physical, moral, physical and mental deterioration.

One of the great attributes of the holiday of Pesach is that it allows us a new and fresh view of things. By cleaning out the chametz of our homes and souls we open ourselves up to new vistas and fresh challenges that can inspire us and deliver us to a higher level of purpose and accomplishment.

The Seder allows for a family discussion of issues, since the Haggadah itself raises almost all possible human issues – family, tradition, Torah, the land of Israel, the purpose of Jewish life and of an individual's existence, the recognition and understanding of evil, and the ultimate human necessity for reliance on faith in the Creator.

These issues are extremely relevant in today's world and affect every family and home. For most of the year we have little time or inclination to dwell on these matters for the distractions and obligations of life are many and omnipresent. But on this night of the Seder there is time, mental capacity and psychological freedom to engage with these issues. My wife, of blessed memory, told me that when she was ten or eleven years old a great rabbi was a guest for the Pesach Seder at her home.

The great rabbi talked to her, taught her melodies to sing, gave her advice for life and instilled in her an appreciation for the depth of Jewish tradition. She often told me that this Seder experience influenced her greatly and was a defining moment in her life. She did not attend a Jewish school and was a lonely Orthodox, Sabbath-observing child in the midst of a completely non-observant Jewish group of friends and fellow public-school students.

She told me that the Pesach Seder experience that year fortified her for the rest of her years in high school and college and gave her an enormous gift of self-confidence, identity and Jewish pride. I think that that is exactly what the Pesach Seder should accomplish for all of us.

The rabbis of old enjoined us that the more we speak about the Exodus from Egypt, the more praiseworthy we become. This is in line with the further statement in the Haggadah that: "in every generation one must be able to see one's own self present and participating in the Exodus from Egypt."



The Seder is meant to make the Exodus from Egypt relevant to everyone sitting at the Seder table, even today more than three thousand years later. It transports us back in time, as the very same rituals bring the past to bear upon our current situations and challenges. The Exodus from Egypt is an ongoing story and not merely a one-time commemoration of a past event. That is the secret of the strength of the Seder experience and of its fresh new quality year in and year out.

There is always something new to be said and expressed at the Seder table. And it is this constant renewal of ideas and traditions that gives Pesach its unique ability to represent true freedom and psychological, spiritual and mental liberty. Those ancient rituals provide the tools for dealing with the relevant and seemingly modern problems that face us. The Seder night should be treasured, appreciated and loved.

**Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks**  
**The Missing Fifth – An extract from Rabbi Sacks’**  
**Haggada**  
**UNASKED-QUESTIONS**

Many commentators, among them the Vilna Gaon, have drawn attention to the influence of the number four in connection with the Haggadah. There are four fours:

The four questions  
 The four sons  
 The four cups of wine

The four expressions of redemption: ‘I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians and free you from their slavery. I will deliver you with a demonstration of My power and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to Me as a nation.’ (Ex.6: 6-7).

It may be, though, that just as an X-ray can reveal an earlier painting beneath the surface of a later one, so beneath the surface of the Haggadah there is another pattern to be discerned. That is what I want to suggest in this chapter.

The first thing to note is that there is, in fact, another ‘four’ on the seder night, namely the four biblical verses whose exposition forms an important part of the Haggadah:

‘An Aramean tried to destroy my father . . .’  
 ‘And the Egyptians ill-treated us and afflicted us . . .’  
 ‘And we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers . . .’

‘And the Lord brought us out of Egypt . . .’ (Deut. 26:5-8)

There are, then, not four fours, but five.

In early editions of the Talmud tractate Pesachim (118a) there is a passage that perplexed the medieval commentators. It reads: ‘Rabbi Tarfon says: over the fifth cup we recite the great Hallel.’ The medieval commentators were puzzled by this because elsewhere the rabbinic literature speaks about four cups, not five. The Mishnah, for example, states that a poor person must be supplied with enough money to be able to buy four cups of wine. In both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds the discussion revolves around the assumption that there are four cups on seder night. How then are we to understand the statement of Rabbi Tarfon that there is a fifth cup?

Among the commentators three views emerged. The first was that of Rashi and the Tosafists. According to them, there are only four cups on the seder night, and it is forbidden to drink a fifth. The statement of Rabbi Tarfon must therefore be a misprint, and the texts of the Talmud should be amended accordingly.

The second was that of Maimonides. He holds that there is a fifth cup, but unlike the other four, it is optional rather than obligatory. The Mishnah which teaches that a poor person must be given enough money to buy four cupfuls of wine means that we must ensure that he has the opportunity to fulfil his obligation. It does not extend to the fifth cup which is permitted but not compulsory. Rabbi Tarfon’s statement is to be understood to mean that those who wish to drink a fifth cup should do so during the recitation of the great Hallel.

The third view, that of Ravad of Posquières, a contemporary of Maimonides, is that one should drink a fifth cup. There is a difference in Jewish law between an obligation, *hovah*, and a religiously significant good deed, *mitzvah*. The first four cups are obligatory. The fifth is a *mitzvah*, meaning, not obligatory but still praiseworthy and not merely, as Maimondes taught, optional.

Thus there was a controversy over the fifth cup. Rashi said that we should not drink it; Maimonides that we may; Ravad that we should. What does one do, faced with this kind of disagreement? Jewish law tries wherever possible to propose a solution that pays respect to all views, especially when they are held by great halakhic authorities. The solution in the present case was simple. A fifth cup is poured (out of



respect for Ravad and Maimonides) but not drunk (out of respect for Rashi).

When a disagreement occurs in the Talmud which is not resolved, the sages often used the word Teyku, 'Let it stand'. We believe that such disagreements will be resolved in the time to come when Elijah arrives to announce the coming of the Messiah. One of his roles will be to rule on unresolved halakhic controversies. An allusion to this is to be found in the word Teyku itself, which was read as an abbreviation of Tishbi Yetaretz Kushyot Ve'ibbayot, 'The Tishbite, Elijah, will answer questions and difficulties.' This therefore is the history behind 'the cup of Elijah' – the cup we fill after the meal but do not drink. It represents the 'fifth cup' mentioned in the Talmud.

According to the Jerusalem Talmud, the reason we have four cups of wine is because of the four expressions of redemption in God's promise to Moses. How then could Rabbi Tarfon suggest that there are not four cups but five? The fascinating fact is that if we look at the biblical passage there are not four expressions of redemption but five. The passage continues: 'And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the Lord.' (Exodus 6: 8)

There is a further missing fifth. As mentioned above, during the course of reciting the Haggadah we expound four biblical verses, beginning with, 'An Aramean tried to destroy my father.' In biblical times, this was the declaration made by someone bringing first-fruits to Jerusalem. However, if we turn to the source we discover that there is a fifth verse to this passage: 'He brought us to this place [the land of Israel] and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey' (Deuteronomy. 26: 9). We do not recite or expound this verse at the seder table. But this strange since the Mishnah states explicitly, 'And one must expound the passage beginning, "An Aramean tried to destroy my father" until one has completed the whole passage.' In fact we do not complete the whole passage, despite the Mishnah's instruction.

So there are three 'missing fifths' – the fifth cup, the fifth expression of redemption, and the fifth verse. It is also clear why. All three refer to God not merely bringing the Jewish people out of Egypt but also bringing them into the land of Israel. The Haggadah as we now have it and as it evolved in rabbinic times is, in Maimonides words, 'the Haggadah as practised in the time of exile,' meaning, during the period of the Dispersion. The missing fifth represented the missing element in redemption. How could Jews celebrate arriving in the land of Israel when they were in exile?

How could they drink the last cup of redemption when they had said at the beginning of the seder, 'This year slaves, next year free; this year here, next year in the land of Israel'?

The fifth cup – poured but not drunk – was like the cup broken at Jewish weddings. It was a symbol of incompleteness. It meant that as long as Jews were dispersed throughout the world, facing persecution and danger, they could not yet celebrate to the full. One great sage of the twentieth century, the late Rabbi Menahem Kasher, argued that now that there is a State of Israel, many exiles have been ingathered and Jews have recovered their sovereignty and land, the fifth cup should be reinstated. That remains for the halakhic authorities to decide.

What, though, of the four questions and the four sons? There was a fifth question. The Mishnah states that a child should ask: 'On all other nights we eat meat that is cooked, boiled or roasted; but this night only roasted meat.' This text can still be found in the early manuscripts of the Haggadah discovered in the Cairo genizah. It refers to the time when the Temple stood and the food eaten at the seder night included the paschal offering, which was roasted. After the Temple was destroyed and the practice of eating a paschal lamb was discontinued, this question was dropped and another (about reclining) substituted.

Was there a fifth child? The late Lubavitcher Rebbe suggested that there is a fifth child on Pesach. The four children of the Haggadah are all present, sitting round the table. The fifth child is the one who is not there, the child lost through outmarriage and assimilation. Rabbinic tradition tells us that in Egypt, many Jews assimilated and did not want to leave. The Torah uses a phrase to describe the Israelites' departure from Egypt, Vachamushim alu bnei Yisrael miMitzrayim (Exodus 13: 18). This is normally translated as 'The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle.' However Rashi, citing earlier authorities, suggests that hamush may not mean 'armed.' Instead it may be related to the word hamesh, 'five'. The sentence could therefore be translated as, 'Only a fifth of the Israelites left Egypt.'

The rest, he explains, perished in the plague of darkness. The plague itself was less an affliction of the Egyptians than a way of covering the shame of the Israelites, that so many of their number did not want to leave. The loss of Jews through assimilation has been an ongoing tragedy of Jewish history. How do we allude to it on seder night? By silence: the fifth child – the one who is not there.

So the beneath the surface of the Haggadah we find, not four fours, but five fives. In each case there is a missing fifth – a cup, an expression of deliverance, a verse, a question and a child. Each points to something incomplete in our present situation. In the half-century since the Holocaust the Jewish people has emerged from darkness to light. The State of Israel has come into being. The Hebrew language has been reborn. Jews have been brought to safety from the countries where they faced persecution. In the liberal democracies of the West Jews have gained freedom, and even prominence and affluence.

But Israel is not yet at peace. In the Diaspora assimilation continues apace. Many Jews are estranged from their people and their faith. Something is missing from our celebration – the fifth cup, the fifth deliverance, the fifth verse, the fifth question and the fifth child. That is a measure of what is still to be achieved. We have not yet reached our destination. The missing fifths remind us of work still to be done, a journey not yet complete.

**AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL**

On the Seventh Day of Pesach we read from the Torah the Shirat Hayam, which tells of the stupendous miracle of the splitting of the Sea of Suf. We also read this portion each year in Perashat Beshalach, and we say it every day in our morning prayers. This repetition means that it is very important for us to understand and feel the many teachings of this open Miracle.

“And Hashem on that day saved Israel from the hand of Egypt.” (14:30) The rescue of Israel from the power of Egypt was not completed until the day of the splitting of the Sea of Suf. From “that day” onward Egypt no longer interfered in the affairs of Israel. The remarkable fact that for the following 500 years nothing is mentioned of any intervention by Egypt in the affairs of Israel is a tremendous demonstration that testifies to the truth of the total devastation of Egypt by the Plagues and by the episode of the Sea.

“And Israel saw Egypt die on the shore of the Sea.” (14:30) Not only did Hashem rescue Israel, but He also granted them the exultation of seeing the destruction of their pursuers, while standing safely on the shore. When we see the downfall of the wicked, we gain more Awareness of Hashem’s power and His kindness:

“Be elevated, O Judge of the world! Turn back recompense (revenge) upon the arrogant” (Tehillim 94:2).

“Then would sing Moshe and Bnei Yisrael.” (15:1) Did the Jews rejoice at the destruction of the Egyptians?

Hashem does not rejoice at the destruction of any of His creatures, and it is stated that Hashem did not permit the angels to sing at the drowning of Paro’s host (Megilah 10B).

But here we see that Moshe and the Bnei Yisrael sang, and even rejoiced in every detail of the destruction of their enemy. We understand therefrom that men, unlike angels, must utilize such opportunities to gain more

Awareness of Hashem, and more Gratitude to Him. Angels cannot make any progress, but Moshe and Yisrael

can gain understanding of Hashem and thereby improve themselves greatly.

And that is our function in this life, to improve ourselves.

“Because He has become exceedingly elevated.” (15:1) The repetition (Gaoh Gaah) denotes “exceedingly.” By this spectacle of the overthrow of power of Egypt, Hashem has become exceedingly elevated in my eyes, for it has been openly demonstrated that the deliverance was achieved solely by His hand. They did not say “He is elevated” but He has become elevated.” The chief reason for this song of thanksgiving was not the deliverance, but for the gift of True Knowledge/Daat which Hashem had bestowed upon them by means of a miracle. “The greatness of all benefits which Hashem gives to man...is the Torah...and the showing of...miracles by his (Moshe’s) hand...in order to believe in the creator and in the prophet (Moshe)” (Hovot Halevavot). Thus: “I shall sing to Hashem (in gratitude for this great kindness of the miracle, whereby) He has become exceedingly elevated (in my mind, more than ever before)” over all the forces of Nature; for this gift of True Knowledge is the great success of a man in this world. “I shall sing to Hashem because (He let us know that) He is exceedingly elevated over all.”

Adapted from "A NATION IS BORN" by Rabbi Miller ZT'L