

לקוטי ים החכמה: מועדים | ניסן - פסח

Likutei Ya"m HaChochmah

Festivals & Seasonal *Avodah* Series

Nissan/Pesach

Contents

Translator's Note **(3)**

Preface From The Hebrew Edition of *Likutei Yam HaChochmah – Moadim* **(5)**

Section I: Nisan

1 – The *Avodah* In The Month of Nisan **(9)**

2 – Getting Ready For Pesach **(12)**

3 – Shabbos HaGadol **(16)**

Section II: Pesach

4 – Preparing **(18)**

5 – Erev Pesach – Separating From *Chametz* **(20)**

6 – Pesach Night & The Power of The *Seder* **(32)**

7 – The 4 Cups **(41)**

8 – Reciting The *Hagaddah* **(45)**

9 – *Matzah & Maror* **(48)**

10 – *Afikoman, Hallel & Nirtzah* **(53)**

11 – Shvii Shel Pesach **(59)**

12 – Other Topics For Pesach **(68)**

Translator's Note

The reader should bear in mind that this English translation/adaptation is merely an attempt to translate the *divrei Torah* of the Rebbe *shlit"a*, so that the reader can get a basic idea of the concepts and find them of benefit. In no way should it be seen as a professional and completely accurate teaching of the words of the Rebbe *shlit"a*. It is very possible that the translation is not always accurate or that it fails to make clear what's being described. This is to be expected, but hopefully, and with the positive response of the readers of previous pdfs of this series, this attempt at a translation will be beneficial to those reading it, even if not all the matters here can be understood.

There were some parts in each of the segments which didn't make it into the translation, which either could not be translated due to the heavy esoteric nature of the content, or the lack of the ability on the translator's part to convey these matters in the English word, or because the material would have thrown the reader off, so it was decided that it was best not to translate those parts.

All footnotes are from the Hebrew *sefer*, and as stated in the Hebrew edition of this *sefer*, the footnotes are compiled by the *talmidim* of the Rebbe *shlit"a* but which are completely based on the words of the Rebbe *shlit"a* in other places. However, there were a few places where some clarifications were needed for English readers or for those who never heard of certain concepts (which is to be expected), and in those places where it was necessary, the translator has placed footnotes on the bottom of the text which start off with "Editor's Note." In addition, any bracketed parts that are contained within the text are not from the *sefer* and they are from the translator, added for the purpose of clarity.

Understandably, any errors in this translation are completely on the translator's part, and all the more so will that apply to the translator's own additions contained in the brackets or in the editor's footnotes.

It is our hope *b'ezras Hashem* to compile an index of *Kaballah* terms for the near future.

There are several English adaptations thus far on *Likutei Ya"m HaChochmah "Avodas Hashem"*, which include *Emunah*, *Bitachon*, *Pnimitiyus haTorah*, *Introduction to Kaballah*, *Under The Waters of The Mikveh*, *Avodah of The Bedtime Shema*, *Shechinah & Tikkun Chatzos*, *Motzei Shabbos*, and *Final Test In-Depth*.

The English adaptations of *Likutei Yam HaChochmah* on *Festivals* so far, with Hashem's help, are: (1) Tamuz, (2) Exile & Redemption (3) Av (4) Tu B'Av (5) Elul, (6) Rosh HaShanah, (7) Yom Kippur, (8) Succos, (9) Cheshvan, (10) Kisleiv-Chanukah, (11) Teves-Shovavim, (12) Shevat, (13) Adar, (14) Purim, (15) Nissan-Pesach.

B'ezras Hashem, the translation of this monumental sefer will soon be complete with the upcoming translations on *Sefiras HaOmer*, *Lag B'Omer*, and *Shavuos*.

Preface To The Hebrew Edition of Likutei Yam HaChochmah - Moadim

The Pnimiyus Of The Festivals

When the festivals of Hashem and these times of holy callings come, every Jew wants to shine his soul with the light of these times, with the precious holy flame of the festivals, to reach the **Elokus, the G-dliness** that is contained in each *mitzvah* of every festival, and the soul especially pines to understand the **pnimiyus, the inner essence**, to hear what the festival is calling to him, and to know what to do in order to acquire the eternal purchase that can be gained from these times, to remain with the **d'veykus (attachment) in the Creator** for the rest of the year.

That is why we have become inspired to gather these roses, which have come in their beauty from the mouth of *Maran, the Rebbe shlit"a*, who has spoken to clarify the precious light of the *pnimiyus* of the *avodah* (service to Hashem), the concept of these times and the *mitzvos* in them, to awaken the hearts of *Yisrael* to their Father in Heaven, to unify with Him and become attached in Him at all times.

These words come from *pnimiyus haTorah*, from *razin d'razin*, "secret of secrets", and from a high source they have been carved from. They are deep, expansive words, and **not every mind will be able to grasp all the words**. That is why we have become inspired to gather together all of the practical guidance and understandings that have emerged from these words, along with the feelings of the heart that come with them, to make it all practical, to shine the light of clarity of these times - each festival with its own special color, in the ways of *avodah*. In Hashem we are placing our trust, that it will be of great gain to all those who wish to rise higher.

This sefer comes after the production of the set of 2 sefarim of *Likutei Yam HaChochmah on Avodas Hashem*, which were received in Hashem's mercy with great endearment, and many have requested that they want to own these words of Torah in an organized manner. This sefer has been compiled in a brief format, so that it is easier for the reader to get to the heart of each topic. That is why there are many footnotes to expand on the topics discussed in the text.

How To Use This Sefer

There are many topics relevant to the hidden part of Torah. Therefore, if the reader learning this sefer doesn't understand something, he should skip anything he doesn't

understand, and G-d willing, he will certainly find words that are of relevance to him, for this *sefer* has many degrees to it by which it can be learned.

There are certainly matters in this *sefer* which cannot be applied to every person, especially the parts which discuss Kabbalistic concepts, which are inseparable part of any of the topics being discussed. Especially the matters about *yichud* are deep and hard to understand, and these matters need a lot of explaining. In other places, *Rabbeinu shlit"a* explains the topic more, and in this *sefer* we are only bringing the basic ideas of the topic. But **most of the matters can be understood by anyone who serves Hashem**, and anyone can find in it words that he will find desirable, according to his level of understanding, and to ignite his heart with the *avodah* of the festivals.

Many places require additional explanation, so we have tried to bring sections of *Maran shlit"a* which are applicable to the text, placing these additional segments in the footnotes. Any additional explanations from the editors have been placed in brackets.

All of the segments of this *sefer* need to be seen at their source where the full version of the segments appear [in the sefarim "*Ya" M HaChochmah*"] in order to have a more complete understanding.

The *divrei Torah* here are multi-faceted from all areas of Torah and *avodah*, and we could not cite sources for everything, due to time constraints in preparing this *sefer*. If the reader is bothered at the lack of sources that are brought for many of the concepts here, please understand that this is due to our own folly, for **the words of this *sefer* have not been written by the Rebbe shlit"a himself, and they should be labeled as "unedited", and any error in this *sefer* should be attributed to the editors alone.**

Also, please bear in mind that the actual *divrei Torah* of the *Rebbe shlit"a* which the segments in this *sefer* are sourced in are more than double the size of the material in this *sefer*. Most of it didn't even get written down, and only what was relevant to our practical *avodah* has been written here. There are many exalted matters, such as the *kavanos* (intentions), which have not been written here, and we have only put into printing any material which we felt would benefit any *ben aliyah*, any words which they can feel a connection to, on some level.

Acknowledgments

May blessings come upon the heads of those with the wisdom of heart who bravely applied their hearts to put forth this wisdom into written format, and who once again bore the yoke of preparing this *sefer*: Pinchas ben Rivkah, Binyamin ben Shoshana Bluma, Moshe Azriel ben Shoshana Roiza. May great blessings come upon the head of this *Machon*, R' A.B. shlit"a, who is dedicated in his heart and soul to *Maran the Rebbe shlit"a*, for his help in preparing this *sefer*.

How To Benefit From This Sefer

In the words of the *Rebbe shlit"z*: "We must bond with the light of the true *tzaddikim* who revealed the way of *yichud*, which is so vastly deep. We must search for it again and again, because even when it becomes revealed it is still so hidden. Even when a person is *zocheh* to get close to the way of *tzaddikim* and *d'veykus*, the S"M blocks the truth from him, again and again, each time. As Rebbi Nachman said, even the binding and cover of a sefer blocks the light of the sefer. Every point that a true *tzaddik* revealed is constantly being blocked from a person."

Therefore, the reader who wants to prepare his soul for an upcoming festival should be aware of the words of the *Ramban*, that when we arise from learning a sefer, we should wonder on how we can actually fulfill what we have learned. It should be clear to us what we have just learned, meaning that we should make clear conclusions on the topic and have the outline of the concept, and when we are clear about a point, we are able to go with it and serve Hashem with it.

A Practical Example On How To Apply A Concept of This Sefer

If, for example, the reader is learning about how *chametz* on Pesach is the concept of *yeishus* (ego), he should allow himself to feel the concept, then *daven* about it and learn the sefarim on the topic, and to think that he is not deserving of any honor, and he should think about the reality of Hashem and the worthlessness of the human being, so that he acquires the concept of *bittul haYeish*, and then he do the respective *yichudim* that pertain to this topic. And when a person is cleaning for *chametz* and then he is burning the *chametz*, he should go over the words that he has learned about these matters, through *davening*, and feeling and contemplating the matters, and focusing on the *yichudim* about the matter at hand, until with Hashem's help the "flame comes on its own", where he will feel that he has changed for the better, truly acquiring these matters with time, acquiring the matter of *bittul haYeish* on his own level. From this he will reach a great, fiery longing to become *miskalel* (integrated) in the Creator. And the same will apply when learning about any festival or mitzvah being learned about.

The basic rule to bear in mind with any section is that it won't suffice to learn only once about the matters. The reader should make a conclusive summary of the matters being learned, and then take a point that speaks to him, and use it in several different angles, whether he is about to do a particular mitzvah on the Yom Tov or while he's in the midst of doing the mitzvah of the Yom Tov, until the matter is illuminating him inwardly, in his soul.

In Conclusion

As we depart from this holy work, we raise our hands to Hashem and we ask of Him that we be *zocheh* that this sefer should be received with love and that it should of benefit to the *bnei aliyah* who search for Hashem, that they should know the way to go in, to ignite within them the light of these holy days of the festivals, through the ways of the true *tzaddikim*, and to serve Hashem as is their desire, with a complete heart.¹

¹ Understandably, this introduction which appears at the beginning of the Hebrew edition of *Likutei Yam HaChochmah – Moadim* applies not only to this pdf you are reading, it applies to each of english adaptations of all of *Likutei Yam HaChochmah* on the Festivals

1 - The Avodah In The Month of Nissan

Gaining Shechinah-Consciousness In Nissan

Chazal teach, "The first day of the month of Nissan is the Rosh HaShanah (new year) for kings." (*Talmud Bavli Rosh HaShanah 2a*), meaning that we need to coronate Hashem as King over the entire world, as taught in *sefer Avodas Yisrael*. We have to produce a new consciousness of how to coronate Him as King. The entire exile is still going on because this consciousness is missing from our midst.

How do we make Hashem King, each moment? The words *Goleh* (exile) and *Geulah* (Redemption) are similar words, and the only difference is that the word *Geulah* has an added letter *Aleph* in it, hinting to declaring Hashem as King, the Chief of the world (*Aluf shel olam*) at every moment. The *Geulah* depends on receiving the consciousness of "This month will be to you" [which the Torah says about the month of Nissan], or being aware of the *Shechinah* – which we can begin to reach in the month of Nissan.

The *sefer Avodas Yisrael* says that from Rosh Chodesh Nissan and onward, we begin to reach the *Shechinah*, otherwise known as Hashem's name of *Adnus (ADN"Y)*. The first 10 days of Nissan corresponds to the letter *yud* of the name of *ADN"Y* (the letter *yud* equals 10). The following 4 days until Erev Pesach corresponds to the letter *daled* of *ADN"Y* (the letter *daled* equals 4). From Pesach until Shavuot there are 50 days, corresponding to the letter *nun* of *ADN"Y* (the letter *nun* is equal to 50). The one day of Shavuot corresponds to the letter *aleph* of *ADN"Y* (the letter *aleph* equals 1), and that is when we complete the coronation of Hashem as Master over the world. This is the consciousness which we receive between the first day of Nissan until the festival of Shavuot.

We only forget about the *Shechinah* when we aren't involved with *emunah*, *tefillos*, and *yichudim* every moment. If we accustom ourselves to *tefillos* and *yichudim*, it will be very close to us to attain *Shechinah*-consciousness and we will immediately be able to come out all of the concealments in Creation and coronate Hashem as King. That is what is implied by "This month will be to you."

In order to be able to have the strength for *tefillos* and *yichudim*, we need to be found in Torah learning all the time. The root of the *Shechinah* is in the *Malchus d'Ein Sof*, which includes in it the *kav EinSof* (the ray of the Infinite light), which is the Torah.

Thus we need to prepare during these days to redeem our soul on the night of Pesach, entering totally into *tefillos*, *yichudim* and compete *emunah*. This is how we can come to accept the Torah on Shavuos – **for the entire Torah is really the attainment of the ways of *emunah* and *yichud***. So we must never forget about *tefillos* and *yichudim* at all times – and that is how we can come to reach the Torah.

The Month of Building Our Inner Beis HaMikdash

Chazal said, “In Nissan, they will be redeemed in the future.” During the year we must be thinking about the *Geulah* and awaiting it, and all the more so when Nissan arrives.

One’s main task on this world is really with himself – to build a *Beis HaMikdash* within himself, and bring *korbonos* there. The first step of one’s task is more external – **one has to dedicate himself to serving Hashem and work hard at this even if he doesn’t feel any light**. This is the verse, “*For on You, we are killed all day.*” And this is especially the case when it comes to *davening* – **you have to put in effort into your *davening* even when you feel that you have lots of blockages and darkness.**

The next step to come to is more inward. It is to offer your own *Ketores*-offering to Hashem – to become connected inwardly to Hashem. This is like the *Beis HaMikdash* of fire that will come down from Heaven in the future – and every person has to build it in his own heart.

The Torah says “*This month will be to you.*” Hashem gave us the power of *Malchus* (*Shechinah*), which is called “month” – the ability of renewal, the power to serve Hashem in any situation. Sometimes we must serve Him inwardly and sometimes we serve Him externally. Any level of serving Hashem must be valued, and we cannot belittle any level. **We must sometimes serve Him even when we don’t feel like we are getting anything out of it, and this is *mesirus nefesh*. This is our “outer” *avodah*. And when we do that, we are then able to go inward and serve Hashem in the innermost chamber in front of Him.**

Through actively focusing on *yichudim* at all times, we connect more and more to the *Beis HaMikdash* of fire. The more that people keep this up and the more *tzaddikim* are involved in this, the *Geulah* is drawn closer and we are building the *Beis HaMikdash* of fire to come down from Heaven.

The Power of Shabbos Parshas HaChodesh

The Torah says **לכם** **החודש הזה לכם** “*This month will be to you*”. The Gemara says that Rabbi Eliezer ben Aruch wanted to get refreshed and visited a certain place, and he forgot all his learning there. When he returned, he opened a Sefer Torah and started to read the words “This month will be to you” but he read it as **בלבם** **החודש הזה בלבם** “*There was a deaf person in*

their heart.” His students realized that something had happened to him, so they *davened* to Hashem to have mercy on him, and later his learning returned to him.

We can learn from this that even when the heart of a person has become closed up, as if it is “deaf”, the arrival of the month of Nissan and Shabbos *HaChodesh* (when we read “*This month will be to you*”) is able to fix the deafness in our heart. **Any person can get awakened to open his closed heart during this month.** [That is, through the power of *tefillah*, just as the students *davened* for their rebbi].

The Opportune Time For A Peaceful Redemption

The month of Nissan is a time where we can do *teshuvah* out of love for Hashem, and it is also a month where we can have a pleasant arrival of Mashiach. For if Mashiach comes in the month of Tishrei (which is also an opportune time for him to come), he will come with harsh judgments. But if he comes in Nissan, it will be with Hashem’s kindness and loving compassion.

May Hashem have pity on us that Mashiach should come in His great compassion and kindness – because we do not have the energy to sustain any more concealments. We ask of Hashem to show His compassion, and that He be revealed to us from His compassion and kindness.

That happens when we connect to the light of the true *tzaddik* – to search for the point of absolute truth, to be genuinely attached to Hashem, to be connected at all times to the light of *daas*: “*Know the G-d of your father and serve Him.*” Focus the mind on searching for how you can see G-dliness at all times. Becoming attached with Hashem doesn’t depend on any outer factor - it is entirely a very inner connection, deep in our soul.

2 – Getting Ready For Pesach

The Katnus (Low Inspiration) When Preparing For Pesach

When we are preparing for the holy Yom Tov of Pesach, many times we will feel *katnus* (lit. “smallness”, low-level inspiration or low-level spiritual consciousness).²

The sefer **Shemen Sason** says that before Pesach we enter into “50 gates of *katnus*”. The sefer **Chesed l’Avraham** (grandfather of the *Chida*) says that when our souls are being cleansed and purified during the 30 days before Pesach, we are being purified through more and more gates of *katnus*, with each day that gets closer to Pesach. All of these “gates of *katnus*” are to prepare us for receiving a “hidden Torah” on the night of Pesach - which repairs the sin of Adam.

The **Reshash** explains that Adam didn’t want to serve Hashem “slowly.” He was in a rush to serve Hashem at the highest level, and he didn’t want to wait. He didn’t have the patience to explore all the different levels in their many details. He wanted to get to the collective whole without first going through the different parts that made up that whole – and therefore the *Shechinah* couldn’t be revealed to him.

The secret that is called the “hidden Torah” is that we need to be able to stay with the darkness of not yet understanding all the details and subtleties that we need to go through, in Torah, in *avodah*, and in every concealment and process that we find ourselves amidst. Only after we have gone through everything patiently, remaining faithful and loyal to Hashem, does the *Shechinah* become revealed to us – from all the different levels we have patiently gone through.

The Avodah From Rosh Chodesh Nissan Until Pesach

During the first 15 days of Nissan, we are in a preparation stage, in which we will be going “from bondage to Redemption”. Our main *avodah* during these days is to prepare ourselves throughout the day for the inner point – the *Shechinah*.

² *Moreinu shlit"za* said elsewhere, “The truth is that even when it seems to us that we are in *katnus* – which is called *achor b’achor* (back-to-back), there is an inner level at the same time which we can enter into, which is entirely *pnim* (face-to-face). We need to learn the way of these *yichudim* very discreetly, in a hidden manner, and after we persist with the *yichudim*, at the end we can see the “birth” of a new level.”

Chazal said “A person should always learn Torah *shelo lishmah*, because from *shelo lishmah* a person will come to *lishmah*.” (*Pesachim 50b*). Chazal didn’t mean to learn completely *shelo lishmah*. Rather, the intention is that everything a person does throughout the day should all be centered around the inner point. For example, when a person *davens* any of the three *tefillos* throughout the day, this is like greeting the *Shechinah*. But this is only the external level of the *Shechinah*. One cannot reach the inner point of all his *tefillos* unless he is preparing himself throughout the day for the *Shechinah*. These are the external forms of *avodah* which enable a person to reach *lishmah*, to open the inner point in his heart.

On the night of Pesach we need to reach the *Shechinah*. But in order to reach it, we need to first be patient as we remain outside of this level and we are still in the midst of external forms of *avodah*. We need to enter into one level after another so that we can arrive at the inner point, which is a refined level of being connected with Hashem in the innermost point of the heart. We cannot enter there unless we have first opened all the gates to get to it.

That is why during these days, we should do everything so that we can revolve around the *Shechinah*, by longing for it at all times - to long for Hashem to bring us into that inner point - which is the deepest point in our heart.

Watching What Comes Out Of Our Mouths During These Days

Now when we are preparing for Pesach, the time of *Peh-Sach* (the mouth that talks), we need to watch our mouth so that we aren’t speaking negatively of another Jew, and so that we shouldn’t utter any painful words to another Jew. Rather, we should make sure to honor every person. This is actually the main sign of being *holy*. One first has to be purified from the *kelipas noga* [the materialism of permitted desires] in order to eat the *matzah* with a holy mouth that has been cleansed from evil speech towards others.

Each day a person needs to check himself: “Perhaps I am still found in *kelipas noga*.” The **Tzemach Tzedek** said in the name of the **Baal Shem Tov** that *Chassidus* is mainly about *bittul* (self-nullification), for one to become *ayin* (nothing). If a person is *Yeish* (self-centered), if he doesn’t have good *middos* - he is certainly amidst *kelipas noga*, even if knows the entire Torah well and he has acquired many levels so far. As long as a person causes pain to people, he is *Yeish*, and all of his levels are coming from *kelipas noga*.

Preparing Through Bittul

From the 10th of Nissan and onward, we begin to enter into the next stage of preparing for Pesach and rising to a higher level. It is the time to get rid of *chametz*, and on a personal level this refers to getting rid of all *mochin d’katnus*. We should make all it “nullified like the dust” - that is, by agreeing that we are not interested in anything in the world other than nullifying ourselves to Hashem’s infinite light.

All the tools that Hashem made in His world will all return to Him through the “returning light”, becoming a fire that will burn up all the concealments. Every reality that Hashem created will return to being a fire, where it longs to go back its source in the Infinite. When everything returns to Hashem, there will no more evil and no more concealments, just a “constant fire burns on the Altar, it shall not be extinguished.” The fire that roasted the *korbon pesach* represented the holy fire that makes a person into an “existence that is a non-existence” – where the sin pines completely and destroys itself so that it can become nothing and melt into G-dliness, the G-dly world of *ayin* (nothingness of the human being) because there is only G-dliness.

Wherever we go and whatever we see, we should learn to see it as only “*Hashem is One and His Name is one.*” Everything will return and become integrated in the spiritual *Kodesh Kodashim*, the Holy of Holies – not just to the Holies, which represents the higher consciousness, *mochin d’Aba* (the consciousness of *Aba/Chochmah*) but the Holy of Holies, which is the revelation of Hashem’s infinite light, *ohr EinSof*. We always need to reveal *ayin (bittul)* and *ani Hashem* as one.

Our *avodah* is to connect all our senses with Hashem – everything we see, hear, smell, and talk should all be used as means of either fearing, loving Hashem or being attached with Him in *d’veykus*. Every solitude of *hisbodedus* and every *nigun* we sing we should be connected with envisioning the name of *Havayah*. In all our acts, we should see and hear Hashem, and in every feeling we should attach ourselves with Him, and also speak with Him.

And not only that, but in any intention we have, we should connect ourselves with the “apex of the *yud*” – the secret of infinite light, of transcending the human state – and this is how we can “eat” of the *korbon pesach* and *afikoman*, raising all our longings (which are called the “feminine waters” the yearn to go back to their source in the higher, masculine waters above) with a true pining in our soul for our Root.

Sweetening Our Bitterness

Now when we are in the midst of preparing ourselves for the holy Yom Tov, our main preparation is inward – to enjoin ourselves with G-dliness, to think all the time of *yichud*, of how Hashem’s Presence is unified with the entire Creation.

Even if a person has fallen into *maror* – the bitterness of This World – there is an antidote for him. Chazal said, “If not for salt, the bitterness of the world cannot be sweetened.” (*Zohar 241*). The “white” color of the salt – representing the “higher whitening”, which is the **awesome bliss of enjoying G-dliness**, together with the warming effect of **feeling humbled to Hashem – is what sweetens this world’s bitterness.**

The **Baal HaTanya** said that the main repair for the final generation is through *tefillah*. “*Let this be written for the final generation, so that the nation will praise Hashem.*” It means that we need to attach ourselves to Hashem’s infinite light as we *daven*, along with truly humbling ourselves before Hashem as feel that we are nothing before Him.

To the extent that one puts effort into this, he lights up the whole world. **Hashem has sent each person onto this world for his own personal *tikkun* (repair), each person at a different place and situation, and even if a person is under a “thick cloud and darkness”, he should put in the effort to reveal how there is really no darkness at all – for the purpose of Creation is to reveal His *ohr pashut* (undifferentiated infinite light) throughout every space.**

3- Shabbos HaGadol

Shabbos HaGadol - The Bittul That Comes Before Bittul

The **Izbizher** said that "Shabbos HaGadol" means that it is a time to put a "Shabbos", a rest, a *bittul*, on our aspect of "*Gadol*", our nature to expand ourselves and become greater – so that we nullify everything in complete surrender to Hashem's infinite light.

This is the introduction to Pesach – to sanctify our desire to expand ourselves and become greater, to make it holy. It is essentially the concept of *bittul*, surrendering ourselves to the Creator. As long as we are in "Egypt", we have no *daas* – we don't really know or understand anything, and that is a terrible exile to be in. But the advantage of this is that we at least feel that we aren't doing anything, and can feel like we are absolutely nothing. That is precisely when it can be revealed that "*I, Hashem, dwell amidst them in their defilement*", when "*I will descend with You to Egypt.*"

When we begin the Redemption process – when we begin to leave "Egypt", which is when we begin to serve Hashem with learning, *davening*, and doing the *mitzvos* – we are beginning to become greater and we are expanding. But that is when the evil inclination enters and he convinces us to feel our own sense of importance, as if it's all up to us – as if we don't need Hashem's compassion at all times in order to get further. That is *chametz* – the conceitedness, that sense of "Me".

So that is why we need to begin the process of the Pesach *Seder* already with the Shabbos before it, Shabbos HaGadol. It is so that we can sanctify our desire to expand ourselves, and to instead nullify our existence entirely: "I am surrendered to Hashem's infinite light." This is all through the holiness of Shabbos, and that is how we prepare for the great expansion that will take place on the night of the *Seder*, enabling the *Seder* to elevate us while at the same time keeping us nullified.

That is why there must be a Shabbos HaGadol before Pesach. It is to show us that there must be a Shabbos – a *bittul* – before we receive the light of Pesach. Shabbos is a very inner light, and only through it can we repair our deeds on the night of Pesach. It is not enough for us to be saturated with the spiritual light that will come on the night of Pesach. Rather, we mainly need a *bittul* – which is the holiness of Shabbos, of not going anywhere. On Pesach we will become very saturated with spiritual light, but there is concern that it may make us conceited and self-focused. So we first need to precede it with a *bittul*, with a Shabbos, with a state of total *ayin*.

When *tzaddikim* becomes saturated with spiritual light, it doesn't cause them to feel their own existence more. To the contrary, it makes them feel even more connected to the *ayin*, to the realm where there is only G-dliness and nothing else. The way we can see this is that even after the *tzaddikim* gain the satisfaction that comes from these bursts of light, they gain even better *middos* than before, and they totally give themselves up for each Jew.

A Shabbos To Prepare Us For Pesach

On Shabbos HaGadol we prepare ourselves for Pesach. On Shabbos any person can easily come to a point of truth, a point of holiness, which is the point of *yichud*, and to then pour living waters on his exhausted soul. Shabbos is the time when any person can learn and *daven* with a bit more *d'veykus* and with being closer to Hashem, and then one can more easily come out of lowliness – the desires of jealousy, lusts, and honor-seeking, and all the ten “impure crowns” (the ten primary traits of impurity). With this, one can subsequently merit an outpouring of prophecy and revelation of G-dliness on the night of the *Seder*.

A Shabbos of Geulah

The **Chasam Sofer** said that Shabbos HaGadol is an opportune time for the arrival of Mashiach. Chazal said that Eliyahu will not come (to announce Mashiach) on Shabbos, but the **Ksav Sofer** explained that although Eliyahu won't come on Shabbos, Mashiach can come before Shabbos and then he will be hidden, and then on Shabbos he can be revealed.

On Shabbos HaGadol, it is an opportune time to understand the secret of “*His Name is with certainty*” (recited during the Chazan's repetition on Rosh HaShanah), meaning that a Jew can bring the Redemption without getting into all the doubts of the Other Side if it can happen or not. Rather, we can believe that “His Name is with certainty”, and we are certainly achieving salvations – and in the merit of our faith in Hashem, the Redemption can come.

Hashem enjoys it when we are connected to the holiness of our *tefillos* and we have faith that He hears us, and we don't allow ourselves to fall into the doubts of this world of action, where there is no *yichud*, and instead we plunge ahead with force into Pesach night, with clear *emunah* that Hashem has heard our *tefillos*.

The Redemption mainly depends on recognizing *yichud* in the world of action we live on. Through truly asking for the *Geulah*, as we cried out in Egypt, “*And we cried out to Hashem our G-d and Hashem heard our voices and saw our affliction*”, let us strengthen our *tefillos*, which is like our carefully protected *matzah*, combined with the power of the true *tzaddikim*.

Likutei Ya"m HaChochmah: Festivals & Seasonal Avodah Series – Nissan/Pesach

4 - Preparing

Learning What Pesach Is About

We must now prepare every moment for the upcoming Yom Tov, because we can only get the holiness of the Yom Tov slowly, and that is why it needs great preparation - learning about the matters of the Yom Tov, both the revealed and hidden areas of Torah about the holy night of Pesach, so that we can gain a great desire for the holy night of Pesach, a “night that shines like the day.”

On the night of Pesach, we can subjugate the evil inclination that confuses us all the time, by eating the *matzah* – the word *matzah* means fighting, and by eating the *matzah* we are showing that we are destroying the *yetzer hora* that fights with us constantly. We can then learn and *daven* in the proper way: being conscious of the G-dly light with us.

Davening That We Be Zocheh To Bittul On The Night of Pesach

Throughout the entire week in the days leading up to Erev Pesach, we need to ask Hashem that we gain His overextended compassion to be worthy of fulfilling all the *mitzvos* of Pesach night – as simple as that sounds – and that we should say the *Hagaddah* as we should. The purpose of the *Seder* is to simply fulfill all of its *mitzvos*. And we need to *daven* endlessly to be worthy of fulfilling them even on the simplest level – and that we should give Hashem a *nachas ruach* (satisfaction) through it.

We should also *daven* to get rid of all our *chametz* – our physical *chametz* as well as our “spiritual” *chametz*: to throw away our *yeishus*, that independent sense of “Me.” All *yeishus* is a subtle form of worshipping ourselves as an idol – and we need to burn it, just as we must burn idols. *Chametz* represents the *ani*, the “I” of a person, which implies both independence as well as pleasure. We need to rid ourselves of sensing any independent existence of our own (the feelings of conceit and being self-focused), throwing it away and burning it. But we also need to find the secret of true pleasure that’s rooted in holiness. Through ridding ourselves of *yeishus* – of our own existence – we gain the “carefully protected *matzah*” on Pesach - meaning that we become protected by Hashem’s compassion. (This brings us to the state of absolute *ayin*, which is in *Arich Anpin*.)

Bittul Through Bitachon Before Pesach

Every person wants to feel a sense of G-dliness at the *Seder*, through drinking the 4 cups and all the other *mitzvos* at the *Seder*. And by every Yom Tov as well, a person wants to feel

something spiritual. But this is a test for a person. He will become anxious: “Am I prepared enough for Pesach? Will I feel its *kedushah* (holiness)?”

A person has to combat these thoughts with *bitachon*: **It shouldn't make a difference to you if you will “feel” any “lights” or not. Instead, accept upon yourself that you will simply fulfill all the *mitzvos* at the *Seder***, and that you will serve Hashem in every situation you are in, and that your intention is to fulfill the Heavenly purpose of everything and to do Hashem's will. Trust in Hashem that in the end, you will merit to serve Him at the innermost level. But at first, you should not care at all if you are or aren't feeling anything special. Serve Hashem with *mesirus nefesh*, as it is written “*For upon You we are killed, each day*”, and happily accept whatever light Hashem sends your way.

Although we need to prepare for the holiness of Pesach, who can prepare for it completely and properly? Who can get rid of all his personal *chametz*, all the traces of evil in him that he's not even aware of? No one can do it completely, and therefore a person has to do only whatever he's able to.

After a person has done everything he can, and after learning the *sefarim* of true *tzaddikim* and becoming bound with them, he should then enter into *bitachon* and absolute *bittul*, “like an infant nursing from its mother in the last quarter of the night” – the end of the exile, which is the darkest part of the “night”. He should “eat whatever his mother feeds him” – to enjoy whatever Hashem will send his way, surrendering himself to the Most High.

Giving Tzedakah and Kimcha D'Pischa Before Pesach

Giving *tzedakah* is a good preparation before any *mitzvah*. The Jewish people are accustomed to giving a lot of *tzedakah* before Yom Tov, as well as before each *davening*. This is because in order to raise the “288 sparks” that are present at each *mitzvah* and *tefillah* – which is through longings that bring us “from below to above” – we first need to begin “from above to below” the “5 *gevuros* of *Ima*” which descend onto the world of action, in order to prepare the 288 sparks to ascend. This happens through giving *tzedakah* – which draws down holy blessing from above to below, and which prepares us to do the *avodah* of going from below to above.

Giving increased *tzedakah* before Pesach is because we wish to draw the holiness of the day of Pesach down from above. In order to gain from the holiness of Pesach night, we need to increase giving *tzedakah* before Pesach.

Preparing For Pesach With Learning The Secrets About The Yom Tov

The main way to prepare for the light of the upcoming Yom Tov is by learning the secrets of Torah about that Yom Tov. The Zohar says that before the final Redemption, the sea will be split again for us - through the secrets of the Torah. The 4 cups hint to the 4 levels of the

Torah that are *Pshat, Drush, Remez, and Sod*. The fifth cup, the cup of Eliyahu, represents the level of “secret of secrets”, the deepest secrets of Torah [taught in *Chassidus*]

“It is this which stood for our fathers and for us” – it is how we subjugate the *kelipos* whereby “Your wrath is poured on the nations”. Through learning the secrets of Torah, we can weaken the *kelipos*. These secrets are the “repairs of *Atik*” – the secrets which explain how we can remove ourselves from This World and come to divest our physicality.

These secrets are contained in the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov and Rebbi Nachman of blessed memory – who revealed to us the ways of truth, of how the Jewish can people can attain the spiritual senses, to be able to see, hear, smell and speak of supernal matters, which removes us totally from all impressions of This World. This is the light of Eliyahu, which Eliyahu will use to come redeem the Jewish people with [before the arrival of Mashiach], where each eye will see the return of the *Shechinah*.

Bittul/Surrender (Mochin d’Aba) Must Precede Hishtokekus/Longing (Mochin d’Ima)

When Yom Tov will soon be upon us, our *avodah* is to do the will of Hashem and **ask Hashem for mercy that we should be merit to fulfill all of His words simply and earnestly. This is more important than anything** – and it must entirely come from our longing for Hashem.

[However, that will be mainly be the *avodah* on Yom Tov.] Before that, we must first have *bittul* by surrendering ourselves to Hashem’s commandments, and this includes listening to the words of the *tzaddikim* in our generation, in every detail they tell us. This will enable us to completely receive the *mochin* (consciousness) of *Ima* – or the great longing to receive an added burst of light and revelation of G-dliness and genuine attachment to Hashem. *Bittul* is the *mochin d’Aba* which we need in order to receive fully the *mochin d’Ima*. It is by knowing that Hashem runs everything, and we must heed His word and feel surrendered to Him. It is then that our longings for more attachment to Hashem are deemed very important in Heaven, and then Hashem sends us all the great lights that we desire.

The Roles of Our Routine Avodah and Seasonal Avodah (Yom Tov)

The core of our *avodas Hashem* is when we serve Him at the level of *CHaGa”T* (*Chessed, Gevurah, Tiferes*) while the outer level of serving Him is *NEH”Y* (*Netzach, Hod, Yesod*). **When we renew ourselves each day to serve Hashem, this is the core level of serving Him – the *pnimiyus***. In contrast with this, serving Hashem on the festivals and special times of the year are only the outer level of serving Him – the *chitzoniyus*.

The festivals can be compared to a person who is invited to come before the king, who has to first remove his normal weekday clothing and put on new, nice clothing so that he can come to the king properly and dressed for the occasion. Similarly, before a person goes to a

tzaddik, he must think about doing *teshuvah* for all his sins, so that he won't face the shame of the *tzaddik* seeing all the blemishes on his soul that he hasn't yet fixed, and so that he can find more favor in the *tzaddik's* eyes. The festivals reflect this analogy. A person prepares and purifies himself for the great day. It is very important for a person to prepare himself well for the festival, so that he will come to it properly and thereby be purified and sanctified from the light of the festival.

Yet, as important and great as this is, it is only the superficial layer of serving Hashem. For as soon as the festival passes, it is gone, and the next day everything is back to routine. The person goes back to before, "returning again to his vomit." This is all because he hasn't yet fixed himself at his core. The work of serving Hashem from our core is the daily task for each of the ordinary days of the year.

Therefore, we must not wait for the festival to come in order to start serving Hashem as we should. We need to love Him every day, serving Him anew each day. Certainly before a festival is about to come we need to be preparing ourselves for it, because the festival is loftier than all the ordinary days of the year.

The **Arizal** says that on the festivals, the windows of Heaven are opened for the masses, unlike the rest of the year when only cracks of Heavenly light can trickle down to us. The festivals are the roots of the ordinary days of the year, and therefore it's simple that we need to prepare ourselves for the festival and awaken ourselves to serve Hashem better. Still, we serve Hashem at a deeper level during the ordinary days of the year, and our daily *avodah* is unified in one piece with the seasonal *avodah* on the festivals. They are two parts that must come together to comprise one whole – giving a *nachas ruach* to Hashem.

5 - Erev Pesach – Separating From *Chametz*

The Deeper Source of The Tension On Erev Pesach

On Erev Pesach, there are *dinim* (harsh judgments) which make people become easily angry amidst the preparations for the Yom Tov.

The deeper understanding of this is because Pesach, the festival of our redemption, began amidst a state of *achor* (indirect closeness with Hashem), which awakens *dinim* (judgments), and the *dinim* manifest in the form of anger. The *Sitra Achara* (Other Side) is then able to grab hold of us through these *dinim* when we are overtaken by them, when we find ourselves getting angry amidst the preparations on Erev Pesach, and in this way, the *Sitra Achara* gets us to forget about the *yichud* that we will be doing later on the night of Pesach, where we will be at a level of intimate closeness with Hashem, *pnim*.

The redemption from Egypt began with the ten plagues, and we found ourselves getting closer with Hashem. But then we receded back when Pharaoh refused to redeem us after each of the plagues, making himself tougher and getting worse, and we felt further from Hashem. We kept going through a cycle of feeling closer, than feeling distanced. This actually shows us the way of how to fight with “Pharaoh”, who is also called the “great sea serpent” – it is when we know the secret of how to go back and forth from the modes of *achor* (indirect closeness with Hashem, serving Him in spite of feeling far from Him) and *pnim* (direct closeness with Hashem, serving Him amidst feeling closer to Him).

Hashem told Moshe that he should tell Pharaoh: “*I am Hashem.*” Everything depends on unifying *HaVaYa”H* with *Elokim* – which means to thank Hashem for every situation one has been through until today, and then to ask for success, and sweetening all the judgments by trusting in Him.

[That is why Erev Pesach begins with sweetening the judgments, through *achor*, and then later we can sweeten the judgments by way of *pnim*, on the night of Pesach.]

The Custom of Having A Chametz Meal on Erev Pesach

The **Kamarna** cites a custom of eating a *chametz* meal on the morning of Erev Pesach. **R’ Mordechai of Nadvorna** said that this custom came from the students of the Baal Shem Tov, and that it was one of the *halachos* that were forgotten during the mourning period over Moshe, and it has been passed down orally through the generations in a tradition from one man to another. It is a great secret, in which a meal is eaten the morning of Erev

Pesach, with every delicacy, a meal as grandiose as the meals in the palace of Shlomo HaMelech, which lacked nothing. Then, as soon as a certain time arrives, everyone in the meal immediately stops eating and makes a quick separation from *chametz*.

Even if a person can't fulfill this custom, he should understand what was behind it, so that he can at least fulfill this custom at a "secret" level even if he's not doing it in the active sense. The point of this meal was to make a noticeable separation between *chametz* and *matzah*. First a meal of *chametz* is eaten, and then neither *chametz* nor *matzah* can be eaten (for *matzah* cannot be eaten on Erev Pesach), and then (in previous times) they would begin to bake *matzos*, and then at Pesach night, *matzah* is eaten.

This is really the combination of the holy forces represented by "Yosef" and "Dovid". Dovid personified humility, the one who feels "impoverished" [who feels unworthy and far from righteousness], which is really the holy use of *Binah*, rooted in *Arich Anpin*, also known as the *Binah* aspect within *Keser*. This is accessed when one has *mesirus nefesh* in *tefillah*, giving up his soul entirely as he *davens* to Hashem.

The level of Yosef is *bittul*, which is *Chochmah*, rooted in the higher root of the "bliss of *Atik*", which is really the *Chochmah* aspect of *Keser*. This is the bliss that comes from the *yichud* (unity) with our "living G-d".

Chametz has two aspects to it. It represents conceitedness and sense of independence, which is a *kelipah*. It also hints to the holy power of pleasure, which is rooted in the very root pleasure, *Atik*. Through the pleasure of *chametz* during the year, one must rise to the true pleasure of the *yichud*, to recognize Who the true Existence is: "I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt."

Thus the Zohar says that during the seven days of Pesach in which we don't eat *chametz*, we can now eat *chametz* in holiness, which is the secret of Yosef, the root pleasure and the holy exaltedness of *Atik*, where the bitterness of *maror* can be turned into *romem*, exaltedness, where *mar* (bitter) is turned into *ram* (exalted), just as when Mordechai went from bitterness to being exalted.

But on the night of Pesach, this exaltedness is only subtle. The *matzos* reveal "supernal *Aba v'Ima*", but in spite of this the *matzah* is still the "poor man's bread", they do not reveal pleasure. Yet, through reaching the inner dimension of *Aba v'Ima* we can reach the pleasure, because the "inner level of *Chochmah* is *Atik*" - which is to take pleasure in Hashem. The *yichud* on the night of Pesach is thus the inner level of *Chochmah*, which is the inner level of *Atik*.³

³ (Some background is needed to have a minimal understanding of this.) *Binah* is called "closed lights" – when we work hard at serving Hashem even when it's not enjoyable for us, and not

only that, but we avoid the pleasurable feelings because we want to purify ourselves from traces of egoistic existence and therefore we are concerned of taking pleasure for ourselves. Our *avodah* at the level of *Binah* is effort, *lishmah* (for the sake of Heaven and not for ourselves) and we feel unworthy. This is like the “poor man’s bread”. It also represents a kind of davening when we feel like we have nothing of our own. This is all the path of “Dovid.”

At the other end of the spectrum is *Chochmah*, “revealed lights” – where we enjoy the bliss of G-dly light accompanying our service to Hashem. The light also makes us feel surrendered to the Reality of Hashem alone, so that we don’t feel our own existence at all. Here we can enjoy the G-dly light because it keeps making us more and more attached with Hashem. [The following represents the purification process that begins with separating from *chametz* on Erev Pesach, then the stages of *Matzah*, *Maror*, *Korech*, *Shulchan Orech*, *Tzafun (Afikoman)* and finally ending at Shavuos.]

Chametz is a combination of foods mixed together resulting in different complexities of taste, an enjoyable food to eat – hence *chametz* represents enjoyment. But the danger is that we will enjoy the pleasure for ourselves and become conceited through it, feeling independent from Hashem. As long as we haven’t yet purified our sense of existence and we don’t yet feel that the true Existence is Hashem [and therefore we have no independent existence of our own], we cannot use pleasure/*chametz* properly. That is why *chametz* is forbidden for 7 days, where we separate from all conceitedness and independence, and only after Pesach can we use pleasure/*chametz* properly, meaning that we can then feel how all pleasures are nothing and that we are meant to reveal the G-dly bliss through these pleasures, for only Hashem is the true pleasure, and therefore all pleasures have their source in Above, in the G-dly pleasure, *Atik*.

On the night of Pesach, we eat *matzah* which is a simple food, the poor man’s bread, which is far removed from pleasure. The *matzah* represents Dovid, lowliness, poverty (in the spiritual sense, feeling unworthy), *tefillah*. On the other hand, the *matzah* also draws forth the *mochin* (the consciousness) of “supernal *Aba*”, the great light of *bittul b’metzius* (nullifying our reality to Hashem’s) which brings a G-dly bliss with it. But this pleasure isn’t openly felt, it is only subtle. Through eating the *matzah*, while connecting to the lights of the *Aba*-consciousness (*bittul*, surrendering to Hashem completely) which is coming to us through eating it, we can then enter further into the inner dimension of the *Chochmah*, which is the innermost level of *Atik*, and there we can feel a very subtle pleasure.

Maror is also rooted in *Chochmah*, but it represents when *Chochmah* falls, where *Chochmah* becomes turned into bitterness. This is the secret of the “death of Mashiach ben Yosef”, which represents taking pleasure improperly, causing a person to fall into the independence of *BiY”A* and losing his light of *Chochmah*, where it is turned into bitterness. One has to sweeten the *maror* and turn it into *romem* (exalted).

By sandwiching the *maror* with the *matzah* (poor man’s bread), one can reach *bittul*, and sweeten the bitterness and turn it into something exalted. This all takes place on a subtle level.

Then comes *Shulchan Orech*, in which we make a meal fit for a king, where we can enter more into pleasure and in a holy manner, now that we have received the repairs of *matzah* and *maror*. Then we can eat the *afikoman* after being satiated from the meal. Now that we have risen to true spiritual pleasure, *Atik*, through the meal of *Shulchan Orech*, we can now feel the bliss of the upper *yichud* which happens on Pesach night.

On Pesach night we reach *Be”N* (the 52-letter name of Hashem) but during the first morning of Pesach we can rise to *Ma”H* (the 45-letter name of Hashem).

The revelation is complete on Shavuos, when two loaves of *chametz* bread would be brought – meaning that we offer up our sense of existence and we reveal Who the true Existence is – the Creator. This is the complete *yichud*, the level of *Yechidah*, where “two kings can share one crown” – where *ani* and *ayin* are one, two parts of one *Keser/crown*, both revealing the Creator.

The matter behind this is because the root of all true existence is in *Atik*, the *Ani* (the “Supreme I”) of the Creator, and this is the root of all pleasure - the pleasure of the absolute *yichud* (His oneness). The “pleasure” of *Atik* is revealed in *Chochmah*, while the “existence” in *Atik* is revealed in *Binah*. But down below, this holy power becomes turned into *chametz*, which is independence and conceit, and which causes a person to think that he is the one who is doing everything.

That is why we cannot come to Pesach unless we first have the *avodah* of Erev Pesach, which is to have a meal of *chametz*, revealing the root of pleasure. The custom is to make this meal at 8 a.m, because 8 is the number of *Binah*. It is a festive meal like a meal that Shlomo HaMelech made, and Shlomo was a degree of Yosef, for it opens the secret of holy pleasure. At the beginning of Erev Pesach, there is the light of Yosef, where we enter into the root of holy pleasure, through enjoying *chametz*. But at 8 a.m. we must begin the *avodah* of *Binah*, which is the secret of Dovid, by separating from *chametz*, and we must be careful not to leave over any *chametz* from this meal, to erase all independence.

We must separate totally from eating *chametz* at the end of the time to eat *chametz*, and burn it, to burn all *yeishus*/independence, so that our whole pleasure will only be the root and holy pleasure. Then on the night of Pesach we can have the light of Dovid, and awaken the *yichud* of Mashiach. With every word of the *Haggadah* we utter we throw away the *chametz*, the conceit and independence, and we enter into the G-dly light, to know that everything is His infinite light.

We need to *daven* at all times, and that is the *avodah* of Dovid (*Binah*). We also need *bittul* at all times, which is Yosef (*Chochmah*).

The apex of this is the *afikoman*, which is eaten when we are satisfied at the end of the meal of the *Seder*. The sefer **Bris Kehunas Olam** says that the main *yichud* happens through the *afikoman*, where we enjoy the awesome bliss of G-dly vitality which is drawn from *Atik*, and

Thus, on Erev Pesach our *avodah* is to separate from *chametz* and burn it, and this is the mode of Dovid. But through the custom of eating a *chametz* meal on the morning of Pesach, we connect to the root of the pleasure of the *chametz*, the pleasure of G-dly bliss, and this is how we fuse “Yosef” (pleasure) into Dovid – by eating a meal as grandiose as Shlomo HaMelech. For indeed, Shlomo is also the level of Yosef, and represents the inclusion of Yosef in Dovid. But on Pesach night, the mode is Shlomo, the upper consciousness of “supernal *Aba v’Ima*” which are drawn on the night of Pesach. It also includes the mode of Dovid, through *matzah*, the poor man’s bread (humility), *Binah*. The bliss of *Chochmah* is not yet openly revealed on the night of Pesach, only on a subtle level. It is only the beginning, and a preparation, for the bliss in G-dliness that will be revealed on Shavuot, which is *Atik*. (This is a brief outline of the concepts, as heard from *Moreinu shlit”a*.)

as the sefer **Magid Meisharim** says, that on Pesach we can enjoy anything we want, because all physical pleasure on Pesach becomes turned holy.

Dovid is the humility of recognizing how we need Hashem's mercy at all times, while Yosef is all about *bittul*. But we need both. We need *tefillah*, which is Dovid's humility. It is not enough to have *bittul*. We need the humility, *tefillos* and requests for Hashem's mercy at all times – the revelation of Dovid. In contrast, Yosef is the revelation of having *bittul* at all times. This is rooted in the loftiness of *Atik*. But down below (on our world), the loftiness of *Atik* translates into sense of one's own independence. Thus we need absolute *bittul*, so that we can use the G-dly light and reach holy elevation.

The **Arizal** says that on the night of Pesach there is a *yichud* even in *Asiyah*, meaning that the revelation of G-dliness extends all the way down until *Asiyah*, the place where the creations feel total independence. On the night of Pesach, all of this takes place on a subtle level which can barely be felt. The pleasure on the night of Pesach is very subtle and it cannot be felt easily. This is because the *matzah* is simple, it is a "poor man's bread", which does not reveal pleasure. It is the preparation for the *yichud* on Shavuot, where we offer the two loaves, raising all pleasure, all *chametz*, to holy pleasure.

Burning The Chametz

Burning the *chametz*, and nullifying it like the dirt of the earth, is so that the *Sitra Achra* shouldn't have any grasp on us through inflicting sadness on us.

All sadness comes from *yeishus*, the egoistic sense of our own existence. It can especially cause the *katnus* (low-level inspiration) of "*Leah*", where our thoughts can become preoccupied and we forget about *yichud* - where our thoughts become like *chametz*, leavened dough (conceited thoughts) and "yeast" (thoughts that are self-focused).

Instead, all our existence should be only to reveal a greater level of *bittul*. For although Hashem wants us to reveal the 45-letter name of Hashem, equal to *adam* (45), our entire level becomes elevated when we rise to the level of *lo adam*, where no *chametz* and no *mochin d'katnus* can take hold of us at all.

That is why we burn ten crumbs of *chametz*, which represent the "ten impure crowns of the *Keser*" on the side of evil – all jealousy, lusts, and honor-seeking and all pleasures which cover and conceal the infinite light of Hashem from us. We nullify all of it as if it is all as worthless as dirt, and then we can recognize that everything is only a revelation of His infinite light. This is the secret of "*What does Hashem your G-d ask of you?*"

Chametz Represents The Sadness That Comes When Our Spiritual Consciousness Is Low, And We Must Fight This With Bitachon and Simchah

Chametz represents the sadness and melancholy that takes hold of us when we begin to enter into serving Hashem. Whenever we begin, the Serpent, the evil inclination, comes to us and places saddening thoughts into our mind, inducing us with melancholy. It wants to trip us into being discouraged, because we find ourselves in a state of *katnus* (low-level spiritual consciousness) and we don't feel any holiness yet, so we are more vulnerable.

The Serpent approached Chavah, because as soon as a person wants to start serving Hashem, which is a *yichud* – for the person wants to designate his soul for Hashem with all his heart and soul – the person is first in a state of *ibbur* (“pregnancy”, a preparation for a higher level), and he is in danger from the Serpent who can confuse him with thoughts that are saddening and discouraging. This is because before a person can reach any level in serving Hashem, he first has to go through a *katnus* (low-level consciousness), a state of “pregnancy” before his soul can become “born” again into a new level. At first a person starts out vulnerable to the Serpent, who can easily sway him with saddening and discouraging thoughts.

The Serpent mainly shows up in between the stages of *katnus* and *gadlus*, when we are on our way to growing to a higher level. At *gadlus*, there will be a birth of a new level, a new *yichud*. Throughout all our *avodas Hashem*, there is always a “pregnancy” and later a “birth”. Whenever we perceive something new, and we think that now we know how to serve Hashem, suddenly our *mochin* is removed from us and we enter into a new state of “pregnancy” - which is a degree of being exiled in Egypt. During that difficult time, we must strengthen ourselves in the same way that the Jewish people were strengthened in Egypt: By knowing that “*I will be as I shall be*”. We should concentrate on the name of EHY”H, (אהי"ה), knowing that “*Hashem is with you, constantly*”.

This is how we can turn the *chametz* into *matzah*. The entire difference between the words *chametz* and *matzah* is a tiny difference: The word *chametz* is spelled with the letter *ches*, while *matzah* is spelled with the letter *heh*. Two people can be serving Hashem, but the one who strengthens himself during a time of *katnus/ibbur* (vulnerability/pregnancy) when he begins to serve Hashem, is the one who will merit the “guarded *matzah*.”

Whenever a person gets up in the morning, at first it is difficult and he finds himself in a state of low-level inspiration, *katnus*. He needs to renew himself as he enters into holiness. He must purify himself, say *korbonos*, and mainly so, he must strengthen his faith very much, that Hashem is not abandoning him *chas v'shalom*, even when he doesn't feel any light or holiness.

This is how one strengthens himself with the name of *EHY"H*, in which one reminds himself that Hashem is telling him, "I am with you in all situations, even when you are in Egypt." The Other Side wants to trick you into believing that Hashem has abandoned you. Do not listen to his discouraging voice, when you find yourself vulnerable and deplete of inspiration. Instead, awaken yourself to come out of being "short-breathed from the difficult labor" – from your lack of *emunah*, your difficulties in serving Hashem and your bitterness – and instead, strengthen yourself with knowing that Hashem is with you, for He reassured us that "*I will be as I shall be*", and that is how you will break the *ches* of the *chametz* and turn the *chametz* into *matzah*, so that the Other Side won't have any grasp on you.

The main *avodas Hashem* is to have a joy in serving Him, "*Yisrael rejoices in His Maker*", to have a joy in G-dliness, and not to allow any "*chametz*", only "*carefully guarded matzah*". This is the main *avodah*, to kill the Serpent at the beginning of our *avodah*, who comes every time when our *mochin* leaves us or whenever our inspiration goes away a bit. To the extent that we remove the Serpent - sadness - and not letting it have even the slightest hold of us, that is how we will merit a deeper level of *yichud*. This is the main *avodah*: to know that Hashem is certainly with you in every situation.

Everyone knows this, but we need to see it in front of our eyes. We shouldn't forget about this point. As soon as we find ourselves in a time of low-level inspiration, we must know that we are in a state of "pregnancy", which is preparing us for a higher level. In order to get from one spiritual realm to another, we must traverse this removal of *mochin* (spiritual consciousness). The main test is how much we will use the name of *EHY"H*. The greater a *tzaddik* is, the quicker he will make use of the name of *EHY"H*, knowing that Hashem is with him.

What is the way to get through dismal periods when we feel depleted of inspiration? It is by repeating verses that will uplift us and give us *bitachon*. The first redemption happened through *bitachon* in Hashem, "*Our fathers trusted in You*", and so will **our final redemption happen through *bitachon*. We must remember constantly that Hashem is with us.** "*Praiseworthy is the man who trusts in You.*" That is how we go from *chametz* to *matzah*. When we begin to serve Hashem and we find that our *mochin* leaves us, we need to strengthen ourselves with the name of *EHY"H* ("*I will be as I shall be*") that Hashem is with us, He is protecting us - and that is how we will subjugate the "*chametz*" and make "*matzah*".⁴

⁴ In the generation of the final Redemption especially, where we have shifted from the letter *yud* of *HaVaYaH* and now we have entered into the final letter *heh* of *HaVaYaH*, the *mochin* of *pnim* begins to be revealed. This is the *mochin* called "*supernal Aba v'Ima*", which is higher than *Yisrael Saba u'Tevunah*, and it reveals the "white hairs" of the holy level of *Atik*. This is where

The Concept of “Dinei Leah”

When a person feels brokenhearted and discouraged – when he feels like he isn’t *zocheh* to learn Torah or serve Hashem properly – he imagines that he is far from Hashem and that he cannot come close to Hashem or attain *d’veykus* in *Elokus*. He feels that there is no way for him on this world to come to his life’s purpose. He is being seized by the “yeast” and the “*chametz*”, which comes from *dinei Leah*.⁵

Really, everyone who learns Torah should be able to become enthused with the essential delights in G-dliness. But *dinei Leah* cause a person to enter into sadness, when he sees that he doesn’t understand his learning or when he sees that he isn’t *davuk* in *Elokus*.

The entire *avodah* of Pesach is to get rid of the *chametz* and the yeast: **“Hashem is with me constantly even when I don’t feel it.” With a little bit of *bittul*, we can do this.** For even if we are not *zocheh* to this great *avodah*, we can apply the rule said about destroying *chametz*, “With *bittul*, it is enough”, implying that **it is enough if we just say words of *bittul*. Even more so, the very fact that we want to have *bittul* will be enough** – for the *Poskim* rule that it is enough to merely desire to nullify the *chametz*, and that is enough to make it nullified.

the *Radla* begins to become revealed. This will reveal the true *yichud*, of *Chochmah* and *Binah* together, where the letter *heh* will become born, producing the letter *vov*, which brings the *mochin* of *Chayah*.

⁵ The concept of *dinei Leah* is, briefly, as follows. Leah represents the mode of effort and exertion in serving Hashem, amidst *mesirus nefesh* (giving up oneself) for Hashem. The *dinei Leah* are the *kelipos* that attach themselves to this path of “Leah”. They cause a person to feel that he is the one doing everything, as a result of all his efforts, and this makes a person feel conceited and self-focused with feelings of *yeishus* (“I exist”). This later leads a person into becoming brokenhearted, when he sees that he isn’t succeeding with his efforts, making him full of despair.

The *dinei Leah* need to be “sweetened”, by remembering that I need to try my best with all my energy, but the truth still stands that Hashem is the One Who is doing everything. “*To the Almighty, Who completes it upon me.*” This saves a person from conceit, when he remembers that everything is allowed due to Hashem’s power and not through him. This also saves a person from falling into sadness and despair, and instead he can live with *bittul*, with the knowledge that Hashem is doing everything and that it is all for the good. This is not a contradiction to the obligation that one has to work with all his energy. We need exertion, coupled with *bittul*, the knowledge of Who is truly doing everything. When we don’t succeed, or when we don’t understand our learning or when we don’t feel enthusiastic to learn, and we don’t feel any *d’veykus*, we can remember that “It is not me who’s doing anything. The only thing I have to do is try hard. The results and the accomplishments are not up to me. I am nothing but a servant who will be loyal to Hashem, who does what he is supposed to do because that’s what his master commanded him. I am not interested in anything other than doing what He commanded me to do. I will serve Him happily even when I find myself in darkness, for I know that my Master is with me. This is just a test to prove my loyalty to Him.”

We search for the *chametz* using the flame of a candle, because when we want to know that everything is Hashem, we need to search for the flame – the *Shechinah*. We should not make any reality out of the *kelipos*, and instead we should know that **the only reality is Hashem’s G-dly reality, Elokus. (In fact, even our difficulties in serving Hashem and our feelings of distance from Hashem are also from Hashem).** With this we can have the light of the *Shechinah* – the flame of the candle – and through it, we can search out our personal *chametz*.

We need to truly make Hashem King over us, by dismissing the *kelipos* as being a false reality. If there are any areas in which our Torah learning and *avodas Hashem* which aren’t working out, we should **make Hashem King in those areas, by getting rid of our personal *chametz* – by strengthening ourselves with the knowledge that nothing has power other than Hashem.** Sadness is mainly stemming from feeling a distance from Torah and serving Hashem. We can overcome our frustrations at this when we are aware that the King Himself has placed the obstacles in our way in order to test us, as the Baal Shem Tov taught. Hashem wants to only give us good, and one should always be aware that “He is watching over me. He is escorting me through every level, so that *“They will know that I Hashem.”* Hashem is with you, bring you closer to Him every day, and opening up all the higher worlds in front of you for you to enter into them.

When you want to reach *bittul* – to nullify everything and know that Hashem is with you always even when things aren’t working out for you (including your learning and *avodas Hashem*) – you will then find the *Shechinah*, and the *Shechinah* will help you find your personal *chametz* and destroy it.

The truth is that in the Torah teachings of the *tzaddikim*, we can find the light of the Redemption. But we need to look for the *Shechinah* in their words. The *Shechinah* shows a person the way. Everyone learns Torah, but not everyone merits its true light. The Torah can redeem every person. **If we aren’t seeing success, then this, too, is what Hashem wants.** If we look for our personal *chametz* through the light of the *Shechinah* (through desiring *bittul*) - that is, **when we realize that Hashem’s Presence is never concealed from us and we believe that Hashem is doing everything (and even our frustrations and lack of success in serving Him is also from Him) - then the *Shechinah* will show us the way** to the truth.

The Greatest Tikkun Is Bittul

Destroying *chametz* can be done either through scattering it in the wind, throwing it in the water, or burning it in a fire. These are the three different ways to get rid of *chametz* – using any of the three elements of air, water, and fire. Besides for destroying the *chametz*, we also have to nullify it and disregard its value, considering it like the dust of the earth. The element of earth is the “container” that holds together the three active elements of air,

water, and fire. The Poskim said that the main way to get rid of the *chametz* is through nullifying it – using the “element of earth”.

Destroying the *chametz* repairs all of four elements (earth, fire, water, air). Every Jew has to repair his personal four elements. Fire is the root of anger. Water is the root of all lust. Earth is the root of sadness and laziness. Air is the root of haughtiness, mockery, and evil speech. All of these evil behaviors can be repaired when we are destroying the *chametz*, when we enter into the holy side of all these elements. This is by entering into a love for Hashem (water), a fear of Hashem (fire), an attachment with Hashem (air), and feeling completely surrendered to Hashem (earth).

When we destroy *chametz*, we are ridding ourselves of the evil traits that come from our impaired elements, and when these evil traits fall, the holy side of these traits enter – love, awe, and attachment with Hashem, corresponding to water, fire, and air. The three active elements also correspond to *CHaGa”T* (*Chessed*/water, *Gevurah*/fire, *Tiferes*/air). Yet, the Jewish people are called *Yehudim*, from the name Yehudah, whose personifying trait was humility, corresponding to the element of earth: “And may my soul be like dust to everyone.” Although we destroy *chametz* through the three active elements, we also need to nullify it, in case there was any *chametz* we didn’t yet destroy. The main way to get rid of *chametz* is through nullifying it like the dust of the earth.

So even after searching for the *chametz* and destroying it, we need to nullify it afterwards. This fixes everything, enabling us to be worthy of the revelation of the *Shechinah*, especially on the night of Pesach, the time when Eliyahu is revealed – the night in which we reach the *shem Ma”H* (45-letter name of Hashem), which represents *Malchus*.

6 – Pesach Night & The Power of the *Seder*

Maariv On The Night of Pesach

The *tefillah* of *Maariv* (the evening prayer) on the night of Pesach is unparalleled. It affords great, powerful *mochin* (higher consciousness, the ability to receive newer perceptions). The completion of this *yichud* is achieved by *Halel* afterwards, an exalted secret, which completes the *zivug* (union on High) at a very inner level.

Usually, the outer level must come before the inner level. Only at the creation of the world did the inner level precede the outer level, the 2 days of Rosh HaShanah. But on the night of the *Seder*, the inner level comes before the outer level. **Rav Chaim Vital** and the **Reshach** explained that through uttering the *Maariv* prayer on Pesach night, we receive all the *mochin* on the inner level, and afterwards when we fulfill the *mitzvos* by the *Seder*, we repair the outer level.

With the *mochin* that repairs the outer level, we are elevating *NeH"Y* (*Netzach, Hod, Yesod*) above to the level of *CHaGa"t* (*Chessed, Gevurah, Tiferes*), but with the *mochin* at the inner level, we elevate *NeH"Y* to *CHaGa"t*, and then *CHaGa"t* rises to the level of *CHaBa"D* of *Arich*, where the "7 repairs of *Atik*" are. Thus at the inner level we are raising the *mochin* very high, all the "7 repairs of *Atik*" which are within *CHaBa"D* of *Arich*.

Now let us explain this in terms of our own *avodah*. When a person *davens* properly the *Maariv* and *Halel* on the night of Pesach, with *kavanah* (concentration) and *d'veykus* (attachment in Hashem), he has already achieved the *mochin* at the inner level. At that inner level, the *kelipah* of Pharaoh has no grasp, for Pharaoh can only grasp by the "back of the neck, from the throat and below", at the external area, the area of action. That is why when a person comes home and sits with his children and he has to do things in the house and speak with people, and he eats while leaning and eats in a state of holiness, "Pharaoh" can still have a hold on him. The advice for this is to introduce the inner level – *Maariv* – before the outer level, which is the *Seder*.

Thus we should daven *Maariv* and say *Halel* with great *d'veykus*. The *tzaddikim* would put a lot of effort into *Maariv* and *Halel* on Pesach night, which repairs the inner level, through the 7 repairs of *Atik*, rising to the place above Pharaoh's grasp. This *d'veykus* is above the body and the emotive traits. Thus it is easier to enter into *d'veykus* on the night of Pesach, during *Maariv* and *Halel*.

After we have drawn the *mochin* to the inner level, we can then come home and fulfill the *mitzvos* of the *Seder*, to say the *Hagaddah* and do the necessary actions, bringing G-dliness into the external realm of action and speech. This extends the holiness of G-dliness into our spine, and then we can eat in holiness, now that the light has been drawn to the inner level, to our head, so Pharaoh cannot have a hold now even on the outer level, the areas below the head.

In order to reach holiness in the outer level, we first need holiness at the inner level, by being lengthy in prayer, especially on Pesach night, and to merit the *Shechinah* when we are davening, to never abandon Hashem. This doesn't mean that we need to daven a long *Shemoneh Esrei*. The main thing we must be lengthy in is being immersed in *d'veykus*, the secret of *Arich Anpin* and *Atik*, in which we can be lengthy and transcend this physical Creation and leave our body, going out from physical pleasure and entering into spiritual pleasure, which is a degree of "*Then you will rejoice in Hashem*", with true *bittul*, and to reach the *Shechinah* and *emunah*.

The Seder - A Meal That Is Entirely G-dly

All that we eat at the Pesach *Seder* - besides for eating the *matzos* and all the *mochin* that we gain from eating it (as the **Arizal** writes about), even if we don't have intentions for the sake of Heaven when we eat at this meal - it all becomes turned holy.

Perhaps we can explain this based on the words of the Arizal that on Pesach night, there is a novelty which isn't found during other times: A *yichud* happens even in the world of *Asiyah*. On the night of Pesach, a Jew is so unified and bound with Hashem that all his thoughts, words, and actions, including his eating, becomes turned into G-dliness, for even *Asiyah* becomes a revelation of G-dliness on the night of Pesach. This is all because the *avodah* on Pesach night is to contemplate *Ain Od Milvado*, that there is nothing besides for Him.

Especially when drinking the 4 cups, it is especially important to contemplate and see how Hashem hints to us in each thing to come closer to Him. So in every food that we eat on this night, we understand that Hashem is found with us in every place, and we can feel great holiness because of this.

Thus, on the night of Pesach, we can elevate our eating from the entire year, and we can receive a holiness which we can use to turn all our eating throughout the year into eating for the sake of Heaven (the **Arizal** revealed the awesome *yichudim* to concentrate on while eating, and the **Toras Chocho**'s view is that these intentions are for every time we chew the food).

The Night of Pesach – Becoming Included In The Infinite Light, Amidst Talking To Hashem

On Pesach night, we include ourselves in the light of the Redemption, by attaching ourselves with Hashem's infinite light. Still, we talk to Hashem and express our impoverished state to Him, considering ourselves poor and destitute, and feeling humbled towards each Jew as well – just like Dovid HaMelech, who was considered lowly and ridiculed, even amidst his genuine love for Hashem.

Only the impoverished, suffering person is able to expose the holiness of darkness – for he recognizes the glory of the King, with a love for the truth. This is how he returns himself to Hashem's infinite light. Even after he has felt the awesome bliss of Hashem's infinite light and he now knows what the true pleasure is, he continues to remain humbled and feeling unworthy.

On The Night Of Pesach, We Can Attain The Infinite Light

The realm in which we can tap into Hashem's compassion is a higher world than anything else, even higher than *ruach hakodesh*. Hashem's compassion is in the realm of *Adam Kadmon*, which shines onto every world and every level. It is like the light of the entire Torah at once, and for this reason, every Jew desires the light of the entire Torah.

This concept is especially revealed on the night of Pesach, in which we enter into a state of “pregnancy”, where we are in a fetal state, and just like a fetus who can see endlessly from one end of the world to the other, so can we attain Hashem's infinite light. We can stop being confident on our own power and holiness, and instead we can be like a fetus inside its mother, who eats whatever its mother eats – we rely only on Hashem's endless kindness.

The Goal of the Seder: Knowing That Hashem Is Doing Everything

There are two general *yichudim* – the *yichud* of *Yisrael v'Leah*, which is manifest in the area of the “head”, and the *yichud* of *Yaakov v'Rochel*, which is at the “heart” area.

Whenever a Jew begins to think any lofty thoughts or intentions, this is the mode of “Leah”, which uses the mind, the head. When Yaakov is called *Yisrael*, this alludes to the mind, for *Yisrael* is from the words *Li Rosh*, “a head unto Me” – the area of the head/mind, where the union on High is called *Yisrael v'Leah*. Thus, “Leah” represents the mind, the head (*Yisrael*). Whenever a Jew has holy thoughts of serving the Creator, he is doing the *yichud* of *Yisrael v'Leah*.

The other *yichud* is at the heart area, in which a person uses his feelings, voice, and words. This is *yichud* of *Yaakov v'Rochel*. Yaakov is called Yaakov (as opposed to *Yisrael*) when the

“air of the heart” rises above. All feelings and words which arise from the heart are called “Rochel”. There is first a division between the head and the heart, between Dovid who is the secret of Leah⁶, with Yosef who is the secret of Rochel.

On Pesach, we need to come to the level of guarded *matzah*, meaning that we must protect our aspect of “Leah”. On Pesach, the main aspect of *avodah* is not the *kavanos* of the *sheimos* (intentions of holy names of Hashem) which we use our minds for. During the rest of the year we receive great holiness from the *kavanos*, where the *partzuf Leah* is its own complete *partzuf*. But on the night of Pesach, we aren’t able to receive holiness just from thoughts alone. This is because the *partzuf Leah* becomes concealed on Pesach, and we have to be careful during this time not to fall into *yeishus* (sense of “me) from the *kelipos* (impure forces) which want to grab onto the area of “Leah”.

Although it is good to think about the *sheimos* and *kavanos* and *yichudim*, on Pesach night the main *avodah* is to take “Leah” (thoughts and intentions) and give it to “Rochel” - meaning that we must search to reveal our heart’s feelings. For all *sheimos* and *kavanos* help only if they bring a person to more light of *yichud*, and to understand that only Hashem enables everything.

Therefore on Pesach we must not forget about the Creator and from the greatness of His *yichud*, and even as we do our *avodah*, still we should do it all in a way that reveals *yichuda ilaah*, that there is no other reality than the *ohr EinSof*. Before Creation everything was *ohr EinSof*, and after Creation everything will return to be integrated in the *ohr EinSof* - and even now, everything is filled with the *ohr EinSof* on a hidden level, and the entire purpose of revealing the *tzimtzum* (contraction of His infinite light) and *pirud* (separation of Creation from His revealed G-dliness) was all so that He will reveal the secret of a greater and more intense *yichud*.

The Seder Combines Torah, Teshuvah, and Tefillah

The main way to receive the light of the Yom Tov of Pesach is, through renewing our Torah study. Together with learning Torah, we also need to return to Hashem through *teshuvah*.

⁶ Dovid HaMelech is called the “head”, which is Leah, and as Chazal said, “Ben Dovid will be at the lead.” Yosef is called the heart - Rochel. When Dovid HaMelech withstood the test of not killing Shaul HaMelech in the cave, he became complete, receiving the “heart of Dovid”, receiving both *yichudim*. Dovid HaMelech really includes every level, but at first, Dovid and Shaul were divided from each other, because the head and heart are first divided from each other. The “head” is *yichud Yisroel v’Leah*, the world of thought, thinking about names of Hashem and Torah, which is all the secret of Leah, but this is currently divided from *Yaakov v’Rochel*, which is the air of the heart that rises above, through speech. Rochel descends into the worlds of *BiY”A*, whereas thoughts stay above in the realm of the head (Leah) and they do not descend below to influence the heart. This difference between the head and the heart is what creates the “dispute” between the head/Leah/Dovid and the heart/Rochel/Yosef.

And when we do *teshuvah*, we also need to be learning Torah, because *teshuvah* doesn't last unless there is Torah study and contemplating the *EinSof*, of how He fills every world and surrounds all worlds and there is no place empty from Him, and in every move we can find Hashem there.

The main aspect of personal exodus from Egypt on the night of Pesach for each person is, that Yom Tov is called "a holy calling, a remembrance of leaving Egypt", meaning that the way to leave the exile of the soul is through calling to holiness – to the light of the Torah. When each person accepts upon himself on Pesach night to learn *Nigleh* and *Nistar* (the revealed and secret areas of Torah) which are the secret of *matzah* (*mochin d'Aba*) and the 4 cups (*mochin d'Ima*) – with this, one will do genuine *teshuvah*, because *teshuvah* cannot last without the light of Torah study.⁷

Pesach night is the opportune time to enter into *tefillah*, through the light of the Torah, and to reach true *teshuvah*. For through accepting upon ourselves to learn Torah *lishmah*, which connects together Torah and *tefillah*, with this we certainly will gain the *mochin* on Pesach night. It is known that *teshuvah* is *Binah* and Torah is *Chochmah*. On the night of the *Seder*, the *mochin* of *Binah* is drawn through drinking the four cups, while the *mochin* of *Aba/Chochmah* is drawn through eating the *matzah*. Thus, the *Seder* connects together Torah (*Aba/Chochmah*) and *teshuvah* (*Ima/Binah*).

All the *kavanos Arizal* by the *mitzvos* of the *Seder* is a form of learning Torah, for it is a learning experience of the *mitzvos*, to learn what we draw forth by each cup we drink and what we are doing at each part of the *Seder*. The entire *Seder* on Pesach night is a form of learning Torah, and with it we are *zocheh* to the secret of *yichud* of Hashem with His *Shechinah*, which hints to the unity between *Nigleh* and *Nistar*, Torah and *teshuvah*.

Through the rest of the year, the *pnimiyus* (inner dimension) is clothed and covered. But by the *Seder*, where we tell our children about the exodus, it is the time to speak openly about hidden matters. Through revealing the hidden, we draw forth a light of *emunah* for our children and for their generations, that they should be constantly bound to *yichud* of Hashem and His *Shechinah*, and with this we can be *zocheh* to go out from all impurity and rise to purity.

The Secret of Matzos, The Cups, and Reclining

There are three aspects of the *Geulah*, (Redemption), the "three redeemers" – Mashiach ben Yosef, Mashiach ben Dovid, and Moshe, who presides over both of them. The three

⁷ Through accepting upon oneself the yoke of learning Torah, which is the secret of Mashiach ben Yosef, one is *zocheh* to attain the light of Mashiach ben Dovid, which is *tefillah* and *teshuvah*.

redeemers correspond to *CHaGa"t* (*Chesed*/Mashiach ben Yosef, *Gevurah*/Mashiach ben Dovid, and *Tiferes*/Moshe).

The *Geulah* began on the 14th of Nisan. 14 is *yud daled*, an acronym for *yad*, which stands for Yosef and Dovid. This was the beginning of the *Geulah*, and thus Erev Pesach is when we subjugate Amalek through searching for the *chametz* and burning it. But the main *Geulah* is on Pesach itself, the 15th of Nisan, where there is a full moon. This is the level of "Moshe", who is comprised of both redeemers. Erev Pesach is the beginning and it is also a Yom Tov of bringing the *korbon pesach*, but it is only at the level of Yosef and Dovid alone. On Pesach when the moon is full, there is the level of Moshe who is comprised of both redeemers, and he is the true redeemer, as the Zohar teaches, "What was, will be" [just as Moshe was our first redeemer, so he will be the final redeemer]. For the main *Geulah* is through the "middle line": Moshe.⁸

When Pesach night arrives we need to enter into the *pnimiyus* - where *mitzvos* don't require *kavanah* - because Moshe represents simple *emunah*, the "essential delights". One should gladden himself with *emunah* itself.

Only through this light can one reach all the *kavanos* and sweeten all "48 combinations of the name *Elokim*" - which represent all of a person's difficult experiences by way of the body, the world, his environment, time period, and his soul. One needs to weaken the *kelipah* of "*Cham*" (evil passions) through "*My heart is warm within me*", the secret of love for Hashem. *Klal Yisrael* takes the highest level of *neshikin* (Hashem's kisses) from *Arich Anpin*, entering into the inner dimension of *Chochmah/Aba* which is *Atik*, which is above Pharoah's grasp, because the highest place that Pharoah can reach is *Arich Anpin*, but he can't reach *Atik*, the innermost dimension.

The main thing is that deep down we must be aware of *emunah peshutah*, and we should "recline" on the *Shechinah*, the "essential *d'veykus*", and to unify the 4 cups (Dovid/*Binah*) with the *matzah* (Yosef/*Chochmah*), awakening the true love, and then we can reveal the kingdom of Mashiach.

We should not only lean to the right (Yosef) or to the left (Dovid), but to the middle: Moshe. On the night of Pesach, the union of Moshe with Yosef and Dovid begins, and this is the light of the kingdom of Mashiach. Thus we open the door for Eliyahu HaNavi, which is a degree of the revelation of Mashiach on the night of Pesach in every Jewish home.

⁸ Yosef is *Chochmah*, while Dovid is *Binah*. The Arizal says that the main *mitzvah* by the *Seder* is the 4 cups, even though the 4 cups are only Rabbinical while *matzah* is according to the Torah, because the *matzos* by the *Seder* are only hinted to, whereas the 4 cups are out in the open. This is because the *matzos* represent Yosef, who is more hidden, whereas the 4 cups represent Dovid, who is more revealed, thus the main aspect of the *Seder* is the 4 cups, the light of Dovid/*Binah*.

Unity At The Seder

The night of Pesach is the time of freedom, and it must be in a way of bonding with others, seeing each other like when people are seated in a circle, the secret of the king's crown which is round like a circle, for each Jew is like a king, on this night. Really one has to be connected with every Jew in the world, but primarily each person must become connected with those whom he recognizes, who are the tools that Hashem has given him [in order to reach *ahavas Yisrael*]. One should become connected to all his friends, and through them he can become bound with all of *Klal Yisrael*, and to awaken the secret of "All who are poor, come and eat" which we say at the beginning of the night, so that we can connect to *Klal Yisrael*.

We must be careful on Pesach night, where the Satan comes to confuse us. Through bonding deeply with each other on this night, there is *siyata d'shmaya* to succeed at fulfilling all the *mitzvos* of the *Seder*.

But we must not think that *ahavas Yisrael* means to only love our friends, whom we are familiar with. That is a total misconception about *ahavas Yisrael*. We must love every Jew! It is just that by way of loving our friends whom we recognize, we can connect to the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. Thus on Pesach night when each one connects with another, it becomes a night of protection from all harm, such as anger and other things that block us or make us forget about *Elokus*.

Drawing Forth Yichuda Ilaah (Rochel) On Pesach To Influence Yichuda Tataah (Leah)

It is known that all *avodas Hashem* is comprised of two levels, *yichuda ilaah* and *yichuda tataah* (higher-level and lower-level unity). These are also *Chochmah* and *Binah*.

A person may serve Hashem through the way of *Chochmah*, which is *yichuda ilaah*, in which he serves Hashem and perceives everything by way of realizing that everything is *Elokus* (G-dliness). Or, a person may serve Hashem by way of *Binah*, or *yichuda tataah*, which is to accept upon himself the burden of His Kingdom, through Torah study and *tefillah*. This is all a general description, but there are many details to each of these two root paths.

These two paths are also called Rochel and Leah. The *partzuf* (spiritual area) of Rochel mainly nurses from *Chochmah*, which is *yichuda ilaah*, while the *partzuf Leah* mainly nurses from *Binah*, the *yichuda tataah*. Serving Hashem is the most genuine and complete when one knows how to combine these two paths together. This is through *daas*.

A person mainly receives this *daas* on Shavuos, the time of the giving of the Torah, which gives on the true *daas* to combine together *yichuda ilaah* with *yichuda tataah*, where we receive the Torah which combines together these two aspects and reveals *daas*, that in each *mitzvah* a person does, he is building a container for *yichuda ilaah* and when he learns

Torah he really immersed in *yichuda tataah*, which is really revealing *Elokus* so it is all part of *yichuda ilaah*.

But on the night of Pesach, when we left Egypt, we first need to learn *emunah*, which is *yichuda ilaah*, Rochel, and at that time it is hard to go in the way of *yichuda tataah*, the path of Leah, so we must be very careful then from yeast and *chametz*, that sins shouldn't take hold of us. When we enter into the depth of *yichuda ilaah* which is Pesach, going out of Egypt, and we receive such great *mochin* in *emunah* and then we are in danger that we may be brought to sin, by saying that everything is G-dliness and not taking responsibility, which makes us lose the protection from sin.

Thus the Sages made sure that on Pesach we will keep many *chumros* (stringencies), more than any other time of the year. This is because Pesach, which is Rochel's light, is the time to gain more *yichuda ilaah*, where there is no mention of the path of Leah. That is why we have to be very careful on Pesach not to see or be found with *chametz*.

The Zohar says that the *yichud* on Pesach night at the *Seder* is called *zivug ilaah*, a higher union on High. The *yichud* on this night resembles the *yichud* of the future. For today we cannot do the true *yichud* between *Z"A* (*Zeir Anpin*) and *Nukva*, between *yichuda ilaah* and *yichuda tataah*, and it is mainly *yichuda tataah* which plays more of an active role today than *yichuda ilaah*, because we cannot fully understand *yichuda ilaah*. But in the future, when these two ways of *yichud* will be combined, we will be to go in both ways together. This level is not followed today. But on the night of Pesach we can taste a bit of the light of the future, for on the night of Pesach, the light of *yichud* affects even the world of *Asiyah*.

But it is still called the "poor man's bread", because we don't have proper tools today to receive the light, for on Pesach we have not yet received the Torah, and we still need to be wary of being attacked on the night of Pesach, and that is why we are careful from any trace of *chametz* and we have many extra *chumros* (stringencies). Since the light of *yichud* is shining so much and reaching *Asiyah*, it is like *Shir HaShirim*, the *yichud* is more open and revealed, and even when we are in the 49 levels of impurity and found in difficult sins and *hester* (concealment of His Presence), Hashem is revealed to us by way of *yichuda ilaah*, thus we have to be very careful then from sin.

Freedom – Reaching The Heart

Freedom on Pesach night is to reach the *Shechinah*, which is the very inner point in the heart, to reach the letter *heh* which is comprised of *daled* and *yud*, to reach the 10 kinds of song, the "song that is doubled and tripled and quadrupled", which is the inner point in the heart connected to *Malchus d'Malchus*, which is *p'shitus* (lit. "simplicity", simple faith in Hashem) itself.

Asking For All Our Needs On Pesach Night

The night of Pesach, when we recite *Shir HaShirim* [after the *Seder*, for those who have the custom] is when a person is entirely clinging to and hugging his Creator, seeing true freedom and feeling that Hashem is running everything, and that He can bring a person all the salvations he needs.

We say in the *Hagaddah*, "And now the son asks" – **on the night of Pesach we can ask Hashem for anything we need, because we see the *Shechinah* in front of our eyes and we perceive how only Hashem can help us and that there is nothing besides Him.**

Applying The Seder Into The Rest of The Year

On the night of the *Seder* we gain a *Seder* (order) for the rest of the year as well. One who wants his *avodah* to be organized properly during the rest of the year needs to enter into the secret of *afikoman*, which is that Hashem is doing everything and a person does nothing and he does not have the ability to arrange his learning and be clear in it, without Hashem's help.

7 – The Four Cups

The Four Cups – Mochin d'Ima (Longings)

The 4 cups at the *Seder* are called *Mochin d'Ima* (*Ima*, or *Binah*-consciousness, expressed through longings for Hashem), essentially four different longings for Hashem in which we want to be connected to the Torah and to Hashem in different ways, relating to Him as “*my daughter, my sister, my mother.*”

The 4 cups are also called the “gladdening wine”, to draw us closer to the infinite light of Hashem with a pining soul, for all the levels described in *Shir HaShirim* composed by Shlomo, who represents the completion through longing and elevating the “feminine waters” to the upper *yichud*, which is “*my sister, my wife, my dove...*” These are all depictions to reveal the infinite light of Hashem through holy visualizations.

But we need to connect *mochin d'Ima* with *mochin d'Aba* (*Aba* or *Chochmah*-consciousness) which are the *matzah* and *afikoman*. In another way of saying it, we need to connect *adam* (the lower reality, the longings to go back above, which is *Binah, mochin d'Ima*) with *lo adam* (the higher reality, *bittul, Ain Od Milvado, mochin d'Aba*) - meaning that even when we are connected to the state of *adam*, we should also be connected to a state of *lo adam*, because that is the completion of holiness. If we are connected to Hashem only through the state of *adam* and not to *lo adam*, even though we have gotten closer to Hashem there is still a great damage, it is the detrimental “intoxicating wine” but not the useful “gladdening wine”. For the main holiness is when we have longing - which is the state of *adam* - and to reveal through it a *bittul*, which is *lo adam*.

That is why at all times we need to integrate ourselves into the secret of “*I am Hashem and I do not change*”, and “*You are before the world was created.*” Even as we think of all the different kinds of *d'veykus* there are, we must also be constantly connected with *lo adam*, with *Chochmah*, which is called “holy”, and that reveals an added holiness.

For we need to be enthused when serving Hashem - and this is the implication of the 4 cups – with different kinds of *d'veykus* in Hashem, relating to Him as “*my mother, my sister, our Father our King*”, etc. This is all in the secret of *Binah*. But together with this, we should enter into the *Paroches* (curtain), not only until *Chochmah*, but also until *Keser* and the *Radla*, where everything is contained and integrated, where *adam* becomes turned into *lo adam*.

That is our *avodah* on Yom Tov, that all the levels of *tzimtzum* and *olamos*, all *katnus d'Aba* drawn from *afikoman*, should all elevate our *mochin d'Ima* to its root. For at first, “*Malchus* is hidden in *ohr EinSof*.” It is through *katnus d'Aba*, the ability to visualize *Malchus* is hidden in *ohr EinSof*, that Hashem delighted in the pride that He would have in the future when He would create us from the *ohr EinSof*.

And even now, when Hashem has given us the “4 cups” – by revealing to us about the 4 worlds of *Atzilus*, *Beriah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah*, which correspond to the 4 abilities of spiritual sight, hearing, smell, and speech – and the 4 areas of Torah called *PaRDe”S* – still, the main *avodah* is to include it all in the *afikoman*, which is *katnus d'Aba*. We must include everything in Hashem’s infinite light, that secret of *lo adam*, the absolute *ayin*, for every revelation is all included in that light.

The Four Cups Correspond To The Four Spiritual Senses

The 4 cups correspond to the spiritual uses of our speech, scent, hearing, and vision – the ability to talk to Hashem, to sense Hashem, to hear Hashem, and to see a G-dly reality. At first, we must begin to talk to Hashem, until we feel Him (scent) and then we can hear and contemplate His G-dliness, until we are seeing holy names of Hashem. [Some people start in the opposite order, beginning from seeing names of Hashem and sensing His reality and then talking to Him].

The 4 cups represent the ascending order of these levels, and also to the 4 letters of the name of *Havayah*. The first cup corresponds to the letter *heh*, the second cup to the letter *vov*, the third cup to the letter *heh*, and the fourth cup to the letter *yud*. These represent the abilities of talking to Hashem, sensing the reality of Hashem, hearing Hashem’s reality, and seeing a G-dly reality of names of Hashem. This all brings us to the highest point – the “apex of the letter *yud*” – which is the level of feeling total *bittul* to Hashem, and the “*mikveh*” of the 50th level of holiness to immerse in and become purified.

Reb Aharon of Strotchele explains how the 4 cups raise us to higher levels [in the aforementioned manner] until we can get to the level of the “fifth cup” – the cup of Eliyahu, which is the light of Mashiach – the level of complete *ayin*, which we can come to only after we speak to Hashem, sense Hashem’s existence, hear and contemplate His reality, and seeing His G-dly reality of seeing His holy names in front of us.

The darkness for the Egyptians was a light for the Jewish people. That light is essentially the complete *bittul* to Hashem. For the non-Jews, the concept of becoming surrendered to Hashem is total darkness for them, because they do not know what *bittul* is. But for the Jewish people, *bittul* – leaving the self behind and taking pleasure in the G-dly light and entering into more genuine closeness with Hashem – is the greatest light for them.

The 4 Cups – Divesting Ourselves

The 4 cups enables us to divest ourselves from all physicality. We can begin this process on Pesach night and extend it into the rest of the year. We should leave behind the world and instead integrate ourselves into enjoying the light of the *Shechinah*, until we are divested of any imprint of This World and any of its pleasures. Then we can become integrated into the bliss of enjoying G-dliness, and to stay with the Heavenly light and spend time with it. This is the secret of the “repairs of *Arich Anpin* and *Atik*”, and this gives us the greatest wealth, in which we will need anything from this world, because we have already been satiated with such a great spiritual wealth – the bliss of enjoying G-dliness.

Longing For Hashem, Then Surrendering To Him, Then Longing For Him Even More

We first drink two cups before eating the *matzah*. This is because before we can reach *bittul* (*mochin d’Aba*) which we gain from the *matzah*, we first need to have a longing for that *bittul*. That longing is through the 4 cups, which is where we draw the *mochin* (consciousness) of *mochin d’Ima* – the power of longing. For we cannot come to *bittul* without a longing (*hishtokekus*) for it.

After we attained a longing through the first two cups, we can then eat the *matzah* and gain the *bittul*, or *mochin d’Aba*. Then we complete it through the last two cups, which are *mochin d’Binah* – the completion of our longing for Hashem.

The meal on Pesach night is called the *Seder*, “order”, because it is the order of our *avodah* – to first long to hear the voice of Hashem, and then to surrender ourselves totally to Him. Only after that can we complete our longing to become connected with Him – and that connection is depicted in *Shir HaShirim*, which contains the verse “*Kiss me with the kisses of Your Mouth.*” For Hashem mainly desires that we should yearn to nullify ourselves to Him in our every move, to do His will and serve Him with a complete heart. That brings us to true *bittul*, the *mochin d’Aba*. That brings us to true longings for Hashem, which are *mochin d’Ima*. By the end of the *Seder*, we can finally get to the level of closeness with Hashem depicted in *Shir HaShirim*, “*Kiss me with the kisses of Your Mouth.*”

The ‘beginning of wisdom’ (*Chochmah*) is essentially the wisdom of *bittul*, nullifying ourselves to Hashem - and to fulfill His *mitzvos* in utter simplicity and loyalty to Him. Only after that can we search and long for the light of becoming attached to Him in *d’veykus*.

Jumping To Higher Levels of Pesach Night – Through The 4 Cups

On Pesach night, all of the *mochin* (levels of spiritual consciousness) enter us all at once (throughout the different stages of the *Seder*). We immediately reach our first stage of greatness (*gadlus*) as well as the second stage of greatness (*gadlus sheini*) on this night, a process which is normally gradual throughout the year. Normally, we must ascend towards

Hashem only in gradual steps and we can't to Him so quickly. How then are we able to jump through so many levels on one single night?

It is because on Pesach night, the 4 cups enable us to access the secret of *Atik*, the all-inclusive level of greatness (*b'Atika talya milsa*, "It all depends on *Atik*.") On Pesach night, the 4 cups help us leave the world behind, where we ascend from level to level. At first, through the first cup, we enter into the level of *kabalas ol* (accepting our duties to Heaven). As we keep ascending from one level to another, we must make sure to keep holding onto the previous levels.

The Fifth Cup

There were *tzaddikim* who would place the fifth cup (the cup of Eliyahu) on the table at the beginning of the *Seder*. The reason for this was because the *Seder* is a great awe, a revelation of *Shechinah*, and all the four cups receive their spiritual power from the fifth cup, which is like the soul level of *Yechidah*, the *Sefirah* of *Keser*, the world of *Adam Kadmon*. The main aspect of Pesach night is the fifth "way of Torah", which is called the "settling of G-dliness", and it is shined onto all the 4 cups. It is the way of Torah which shines its light onto all other ways, and this way does not depend on any time. Rather, it is a level where each moment and each word of Torah contains everything.

8 – Reciting The *Hagaddah*

Washing The Hands

At *Kadesh*, the *mochin* begin to enter. It is not enough to have *mochin*, though, because the main thing is to cleanse and purify oneself, and that is why after we receive the beginning of the *mochin*, we are given strength to be cleansed, especially now when we have *mochin d'Chochmah* and we can understand how to serve Hashem, the duty is upon us to use this and become more sanctified.

Saying the Hagaddah Amidst A State of Bittul

Why is the *Hagaddah* called “*Magid*” (which implies that something is being told over on its own?) The **Tzemach Tzedek** explains that it is because if we want to receive the holiness of this night, we need to say the *Hagaddah* in a state of *bittul*, as if the *Hagaddah* is being said ‘on its own’, as if ‘the *Shechinah* speaks from his throat’. With every letter of the *Hagaddah* we say, we need to settle G-dliness upon it – to say it all amidst total *bittul* (surrender) to Hashem.

The Seder – Combining The Ohr EinSof With The Tzimtzum and Revealing The Level of The Future

Before the Creation, Hashem’s kingdom (*Malchus*) was hidden in a potential state within His infinite light. This is known as the light of “Yosef”, and it was when His infinite light was the “higher-level unity”, *yichuda ilaah*. It is a level where the awareness of *Ain Od Milvado* (“there is nothing besides Him”) is clear with nothing blocking it. After Creation, Hashem made a contraction (*tzimtzum*) in His infinite light, where His unity was now a “lower-level unity”, *yichuda tataah*, and this level is also called “Dovid”, in which a person feels that although there is a G-dly reality, he feels separate from that reality, thus feeling his own lowliness.

The repair for this seeming separation is to shine the light of “Yosef” (*yichuda ilaah*) within the light of Dovid (*yichuda tataah*). This enables us to hear the song of the future, when the *yichuda ilaah* will be constantly renewed every moment, all because of the *yichuda tataah*. That is the main reward in the future – to understand how Hashem’s unified reality, His *yichud*, is always being renewed. It will be a song that is so wondrous and sweet that will be higher than anything else, and every moment it will be revealed with a new beauty.

Thus, Dovid really contains Yosef – that is, when Dovid’s light reaches its complete level. Yosef represents the *yichud* of Hashem, while Dovid enables the renewal of that *yichud*. In the end, Dovid and Yosef “become one tree” (*Yechezkel 37:19*). It is only right now that we are able to feel that it is possible for Creation to be separate from Hashem’s reality, and this because the truth isn’t yet recognizable that it’s all a container for His light. In the future, we will discern better the light of His unity and see how it is constantly renewed precisely through all of the seeming separation from Him that occurred.

On Pesach night, *yichuda ilaah* and *yichuda tataah* fuse together as one, so that every Jew can understand and heart the song of the future, and to feel that everything is filled with the light of His *yichud* (unity), from a great and wondrous renewal, seeing how all of Creation is nothing but a garment that revealed the light of His *yichud*.

And after that we can come to the “revelation of Eliyahu”, the “revelation of the *Shechinah* on the lower realms”, where it becomes revealed that the purpose of Hashem settling His *Shechinah* upon the world is to reveal more how “No thought grasps Him at all” –where it becomes revealed that “Yosef” and “Dovid” (*yichuda ilaah*, *ohr EinSof* and *yichuda tataah*, *tzimtzum*) are not two separate realities *chas v’shalom*, but two different garments of the same reality.

How The Wicked Son Can Repair Himself

Even if a person sins and he is like the “wicked son”, there is an inner point in his heart in which he still desires to be connected with the holy *Shechinah*, and it is that inner point which brings all of us to the inner Holy of Holies, to become attached with the One Who is Individual and Unique.

The Torah Is Speaking Even To The Wicked Son

The Torah is speaking to all four types of children, corresponding to the four levels of *mochin* (consciousness or spiritual levels). For even the wicked person, who is at the level of the world of *Asiyah* – the lowest level – must reveal G-dliness and the upper *yichud* there, and he must not remain with the darkness of this world where Hashem’s Presence is concealed. For on the night of Pesach, we must reveal how it is a night that shines like the day. We do this by being lengthy in our *tefillos* to Hashem on this night, which is the secret of *Arich*, and also through holy contemplations, which gives us the “repairs of *Atik*”.

Even if one feels that the light is gone from him, he must awaken himself anew and enter into the repairs of *Atik*, which he can find in the *tefillos* of this night. At *Atik*, the *kelipah* of Pharaoh has no grasp. One ascends to *Atik* by leaving go of this world. Hashem is always giving gifts to a person, and we can always become renewed, to receive an inner light and shine 370 bright lights into *Zeir Anpin*, thereby fixing the outer level of Creation.

When we left Egypt, we received the holiness of the Redemption from midnight and onward. But nowadays, we can receive holiness of the Redemption even the first half of the night (before midnight), which corresponds to the wicked son and the world of *Asiyah*. On the night of Pesach where we have special spiritual protection, we can turn even the most external levels – the physical body – into a G-dly light. Then we can receive the holiness of *Shir HaShirim*, in which even our body can yearn to become connected with Hashem, so that even the blood in our physical body is pining for Hashem alone.

9 - Matzah & Maror

Matzah – Receiving The Mochin d'Aba (Chochmah)

Eating the *matzos* draws the *mochin* (consciousness) of *Chochmah (Aba)*, which is the concept of *bittul* (surrendering) to Hashem, as the **Arizal** revealed.

The **Baal HaTanya** said that every Jew can feel that he has a Father in Heaven, when he eats the *matzah*, and thereby receive energy to serve Hashem for the rest of the year. (This is based on the words of Chazal in the Gemara that a minor child is obligated to eat *matzah* as soon as he is able to say "Abba" (Father) and as soon he is able to eat grain.)

Matzah – Bittul

Matzah has to be carefully watched so that it doesn't become *chametz*. This is because the worlds of *BiY" A* – the realm of "*Leah*" respectively - became corrupted ever since the sin of eating from the tree of knowledge, causing *dinim* (judgments) to take hold of physicality. Protecting the *matzah* is a hint to protecting our physical body from the desires of This World – as well as the desires for independence and honor. The main repair that is needed for this is to stop thinking about ourselves. This is by contemplating the worlds of *Asiyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Beriah*, and *Atzilus*.

We rise to the holy world of *Asiyah* when we accept our duties to Heaven and we speak to Hashem.

When we feel G-dliness, we rise to the holy world of *Yetzirah*.

When we contemplate G-dliness and we are aware of Hashem's Presence in everything that we see as well as in everything we learn in the Torah, we are rising to the world *Beriah*. In everything that happens to us, Hashem is really speaking with us in His utmost Divine Providence, and He is always hinting something to a person. And certainly when we learn Torah, we can find hints from Hashem of how to get closer to Him. This is how we "listen" to the hints that Hashem sends us of how to come closer to Him, and this is the holy world of *Beriah*.

Finally, we can come to see a G-dly reality – to see the holy names of Hashem in the Torah, and to understand what the *tzaddikim* said: That even the upper worlds can be seen as the reality of Torah itself. Through all of these levels (*Asiyah*, *Yetzirah*, *Beriah*, *Atzilus*) we are becoming connected to *ayin* (the G-dly reality in which there is no sense of self). This was

the light that all the Jews had in Egypt during the plague of darkness for the Egyptians – the light was primarily a state of total *bittul* to Hashem, while being a darkness for the Egyptians, for the nations don't know what *bittul* to Hashem is. *Bittul* is about leaving the sense of self and to take bliss in the G-dly light, and to enter into deeper and truer *d'veykus* in Hashem.

However, the Baal Shem Tov taught a rule that after one reaches a higher level, it leaves him, and then he has to start again anew. That is why a person always needs to formulate new words to say to Hashem, and then he can reach an even higher world of *Asiyah* than before. He can keep rising through all of the worlds until he reaches total *bittul*, until he wants to give up his soul for Hashem, and he can feel an utter bliss in this *bittul*, in which he feels like he has no reality of his own – he is just integrated in the Creator's Reality.

Matzah – The Antidote For Conceit

We say in the *Hagaddah*, “This *matzah* that we are eating – for what purpose?” The sefarim explain that *matzah* can bring us to the humble state of “What are we?” It is to taste the sweetness of *bittul* (being surrendered) to Hashem.

Human nature is that we tend to be involved with our self all the time. Either a person will fall into the lusts of this world, or he will even pursue spiritual goals but he will do it all for his own glory. And even if a person is at a higher level and he serves Hashem *lishmah*, he still feels his own existence on some level, and all of this is a result of eating from the tree of knowledge. Whenever a person feels his own self, even if he's involved in spiritual pursuits (and certainly when he doesn't do so for the sake of Heaven) and all the more so if he pursues all kinds of wishes for worldly matters, this is all a result of the eating from the tree of knowledge.

But by eating the *matzah*, we can be *zocheh* to tasting the taste of the *manna* – the level of before the sin. Hashem made a vacant space where He constricted His infinite light and allowed a concealment of His light, meaning that we cannot reach Hashem's Reality as it really is. But the Jewish people were given the power to erase that vacant space and get by all the concealments, to come out of all the desires of this world and all the desires for glory, and to leave behind the very desire to feel one's own self (which is the Serpent's effect on mankind: to focus on yourself).

When you kill the 'serpent', you get the King's daughter [like the famous analogy, where the king offers his daughter only to the one who is brave enough to kill the snake that guards her room]. The “Serpent” is essentially when a person fails to remember Hashem. When you kill that 'serpent', you become worthy of entering into the *Shechinah*, and to become truly connected to all the upper worlds.

The way to come out of the Serpent's hold is through eating the *matzah* – with the intention that **we are abandoning the foolishness of this world, and that we will learn Torah *lishmah* and forget about our own selves, showing that our entire wish and desire is only to reveal the light of Hashem on the world.**

The *matzah* contains the taste of the *manna*, and it raises a person to total *ayin*, saving a person from the “Serpent” which causes a person to be focused all the time on his own self and to think about his own successes and achievements – which only makes a person feel broken later, whenever he doesn't succeed....

Matzah – Protecting Our Thoughts From Sadness

When a person feels brokenhearted and discouraged, because he sees that he has no Torah learning and no *avodas Hashem*, and it seems to him that he is so far from Hashem and that he cannot come to be attached in G-dliness, as if there is no way for him on this world to come to his life's purpose – this is all that “yeast”, the *chametz*, which comes from the *dinei Leah* (the ‘judgments’ that come upon ‘Leah’).

One has to know that it is Hashem who is making his heart heavy – it is all from Hashem. With this awareness, one can protect the “Leah” within him, and this is how one protects his *matzah* from *chametz*. One has to protect his thoughts from sadness, so that his thoughts shouldn't become fermented and turned into *chametz*) due to his discouraging states of *katnus*.

One can sweeten all the bitterness on him, knowing that everything is all G-dliness. Guarding our *matzah* is a hint to guarding our minds from questioning and wondering why we aren't succeeding. Instead, we must enter into *emunah*, clearly and joyously, and without worrying if we are succeeding or not in our *avodah* to Hashem – that “*chametz*” which confuses us and prevents us from *d'veykus* in Hashem. Let us rather become connected to thoughts of Torah and G-dly light [*emunah*] with certainty – through reminding ourselves of *yichuda ilaah* when we eat the *matzah*.

Sweetening Our Bitterness – Through Emunah

Maror represents that bitterness when Hashem's Presence is greatly concealed from us. The **Arizal** says that *maror* has the *gematria* of *maves*, death. But through dipping it in *charoses*, which has the *gematria* of *chaim* (life) and which is the secret of the names *EHY”H-YHV”H-EHY”H* (אהי"ה, יהו"ה, אהי"ה)⁹ which is equal in *gematria* to the word *chaim* (life), one can sweeten all the judgments on him.

⁹ These names of Hashem represent the reality and unity of Hashem, which erases all bitterness. When a person knows that Hashem does everything – this is tapping into the name

Charoses contains in the word *Rus*, who is also the “Leah” aspect of the *Shechinah*. The *maror* represents the *Eitz HaDaas*, and the *charoses* is the *Eitz HaChaim* that sweetens that *maror*, turning the bitterness into sweetness. Thus the *charoses* provides *chaim*, life. It turns the bitterness, the *maror*, into its opposite - *romem*, exaltedness. (This is when a person lives with *bittul*, with *yichuda ilaah*, which erases all the bitterness of the world. All bitterness comes from the concealment of Hashem’s light.) It turns the bitter herbs of *maror* into the sweet spices of *mor dror*, a hint to Mordechai – the light of *Yesod d’Aba*, the holy *mochin* of *yichuda ilaah*.

Transforming Our Bitterness

Maror (our bitterness) can either be *mor dror*, a sweet spice to us – a portal to liberating ourselves to freedom – or it may become bitter *maror*. **It all depends on how we go about our bitter situations. If we enter into *emunah* and *tefillah*, we can turn the bitterness into sweetness and freedom for us. But if not, then we will have to be forced to come to there through bitterness itself, *chas v’shalom* – all the bitterness that is found on this world which people find themselves going through.**

Our bitterness, our *maror*, can become *maves* (death) to us, if we don’t live our lives with G-dly light. Such a life is like death.

No one can get around Hashem. Everyone has to listen to Hashem at some point, and if he doesn’t, then he will be forced to, but it will be difficult for a person if he waits until he gets forced. A person has a choice. Either he can choose a sweet path, in which he takes pleasure in Hashem, or he will fall into the false pleasures of this world, which translate into the bitterness of this world.

The **Arizal** says that the word *charoses* is equal to 68 plus 606 (*Rus*, the *Shechinah*). The 68 is equal to the names of *EHY”H-YHV”H-EHY”H*, and which can exempt one from all bitterness.

Thus in one moment - **even if one is *chas v’shalom* like the wicked son at the Pesach Seder - as long as he turns to the Creator and accepts His G-dly reality**, he can access the names of *EHY”H-YHV”H-EHY”H*, the secret of *charoses* on maror – that is, **he can enter into *emunah* and turn to the Creator, and thereby sweeten all bitterness.**

Maror – Sweetening The Bitterness of “Leah”

The **Arizal** (*Shaar HaKavanos Pesach 5:12*) says that we need to sweeten the bitterness and harsh judgments of “Leah”, which are like death. When we think that we are running the

of *YHV”H* (*Havayah*), יהו"ה. When one is aware that Hashem is with us and that He will be with us always, this is tapping into the name of *EHY”H* (אהי"ה). With these two names of Hashem together (and what they imply), all bitterness is sweetened.

world, this can bring death, and that is what the *kelipos* (evil forces) do – causing people to think that they are in charge, and thereby inviting death upon themselves. Above in the world of *Atzilus*, the mode of Leah (efforts of the human being) is so great and holy, but below in the worlds of *BiY" A*, the mode of Leah gets twisted into a sense of one's own existence and independence, *yeishus*, a feeling that "I am the one who is doing everything."

That is why on the night of Pesach, we must guard our thoughts from "*chametz*" – from thoughts of *yeishus*, own independence and existence. We must instead think that Hashem is running everything. On Pesach night, the song of *emunah* is awakened, and it is the repair for all heresy, all concealment of Hashem's Presence, and all suffering. For all suffering only comes when people don't realize that the entire Creation is nothing but a garment for Hashem's Reality.

When eating the *afikoman*, we are getting a glimpse of the *Shechinah*, knowing that Hashem is doing everything, where we can understand that *yichuda tataah* is nothing but the revelation of Divine Providence on the lower realms, and that it is totally integrated in *yichuda ilaah*. Every garment – and every concealment and contraction of His light – is all for the purpose of revealing more the light of His unity. (Meaning that Hashem is not only orchestrating and conducting the lower realms, by rule of *yichuda tataah*. In an inner and hidden dimension underneath it all, there is no reality at all of the lower realms, for everything is only G-dliness - *yichuda ilaah*. Both of these dimensions are true and they do not contradict each other).

Charoses – Sweetening The Bitterness

Leah represents the hard work and exertion at serving Hashem, while Rochel represents the concept of seeing G-dliness in everything. Pesach is all about freedom, where we don't need to work hard and everything is a gift from Hashem, and we just have to think about the lights that Hashem is giving us on Pesach, deepening our ability to see G-dliness, which is the mode of "Rochel." When we begin to counter the *Omer*, we return to effort: the mode of "Leah".

It is like when we tell someone who wants to do *teshuvah* that he should first ignore his past sins and only fix them later, because if will begin to work at fixing them then he will never start serving Hashem, and he may fall into depression. Only after he has begun to serve Hashem and has tasted its sweetness, and he already received some level, can he go back and fix the past without becoming broken in the process.

Thus on Pesach we don't begin with efforts, with "Leah". Only after Pesach when we begin to count *Omer* will we enter into effort and *avodah*. Still, though, we need to sweeten the *dinei Leah* and do a bit of *teshuvah*. But we can't do *teshuvah* in a bitter state. We should not think about our lowliness. Instead, we should think of how great and awesome Hashem is, entering into *d'veykus*.

11 - Afikoman, Halel & Nirtzah

Eating The Afikoman – Merging With The Inner Dimension

When eating the *afikoman*, we are getting a glimpse of the *Shechinah*, knowing that Hashem is doing everything, where we can understand that *yichuda tataah* is nothing but the revelation of Divine Providence on the lower realms, and that it is totally integrated in *yichuda ilaah*. Every garment, every concealment, and every contraction of His light – is all for the purpose of revealing more the light of His unity. (Meaning that Hashem is not only orchestrating and conducting the lower realms, by rule of *yichuda tataah*. In an inner and hidden dimension underneath it all, there is no reality at all of the lower realms, for everything is only G-dliness - *yichuda ilaah*. Both of these dimensions are true and they do not contradict each other).

Afikoman – Enjoying The Bliss of G-dliness

The secret of the *afikoman* is that it enables one to get *enjoyment* from *Elokus* (G-dliness), in an intimate “face-to-face” manner – the secret of *yichud*. It is the pleasure of revelation of G-dliness where we relate to Hashem as “You”, and it is the secret of “revelation of Eliyahu” on the night of Pesach when we can feel the *Shechinah*. This pleasure comes from the “settling of G-dliness” from the level of *Atik*, and a spark of it is revealed through the *afikoman*, which is the light of the six days of Creation – the secret of the *yichud*.

Sefer Bris Kehunas Olam says that the main *yichud* on Pesach night happens by the *afikoman* – the pleasure that comes at the end of the meal. The *afikoman* is an awesome yet hidden *yichud*, where we enjoy the great pleasure of living off G-dliness, drawn from *Atik*. The sefer **Magid Meisharim** (*Vayakhel*) says that on Pesach we can enjoy anything we want, because it all becomes entirely holy, due to the *matzah* which helps us feel the humility of Dovid HaMelech. And the next morning, through the *tefillah* of *tal* (the dew), this is revealed even more, and this is all the root for the *yichud* that will be on Shavuos.

Afikoman – Enjoying The Reality of The Creator Like A Child Who Enjoys His Father’s Presence

When a Jew eats the *afikoman* on the night of Pesach, he should close his eyes tightly and see the “three colors” – the different modes of *d’veykus* to Hashem through each of the three *Avos* - which can awaken him to become connected to way above, and **to find a pleasure above all pleasures – a bliss in his Creator – rising above to the root point of a Jew, which has **a pleasure in his very existence of being a Jew, for being a prince of the King.****

That is the *avodah* we have by the *afikoman*, which is called *katnus d'Aba*. **It is like a child enjoying his father's presence.** Although every Jew certainly prepares himself for this night of Pesach and all of its many aspects, with a longing to serve the Creator through the many different aspects of *avodah* on this night (such as *Karpas*, which is equal to 360, equal to the word *Shas*, representing the longing of a Jew to know all of *Shas*), and all forms of *avodah*, whether *katnus* or *gadlus*, whether *mochin d'Aba (bittul)* or *mochin d'Ima (hishtokekus)*, the main point of all of this is to get to the root point, which is when we eat the *afikoman*.

This root point can cut away all the *kelipos*. When we close our eyes from all imprints of this world, and we see the higher, “supernal colors” of the light of Shabbos Kodesh, and we can sense the *d'veykus* to Hashem that comes from the many colors of [the clear prism of the] *ohr pashut* (undifferentiated infinite light of Hashem), **receiving great vitality again and again from just calling to Hashem as our Father - and this is above all other perceptions.**

That is also why any of the *kavanos* on Pesach night to reach *gadlus d'Aba* is only hinted to, because the main *kavanah* is for *katnus d'Aba*, which is the concept of **relating to Hashem as we if are a child enjoying the Presence of our Father in Heaven. When a person tastes from the afikoman, he can receive a true daas and d'veykus to say, “My Father in Heaven! I have no other enjoyment than calling You as my Father!” And with this, a person subjugates all accusing forces.**

Afikoman – Returning Everything To The Infinite Light

The secret of the *afikoman* is so exalted and higher above all other perceptions, and the *tzaddikim* barely revealed anything about it. The **Arizal** says a few cryptic words about it – that the *afikoman* is *katnus d'Aba*. But the *sefarim hakedoshim* revealed that the word *afikoman* (אפיקומן) has the *gematria* of the word יזרע *yizra* (to plant seeds), a hint that the *afikoman* enables one to know that Hashem is the One who plants the seeds of everything, for everything to sprout forth.

More specifically, the *afikoman* is the *Binah* of *katnus d'Aba*. When we eat the *afikoman*, we can accomplish anything. For it is then that we recognize that Hashem is running everything. All of our *avodah* is only for the purpose of revealing more how Hashem rules everything. That is the perception of *Binah d'Aba* – seeing and contemplating how *yichuda tataah* (all of our *avodah* and efforts on this world to serve Hashem) are all included in the *yichuda ilaah* (Hashem's infinite light).

Through *afikoman* we can come afterwards to “revelation of Eliyahu”, the level of the 52-letter name of Hashem – the *Shechinah* as it is revealed on this world. The purpose of the

Shechinah dwelling on the lower realms is to reveal more and more how “No thought can grasp Him at all.”

Hashem provided two ways of how we can perceive Him, so to speak. On one hand, we need to understand at all times that everything is His G-dliness, and there is nothing else besides Him. At the same time, we must also come to see Hashem “face-to-face”, so to speak, thereby understanding that not only is He unlimited, but that He is revealed even in the world of limitations that we are on. And all this is so that we will understand even more sharply that no thought can grasp Him at all.

That is the secret of *Binah d’Aba*, the secret of the *afikoman*. On one hand we can see that no thought can grasp Hashem, but at the same time we must see Him face-to-face, so that we can recognize even more that we do not grasp Him.

When we eat the *afikoman*, it is so that we will reveal how all of *yichuda tataah* is to reveal even more the *yichuda ilaah* – essentially that all of the *tzimtzum* serves to reveal even more the *ohr EinSof* (Hashem’s infinite light).¹⁰

¹⁰ Additionally, *afikoman* is from the words *afiko man* – it “releases our *Ma”N* (*mein nukvin*), “feminine waters”, our longings and pinings of our soul to return to our higher root. The *Arizal* calls *afikoman* the *katnus d’Aba* (the lower level of *Aba*), or *Malchus d’Aba*. In terms of the *Sefiros*, the *parzuf Aba* is known as *Chochmah*, otherwise known as the “revelation of Hashem’s infinite light”. The *Malchus* level of *Aba/Chochmah* – the lowest point within that perception – is the “root of judgment, hidden within the infinite light”, and in terms of the *Sefiros* it is *Binah* – or the longing for Hashem’s infinite light, from the awareness that there is nothing else besides for this. *Afikoman* means *afiko ma”n* – to “release the longings”, to reveal the “*Malchus* hidden within the *EinSof*” – the secret of longing to return to Hashem’s infinite Light. *Afikoman* - the *katnus* or the *Malchus* within *Aba*, is the secret of the *Shechinah*, which is sometimes referred to as a “minor” – [a ‘smaller version’ of Hashem’s infinite light], also called the light of *Memale kol olmin*, Hashem’s light that fills all worlds: The aspect that Hashem wants us to feel His Presence in front of us. *Afikoman* is essentially the *yichud*, the union, of the souls of the Jewish people with their Creator. By showing that our deepest longings are for Hashem, we connect Him not only through by way of His infinite light, but also through the *tzimtzum*, the contraction of His infinite light which resulted in our longing to go back to our infinite Source. The purpose of the *tzimtzum* is to add an additional level of *d’veykus* onto our connection with Hashem’s infinite light – it is the bliss of the additional adornment upon His infinite light [which is reached through us when we long to go back to Him and through all our *avodah* – our *Binah*]. For it is only through the creations - through us - that the *yichud* of Hashem becomes revealed with even greater intensity [than before Creation].

Our *avodah* on Pesach is to feel that all of the *tzimtzum*, all of the worlds that were created out of Hashem’s infinite light – all of this *katnus d’Aba*, as represented by the *afikoman* – is all for the purpose of raising our *mochin d’Ima* [our longings, our *Binah*] back to their root. For at first, *Malchus* was hidden in the Infinite Light, through the secret of *katnus d’Aba*, where Hashem reveled, so to speak, in the pleasure that he would have in the future when He would create us. Now that we are after the *tzimtzum*, Hashem made 4 worlds of *Atzilus*, *Beriah*, *Yetzirah*, and *Asiyah* – represented by the 4 cups – which are all 4 ways of perceiving Him: Seeing His G-dly

Perceiving G-dliness Even Amidst Katnus/Low-Level Inspiration

A person has to long with all his heart to leave the body's hold and desires that imprison him, and to revel in the "King's delights". After that he can easily perceive his Creator at any level he is at, even if he is at the lowest levels - and in this way, he reveals the glory of Hashem everywhere.

This is the implication of the *afikoman*, which refers to *katnus* [our times when we are smaller and on a lower level of spiritual consciousness]. The *tzaddikim* were able to taste the *korbon pesach* when they ate the *afikoman*. The *korbon pesach* was tied with its knees and stomach together, resembling a fetus. The hint is that the *tzaddikim* can feel that Hashem is with them in every situation, even in times of *katnus* (smallness) and *ibbur* (pregnancy, times of low-level inspiration which are really a preparation stage for a higher level).

It is during the eating of the *afikoman* that the greatest level of *yichud* takes place - and *afikoman* represents *katnus*. This is to show us that we must not be fazed by *katnus* or from anything in the world that can make us feel down about ourselves. Heaven tests a person with all kinds of *katnus*. We must remain unfazed by all the *katnus* that comes our way, and to keep looking for the *Shechinah* in every situation. Moshe's soul extends to all of the *tzaddikim* and then to the rest of the Jewish people - we need to enter into Moshe's spark in us, by not being fazed from any concealment of His Presence, and to that extent, we will go "towards Him, and not to His attributes." For we should not be trying to understand His attributes - His conduct towards us - and we should instead use His conduct solely as a means for us to become entirely focused on "Him", on Hashem alone.

reality [*Atzilus*], hearing and contemplating His reality [*Beriah*], sensing His Presence [*Yetzirah*], and talking to Him [*Asiyah*]. These also represent the 4 different levels of Torah, *PaRDe*"S (*pshat, drush, remez, sod*). Our main *avodah* now is to return everything to the "*afikoman*" - to *katnus d'Aba* (to *malchus d'Ein Sof*), to return everything to Hashem's infinite light.

May Hashem help us return all of our efforts and work to His infinite light. Though we do not know the secret of these matters, we do want to be *davuk* (attached) in Hashem and to surrender all our existence (*yeishus*) and sadness, all of our worries if we're succeeded or not at serving Him properly - and certainl we have to get rid of all our confusions and lusts that take us away from reaching our purpose - and to see how this is all the "dust of the earth" (in the same way we nullify the *chametz*), turning it all into *Malchus d'Ein Sof*. May we be *zocheh* to see the wonder that Hashem will show us when He takes us out forever from this exile - the wonder that will be the "50th gate of holiness", the *Nun* (50) in the word *Niflaos* (wonders) that He promised He will show us, in which we will see how everything is entirely to awaken our longing to return to His infinite light.

The Secret of Hiding The Afikoman

[Pharaoh didn't fully believe in Hashem, though he had some awareness of Him.] The most that Pharaoh could perceive of Hashem was at the level of *Elokim* (G-d), but he couldn't perceive Hashem as *Havayah* [and this filtered down to the people as well, and that was the "exile of Egypt" – being unaware of *Havayah*]. This lack of awareness towards Hashem was the very exile in Egypt. The name of *Elokim* refers to nature, while *Havayah* refers to the secret of *yichud*. Indeed, Hashem was hiding His conduct – which is called His mode of *Zeir Anpin* – and making it seem that nature was running its own course.

Thus we hide the *afikoman* – which represents *Zeir Anpin* – to show that Hashem's conduct of running the world (*Zeir Anpin*) seems to be hidden from us. The children search for the *afikoman*, because it is Hashem's children - the Jewish people - who search for the revelation of His G-dliness (even when they aren't deserving of it), and that is how they come to the greater levels that follow: The levels attained through eating the *afikoman* and *korbon pesach*. [The *tzaddikim* were able to taste the *korbon pesach* when eating the *afikoman*, feeling how Hashem was with them in every situation, even during time of *katnus* and *ibbur*, low-level inspiration which serve as preparation ("fetal") states for receiving higher levels of awareness of Hashem].

Midnight

The redemption from Egypt happened through *tefillah* – and so will the final redemption come through *tefillah*. But the power of *tefillah* depends on the power of Torah, because *tefillah* is represented by the last letter *heh* in Hashem's name of *Havayah*, and Torah is represented by the letter *vov* before it, and the last letter *heh* gets its illumination from the letter *vov*. Thus, *tefillah* is influenced by our Torah learning.

At the moment of *chatzos* (midnight), the *yichud* is awakened, and it becomes revealed to everyone how much the Jewish people accomplished with their *tefillos*. That is the matter behind the holiness of midnight, when we finish eating the *afikoman*. At midnight of Pesach, the holiness of *yichud* is awakened in the world, where it shines even on the lowest world, *Asiyah* – in the actual sense. "And as the days when you left the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders."

Halel of Maariv and Halel By The Seder – Drawing Forth Two Levels of Mochin

The **Rema m'Pano** explains why we say *Halel* for a second time on Pesach night, even though we already said *Halel* by *Maariv* [for those who have the custom to sing *Halel* after *Maariv* on Pesach night]. It is because by *Maariv*, we drew down the *mochin* for the night of Pesach only at the level of *NeH"Y*, and now we are drawing forth the *mochin* again, returning to this *avodah* again, this time drawing forth the *mochin* that will enable us to receive it at the level of *CHaGa"t*.

Nirtzah – The Final Level of Bittul

Nirtzah represents the highest level of being nullified to Hashem, the level called *bittul b'etzem*. It corresponds to the “fifth cup”, the cup of Eliyahu, and it refers to the *Shechinah*, and the secret of “the *Malchus* hidden within the *Radla*”. It represents the level where a person is in a state of *yichud* all day, not only when he *davens Shemoneh Esrei* but even as he is speaking to people, where he is both “above and below at once”.

But we cannot reach the “fifth cup” unless we have first connected strongly to the four cups, which will eventually draw us towards the fifth cup. The main *avodah* on the night of Pesach is with the four cups – to enter into repairing the four exiles, represented by the four children corresponding to the four worlds [*Asiyah, Yetzirah, Beriah, Atzilus*], which correspond to the levels of *bittul* that are *kabalas ol* [accepting our duties – the world of *Asiyah*], the primary holy feelings which are *ahavah, yirah, d'veykus* [love, fear, and attachment with Hashem – the world of *Yetzirah*], *bittul haYeish* [submitting our independence to Hashem – the world of *Beriah*], and *bittul b'metzius* [nullifying all of reality to Hashem’s reality – *Atzilus*]. And that is how we can reach the “fifth cup”, by *Nirtzah*, which represents the highest level: *bittul b'etzem* [to be completely surrendered to Hashem – where we recognize that we only exist to reveal Hashem].

11 - Shvii Shel Pesach

Shvii Shel Pesach – Yechidah-Consciousness

There are two levels of *yichud* on Pesach – on the night of Pesach, and on *Shvii shel Pesach* (the 7th day of Pesach).

On the night of Pesach, there is *mochin* of *Chayah*, which is also the *mochin* of *gadlus sheini* which is drawn on the night of Pesach. On *Shvii shel Pesach*, the *mochin* is in the secret of the *Yechidah*, which is also the secret of *B'Atika talya milsa*, "In *Atik*, the matter depends." The **Toras Chochom** explains that through the light of *Atik*, a light is drawn that resembles the *mochin* of *pnim* on Shavuot, which reaches the level of the *Yechidah*. [However, it is all in a state of *katnus*.]

These two levels were gained by the Baal Shem Tov when he journeyed to Eretz Yisrael. On the night of Pesach, his soul rose up to Heaven. This was when he reached *Chayah*-consciousness. He performed a miracle in Istanbul because of what he saw in Heaven, as the well-known story about this is told over. And on the seventh day of Pesach, he fell into a state of low spiritual consciousness and he lost all his spiritual knowledge. Then Achiyah HaShiloni came to him and taught him a *yichud* (the *yichud* of *ADN"Y- EHY"H*), and this allowed a great miracle in which he was saved from death. This was where he reached *Yechidah* level of the soul, which corresponds to the world of *Adam Kadmon*, which descends to the lowest point of *Asiyah*, and which can fix the lowest levels of *katnus*.

Splitting The Sea of Concealment

The secret of the event of the splitting of the sea was that the people reached the level of "This is my G-d, and I will glorify Him." The **Arizal** (*Shaar HaKavanos Pesach, 12*) explains that it represented a level in which we can turn the *Nachash*, the Serpent (representing all darkness and concealment) into *Choshen*, the breastplate of the Kohen Gadol which contained the *Urim V'Tumim*, which answers all questions.

Hashem gives a person suffering only so that he will elevate that suffering and sweeten it, to mimic the splitting of the sea, in which we tore through all concealment, until we came to the recognition of "This is my G-d and I will glorify Him."

The Secret of Shvii Shel Pesach

The **Arizal** explains the secret of Shvii shel Pesach as *yichud d'katnus* or *yichud d'achor*, revealing the oneness of Hashem amidst the least encouraging situations. The *Geulah* – the final Redemption – is borne from this *yichud*. The S”M (Other Side) tries to prevent it, by bringing harsh decrees and all kinds of concealment upon us, so that it can nurse vitality and grow stronger from the *yichud d'katnus* or *yichud d'achor*. And therefore we have to be careful not to let the S”M get this vitality. The **Toras Chocho**m teaches that the way to counter the plans of the S”M is, through the lofty powers of *Arich* and *Atik* – which can transform the *yichud d'katnus* into *yichud d'gadlus* (or *yichud d'achor* into *yichud d'pnim*).

At *yichud d'katnus*, a person is confused and he has doubts, and he doesn't know what Hashem wants from him – even as he's trying to become holier and grow to higher levels. The repair for this is to access *Atik*: “In *Atik*, the matter depends.” One needs to first enter into the light of *Arich* and then he can enter into *Atik*.

First, one needs to have *mesirus nefesh* to do the will of Hashem, by not being concerned about what he feels right now. He just has to give himself over to the G-dly light and surrender himself to Hashem, just as by the splitting of the sea, when the sea didn't split until Nachshon jumped in and showed he was ready to give his life and submit himself to Hashem's plan. [This is the *mesirus nefesh*, the level of *Arich*.]

After showing *mesirus nefesh*, one can then revel in a bliss in Hashem's Presence with him that goes beyond all logic and reason. This is the light of *Atik*. This is the secret of “*Yisrael rejoices in his Maker.*” It is **to enjoy one's intrinsic connection with Hashem** and be connected with the upper *yichud* – the essence of Hashem's will which is above every other revelation – and in this way, one transforms *yichud d'achor* into *yichud d'pnim*, going from *yichud d'katnus* to *yichud d'gadlus*.

This is how we turn the *yichud d'achor* on Shvii Shel Pesach, into a *yichud* of *panim b'panim* – the most intimate connection with Hashem. **And with this, the *Geulah* (final Redemption) can come with Hashem's mercy, with no harsh decrees or troubles.** For “In *Atik*, the matter depends” – and through having *mesirus nefesh* for the will of Hashem, we can rise to the very essence of G-dliness.

The Revelation On Shvii Shel Pesach – Every Descent Is For The Purpose of Ascent

At the splitting of the sea on Shvii shel Pesach, the *yichud* that is normally above in Heaven was now happening down below on the world, where the Jewish people enjoyed an intimate, face-to-face relationship with Hashem. It became revealed to everyone's eyes, in great detail, how every single descent and failure we go through is really an ascent to a

higher level, and revealing how every secret of Torah, in all of its different colors, is all bound and unified as part of the prism of *ohr pashut*, Hashem's undivided infinite light.

The Jewish people reached this level on Shvii Shel Pesach, but they didn't receive this level of "Torah" due to the breaking of the *Luchos*. This level will be revealed as a new level of Torah in the future – the Torah of *Atika Stimaah* (lit. ancient, hidden level of Torah). This is a level of Torah where all the secrets of the Torah are revealed to a person as an individual. It reveals the qualities of every Jew's soul, and that each Jew is always going higher, and that every descent and failure was only for the purpose of revealing a higher and more intense perception of G-dliness, since everything is bound with the light of His undivided unity (*achdus peshutah*) – and all of our *avodah* was entirely give a *nachas ruach*, a satisfaction, to Hashem. At this level, we see how every descent and failure we went through was all for the purpose of making us ascend higher, to reveal a deeper perception of G-dliness.

Any Jew who cleanses himself off from all the impure effects of sin, is able to reach this. For Hashem wants to be revealed to anyone who is a Jew – so that the Jew will feel His Reality throughout every detail, with the simplicity of a little child who doesn't care about the fact that he doesn't understand anything yet, and whose entire wish is just to give a *nachas ruach* to Hashem at all times, and to be "above and below at once". **Every moment, we should just be someone who is truly serving Hashem, who desires only to give a *nachas ruach* (satisfaction) to Him – and it shouldn't make a difference to us if we find ourselves in a 'bad period', *katnus* (low-level inspiration) or in a 'good period', *gadlus* (high-level inspiration and growth) – or whether we feel like we are heading towards Gan Eden or Gehinnom. [We must only be concerned about one thing alone – giving a *nachas ruach* to Hashem].**

Shvii Shel Pesach – The Emunah That Transcends Every Concealment

On the night of Pesach, we gain *emunah*, through the outpouring of *mochin d'gadlus* (high-level spiritual consciousness) that comes on the first night of Pesach. It is a night where a great, awesome *yichud* takes place (on High). But the seventh day of Pesach is called *katnus* (low-level spiritual consciousness), as explained by the **Arizal** (*Shaar HaKavanos, Pesach 12*).

When the people stood at the sea front, they were at the place of the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil" – or the mode where a person begins to feel his own reality and existence, "Me", so he begins to fall into all kinds of questions. He notices his emotions and then he can have all kinds of questions based on what he's feeling. Then he asks himself, "Why is it that sometimes I can feel a certain truth and sometimes I can't feel a thing? Why is it that sometimes I'm so defiled and sometimes I'm pure?" He begins to question Hashem. All of this questioning is really coming from being at the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil", where a person determines everything based on how he feels right now.

The feelings of a person are mixed with good and evil. The problem that the philosophers had was that they came to conclusions based on how they felt. If they felt something was true, they thought it must be true, and if they didn't feel it was true, then they concluded that it must be false, and that there was no other option.

But when a person goes beyond questioning and philosophy and human emotions, by gaining true *daas*, which is above the place of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, he knows that he really doesn't know a thing. He believes in all the Sages of the Jewish people and in the *tzaddikim* who came after them, and from that *emunah*, he can then come to the true understanding, *daas*.

But if a person follows his feelings and his material wishes, and he has no faith in the sages and he doesn't surrender his knowledge to the *tzaddikim* of the generation, he determines his worldview and his perception of the truth based on whatever he personally feels or intellectually understands. He will always remain on the outside of the truth, and he is found below on this world – at the place of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Red Sea (*Yam Suf*) represented the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil because it is situated below Eretz Yisrael – it is below the place of *emunah*.

The *kelipah* of Pharaoh stands squarely at the place of *daas* to prevent a person from attaining *daas*. Pharaoh is the voice of confusion to prevent a person from getting closer to the holy and true *daas*. Pharaoh also prevents all of a person's *mochin* (knowledge and spiritual awareness) from filtering down below into a person's heart, so that a person won't internalize what he knows and he won't be able to feel in his soul the revelation of G-dliness.

Pharaoh mainly takes hold when a person goes through suffering or failure, which every person goes through. When a Jew sometimes falls into a state of immaturity or he falls into a small sin – and he feels terrible about this – he is then vulnerable to Pharaoh, the *kelipah* that wishes to prevent *emunah* (the true *daas*) from entering one's soul, and then Pharaoh can drag a person into the sea of philosophy and denial of G-d. Pharaoh's entire vitality is to grab a Jew when he finds himself in *katnus*, where he is vulnerable to Pharaoh's voice of confusion. Pharaoh wanted to lick the blood of the Jews [and he would bathe himself in Jewish blood] and taste the downfall of every Jewish soul, *chas v'shalom*.

When Pharaoh descends below [from the 'throat' area] and he wants to grab onto the failures of a Jew's soul and thereby accuse that "These are idol-worshippers", at that moment, Pharaoh is no longer situated at the 'throat', but he is found between the heart and the liver, the place of lust – the sea of desires. This is like Pharaoh trapping the Jews by the Yam Suf, and this is where Pharaoh is attempting to get a Jew to sin. At that moment of difficulty, if one will strengthen himself with the knowledge of G-dliness that Hashem is with him, he can draw forth new levels of *mochin* (spiritual perceptions) and knock down

all of the barriers and concealments, in one moment – drowning Pharoah and his army into the sea.

The truth is that the Other Side [represented by Pharoah] really isn't able to distance a person from Hashem, and it cannot prevent a person from drawing forth new *mochin*, even as the Other Side is enjoying the dismal, fallen state of the Jew's soul and licking his blood and enjoying his suffering.

On Pesach night, Hashem did great miracles for us, punishing Pharoah and of his nation, giving us a special illumination so that Pharoah loses his balance and falls down from the 'neck' area where he is normally located at – the place of *mochin* – and at that moment, all the greatest levels of *mochin* descend into us, into our heart.

But after the first night of Pesach, all the *mochin* leave us. Throughout the first week of *Sefiras HaOmer*, we begin to receive a new level of *mochin*. By the fifth day of the week following the first night of Pesach, we are found at *mochin d'katnus*. It was at that time when our people fell into a dismal state of *katnus*. We felt that we didn't know which way to go in – meaning that we didn't know the way of how to serve Hashem. We were confused, trapped from all directions, by Egypt, by the desert, by the sea. And it was so dismal for us that there were accusations in Heaven against us, because the angels were saying, "They [the Egyptians] are idol-worshippers and they [the Jews] are idol-worshippers!"

But on the sixth day of that week, we received some level of *mochin d'gadlus*, but it wasn't the same level as when we left Egypt. We were still in danger of Pharoah – we didn't have enough light to remove Pharoah from his place where he is able to prevent us from *daas*, and therefore Pharoah could still cause us confusion.

On Shvii Shel Pesach - the seventh day after going out of Egypt – the **Arizal** says that the light of Mashiach began to shine. We no longer had all the *mochin*, the great perceptions that we had when leaving Egypt – we didn't have the awesome upper *yichud* of Pesach night with us – and instead, we felt that we had lost all our *mochin*, and we felt terrible about it. We were suffering from it. And the Other Side enjoys it very much when we feel like we're suffering from our loss of great levels, and that is when a Jew is most vulnerable to be dragged down by the Other Side into the lowest abysses of defilement, due to the suffering in his soul that he feels – which are like Egypt on one side, with the sea on the other side.

A Jew has to be smart about this and understand that when Hashem is testing him with *katnus* – when he feels small about himself – it is precisely then that he can draw upon himself an even greater level of *mochin*, where he can come to "This is my G-d and I will glorify Him." The Other Side is the enemy who pursues our soul to steal all of our inner wealth, but even as it pursues us, Hashem is with us, hidden within the difficulty.

The Concept of The “Meal For Mashiach” On Shvii Shel Pesach

Whenever a Jew has suffering - whether it is physical, or emotional, internal suffering - at that moment when his spirit is low, he should use it to draw forth a higher level of *mochin*. Dovid HaMelech was being pursued and humiliated by different people in his life who wanted to destroy him, and it was precisely during those times where he merited the light of Mashiach. The truth is that he could have been made into Mashiach then [but the generation wasn't worthy].

A Jew has to know that when the Other Side, including Pharoah and his army, are pursuing him – **when he feels like he is in a state of *katnus* - it is precisely then that he can find Hashem. He must know that it's all for his good.** The Other Side thinks that when a person doesn't feel inspired, it must mean that the person has truly fallen, so the Other Side thinks that it can now grab hold of the person and gloat in enjoyment over the person's defeat. At that moment when the Other Side thinks it has been victorious, it comes down from its place – it lays at the “throat” area above – and it descends down below, to ruin the person. That is precisely the time where a person can draw forth great new levels of *mochin*, a degree of the light of Mashiach.¹¹

Thus the Baal Shem Tov established to have a festive “meal for Mashiach” on Shvii shel Pesach, because Shvii shel Pesach is the time when Mashiach becomes born (as the *Arizal* says in *Shaar HaKavanos*), and it is an exalted time in which we can accomplish the arrival of Mashiach. As it is said of **Rebbi Nosson of Breslev**, who once saw his student inspiring himself in a state of growth, whereupon he said to his student: “It's not a novelty that you can be strong now, when you're anyways in a heightened stage of growth. I want to see what you are like when you find yourself in a state of *katnus*, if you will strengthen yourself then too.” When a Jew can serve Hashem even when he's in a state of *katnus*, he can hasten the coming of Mashiach.

But that alone won't be enough. A person also needs to know that it is precisely during a time of *katnus* when a person can draw forth the greatest levels of *gadlus*, and reach the essential lights of Mashiach, the *mochin* of *achdus pashut* with Hashem, in which a Jew can feel the *yichud* with Hashem. That is the great *yichud* on Shvii shel Pesach.

Although the night of Pesach contains a greater and more awesome *yichud*, it still doesn't lead to a birth of a new level. In order to give birth to new levels, one needs the light of *Arich Anpin*, of *b'Atika talya milsa* (*Zohar Beshalach*), and as it's known, when a woman is kneeling to give birth, there is a great revelation then of Hashem's kindness, for the key to

¹¹ The lights of Leah, which are in the category of “Mashiach ben Dovid”, become drawn and integrated into Rochel - which is the secret of “Mashiach ben Yosef”. This is the root of the light of the final Redemption, for it is through this that the soul of Mashiach ben Yosef is born on Shvii shel Pesach. And this continues on Shavuot, with the birth of Mashiach ben Dovid.

children is found only in the hands of Hashem (*Sanhedrin 113a*), which is the mode of *Arich*, a great and intense light. This level is not revealed even by the night of the *Seder*. It is revealed precisely on Shvii shel Pesach, when a person has internal suffering in his soul and he finds himself in *katnus*, compared to the high level he felt during the *Seder*.

Through strengthening his *bitachon* in Hashem – when one knows that it is precisely when he feels like he has fallen, that he can draw forth new *mochin* and essential lights - the Other Side doesn't bother him, because it thinks that the person has fallen anyway. That is how a Jew can enter into *yichud*, and to be truly connected with Hashem - the secret of *b'Atika talya milsa*. Through the *avodah* that we did at the *Seder* on Pesach night, the birth can now take place on Shvii shel Pesach, which brings the soul of Mashiach into the world.

In A Time of Katnus, That Is When We Need To Enter Into The Great Bliss of D'veykus

Atik is the root of all *Gevurah*, because *Atik* is the secret of the true Existence, as revealed through *Binah*, which is called *yeish* (existing) in comparison to *Chochmah*, which is called *ayin* (nothingness). It is through *Binah* that all details become revealed. *Binah*, which is the root of all *dinim*, is the root that reveals all *Gevuros*, all the details that become revealed down below in *Malchus*, and this is the secret of the "84 *dinim*". When addressing Hashem as "*Atah*" (You), this is the recognition of Hashem throughout all the many details that reveal Him upon the world. This is the secret of the six *Heichalos* (chambers), for Hashem wants people to recognize all these chambers and perceive Him by way of all these levels.

That is why sometimes a person falls into *katnus*, where he finds it difficult to serve Hashem. The entire reason that Hashem sometimes allows this Serpent - this *katnus* - to get stronger, is so that the person will be able to perceive the *Heichalos* and all the many details that reveal Him. For it is through this that a person receives the energy to attain a greater level of *yichud* afterwards. This is by entering the secret of splitting the sea, of which it is said that "Hashem will fight for you all your wars" - the secret of *b'Atika talya milsa* (*Sifra D'Tzneyusa 2*), and this is what enables a person to reach *d'veykus* even during *katnus*.

A person needs to use a very inner and root kind of pleasure, which doesn't get interrupted. Moshe used this pleasure by the splitting of the sea, which was a time of *katnus* – through using the secret of *b'Atika talya milsa*, it became revealed to Moshe the way of *avodah* of entering into the inner, root pleasure of enjoying the Presence of the Creator. For without pleasure, a person cannot serve Hashem at all, because there cannot be *yichud* without pleasure.

The difficulty during *katnus* is that there is no pleasure and then a person can't consciously focus on *yichud*. But through revealing the root pleasure which never ceases even during *katnus*, **a person can enter into the pleasure just from feeling the reality of the Creator. This pleasure is the essential, inner level of pleasure for the soul**, the "desire

of desires". The main goal is to reach the upper, hidden *daas*, to reach *d'veykus* at all times, not only during the high of *gadlus* but even during the downs of *katnus*, because a person was created to find pleasure in Hashem, and even during *katnus* a person has to be connected to *yichud*, to the *taanug etzem*, the essential pleasure.

Repairing Kelipas Noga On Shvii Shel Pesach, Through Bittul

The difference between *chametz* and *matzah* is that *chametz* has the letter *ches* while *matzah* has the letter *heh*, which are only slightly different letters from each other. **R' Eizik Chever** explained that the letter *ches* is comprised of three lines, corresponding to the three active elements of fire, air, and water, which correspond to *CHaGa"t* (*chessed/water, gevurah/fire, and tiferes/air*). In the exile of Egypt, they were trapped in Egypt, like the letter *ches* (**ח**) which is sealed in from all its sides, and the letter *ches* represents *chametz*. By the exodus from Egypt, the left leg of the letter *ches* became opened (through the area where they left Egypt from) becoming a letter *heh*, and the letter *heh* represents the change from *chametz* to *matzah*.

This was all a repair of the "three lines" which correspond to the three directions of the letter *ches*, but there is still a fourth direction that is open, on the bottom of the letter *ches* – this is the northern direction, and the north is *tzafon*, a hint to the evil inclination, who is associated with the north (from the north, evil is opened). In order to repair the fourth direction, the north, which is open to the world, it is very difficult. It refers to the fourth *kelipah*, the *kelipas noga*, which is the hardest to repair from all the *kelipos*. In order to have the complete Redemption, the fourth line, the fourth direction, the *kelipas noga*, must be repaired.

The three impure *kelipos*, which came into power since the sin of Adam, are evil wind, evil fire, and evil water. The root evil trait is conceitedness, which branches into the three evil traits of jealousy, honor-seeking, and lust, which remove a person from the world. Jealousy is the evil wind, lusts are the evil water, and honor-seeking is the evil fire.¹²

The *kelipas noga*, which is the root of all of these, is the evil element of earth, which houses the other three active elements and enables them. It is the evil side to *Malchus*. It is repaired through *Aba*, because of the secret of *Aba yasad barta*, the father is the foundation of his daughter, and 'daughter' refers to *Malchus*. Through *Aba*, or *Chochmah* – the concept of *bittul b'metzius* – we can fix the northern direction that is open to the world. "With wisdom, gates are opened."

¹² For example, a person is learning and davening with enthusiasm and passion. This is "fire", but it can become an evil fire storm when a person is doing this only to get honored by others, when he is completely self-focused on magnifying his own honor in the eyes of others.

It is very subtle to repair the *kelipas noga*, and it is also very difficult. It requires a person to sanctify even his permissible pleasures and to become holy even in these areas. A person has to do what he is able to. “*And you shall be holy.*” A person has to do what he can to make himself holier. When he eats, he should have *kavanah* when he makes the blessing, and he should do what he can, and then he will receive help from Above to fix even his permissible pleasures, the *kelipas noga*. For “when a person sanctifies himself a bit below, he is sanctified a lot above.”

This is the secret of splitting the sea, which was through the 72-letter name of Hashem, which represents the world of *Atzilus*, which is the concept of *bittul*. It is through this level, *bittul*, that we can be *zocheh* to repair even *kelipas noga*.

The Dry Land Within The Sea

When the sea was split, the people walked into dry land within the sea. They were amidst the sea, but they walked on dry land. This is a deep secret, representing a whole new revelation of how a person can serve Hashem.

There are two main spiritual lights, called *ani* and *ayin* (nothingness).

The *ani* (*Atik*) manifests below in the worlds of *BiY”A*, as a feeling of independent existence. One needs to purify himself on many levels, with *bittul* after *bittul* at all times, erasing his *ani* and coming to *ayin*. One has to take the worlds of *BiY”A* - his independent “I”, the sense of his own existence - which is “the beach”, dry land - and elevate it at all times, through many levels of *bittul*, until a person becomes integrated within the “sea”. When one elevates his “I” and returns it to its root above, until he purifies his existence, he comes to the level where he walks in “dry land within the sea”, revealing how *ani* (I) is not a contradiction to *ayin*.

There are always two levels - “returning light”, which is longings and purifying one’s lower levels so he can rise to higher levels, purifying his independent “I” that feels separate from the Creator - and there is also “direct light”, which is *bittul* (surrender) through the *ayin Eloki* (the G-dly realm of nothingness). They are actually both one and the same, because they are both about revealing *Atzmuso* (His essence, as it were). This is the secret of “*ani* and *ayin* at once”, which is the secret of the “sea” and “dry land”, at once. Both the levels of *Ma”H* and *Be”N*, both the “direct light” and “returning light” (which are known in terms of *avodah* as *bittul/Rochel/emunah* and *hishtokekus/Leah/tefillah*) are all one matter, of revealing *Atzmuso*.

12 - Other Topics For Pesach

Pesach – A Time of Hisbodedus

When our mouth can utter *tefillos* (prayers) and requests to Hashem, and we are pouring out our words before our Master, this is the power of *peh-sach*, the “mouth that talks”. This is the true freedom, and the way to attain active *d'veykus* (attachment) to Hashem. *Hisbodedus* (talking to Hashem amidst seclusion) is a great, awesome light, and it is called Pesach, from the words *peh-sach*, “mouth that talks.” As long as one can open his mouth and pour out his words to Hashem, that is a sign that the light of *Atzilus* is still shining in him.

The Ten Plagues – Ten Levels of Holiness

Just as there are ten plagues which subjugated the *kelipos* (impure forces) in Egypt, so should a person enter himself into the holiness that accompanied each of these ten plagues.

Each part of *davening* (*Shacharis*) corresponds to the ten holy levels:

Reciting the *korbonos* corresponds to the plague of blood. This is the level of accepting upon oneself his duties to Heaven – represented by the *korbonos*, which were brought in the world of *Asiyah*, action.

This is followed with the songs of *Pesukei D'Zimrah*, the world of *Yetzirah*, corresponding to the plague of frogs.

Then we rise to the blessings before the *Shema*, the world of *Beriah*, and the *Sefirah* of *Binah*, which is to contemplate G-dliness, and the body becomes aflame with it. This corresponds to the plague of lice, which brought suffering and purification to the body, like fire which purifies – and just as the contemplative *Binah* has a purifying effect on the body.

The fourth plague, wild beasts, represents the mixture of every force in Creation becoming unified together, the revelation of *yichud Hashem*, where *Havayah* is unified with *Elokim*. This is represented by the words *Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad*.

Then when reciting the rest of the *Shema*, we say the words “*With all your soul and with all your heart and with all your means.*” These three levels correspond to the plagues of pestilence, boils, and hail. The pestilence represents the level where the body is beginning to become purified, boils are fire, and hail is water.

Then we come to *Shemoneh Esrei*, where we rise to the consciousness of the *Ga"R*, the "three heads" – *Binah*, *Chochmah*, and *Keser*, which correspond to the plagues of locusts, darkness, and death of the firstborn.

Through the Torah, We Gain Pleasure and Belief In Our Power of Tefillah

The main way by which we gain holy stubbornness and we redeem our *tefillos* is, through the light of the Torah, which is the aspect of "Rochel". This light shines mainly on Pesach night (whereas the path of "Leah", represented by the covered *matzos*, is more hidden on this night, because we need to protect the path of Leah on this night by keeping it hidden. Hence we cover the *matzos*, which represent Leah).

It is forbidden to philosophize and question this matter even for a moment, if our *tefillos* are working or not. For once we begin to question if our *tefillos* are working or not, we fall into sadness and melancholy. Since there is no *yichud* in the world of *Asiyah*, it is forbidden to enter into such doubts.

(When we become connected to the light of the true *tzaddik*, we are taught how to *daven*, and then we can see how our doubts are really "holy sparks" that we need to elevate, by pushing out our delusions that seek to distance us from Hashem and to enter into a renewed closeness with Hashem.)

On Pesach night, the *yichudim* that we do are called "Rochel" – the power of the Torah – for when we are connected to the name of *YHV"H* and to the light of the Torah of Pesach, we become worthy of *tefillah* and we leave the blemishes of idol worship (heresy and denial of G-d), sadness, and doubts. Just as a young child knows that his parents can give him gifts, so do we need to know clearly that Hashem can give us all necessary salvations. This is how "Yosef" saves "Yehudah" - redeeming the power of *tefillah* from its exile, purifying all impurity, and conquering all wars, through *davening* for Hashem's extended and endless compassion.

With this, may we merit the light of Dovid HaMelech in its revelation, and may our eyes see the King in His glory. For when our mind and heart is involved all the time with a connection to Torah and *yichud Hashem*, our *tefillos* become filled with grace, for we aren't questioning or doubting them. Instead, our thoughts are focused on Torah and on the *yichudim* of *Havayah*. Then we can merit the grace of Rabbi Yochanan, who said "If only a person would *daven* the entire day", and to have *mochin* at night and at day, every moment.

Weakening Kelipas Pharoah – Through Tefillah Amidst Bittul and Bitachon

Pharoah is the *Arich Anpin* on the side of the *kelipah* (hence Pharoah is the manifestation of *Keser d'kelipah*, specifically the evil side of "lower *Keser*"). Pharoah is all about "Everything depends on what I want". It is a *kelipah* in which a person feels that he must get everything

he wants, with no concept of having *emunah* and no *bittul* to the Creator. This is the evil side of *Arich Anpin* - the area of *ratzon*, the will.

Hashem gave us the power of the will so that we will want to make effort, but the error is when a person thinks that everything depends on his willpower and effort, which is exactly what our superficial world emphasizes. It is all a lie to think that everything is up to our efforts. Everything depends on what Hashem desires. We must go out of the denial of G-d voiced by Pharoah, which is the *Arich Anpin* of the *kelipah*, the self-focused belief of wanting to fulfill every wish. This is a misuse of the power of *mesirus nefesh*, in which we increase our willpower. Since *mesirus nefesh* comes from *ratzon*, the *ratzon* is able to be intercepted by the *kelipos*, and this is where the *kelipah* of Pharoah emerges from - the thinking that everything depends on my efforts and my wishes.

Hashem took us out of Egypt. He brought us to the levels of *Aba* and *Ima* which can bring us to the inner level of *Chochmah* which is the inner level of *Atik*, where we can reach total *bittul*, take pleasure in Hashem from this *bittul*, and then rise higher, all the way until *Atik* (the higher aspect of *Keser*, beyond the will), and all the way until the *Radla*.¹³

Pharoah's heresy was that he didn't want us to have time to *daven*. Pharoah is from the words *peh-ra*, the "evil mouth" which didn't want our mouths to speak holiness. He wanted us to be mutes. We must fight with these *kelipos* which argue to us that our *tefillos* aren't working and aren't being accepted, and we must argue with the deniers of G-d who think that nothing depends on *tefillah* and that everything depends on manpower and willpower, etc. We must get rid of these *kelipos*.

During these days in which we prepare for Pesach, which means *peh sach*, the mouth that talks, we need to be *davening* amidst *bittul*, but we also need to *daven* from *bitachon* and not just with *bittul*. Total *bittul* is to have *ani* and *ayin* at once, to have *bittul* with *bitachon*, to be confident and joyous when we *daven*, with *bitachon* in Hashem's compassion, "*For My Sake for My Sake I will do*", and this is true even if *chas v'shalom* we are like the "wicked son".

The Yichud In Asiyah

In the *Mah Nishtanah*, the child asks: "Why is this night different than all other nights?"

¹³ During Pesach our *avodah* is to fix the sin of Adam, who wanted to bring Mashiach on Erev Shabbos when he was only at the level of *mochin* of *Binah* - and that was the mistake. At the level of *Binah*, a person thinks that everything depends on his own *avodah* and efforts. The *Sefirah* of *Binah* corresponds to the *partzuf* of *Arich Anpin* (and *Chochmah* corresponds to *Atik*, and *Keser* corresponds to the *Radla*). Had Adam waited until Shabbos, he would have received the *mochin* of *Chochmah*, which is *bittul*. Only through *bittul* (*Chochmah*) can one reach the *Keser*, which is the integration of *ani* and *ayin* (*Binah/Arich Anpin* and *Chochmah/Atik*) at once.

During all other nights, the *yichud* (Hashem's unity with all of His Creation) doesn't light up the darkness of the night. But on the night of Pesach, which is different than all other nights, there is *yichuda ilaah* (higher-level unity) which is lighting up even the world of *Asiyah*.

For every person needs to know that when he is *zocheh* to tell everything on his heart to Hashem, this will work, without a doubt. It is just that the Satan confuses a person and tells him that his *tefillos* aren't being accepted and that his *tefillos* aren't needed. It tells a person, "How can you stand in front of the King, after you've done so much damage and so many *aveiros*?"

Normally, *yichud* doesn't reach down to the world of *Asiyah*, because *Asiyah* is completely dark, like the night where the darkness is total, making it seem to a person that his *tefillos* don't work. "*Our wonders we are not seeing*" (*Tehillim 74:9*). When people don't see dazzling wonders coming from their *tefillos*, they doubt if their *tefillos* are doing anything, and this is all because they don't know how to be stubborn when it comes to holiness and to keep *davening*.

If a person lives with holiness, he will certainly feel the sweetness of every word when he davens. But if *chas v'shalom* his *davening* tastes as bitter as *maror* to him, it is Heaven's rebuke to him that he is not behaving with holiness and that he's stuck in the impurity of Egypt and idol worship. One cannot enjoy *davening* in that state, and he will talk negatively about *davening*, saying that there is no point in *davening*, as if Hashem doesn't care if he *davens* with more *kavanah* or less *kavanah* (*Rachmana Litzlan*). This is an exile to the *Shechinah*.

Every Jew is a part of the *Shechinah*, and the main weapon of Mashiach (as well as every Jew) is only through *tefillah* (*Likutei Moharan 2*), for *tefillah* conquers all the worlds and levels. It is just that the Other Side and the impurity of Egypt weakens the Jewish souls from connecting to their *davening*. The power of *tefillah* is the power of Leah, who *davened* so much until her eyes were brittle from crying. But a person has to be careful from the *kelipos* which try to attach themselves to the path of "Leah" by distancing him from *tefillah* and getting him to lose enjoyment in his *davening*.

There is no *yichud* in the world of *Asiyah*, because the *yichud* unifies together the "masculine" and "feminine" aspects, and the masculine is *daas* and the feminine is *emunah*, and usually a person needs *emunah* in order to receive *daas*. But when we need to descend into lower places – when we are forced to descend into lower spiritual levels - we cannot even search for *daas*, because there is no *daas* there. Rather, what we need there is *emunah peshutah*.

When we find ourselves in a lowly state, we cannot engage in clever, sharp discussions (which are a form of *daas*) in order to reach *emunah*. Rather, what we need there is *emunah peshutah*. This is because *daas* and *emunah* cannot be joined together in *Asiyah*, and even if a person will try to understand, he won't succeed. He just needs to rely on *emunah peshutah* alone, so that he won't fall into philosophy and idol worship.

But on the night of Pesach, where we have guarded *matzah*, the path of "Leah" is protected, our *tefillos* are protected, through the "overnight water" - the *tzaddikim* who tell us to bring this water - for they shine the G-dly light and raise the *Shechinah* until *emunah* shines in the world, since the *tzaddik* has the "holy stubbornness" to watch the *matzah*, raising *tefillah* and *emunah* until it illuminates the dark night. For as long as a person has doubts if his *tefillos* are working or not, he just needs to have *emunah peshutah*.

The truth is that the souls of the Jewish people do not need to clarify their *emunah*, because they know clearly that their *tefillos* work and are drawing forth Hashem's kindness and compassion, along with their Torah learning and knowing His Names - and the Jewish people have great, awesome "holy stubbornness" in these matters.

At the *Seder*, the child ask his questions - and we answer all his questions. Normally we do not engage in questioning as we *daven*, and certainly not at nighttime, in the darkness of the world *Asiyah*. But that is only if we enter into *davening* with no *d'veykus*. On Pesach night though, we receive the power of "holy stubbornness", and the 'child can ask all his questions' - anything he wants to ask. **Hashem wants us on this night to use the power of holy stubbornness and ask for all our needs**, so that we can conquer all the wars that we need to fight on this world, whether in our material or spiritual concerns.¹⁴ Through using the power of holy stubbornness, we can ask Hashem for anything, because **at our innermost depths we have no doubts about what our *davening* can do, and we know with certainty that our *tefillos* work, enabling our sins to be forgiven and drawing forth all salvations.**

"There is no *yichud* in the world of *Asiyah*", and this is because *Asiyah* is precisely where people question the power of their *tefillos*. But on the night of Pesach, we receive a new song, on the level of the "masculine" - in which every person can learn Torah or *daven*, without thinking if he's succeeding or not. Without a doubt, Hashem is being good to His creations at all times, and certainly to His firstborn child, *Klal Yisrael* - and therefore, their *tefillos* are certainly working.

¹⁴ This is the war that we need to fight on this world, so that we can repair all the parts of the "holy sparks" that are for each soul. Hashem has arranged that every person has certain needs, in his spiritual and physical areas, and these areas are the tools that bring the light of the Redemption. Every Jew has different holy "sparks" which he needs to repair, for the purpose of the Redemption. These holy "sparks" are the *tikkun* for the *Geulah*, according to one's personal soul root.

Thus we open wisdom for the child (who does not know how to ask), meaning that we teach him to “be an expert at *tefillah*”, to open up all the *yichudim* all the way until *Asiyah* - **to do *yichud* even in a place where he doesn’t see any results, to keep *davening* endlessly and never doubt his *tefillos*.** For we are not allowed to have any questions in the world of *Asiyah* [for *Asiyah* is the lowest realm and isn’t spiritually strong to withstand the danger of entering into these questions]. And this persistence is how we draw the complete *Geulah* closer.

The night of Pesach is entirely a “night that shines like the day”. It is not like the night. There are no darkness and doubts on this night. It is all the masculine. Thus **when the night of Pesach comes, we should not think about ourselves at all. We should not allow ourselves to become sad or melancholy and to wonder if we are succeeding or not.** In the world of *Asiyah*, we have no permission to make *yichudim* if we are amidst sadness, the “exile of Egypt”.

Rather, we must redeem our souls, and connect to the light of the Torah and to the holy names of Hashem - which are **the words of the *Hagaddah*, which contain an awesome light and attachment to G-dliness when we utter these holy words.** When our mind is focused on the *Hagaddah*’s words, we can sanctify even the dark world of *Asiyah*, and ask Hashem with our mouths about anything we want. Any *tefillos* which we are not allowed to *daven* on Yom Tov, we should *daven* mentally, all through using the holy stubbornness that we have.