

In memory of all those brutally murdered in the war on Israel and the fallen soldiers of the IDF. Praying for the safe return of all the hostages.

בס"ד

27 APRIL 2024 | 19 NISAN 5784

VOLUME 37 | #35

DAF HASHAVUA

שַׁבַּת חַל הַמוֹעֵד | **SHABBAT CHOL HAMOED**
שְׁבִיעֵי וְשְׁמִינֵי | **7TH & 8TH DAY**
שֶׁל פֶּסַח | **OF PESACH**

SHABBAT ENDS:

London 9.10pm
Birmingham 9.20pm
Bournemouth 9.18pm
Cardiff 9.27pm
Dublin 9.42pm
Edinburgh 9.47pm
Glasgow 9.51pm
Hull 9.27pm
Leeds 9.25pm
Liverpool 9.33pm
Manchester 9.30pm
Nottingham 9.26pm
Sheffield 9.30pm
Southend 9.04pm
Southport 9.38pm
Jerusalem 7.56pm

Shir Hashirim is read this Shabbat

7TH DAY LIGHTING:

London 8.04pm

8TH DAY LIGHTING:

London after 9.14pm

YOM TOV ENDS:

London 9.15pm



Torah Reading Summary

Shabbat Chol Hamoed

In the aftermath of the sin of the Golden Calf, God “inscribes” the Ten Commandments onto a second set of tablets which were carved out by Moshe. He teaches Moshe the 13 Attributes of Mercy and restates the mitzvah of coming to the Temple on Pesach, Shavuot and Succot.

MAFTIR

Maftir is read from a second Sefer Torah, from the

section of parashat Pinchas detailing the extra offerings brought during Pesach.

HAFTARAH

The prophet Yechezkel (Ezekiel) relates seeing lifeless bones in a valley. God instructs him to prophesy ‘to the bones’. Matching bones come close to each other, eventually re-forming into the bodies that they once constituted. Yechezkel then blows ‘life’ into them. God tells him that this event symbolises Israel’s future revival.

7th Day Pesach

After Pharaoh sends the Israelites out of Egypt, God hardens his heart and he and his army pursue the people, camped at the Sea of Reeds. The Sea splits, saving the Israelites, but then closes on the Egyptians, drowning them. The Israelites and Moshe sing the Song at the Sea (*Shirat HaYam*) celebrating God’s salvation.

MAFTIR (As above.)

HAFTARAH

Taken from the final section of the second book of Samuel (*Shmuel bet*), the Haftarah comprises *Shirat David*, King David’s song of gratitude to God for saving him from the many dangers and plots against him described earlier on in the book. It parallels the Song at the Sea.

8th Day Pesach

The main theme of today’s reading is to appear at “the place of God’s choosing”, The Temple in Jerusalem, on the festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Succot, a phrase mentioned seven times. On each of these three festivals, one had to bring special festive offerings to the Temple.

MAFTIR (As above.)

HAFTARAH

The prophet Yeshaya (Isaiah) paints a moving picture of the future redemption, in which justice and righteousness will prevail. Even the animals will be at peace with one another – “a wolf will dwell with a sheep and a leopard will lie down with a kid”. The tribes of Yehuda and Ephraim, previously enemies, will unite for the messianic cause. Israel will declare God’s Name to the nations of the world and sing His praises.

DAY	TORAH READING	MAFTIR	HAFTARAH
Shabbat Chol Hamoed	Shemot 33:12 – 34:26	Bemidbar 28:19-25	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Pesach 7th Day	Shemot 13:17 – 15:26	Bemidbar 28:19-25	II Samuel 22:1-51
Pesach 8th Day	Devarim 15:19 – 16:17	Bemidbar 28:19-25	Isaiah 10:32 – 12:6



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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Editor-in-Chief: Rabbi Baruch Davis

Editorial and Production Team:

Rabbi Daniel Sturgess

Rabbi Michael Laitner

Rebbetzen Nechama Davis

Joanna Rose

Laurie Maurer

Richard Herman

Tatiana Krupinina

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education@theus.org.uk

ONCE UPON A SEDER PART 3:

The Never- ending Story



**RABBI
ELI BIRNBAUM**

Head of Community
Development,
Stanmore & Canons
Park Synagogue



Last week, we quoted the Mishnaic sage Rabban Gamliel, who urges us (Pesachim 10:5) to reclaim autonomy over our own imagination and on Seder night picture ourselves as if we had personally experienced the Exodus.

How do we achieve this?

In Hebrew, we possess two words for the process of storytelling.

'*Sippur*', shares a root connection with a peculiar group of words: Barber ('*Sapar*'), border ('*Sephar*') and money-counter ('*Saphar*'). At first glance, they appear to have no interconnection whatsoever. But take another look. All three words imply differentiation and separation. This coin is not that one. This hair is no longer attached to that head. This country is not the same as that. So too '*Sippur*'. This is storytelling as it exists in the commercialised West: A gap in time when we pay to get lost in the distant past or fictional future, temporarily separating ourselves from everyone and everything around us.

'*Aggadah*', shares a phonetic connection with the word for a bundle tied tightly together: '*Agudah*'. This is the storytelling

of shared narratives that bind us to and establish commonality with almost total strangers. Be that through a community, a school, or even an entire country, this is storytelling as the creation of common spaces where previously there were none.

Seder night overtly leans (no pun intended) toward the latter. The simplest clue is in the name of the book we use: The Haggadah. As we warn the 'wicked' son, this is not the moment for the individual to lose themselves and drift away from the group.

Whereas Western imagination is the process of shutting out everything around us for a few hours, preferably in absolute silence save for the crunch of popcorn, Jewish imagination encourages the organised chaos of a noisy, almost raucous shared table, replete with questions, answers, songs and of course – the crunch of matzah.

On Seder night we quote Rabban Gamliel's teaching in two parts, but it is easy to miss the second section. This is because the *Maggid* section appears to be winding to a close as we raise the second cup of wine in a toast while reciting the 'first half' of the *Hallel* thanksgiving prayer.

The second part of Rabban Gamliel's teaching is hidden at the outset of that segment and, intriguingly, forms the introductory paragraph to *Hallel*: "Therefore, we must thank and praise..."

Stitch them back together and the two parts reveal something remarkable: Because we can see ourselves as if we personally went out of Egypt, *therefore* we are obligated to sing songs of thanks.

In other words, once a year we stop outsourcing our imaginations. I personally believe this is why the Haggadah is famously the only classic piece of Jewish literature written anonymously. Its passages, poetry and prose are merely a starting point, an introduction to the main, feature-length story: the one we write together, generation after generation, with chisel on clay, quill on parchment, pen on paper or finger on screen, weaving thread by thread the shared narrative of Haggadah. And for this reason, the Haggadah does not begin with a 'Once upon a time'. The story is still happening, and we are the actors, each of us assigned a starring role as part of a national imagination reclaimed and reawakened.

Sefirat HaOmer



**RABBI
DANIEL
ROSELAAR**

Alei Tzion United
Synagogue

The mitzvah of *Sefirat HaOmer* (Counting the Omer) begins on the second evening of Pesach and continues until the festival of Shavuot 50 days later. The Torah states that “seven complete weeks” must be counted (Vayikra 23:15). According to some halachic authorities, this means that if one misses counting any of the days of the Omer period, the mitzvah has been disqualified and one cannot carry on counting the subsequent days. This view finds expression in the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law written 1563) that although such a person should count on the subsequent days, they should not recite the *beracha* (blessing) on the mitzvah in case the counting has been invalidated by the omission.

The requirement to count every day of the seven weeks of the Omer raises several interesting halachic conundrums. One such conundrum relates to someone who becomes barmitzvah/batmitzvah during the Omer period. Even though they may have counted the days prior to their birthday, since they were not absolutely mandated to do so, there is a debate about whether or not those days have any halachic

validity. If they do not have any validity, it is as if they have not been counted. Ironically (according to this opinion), when the person becomes barmitzvah/batmitzvah, he/she cannot continue to count the Omer with a *beracha*! However, despite this opinion, the general



consensus is that in such cases the child should continue counting with a *beracha*.

A further conundrum relates to someone who crosses the international date line during the

Omer period. What happens if they go westbound and repeat a calendar day? It would be somewhat bizarre to count a particular day twice, since the act of counting implies that there should always be an incremental progression. But it would also be bizarre to continue counting according to the previous model – this would be out-of-sync with everyone around them and they would either end up celebrating Shavuot a day ahead of the local community, or on the 51st day of the Omer! It is only the increased frequency of air travel in recent decades that has made this question a live issue and no clear halachic consensus has yet been reached. The issue is further complicated by Rabbinic debate regarding the halachic status of the international date line.

The halachic literature also discusses what an *onen* (a mourner whose deceased relative has not yet been buried) should do about counting the Omer. Normally an *onen* does not fulfil ritual mitzvot. However, in this case, refraining from counting would disqualify an *onen* from reciting a *beracha* throughout the rest of the Omer.

Rabbi Yechezkel Landau (known as the Noda Be'yehuda, 1713-1793) ruled that an *onen* should count (without a *beracha*) in order to enable the resumption of normal counting once this short period ends.

The Genesis of the Exodus



**RABBI
CLAUDE
VEICHT-WOLF**

Staines and District
Synagogue

The seventh day of Pesach (*Shevi'i shel Pesach*) is the anniversary of the splitting and crossing of the Sea of Reeds (known as *Keriat Yam Suf*). Rabbi David Fohrman in his book, *The Exodus You Almost Passed Over*, raises a fascinating point about this seminal event in our nation's history.

He writes that the Midrash (*Shemot Rabbah 21.10*) states that when *Bnei Yisrael*, the Israelites, walked into the sea on dry land, "Rabbi Nehorai expounded, 'An Israelite woman would pass through the sea with her son crying in her hand, and she would extend her hand and take an apple or a pomegranate from the sea and give it to him'".

You might wonder why the rabbis felt the need to add this - the entire miracle of *Keriat Yam Suf*, including the fact that a walkway enabled the Israelites to escape the Egyptians, should have been enough! Was this perhaps hinting at something greater taking place,

demonstrating that mentioning the fruit trees was not accidental?

Rabbi Fohrman often compares the text used in one passage with another in a different location in the Torah and then infers parallels between the two. In this case, he compares phrases used in the Torah's description of the creation of the world and *Keriat Yam Suf*.

Towards the beginning of the Torah, it states, "God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. God saw that the light was good and God separated the light from the darkness" (Bereishit 1:3-4). Commenting on *Keriat Yam Suf*, Rashi writes (Shemot 14:20), "... there was cloud and darkness for the Egyptians, and the pillar of fire illuminated the night for the Israelites and went before them as was its way to go every night, whilst the darkness of the cloud was turned towards the Egyptians."

On the second day of creation, God separated the waters above and below. This is exactly what happened at the Reed Sea, except here, the waters were divided horizontally, not vertically. This division led to the emergence of dry land, both in the Creation narrative and here too.

On the third day, we read

that the dry land, emerging from the midst of the waters, would "sprout vegetation: seed-bearing plants, fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it" (Bereishit 1:11). Hence the connection between the appearance of land at Creation and the fruit that the mother was able to pick for her child at the Reed Sea.

The sequence of events regarding the crossing of the sea closely matches the first three days of creation. Rabbi Fohrman posits the idea that God used the Ten Plagues and the subsequent events at the Reed Sea to demonstrate His mastery over nature to both the Egyptians and *Bnei Yisrael*. Those who recognised God would be protected as He would provide them with light, a pathway and food. The Egyptians, whose belief system rejected monotheism were punished through witnessing a reversal of creation. They were enveloped in darkness and witnessed the earth disappear under the reunified waters of the Reed Sea.

We look to God to protect us and shine a light onto a pathway that will lead to the coming of the Mashiach, speedily in our days.

Shlomo's Final Chapter

Sefer Melachim (Kings) I: Chapter 11



**PNINA
SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and
US Educator

Chapter 11 is the final chapter of King Shlomo's (Solomon's) life. Sadly, at this point, everything comes crumbling down. The chapter begins with a description of Shlomo's one thousand foreign wives. According to Rambam (Maimonides, 1138-1204), they all converted to Judaism. However, they continued with their idol worship. We are told that Shlomo allowed them to build altars and continue with their pagan practices in Jerusalem (vv. 7-8).

The text states that "when Shlomo grew old, his wives swayed his heart after other gods" (v. 4). This is very hard for us to hear after so many chapters describing Shlomo's wisdom and great devotion to God. In fact, there is an opinion in the Talmud that Shlomo did not actually sin by serving idols himself; his mistake was not preventing the idolatry of his many wives. This is treated as if he had served idols himself (Talmud Shabbat 56a). This approach teaches us an important lesson: a leader is culpable for the actions of those around him, if he could have prevented them, even if he was not personally involved in the sins.

Either way, God is displeased with Shlomo and announces a very

harsh punishment: the kingdom is to be split in two. This will not happen in Shlomo's lifetime, out of respect to his father, David. Instead, God announces that it will happen during the reign of Shlomo's son.

Following this announcement, the text records three different adversaries that rise up against Shlomo. First, Hadad the Edomite comes to avenge his people, who were defeated by King David and his general Yoav (see *II Shmuel 8:13*). Second, Rezon of Tzova (what we would today call Syria) acts as an aggressor. Radak (Rabbi David Kimhi, 1160-1235) explains that these enemies only rose up to threaten Shlomo's kingdom in the later years of his reign, after "his heart turned away from God". Until then, Shlomo had ruled a secure and peaceful kingdom.

God is displeased with Shlomo and announces a very harsh punishment: the kingdom is to be split in two. This will not happen in Shlomo's lifetime, out of respect to his father, David.

The third adversary comes from within. Yeravam ben Nevat, from the tribe of Ephraim, openly criticises the policies of Shlomo. He is forced into exile in Egypt under the threat of death. The prophet Achiya HaShiloni tells Yeravam that he will become the leader of a new northern kingdom, comprising ten tribes. Achiya portrayed this in dramatic fashion, removing Yeravam's new cloak, tearing it into twelve strips and instructing Yeravam to pick up ten of them. This leadership came with a condition: if Yeravam would keep the Torah and serve God properly, then God would build an everlasting dynasty for him. By providing this Divine mandate to set up a new kingdom, Yeravam's rebellion against the crown gains Godly approval.

However, God makes clear that David's line will not be cut off. One tribe will remain under the rule of Shlomo's descendants.

Given that Shlomo has sinned so badly, why does God not simply take the kingship away from him? It is because God has promised to preserve David's royal House. Even if his descendants do not continuously sit upon the throne, the line is secured through God's promise that the *Mashiach* (Messiah) will come from the House of David.

The chapter ends with the death of Shlomo and his burial in Jerusalem. His son Rechavam becomes the new king.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

CHOL HAMOED PESACH

26-27 APRIL | 19 NISAN

Never Enough



**JOSH
MARKOVITCH**

Tribe Madrich

It's Pesach. It's time for Seder and Matzah and for singing and storytelling. It's also time for what is, in my opinion, the absolute wildest line in all of our prayers and liturgy. One of my favourite songs this time of year has to be "Dayenu" – "It's enough for us". It states that if God had not done many of the things that He did, it would still be enough for us. However, when reading a bit more closely, one of the lines sticks out to me:

"If He had brought us to Mount Sinai and had not given us the Torah,

it would be enough for us."

What a statement! Had God rescued us and not given us the most fundamental text in Jewish, and indeed world, history, then that would be enough?

Let us understand what this means. Does this imply that there would be no difference in how we live compared to the rest of the world, nothing more expected of us but the 7 laws of Noach that apply to all people? What about the other 606 commandments? I'm not sure about anyone else, but I attest that my life would not look like it is now, sat in Jerusalem, writing an article about Pesach, no chicken soup, no Friday Nights... my life would be so different without the Torah.

The Torah is what makes us Jewish, it is the lifeblood that flows throughout the generations of the Jewish people and is what creates

the discipline and responsibility that we as Jews live as ambassadors of God. So how would merely turning up at Mount Sinai be enough?

Before the Torah was given at Sinai, we agreed "to do and to listen" to God. Rabbi Sacks z"l expounds the importance of this: unity. The Jewish nation standing together before God in an eagerness to follow His will. This is a brilliant explanation. We all see God in our own lives in different ways and this gives us the real freedom to connect with Him in the way that we want to. This shows us how a genuine connection to God, through reverence and love, through highs and lows, is the most important thing. So, this Pesach and far beyond, may we all have the *beracha* (blessing) to strengthen our connection to God, and appreciate the gift of the Torah that was given to us all those years ago.

Pesach Wordsearch

Find the words in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

CHAG

CHAROSET

DAYENU

ELIYAHU

FROGS

MAROR

MATZAH

SINAI

PESACH

SEDER

SIMPLE

TORAH

WICKED

WISE

L	B	N	D	S	G	O	R	F	F	K	X
F	S	C	H	A	R	O	S	E	T	V	D
R	X	U	H	A	Y	I	L	E	Q	Y	S
I	O	C	L	C	Z	E	S	O	D	P	H
W	R	R	W	I	A	T	N	D	E	E	A
S	I	N	A	I	M	S	A	U	K	S	R
V	S	S	I	M	P	L	E	M	C	Y	O
A	H	P	E	B	K	O	C	P	I	S	T
B	X	I	N	T	X	C	W	O	W	G	Z
D	F	R	O	C	S	X	E	O	X	U	X
L	Q	U	F	P	A	N	T	Y	R	U	A
W	R	W	E	Y	L	V	W	P	X	O	V



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

PESACH 2: FEEL FREE!

PESACH IS THE FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM. OF COURSE, WE RETELL HOW OUR ANCESTORS LEFT THE SLAVERY OF EGYPT TO BECOME FREE PEOPLE, ALL THOSE YEARS AGO.



BUT FREEDOM IS NOT JUST FOR WAY BACK THEN. NOT BEING SLAVES IS ALSO ABOUT THE 'FREEDOM' TO MAKE GOOD CHOICES. HERE ARE SOME WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN FEEL FREE IN OUR LIVES TODAY.

FREEDOM is choosing not to get AI to do your homework for you, even if your teacher will never find out.



FREEDOM is not telling the hilarious joke if it might be hurtful to someone.



FREEDOM is choosing not to try out your new drum set when the baby has just fallen asleep.



FREEDOM is not stuffing yourself silly at a super mahoosive kiddush.



FREEDOM is making friends with the power button on your phone and turning it off every now and again.

FREEDOM is being able to look away from the Lashon Hara (negative speech) and not forward it, even when it pops up on your phone.



FREEDOM is not getting angry when someone pushes in front of you in the supermarket queue.

BEFORE PESACH IS BEHIND US, MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FREEDOM OPPORTUNITIES AND TAKE THEM WITH YOU INTO THE SUMMER.



ONE, TWO, FREE!

Page Editor: Rabbi Nicky Goldwiler Writers: Shira Chaik Cartoonist: Paul Solomon

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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.