



Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center
193-10 Peck Avenue ✦ Flushing, New York 11365 (718) 357-5100

April, 2011
Vol. 8, No.10

THE BULLETIN

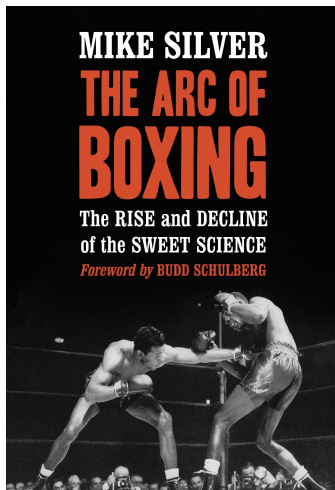
Adar II / Nissan I 5771
Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon

SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST CLUB

APRIL 3, 2011

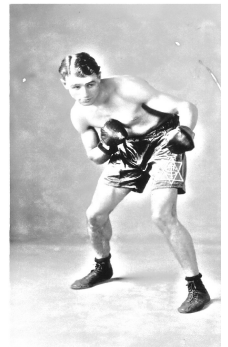
BREAKFAST: 9:45 AM (nominal cost)

LECTURE: 10:30 AM



GUEST SPEAKER: MIKE SILVER
NOTED BOXING HISTORIAN
AUTHOR OF THE ARC OF BOXING:
THE RISE AND DECLINE OF
THE SWEET SCIENCE

WILL SPEAK ON THE PREVALENCE
OF JEWISH BOXERS DURING THE
FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY



SID TERRIS
Universal Boxing Club
1934-1935



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR APRIL

Friday, April 1 – Mincha/Maariv..... 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:01 P.M.
 Saturday, April 2 - Parashat Tazria/Hachodesh - Shabbat Mevarchim Services..... 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat Ends. 8:11 P.M.

Friday, April 8 – Mincha/Maariv..... 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:09 P.M.
 Saturday, April 9 - Parashat Metzora - Shabbat Services. 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat Ends. 8:19 P.M.

Friday, April 15 Mincha/Maariv. 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:16 P.M.
 Saturday, April 16 - Parashat Acharei/Mot - Shabbat Hagadol Services. 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat Ends. 8:26 P.M.

PASSOVER

Sunday, April 17 - Search for Chametz After 8:27 P.M.
 Monday, April 18 - Erev Pesach - Fast of the First Born Service. 7:00 A.M.
Latest Time for Eating Chametz..... 10:17 A.M.
Latest Time for Annulling Chametz..... 11:36 A.M.
 Candle Lighting - First Evening of Passover..... 7:19 P.M.
 Mincha/Maariv..... No Services

FIRST SEDER

Tuesday, April 19 - First Day Passover Services. 9:00 A.M.
 Candle Lighting - Second Evening of Passover..... 8:29 P.M.
 Mincha/Maariv..... No Services

Second Seder

Wednesday, April 20 - Second Day Passover Services..... 9:00 A.M.
 Festival Ends. 8:30 P.M.

Friday, April 22 - Mincha/Maariv - Shabbat Chol Ha-Moed. 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:23 P.M.
 Saturday, April 23 - Shabbat Chol Ha-Moed Services. 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat Ends. 8:33 P.M.

Sunday, April 24 - Mincha/Maariv - Seventh Evening of Passover. 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:25 P.M.
 Monday, April 25 - Seventh Day of Passover Services..... 9:00 A.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 8:35 P.M.
 Mincha/Maariv - Eighth Evening of Passover..... T.B.A.
 Tuesday, April 26 - Eighth Day of Passover Services..... 9:00 A.M.
 Yizkor. 10:45 A.M.
 Festival Ends. 8:36 P.M.

Friday, April 29 - Mincha/Maariv..... 7:00 P.M.
 Candle Lighting Time. 7:31 P.M.
 Saturday, April 30 - Parashat Kedoshim - Shabbat Mevarchim Services. 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat Ends. 8:41 P.M.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Sunday, April 3rd

Sunday Breakfast Club

Mike Silvers Speaks on
 “The Prevalence of Jewish Boxers
 in the First Half of the 20th Century”
 Breakfast – 9:45 AM (Nominal Fee)
 Lecture – 10:30 AM

Monday, April 4th @ 8:00 PM

Program Committee Meeting
 All Are Welcome To Attend

Wednesdays, April 6th & April 13th

10:30 AM to Noon

Adult Education Institute Courses
 Conducted By Rabbi Gerald Solomon
 Subject Matter To Be Announced

Thursdays: 11 AM to 1 PM

“On-going Discussion Group”

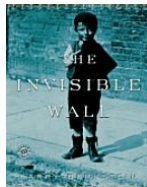
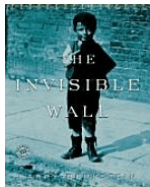
Thursday, April 28th

@ 10:30 AM

Sisterhood Book Club

The Invisible Wall

By Harry Bernstein



ON THE HORIZON

Sunday, May 1st

4:00 PM

Joint Yom Hashoah Program with
 Hillcrest Jewish Center and
 Israel Center of Conservative Judaism
 at Hillcrest Jewish Center
 Featuring recollections of Shoah survivors
 from the 3 Congregations

Sunday, May 15th @ 9:45 AM

Sunday Morning Breakfast Club
 Professor Mark Rosenblum
 of Queens College

REFUAH SHELEIMAH

We wish to extend our heartfelt prayers to all those who are confronting illness, have undergone medical procedures, and are recuperating from mishaps. Among those on our speedy recovery list are Carl Rosenthal and Shari Weinberger.

CONDOLENCES

Our heartfelt condolences go out to Elinor Lonky and her family on the passing of her beloved husband and family patriarch, Alfred.

We extend our sympathy to Eli Kantor and his family on the loss of his cherished sister, Elinor Goldin.

May we express our deepest consolation to Irving Feit on the loss of his treasured sister, Regina Kenigsberg.

We pray that those who have lost loved ones will be comforted and consoled along with all the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and that they may know of no more sorrow.

KEEP ON GIVING

Although the Spring months lie ahead, our city's hungry still suffer with the bane of finding enough to sustain themselves. Especially with Pesach on our doorstep the struggle to maintain some semblance of the holiday is a difficult one. Please continue to bring in canned or boxed goods so that those less fortunate may have a *Zisin Pesach*.

FFMJC IS ON THE WEB

WEBSITE: www.ffmpegc.com

Visit our site for information on services, a calendar of events, links to Jewish community services, and an archive of FFMJC Bulletins.

Email: FFMJC@yahoo.com

Send us your email address to keep up to date on any late-breaking changes to programs or services.



RABBI'S PASSOVER MESSAGE 5771

In a Jewish joke there is often found a serious message. "First you laugh at a Jewish joke or quip. Then, against your will, you suddenly fall silent and thoughtful. And that is because Jews are so frequently jesting philosophers. A hard life has made them realists, realists without illusions," wrote Nathan Ausubel, in the introduction to his Treasury of Jewish Humor.

Humor is considered to be one of the most effective ways of confronting the adversity we face in our lives and coping with difficult situations, especially when we have little or no control over them. "By laughing at our fate, it is as if we were stepping out of a situation and looking at it from a distance, as if we were outside observers, so to speak," wrote Rabbi Reuven Bulka. By so doing, we gain the ability to transcend the circumstances, which may be the cause of our anguish. Theodor Reik, a disciple of Sigmund Freud who resided in New York in the 1920s, remarked that life is often tragic and sad. By joking about it, we can transcend the tragic character of an event and bring it under our control. "By using humor, the lament often turns into laughter."

Why do Jews seemingly joke so much about adversity? "It is the instinct for self-preservation" says Ausubel. "By laughing at the absurdities and cruelties of life, we draw much of the sting from them."

It is said of Shalom Aleichem (Shalom Rabinovich, 1859 - 1916) that he was the greatest humorist in all of Jewish Literature but only if you understand that Yiddish Humor has not only words but a definite attitude as well. It asks us to laugh so that we don't cry. It teaches that there is humor in every situation because reality for the Jews historically has been often too painful to bear. Indeed it has been seriously opined that "laughter is the only alternative to madness," and a means "to maintain one's sanity."

Shalom Aleichem wrote to a friend: "This is an ugly and mean world and only to spite it, we

mustn't weep. If you want to know, this is the constant source of my good spirit, of my humor. Not to cry out of spite, only to laugh out of spite, only to laugh." Thus, Shalom Aleichem's Yiddish works are said to be works of humor born out of necessity and came to be referred to as "laughing through tears."

THE SEDER EXPERIENCE IS ONE OF "LAUGHING THROUGH TEARS"

The Haggadah states the Seder's goal very clearly: "Each individual should feel as though he or she had gone out of Egypt." The longer I live on G-d's earth and therefore the more seders I experience, the more I realize that the seder is, in fact, the quintessence of Jewish joy, despite the painful salt watery, bitter herbs recollections we bring to the occasion. Jewish joy, in order to be true to life must have sorrow and misery mixed in with it. The seder does. A feast, in order to be a true to life feast, must contain some bitterness, some unsavoriness. The seder does. And a serious discussion about the meaning of freedom, must contain some elements of levity. The seder does. A true spiritually meaningful event, would do well to contain elements of prayer, study and song. The seder does. These mixtures reflect the mixture of the maror and the charoses, the bitter and the sweet of life. As the seder unfolds, if you find yourself shedding a tear, do so with a smile. Life is never all bitter nor all sweet. True joy, true Jewish joy always has elements of both.

Best wishes for a joyous and sweet Passover,

Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

This fund allows for the rabbi, at his discretion, to contribute to institutions or to give to individuals in need.

Contributions may be made to "Rabbinical Discretionary Fund" or to Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center with a notation on the check: Rabbinical Discretionary Fund

THERAPEUTIC QUESTIONS FOR PASSOVER

We are informed that a full 80% of the Jews who were slaves, actually chose to stay in Egypt rather than join the freedom bandwagon. Many of the slaves who left Egypt remained there psychologically. Taking the remaining 20% of the slaves out of Egypt turned out to be easier than taking Egypt out of the slaves. No sooner did the slaves leave than they yearned to return. Well may we ask: Are we still enslaved to outdated notions regarding the ways in which we live our lives? How difficult is change for the human species? What did it take for the slaves who left Egypt to finally change their mistaken ways? It took nothing. Most never did. They died in the physical wilderness, in their arid mental deserts.

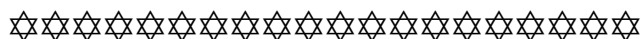
Will we ever change our ways? Are our bodies here but our minds imprisoned in an Egypt of our own making? Is even our seder experience the same old same old? Are we enslaved to old tired out ways of conducting the seder? Have we dared to try to combine tradition with innovation? Or do we say this is the way we've always done it, and it's good enough for me. The great message of Passover is that we are free. We can make legitimate, legal, halachically correct, moral changes in our ways of doing many things. But so many of us are enslaved to habit and by the "familiar."

Also, the fact that many of us take our freedom for granted makes it hard to stay focused on discussing, much less celebrating our liberation from bondage. To so many it is but a relic of our remote past. But maybe on a deeper level we really don't feel free. Maybe we don't really want to experience true freedom? So we find it difficult to wholeheartedly celebrate a condition that we are not sure we want anyway. Too many of our ancestors couldn't handle freedom. They had serious reservations about freedom. They were afraid of freedom, because, they reasoned: With freedom comes responsibility. If I am able to make up my own mind and make my own decisions, I therefore will have to be accountable for everything

I say and do. I'm not sure I want that.

The Hebrew word for Egypt, Mitzrayim, is related to the term maytzarim, "narrow straights." To the extent that all of us feel stuck in our own narrow, familiar places — our own private Egypts — we all tend to resist the Seder and its true meanings. We want to free ourselves, but we're afraid. Of course, this is exactly why the festival is so important. It challenges us with the question: How free do you want to be? What would you like to be liberated from? What are you doing about it? Do you wish to continue to be enslaved? Do you fear the responsibilities freedom brings? Isn't being a slave in a real sense easier than being free? These questions need to be raised at the seder, and in the seder of the mind.

The Haggadah tells it like it is: "Now we are slaves." We all need to confront that which we are still enslaved to on this Passover in the hope that "next year we will be free."



ENDOWMENTS

Yahrzeit Plaque

In main Sanctuary. \$275

In Lasky Chapel. \$175

Panel in new stained glass window

. \$500

Endow a Siddur. \$50

Endow a Chumash. \$75

Sponsor a kiddush. \$225

Special kiddush. ask

Listing in Book of Life. \$25

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund.

Please contact the Temple office
(718) 357-5100
if you are interested

PREPARING FOR PASSOVER

Passover is an eight-day Jewish holiday, of Biblical origin, marking the birth of the Jews as a people and their emergence as a unique nation in history, devoted to G-d's will. It celebrates the liberation of the children of Israel -from slavery in Egypt over 3000 years ago, under the leadership of Moses. According to Biblical law, Passover is determined by the Jewish lunar calendar, and begins on the eve of the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan. The English date varies from year to year, falling in March or in April.

What Special Preparations Should Be Made In The Jewish Home For Passover?

The home must be thoroughly cleansed of all Chametz before Passover. Any Chametz not removed from a Jew's premises before Passover should be sold. Jewish law forbids the use of any Chametz which remains in a Jew's possession during Passover, even after the holiday is over. All cooking and eating utensils must be either set aside exclusively for Passover use, or, in some cases, "made Kosher" according to the procedures of Jewish law. All of these preparations must be completed by the morning before Passover.

What Are The Rituals For The Period Before Passover Begins?

The day before Passover is a fast day for Jewish firstborn males, in commemoration of the tenth plague, the slaying of the first born male Egyptians, which immediately resulted in the Exodus. In many congregations, a special celebration Siyum is conducted, following which participating firstborn males are permitted to break their fast. A ritual search for Chametz is conducted the previous night, and the Chametz that is found is burned the next morning.

Preparing for Passover

1. Removing Chametz

A. Prior to Passover, every Jew is required to remove all Chametz from his home, property, and all premises under his or her jurisdiction (i.e. desk,

office, locker, car). Even if one will not be on the premises during Passover, as long as one is there within 30 days of Passover, the obligation to remove all Chametz before Passover applies. In such cases, one should consult a competent Halachic authority and make the necessary arrangements.

B. To facilitate the removal of Chametz, each Jew is obligated to conduct a diligent search in all places where Chametz may have been kept or consumed any time during the preceding year. The specified time for this search is the night before Passover, traditionally using a feather and the light of a single candle. However, Passover cleaning in Jewish homes must be started much earlier. The premises should be clean by the time the search begins (approximately 45 minutes after sunset). The blessing is recited before the search begins, and a public disclaimer of ownership of Chametz (Bitul) is recited afterward. These texts can be found in most traditional Haggadahs.

C. It is permissible to sell Chametz to a non-Jew before the restrictions on Chametz go into effect on the day before Passover. To comply with the stringent requirements of Jewish law, the sale is conducted by contract through the rabbi, who is empowered to act as an agent by a Power of Attorney Form for the Sale of Chametz. The sold Chametz is the non-Jew's property until after Passover ends and must be treated accordingly. The Chametz should be locked away until after Passover when the Rabbi repurchases it for the community.

D. Restrictions on the eating, then use, and finally, possession of Chametz normally begin on the morning before Passover. Just before these restrictions begin, the remaining Chametz must be destroyed (usually burned) and a public disclaimer of Chametz ownership (Bitul) recited. The exact times depend on your geographic location. Consult your rabbi for the times when these restrictions go into effect.

E. Chametz which remains in a Jew's possession during Passover may not be used by him or any

other Jew at any time, and it may not be purchased after Passover. If Chametz is discovered during Passover, it should be disposed of, in accordance with Jewish law, as soon as possible.

2. Utensils For Use on Passover

A. Jewish law requires special dishes, cooking utensils, glassware, and silverware for Passover use, with separate meat and dairy sets. They can be made of any material, including plastic or paper. Once these are used for Chametz, they may not be used again on Passover.

B. If it is not possible to maintain a complete set of separate utensils for Passover it may be possible to use some year-round utensils for Passover after a special "kashering" procedure.

Metal and wooden utensils, if they can be thoroughly cleaned, may be "kashered," but earthenware utensils may not be "kashered". Procedures for "kashering" depend on how the utensil was used during the year.

C. Shelves, countertops and eating surfaces used year round should be cleaned and covered for Passover use, and special dish racks, sink racks and wash basins should be used. Cooking surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned and covered. Ovens should be thoroughly cleaned, and either "kashered" by being burnt out or used with a special insert liner.

3. Foods Which May Not Be Used On Passover

A. Any food or food product containing fermented grain products (Chametz) may not be used or remain in a Jew's possession on Passover. Even foods with minute amounts of Chametz ingredients, or foods processed on utensils which are used for other Chametz-containing foods, are not permissible for Passover use.

B. Ashkenazic Jews, (Jews of Eastern European descent) also do not eat many legumes (Kitniot) - beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. and products containing them as ingredients throughout Passover, while Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish customs varies from one community to another.

C. Because of the large number of food products which contain Chametz or Kitniot ingredients, only food products manufactured under reliable rabbinical supervision should be purchased for Passover use. That includes beverages, condiments, spices, and all processed foods such as fruits and vegetables, fish, meat and dairy products, and especially, baked goods.

D. Grain alcohol is a fermentation product, and is therefore Chametz. Any edible items which normally contain grain alcohol, including whiskey, liquor, and liquid medications, and even those which are not usually taken internally (such as perfumes, cologne, toilet water, hair spray, hair tonic, shaving lotion, mouthwash, liquid and roll-on deodorants) should be treated as Chametz unless specifically approved for Passover use.

E. Totally inedible non-food products which contain grain alcohol such as polish, ink, paint and floor wax, are permissible for Passover use.

F. Any person with a medical condition must consult his or her physician and rabbi to ascertain the medicines that should be taken during the holiday, and any special procedures that should be followed.

G. There are many families which maintain the tradition of additional restrictions to their Passover diet. Some do not eat any food products made of Matza or Matzah meal mixed with water (Gebrochts) during the first seven days of Passover.

Reminder: Rabbi Solomon will be available (in his office) for the transfer of Chametz ownership on:

Wednesday, April 6th – from 12:00 Noon to 12:30

Wednesday, April 13th-- from 12:00 Noon to 12:30 P.M.

Monday, April 18th – from 9:00A.M. to 10:00 A.M.

If these times are inconvenient, please call Rabbi Solomon at 718-591-3119 for an appointment or return the previously mailed form with your information to the synagogue.

ORDER OF THE PASSOVER SEDER

Kadesh - Recite the Kiddush.

U'rchatz - Wash hands without a b'racha.

Karpas - Eat a green vegetable (lettuce, parsley, etc.) dipped in salt-water.

Yachatz - Break the middle matzah of the three.

Maggid - Tell the story of the Exodus as found in the Haggadah.

Rachtzah - Wash hands again with the appropriate b'racha.

Motsie - Say the blessing "hamotzie" over the two and a half matzot.

Matzah - Say the second blessing "al achilat matzah" and eat the matzah.

Maror - Say the blessing "al achilat maror" and eat the bitter herbs.

Korech - Eating a sandwich of matzah mixed with bitter herbs.

Shulchan Orech - Eat the festive seder meal.

Tzafun - Eat the afikomen (remaining half of the middle matzah).

Barech - Sing the "Birkat Hamazon," "Grace After Meals."

Hallel - Recite the "Hallel" Psalms.

Nirtzah - Sing concluding hymns that G-d accept our Seder service.



SEDER INFORMATION

Ha Lachma Anya: (This is the bread of affliction...All who are hungry, let them come and eat.)

The Four Questions, in which the youngest child present asks about some of the seder's unique rituals;

Avadim Hayenu: ("We were slaves..."), which begins the account of the Jews' experience in Egypt;

The Four Children one wise, one wicked, one "simple" and one "too young to ask" who ask and receive different answers, based on verses from Exodus and Deuteronomy about Pesach, on why and how the holiday is observed;

V'Hi She'amda: ("This promise made..."), which proclaims that a threat to Jewish existence was not only made by Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but that "in every generation they rise against us and seek our destruction. But the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hands."

Arami Oved Avi ("A wandering Aramean was my father..."): a hyper-condensed version of how the Jews came to be oppressed in Egypt, beginning with a reference to Jacob's oppression by Laban.

The Ten Plagues: a recitation of the Hebrew name for each plague, from *daam* (blood) through *makat b'khorot* (the slaying of the [Egyptian] first-born), customarily accompanied by dipping one's finger into the cup of wine and spilling a drop for each plague, symbolizing sorrow at the loss of a human life;

Dayenu: a song commemorating many of the miracles G-d performed for the Jewish people, from "executing judgment" against the Egyptians to "building the [first] Temple." The word Dayenu "it [that miracle alone] would have been enough for us" occurs at the end of each stanza listing a miracle.

Pesach, matzah, and maror: a pointing to, and explanation of (with proof texts), three of the seder's central symbols: the paschal sacrifice, the matzah, and the bitter herbs. According to Rabban Gamliel, a sage of the 1st century C.E., "Whoever does not explain [these] symbols at the seder...has not fulfilled his duty."

B'khol Dor vaDor ("In each and every generation..."): a paragraph that obligates: "In each and every generation, one must look upon oneself as if he [or she] came out of Egypt..."

Hiding the afikomen: A common custom is for someone at the seder to hide the afikomen, part of the middle matzah, which early in the seder had been broken by the leader. Children at the seder are often charged with finding the afikomen in a game of hide and seek. It's customary for the children to request gifts before returning the afikomen. The afikomen is eaten as dessert at the very end of the festive meal, which itself comprises the seder's 11th stage,

After the meal: Birkat Hamazon (Grace After Meals) is said. Before proceeding with the rest of the seder, the ceremonial fifth cup, the *Kos Eliyahu* (Elijah's Cup) is filled, and participants open the door to welcome him. Following this, the second part of

Hallel (the cycle of Psalms 113-118 that offers various praises to G-d) is recited; the first part was chanted shortly before the meal. The seder concludes with a section called

Nirtzah, which proclaims that participants have "ended" the seder "according to custom, statute, and law," and implore G-d to "lead Your redeemed people, to Zion [Israel] in joy." Those present then sing, as they do at the very end of Yom Kippur,

"L'shanah ha'baah b'Yerushalayim!" "[May we celebrate Passover] next year in Jerusalem!" However, this usually isn't really the end of the seder, for various traditional Pesach songs follow. Perhaps the best known and loved is **Chad Gadya** (Aramaic for "a little kid [goat]") a cumulative round in which, beginning with that "little goat," various animals and other objects consume or extinguish each other until the song's culmination: the "Holy One, blessed be He" slays the Angel of Death himself.



Seder Night Table Talk

Four Mitzvot

The Seder is built around the mitzvot of the evening, two of biblical origin and two rabbinic:

- 1) The Torah commands us to retell the story of the Exodus in all its detail.
- 2) We are instructed to eat matzah on this night.
- 3) Bitter herbs (marror) is required by the Torah only when accompanied by the Pascal lamb. Today, without the Temple, it is only a rabbinical injunction.
- 4) The Sages instituted the four cups of wine, to be consumed at various stages of the Seder, to punctuate the end or beginning of a new section. Wine symbolizes the joy of life.

The Seder -- including the dipping, leaning, text, blessings, Afikomen, etc. -- is constructed around these four mitzvot.

The Number Four

In Exodus 6:6 the Almighty proclaims, "Say to the children of Israel: I am the Lord. I will extract you from under the burden of Egypt; I will save you from their bondage; I will redeem you with outstretched arm and great justice; I will take you unto me for a nation, and I will be your Lord."

We find here four expressions of redemption (extract, save, redeem and take), forming the theme of Passover as four: four cups of wine, four questions (no answers!?), four sons.

The next verse in Exodus proclaims: "I will bring you into the land," corresponding to the fifth cup we pour for Elijah the Prophet who traditionally attends all Passover Seders. But this cup we don't drink, as we have yet to see the final redemption of our people.

The Five Rabbis

That explains why we cite the story of the five greatest rabbis of their times. Significantly, none of

their ancestors were actually slaves, because they either belonged to the tribe of Levi (i.e. they were Kohanim and Levites) or, in the case of Rebbe Akiva, the child of converts. Yet despite this, they spent all night discussing the Exodus!

Rabbi Elazar Ben Azarya

When the Sages demoted their leader Rabban Gamliel, they offered the premiership to Rabbi Elazar Ben Azarya who was 18 years old at the time. Rabbi Elazar consulted his wife, who correctly predicted the reinstallation of Rabban Gamliel. When Rabbi Elazar was prepared to accept the position (even temporarily), she countered, "Your beard is black while the Sages are gray. They will never respect your decisions!"

Rabbi Elazar reluctantly agreed, and he went to sleep intending to forgo the honor. In the morning he found that his beard had turned gray. This was a heavenly sign that he should become the leader.

"I am like 70 years," proclaimed Rabbi Elazar. Although he was only 18, he resembled age 70. (By adding the numerical value of the word Ben [52] to his age [18], it equals 70.)

The Four Sons

The Wise Son

He wants to know everything: all categories of mitzvot, testimonies (laws of historical meaning), statutes (that we don't fully understand) and civil law. It's a pleasure to teach someone hungry for knowledge. They eat up every word. Teach him all the laws of "Seder night" up until the last one: we do not eat after the Afikomen.

The Evil Son

He doesn't ask a question, but makes a statement: "What's all this business for you? What's the purpose of all these meaningless rituals?" He excludes himself from the people, so we "knock out his teeth!" The idea here is that those who exclude themselves from their people are troublesome to us. We must find ways to encourage them and enable them to come near and to find the joy in joining their people.-- Sadly we

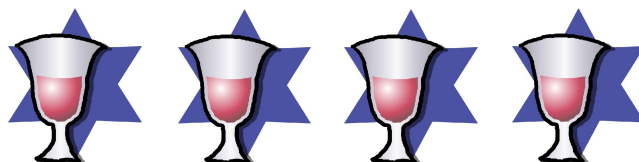
acknowledge that had he been there he would have remained in Egypt. (Indeed, 80 percent of the Jewish people became so assimilated that they never left Egypt.)

The Simple Son

He asks a simple question and receives a plain reply. Don't overcomplicate issues if you want to be understood.

The Son Who Doesn't Ask

Marvin is sitting quietly, minding his own business, and the Torah commands us to approach him and tell him of the Exodus. This is the source of our obligation, because the other sons who asked would receive a reply in any case. What can we accomplish with such a Jew? We must get him to ask, to arouse him to be bothered by the basic questions of life and Judaism. Then we anticipate that he will be on a path to seek out the answers on his own, or to ask for guidance.



Humble Beginnings

The Sages explain that the Haggadah "begins with derogatory statements and ends with praise." There are two opinions as to what this refers:

We were slaves and now we are free.

We were idolaters and now we serve G-d.

We follow both opinions because each one is applicable. In the physical sense we were slaves who gained freedom, while in the spiritual sense we were idolaters and discovered the truth. Terach, the father of Abraham, had a store that sold idols. Abraham single-handedly introduced monotheism to the majority of the civilized world. (Maimonides)

Question: The Jews were only in Egypt for 210 years, yet the verse claims 400.

Answer 1: Since Pharaoh caused them unbearable torture, 210 years of brutal torture was equivalent to a full 400 years of humane subjugation. This is why we eat matzah with marror, and say that the reason we left Egypt in a hurry (symbolized by the matzah) was due to the marror (the bitterness).

Answer 2: Since the verse doesn't specify Egypt, it seems that G-d's promise could be referring to an earlier period when Abraham was in the "Promised Land" but had to pay a stiff price for his wife's grave. He remained a stranger in the land. The Exodus was exactly 400 years from the birth of Abraham's son Isaac.

The kabbalists say the Jews had reached the 49th level of impurity, and had they remained in Egypt for a moment longer they would have reached the 50th rung and never gone out. That's why it was necessary to "calculate the end."

"An Aramite Wanted to Destroy My Father"

When Jacob and his family escaped from Laban, Laban chased after Jacob and wanted to destroy him. (Genesis 31:23)

Question: How does Laban, from the book of Genesis, make his way into the story of the Exodus?

Answer: In order to shorten the story we read Deuteronomy 26:5 which briefly tells the story of the Exodus. Those verses begin with Laban the Aramite.

The story of the Exodus really began much before. The spark that Abraham ignited was spread by his children -- and almost extinguished by Laban. This same spark became a nation and went out of Egypt.

Question: How is the fact that Laban wanted to destroy us connected to our descending to Egypt?

Answer 1: When there was a famine in Canaan, Jacob could have sent his sons to Aram where grandfather Laban had food. Instead Jacob was ready to take his chances with the physical danger

of Egypt, rather than the spiritual danger of Laban's negative influence.

Answer 2: The entire descent into Egypt was a result of the sale of Joseph, which was a result of the brothers' jealousy at the favoritism their father showed to Joseph. Had Jacob married Rachel first, Joseph would have been the first-born and the brothers would not have been envious. Only because Laban switched Leah for Rachel did we end up going down to Egypt!

The Ten Plagues (Before Dipping)

The custom is to pour 10 drops of wine from our cups when reciting the plagues, to indicate sorrow that our enemies had to suffer. Every plague had an aspect of "measure-for-measure," which is how the Almighty evens the score in the world:

1) Blood: No Water

2) Frogs: Noise

3) Lice: No Bathing

The above three plagues were measure-for-measure, in that the Egyptians would not allow the Jews to drink, sleep or bathe. They Egyptians now appreciated the difficulty of being deprived of water (blood), sleep (frogs) and a bath (lice). All three plagues in this series take place at sea level (upon the Nile River bank and in the sands of Egypt.)

The Sages point out that the first three plagues were carried out only by Aaron, because Moses owed a debt of gratitude to the Nile for saving his life (the baby in the basket), and to the sands of Egypt for concealing the Egyptian he had killed years earlier (who had been beating a Jew).

4) Wild Animals:

5) Cattle Plague: The pride of Egypt was their world-famous horses and livestock. When they all suddenly dropped dead in the fields (those in the barns were spared) -- except for the livestock of the Jews -- the Egyptians started to ponder things

more seriously...

6) Boils: Three of the plagues were performed by Aaron, three by Moses, and three directly by God. The plague of boils was the only one that was done by all three. Moses and Aaron both filled their fists with soot from the furnace, and then Moses miraculously took all four fistfuls into one fist and tossed it up to the sky, where God spread it throughout the entire Land of Egypt, causing boils to erupt on the Egyptians' bodies.

The measure-for-measure of this second series of three plagues was that the Egyptians had forced the Jews to risk their lives hunting for them (wild beasts), attending to their livestock (cattle plague), and would constantly beat them until their bodies were covered with sores (boils). This second series of plagues occurred at ground level.

7) Hail: Although it rarely rains in Egypt (the Nile periodically overflows enough for the Egyptians to water their crops), Moses predicted fire-entrapped hail (a natural contradiction) and even warned the Egyptians to bring their remaining livestock and servants indoors. Those who feared the Almighty took them inside, while those who didn't pay attention to His word (teaching us that the definition of fearing God is taking His word seriously) kept them outdoors, and when the hailstorm came (except for the land of Goshen) all was destroyed. Only the wheat and spelt that were not yet fully ripened (so as to bend in the hailstorm, instead of breaking) were spared.

This led the Egyptians to ask, "Why didn't your great Deity wait for the wheat to be hard and break as well?" The answer: "He had to leave something for the locusts to eat!"

8) Locusts: The locusts swarmed down from the sky after being transported by a strong easterly wind. They covered the entire land and consumed whatever the hail had spared. Pharaoh hurried to summon Moses and begged him to stop the plague.

Question: Why was Pharaoh in such a rush?

Answer: Pharaoh wanted the plague stopped before the locusts could lay eggs and doom the future crops as well. The Egyptians, lacking anything else to eat, figured they might as well eat the locusts (and it is a delicacy in Egypt until today). They froze, pickled and preserved locust. They canned, bottled, and salted locust. What happened next? A westerly wind suddenly came and transported all the locusts (including the preserved ones) into the Red Sea.

9) Darkness: For three straight days the Egyptians couldn't see, and for three additional days the darkness was so thick that they couldn't move. They were literally "glued to their spots" and could not eat, drink, sleep, or even use the facilities.

The measure-for-measure here is that the Egyptians had forced the Jews to tend their crops (locusts), stoned them with rocks (hail), and chained them to the wall in dark dungeons (darkness). This third series of three plagues came from the sky.

10) Slaying of First Born: The Almighty Himself descended on Egypt (i.e. a revelation of the Divine presence), and the first-born, who are more spiritually attuned, were killed by the overdose of spirit, according to the Maharal. The miracle was that the Jewish first-born were not killed, which is why even today they fast (or complete a tractate of Talmud) on the day before Pesach as a means of exempting them from the fast. (Tradition)

The Haggadah lists all the details of G-d's kindness at the time of the Exodus, and after every statement we proclaim, "It would have been enough for us!" We repeat this 15 times. G-d could have just taken us out of Egypt without the plagues, but He also destroyed our enemies and their idols. He split the Red Sea and led us upon dry land. He brought us to Sinai where we had a feeling of total unity, and then gave us the Torah, brought us into Israel and built the Temple.

Question: Would we really have been satisfied without the Torah, etc.?

Answer: It means only that it would have been enough of a reason to thank G-d.

Rabban Gamliel proclaimed that whoever doesn't explain the meaning of these three symbols -- Pesach, Matzah and Maror -- doesn't fulfill his obligation of Seder night.

Question: If someone would eat the Pascal lamb, matzah and maror without explaining the symbolism, why should it not fulfill his obligation?

Where else do we find such a mitzvah that if you do not explain its meaning you do not fulfill the obligation?

Answer: The mitzvah of retelling the story of the Exodus. If you fail to explain the Exodus from Egypt, you haven't fulfilled your obligation. Hence the normally prolonged discussion. If you fail to explain these symbols, you do not fulfill your obligation.

1. **Pesach:** G-d passed over our houses in Egypt when He killed the first born at midnight.
2. **Matzah:** The dough of our ancestors didn't rise until they were literally 'thrown out' of Egypt.
3. **Maror:** The Egyptians embittered our lives with harsh labor.

REMINDERS

*Please sign and return the petition to UNESCO to the synagogue office.

*Please send in your donation for Japan/Pacific Disaster Relief to the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee at the proper address or make it payable to FFMJC and send it to the synagogue office.

*Please send in your donation for the "OU Victims of Terrorism Fund" to the appropriate address or make it payable to FFMJC and send it to the synagogue office.

PM BENJAMIN NETANYAHU SAID IN AN INTERVIEW ON CNN THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2011

"The 20th century passed by a lot of the Arab world and the Muslim world, and then in comes the information technology of the 21st century and is telling all these people what they missed out on. And this creates the turbulence. Will it end quickly? I doubt it."

Q: What is the nightmare scenario for you?

Netanyahu: "That you get another Iran. You had a revolution five years ago in Lebanon. A million Lebanese, that's equivalent to 20 million Egyptians, walked in the streets of Beirut chanting for freedom, chanting for a secular, reformist, liberal Lebanese state. Five years later, Lebanon is controlled by Hezbollah which is controlled by Iran. That's what we don't want to see. We don't want to see the stark medievalism that represses women, that crushes the rights of people, that rolls us back a millennium, that fosters violence and does everything that we abhor - that it would take over. And I think these are the two poles. One is real democratic change and the other is a descent to militant Islamism that squashes all freedoms and threatens the peace of everyone."

"Everybody says take the nonproliferation treaty and expand it and bring Israel into it. No, the problem in the Middle East is not that countries don't join it, it's that those countries who join the nonproliferation treaty have violated it left and right beginning with Iraq under Saddam Hussein, going on to Libya, Syria, recently. They're all signatories of the NPT. They all developed nuclear weapons programs. Syria just did that and was exposed and Iran is doing it every day."

"The problem in the Middle East is this tyrannical, medieval, terrorist regime of Iran in which the mullahs and the ayatollahs want nuclear weapons with which they openly threaten to make another holocaust, to wipe out the Jewish state. But that's just for starters. They say that we're the small Satan, that the United States is the great Satan."

"Seven prime ministers have tried to get peace with the Palestinians since the peace process began in Oslo in 1993. Some of them made extraordinarily generous concessions. And it didn't work, because the Palestinians, first under Arafat

and now under Abu Mazen [Abbas], have not picked it up. They refuse to go the distance and actually recognize the Jewish state and make the compromises that are required from both sides. The entire world is focusing on the compromises that are necessary from Israel's side. And I'm prepared to make a lot of those compromises for peace. But they're not focusing on the fact that the Palestinians refuse to make the necessary compromises that are required on their side for peace."

"I nearly died several times in firefights. I had a brother lost in battle. I had many friends lost. One of the experiences I remember was as an 18-year-old soldier, just a few short weeks after entering the army, holding a friend who died in my arms....We want peace more than any other people. We pray for peace, yearn for peace, dream about peace. I want to make sure that the peace holds. And...the only peace that would hold is a peace you can defend...a peace with security."

"Talk about concessions. We uprooted 10,000 Israelis out of Gaza, just eliminated the settlements that were supposed to be the obstacle to peace. We walked out. Iran walked in. We didn't get peace. We walked out of Lebanon....Iran walked in. Now they say just walk out of the West Bank. Make the concession, come on, do it again, a third time....We say that Jerusalem has to remain united under Israel."

Q: The Palestinians have said that they're prepared to bring Hamas into government....Could you ever imagine having any kind of workable [Palestinian] administration that involved Hamas?

Netanyahu: Can you imagine a peace deal with al-Qaeda? Of course not....Hamas has a constitution [that] calls for the annihilation of Israel. Not only that, but the expansion of radical Islam throughout the region and the world. If they stopped firing rockets or importing rockets to launch on our cities - we just intercepted some Iranian rockets yesterday that were intended for Hamas - if they stopped terrorism, if they stopped calling for [Israel's] eradication, yes, of course, we'll be happy to talk to them. But the fact is Hamas has not stopped being Hamas. Hamas continues to call for our liquidation. So what am I going to negotiate with them about, the method of our decapitation, the method of their exterminating us? Of course not."

What if Arabs had recognized the State of Israel in 1948?

ABDULATEEF AL-MULHIM | ARAB NEWS

I have been exposed to Palestinians since I was in first grade in Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia. They were my favorite teachers. They were the most dedicated and the most intelligent among all my instructors, from elementary to high school.

When I was attending New York-based SUNY Maritime college (1975-1979), I read a lot of books about Palestinians, Arabs and the Israelis. I have read every article about the many chances the Palestinians had and missed to solve their problem, especially the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel.

I have seen and read about the lives of the Palestinians in the US and other places. They are very successful in every field. And at the same time I saw the Arab countries at the bottom of the list in education and development. And I always ask the question: What if the Palestinians and the Arabs accepted the presence of Israel on May 14, 1948 and recognized its right to exist? Would the Arab world have been more stable, more democratic and more advanced?

If Israel was recognized in 1948, then the Palestinians would have been able to free themselves from the hollow promises of some Arab dictators who kept telling them that the refugees would be back in their homes and all Arab lands will be liberated and Israel will be sent to the bottom of the sea. Some Arab leaders used the Palestinians for their own agenda to suppress their own people and to stay in power.

Since 1948, if an Arab politician wanted to be the hero and the leader of the Arab world, then he has a very easy way to do it. He just shouts as loud as he can about the intention to destroy Israel, without mobilizing one soldier (Talk is cheap).

If Israel was recognized in 1948, then there would have been no need for a coup in Egypt against King Farouk in 1952 and there would have been no attack on Egypt in 1956 by the UK, France and Israel. Also there will be no war in June 1967 and the size of Israel will not be increased and we, the Arabs would not have the need for a UN resolution to beg Israel to go back to the pre-1967 borders.

And no war of attrition between Egypt and Israel that caused more casualties on the Egyptian side than the Israeli side.

After the 1967 war, Israel became a strategic ally of the US because before this war, the US was not as close to Israel as people in the Arab world think. The Israelis fought in that war using mainly French and British weapons. At that time, the US administrations refused to supply Israel with more modern aircraft and weapon systems such as the F-4 Phantom.

The Palestinian misery was also used to topple another stable monarchy, this time in Iraq and replacing it with a bloody dictatorship in one of the richest countries of the world. Iraq is rich in minerals, water reserves, fertile land and archaeological sites. The military led by Abdul Karim Qassim killed King Faisal II and his family. Bloodshed in Iraq continued and this Arab country has seen more violent revolutions and one of them was carried out in the 1960s by a brigade that was sent to help liberate Palestine. Instead it made a turn and went back and took over Baghdad. Even years later, Saddam Hussein said that he will liberate Jerusalem via Kuwait. He used Palestinians misery as an excuse to invade Kuwait. If Israel were recognized in 1948, then the 1968 coup would not have taken place in another stable and rich monarchy (Kingdom of Libya). King Idris was toppled and Muammar Qaddafi took over.

There were other military coups in the Arab world such as Syria, Yemen and the Sudan. And each one of them used Palestine as their reason for such acts. The Egyptian regime of Jamal Abdul Nasser used to call the Arab Gulf states backward states and he tried to topple the governments of these Gulf states by using his media and his military forces. He even attacked southern borders of Saudi Arabia using his air force bases in Yemen.

Even a non-Arab country (Iran) used Palestine to divert the minds of their people from internal unrest. I remember Ayatollah Khomeini declaring that he would liberate Jerusalem via Baghdad and President Ahmadinejad making bellicose statements about Israel, though not even a single fire cracker was fired from Iran toward Israel.

Now, the Palestinians are on their own. Each Arab country is busy with its own crisis. From Egypt,

Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Jordan, Somalia, Algeria, Lebanon and the Gulf states. For now, the Arab countries have put the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on hold.

Abdulateef Al-Mulhim, is Commodore (Retd.), Royal Saudi Navy. He is based in Alkhobar, Saudi Arabia, and can be contacted at: almulhimnavy@hotmail.com



ARE THE PALESTINIANS READY FOR PEACE?

PALESTINIAN INCITEMENT AS A VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL NORMS

ALAN BAKER

(INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS
-JERUSALEM CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS)

Genuine peace between peoples requires far more than signed agreements. It requires bona fide mutual trust, respect, and a psyche of peace to prevail throughout all levels of society, and must emanate from the leadership.

Tragically, the extreme anti-Israel and anti-Semitic indoctrination that is so pervasive in all levels of Palestinian society has inevitably led to violence and terror, and serves to undermine any hope for peaceful relations between the two peoples.

Officially-sanctioned and encouraged incitement against Israel and against Jews has become a central theme in all spheres of Palestinian society, whether religious, cultural or in the education field. This inevitably results in violence and terror against Israel and its citizens.

The Palestinians are committed in the agreements with Israel to act to prevent incitement. Nevertheless, the Palestinian leadership continues to glorify terrorists as role models for Palestinian youth and encourage hostility and hatred toward Israel.

The Palestinian leadership cannot come with clean hands to the international community to ostensibly call for peace while at the same time undermining any hope for peace through incitement to terror.

The writer is former Legal Adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and former Ambassador of Israel to Canada.

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