

## The Four Sons Within Us Part 2

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller-Gottlieb

The second son is the rasha, somebody who commits serious transgressions publicly, knowingly and without regret. Why even talk to the rasha? We have little reshaim inside of ourselves aware of the yetzer hara's finest selling technique. The yetzer hara appears like your friend with your best interests at heart. He has two things in his favor- immediate gratification which is a killer and the entire physical world which lends itself to being misused. Reshaim justify themselves. They don't learn anything from their bad deeds. You have to be able to find the part of you that's a rasha, that wants honor, money, revenge. The voice will say- if you do the right thing, what will you gain? Mah avodah hazot lachem. And the answer is- Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim, and if you were there, you'd still be there. Meaning, to get what I want in life, I have no control over anything. Mitzrayim is the narrow place where I'm stuck, as we all are. If you serve Hashem, there's redemption, and redemption means being the self you want to be. If you don't serve Hashem, there's nothing. If you were there, you would have died because you wanted to stay there. The Jews who died in the plague of darkness were those who didn't want to leave Egypt. The word for forbidden in Hebrew is assur, which means tied down. Hashem could give you the life you want, your forbidden pleasures won't.

The third son is the tam. You might picture

someone who doesn't quite get it, sweet with good intentions. But in fact, Yaakov is called ish tam. Tam means whole, unbroken. Yaakov was able to meld chesed- compassion and gevura- judgement, moment by moment, not joining them together like shatnas but rather utilizing them when needed. It's all Hashem-all goodness. He wants to challenge me, and I'll meet it. He wants to inspire me, I'll listen. But even the tam has a question. Mah zot-What is she? One of the answers is she is the Shechinah. I understand that the challenges take me to being who I want to be. And that inspiration lets me learn from every person. But where's Hashem in this picture? I want to feel the Shechina within me. So we take him back again to Mitzrayim, Hashem got you out. Wherever you want to find Him, that's where you will. Finding Hashem isn't so easy necessarily because we don't look for him. Mitzvot can be fulfilled out of rote. The tam seeks Hashem. In every situation He'll see the positivity of Hashem's influence.

When the Klausenberger Rebbe was in Aushwitz he suffered so many losses but he couldn't bring himself to eat treif. Somebody mysteriously brought him some bread and marmalade. Now in Auschwitz, that would be like someone knocking on your door and giving you \$5 million. It doesn't happen. But it happened. He never found out the identity of the person but He did see clearly- Hashem

You're here. Instead of falling into the trap of doing things habitually, we have to seek Hashem. And there are people who do this all the time. I remember the last time I visited Rav Freifeld z'tzl. He was slicing a cucumber and admiring each piece, the color, the seeds. That's a tam.

The last son is the sheino yodei l'shol. He doesn't know that there's a question. In the kiruv movement today, there's much less ease in getting people to go to a Torah class or to a Shabbat meal, than there was 20 years ago. Twenty years ago, they knew how to ask a question. Today, there are no questions. People are so addicted to the media that life doesn't have to do with achievement or connection. It has to do with getting likes on your little machine, which is quite tragic. It says, "At petach lo", the feminine nurturing side of you that isn't expressing itself, but is aimed towards the one you're helping, the way a mother focuses on her baby. Open yourself to the questions.

You're reading the Haggada again, the story won't change, but you could. You could decide to listen to the Haggadah through the eyes and ears of all four of the sons and let it touch you, let it open you to Hashem's presence in your life. The Maharal says, Am Yisroel sees geulah when we become ourselves. May Hashem send us the geulah sheleima b'karuv!

## Freedom From Self to Self

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles

Summary by Channie Koplowitz Stein

Pesach is *zman cheirateinu*, the time of our freedom. Why then, asks the Netivot Shalom, are we still in *galut*? Further, asks the Shelah Hakadosh, why was it necessary for Hashem Himself to redeem us rather than an emissary? The Netivot Shalom explains that Egypt enslaved us both physically and spiritually. An embryo is "enslaved" and surrounded within the womb of its mother, totally dependent on its surroundings for its physical health. A baby also has no choice regarding the cultural influences it absorbs. The Jewish people were completely surrounded by the bonds of Egypt, both physical and cultural. Hashem Himself needed to redeem us, for we were not only physical slaves, but

totally immersed spiritually in the depraved culture of Egypt.

This explains why the *Hagadah* uses so many terms to describe our enslavement and our redemption. While most of *Bnei Yisroel* were released from *avdut* to *cherut*, from physical enslavement to freedom, the tribe of Levi, according to tradition, did not suffer physical labor. They though were also redeemed although on a different level, from *yagon* to *simcha*, from mourning to festivity, and from *afeilah le'or gadol*, from darkness to great light. Their experienced the same enslavement of the spirit that all *Bnei Yisroel* suffered, until Hashem Himself directly intervened.

We are still subject to this latter form of enslavement. Each generation has its own challenges. In Egypt, idol worship focused on the worship of the lamb. Today, our "idol worship" centers on consumerism, the "must haves" of our generation. We require Hashem's help to free us from enslavement to our materialistic desires. This tendency is a natural condition, explains the *Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh*. From the moment of birth, man's physicality is much more evident than his spirituality. These are our *meitzorim*, our constraints (and symbolically our *Mitzraim*, "Egypt") of today. Our work in life is to reveal our spiritual essence, to use our physical bodies and

Continues on page 2



## Freedom From Self to Self

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles  
Summary by Channie Koplowitz Stein  
Continued from page 1

material means to achieve a spiritual end. We must perform our *mitzvot* with the joy of finding a path to Hashem and not merely to fulfill Hashem's command. We can even focus on this spiritual goal during the laborious Pesach cleaning. When we clean our house of *chametz*, of the extraneous leaven, we should seek to deflate our physical selves that seek comfort in owning so many unnecessary materialistic things. We can free ourselves from our acquisitive selves. Perhaps someone else can benefit from many of the things we have but don't need. Perhaps we can live a simpler "*matzah*" style life and help others in the process.

The Chatam Sofer explains the word *Me-Le-Ch* (king). The "*Mem*" refers to the *Moach*, the brain; the *Lamed* refers to the *Lev*, the heart; finally, the *Ch(K)*of refers to *Kaved*, the liver, the seat of the blood and our physical existence. When we eat the food of the Seder, or any other time we eat, with the

priorities of maintaining our strength in each of these areas in this order, then we can achieve royalty. For we maintain dominion and control over our physical selves. On the other hand, if we put our physical needs first, the *kaved*, followed by the *lev*, and the *moach*, we become nothing, *K(=Ch)LuM*. We must face our cravings and turn away from them if we are to free ourselves from enslavement to our physical whims and turn to the higher calling of serving Hashem.

The word of God is *chorut al haluchot*, *chiseled* on the Tablets of the Law. But our Sages teach us to read the phrase, "*cherut al haluchot*," freedom is on the Tablets. We choose how we view the Torah. Some choose to consider *Torah* and *mitzvot* onerous and burdensome, chiseling away at our hearts, *chorut*. Alternatively, we can choose to view Torah as the path to true freedom, *cherut*. Do the laws of *Shabbat* restrict me, or do they free me from the chains of the material world and

allow me to embrace my spiritual essence?

Real freedom is achieved only when I can escape the walls that limit me to myself so that I can become part of the greater whole. When I can see myself as part of the whole nation of Israel in the present, connected to its past while holding hopes for its glorious future, my freedom transcends self. I can achieve this only by maintaining and strengthening the thread that binds this all together, Hashem's *Torah* and *mitzvah* observance.

We begin our *Seder* at the Festival of Freedom by verbalizing this theme. "This is the bread of affliction (the *matzo*) that our forefathers ate... Let all who are hungry come and eat." We join with all in our nation. We connect to our forefathers who were slaves in Egypt. In this way we can hope that "next year we will celebrate in Jerusalem, that next year we will be free men."

## The Pesach Experience

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen

The Torah says, "*Vihagadata livincha bayom hahu lemor bavur zeh asah Hashem li bezaisi mi'Mitzrayim*. You shall tell your son on that day because of this we left Egypt." Rashi explains that we were redeemed in order to fulfill the *mitzvot*. *Bavur zeh* refers to the *mitzvot* that are mentioned in the previous verses, namely *korbon Pesach*, *matzah*, and *maror*. We left Egypt in order to relive and perform these *mitzvot* year after year. The Ohr Hachaim teaches that *zeh* is the numerical value of 12 referring to the 12 *mitzvot* of *Pesach*. These are the three *mitzvot* previously mentioned, telling over the story in the *Haggada*, the seven days of *Pesach*, and the *mitzva* of *kiddush*.

The *mitzva* of *V'hagadata livincha* is not just to recite what is written in the *Haggada* but as the Chinuch explains, it is a foundation in *emunah* in Hashem. We were there. We witnessed the miracles, the way Hashem manipulated nature, and the way the 10 plagues affected creation. We saw the revelation of Hashem's greatness, His Divine Providence, which made it impossible to deny His existence.

*Matza* is called the bread of faith. One source

for this is in *Gemara Brachot*. Rav Yehuda says the Tree of Knowledge was wheat because a child does not attain the intelligence of recognizing his parents until he can eat cooked wheat. *Matza* is made from wheat and it gives us the ability to discern our Father in heaven. This is *emunah*. *Emunah* does not mean a person must be proficient in all of *Torah*. It means recognizing Hashem.

If a man hits his parents and causes him to bleed and there were witnesses and warning, he is liable for the death penalty. The *Gemara* in *Chullin* asks, how do we know that the man actually hit his father, perhaps he was a stranger? The *Gemara* gives a logical reason. *Beit din* rely on *rov*. The majority of people born come from parents who were married properly and therefore the man must be his father. Did you ever ask yourself, is my father really my father? Sensing it in the heart is enough. Why isn't that satisfactory for the *Gemara*? *Beit din* really doesn't know if it's the father. Therefore, they must come up with a logical answer to take away the doubt. We have no doubts that our parents are our parents. This is *emunah*. We have no doubt that Hashem is our Father. The *matza* helps us strengthen this faith.

The Ramban explains the verse, "*Bavur zeh asa Hashem li*." *Zeh* refers to the Splitting of the Sea, when the Jews exclaimed, "*Zeh keli v'anveihu*. This is my Hashem and I will glorify him." There was such a clear revelation that they were able to point to *Elokut*. *Emunah* should bring us to a level where we can almost see and feel Hashem. This was *yetziat Mitzrayim*. *Targum Unkelos* says about the words *zeh keli* that one should make a place in one's heart for Hashem. The *Baalei Mussar* learn that the night of *Pesach* should be a night where one can preserve one's *emunah* within oneself forever.

There are many *mitzvot* that we do all year round as a remembrance to the Exodus such as *tefillin* and *mezuzah*. *Yetziat Mitzrayim* is an experience that impacted us forever and that we must relive every day. The Taz says we make a *birchat hanissim* on the *Haggada* because the miracles didn't just happen in the past. We must reexperience it every day.

On *Pesach* we subjugate the I, the *kochi v'otzem yadi*. I don't exist when it comes to Hashem. It's a night of elevation, to get closer to Hashem, and that is why there's a *mitzvah* of telling over the story of the Exodus.

Help support Naaleh by searching the web! For more information visit [www.iGive/Naaleh.com](http://www.iGive/Naaleh.com) & [www.iSearchiGive/Naaleh.com](http://www.iSearchiGive/Naaleh.com)