

Wine and Emunah on Pesach: Renewing our Present Reality

Good Wine and Warm Bread

Wine plays an important role in the Pesach Seder. Rav Yitzchak Hutner zt"l – *Pachad Yitzchak* on Pesach, *Maimar* #58:

Shoftim 9:13 talks about the enjoyment of wine:

הַגָּפֶן הַחֲדָלְתִּי אֶת-תִּירוֹשֵׁי הַמְּשַׁמֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים וְאֲנָשִׁים

Should I leave my wine, which cheers G-d and man?

From this *passuk*, the Gemara Brachos 35a says we only say *shira* [in the Mikdash] on wine [libation on the *Mizbeach*]. What concept is the Gemara alluding to?

The *Lechem haPanim* had characteristic of always being warm; the bread retained its warmth from when they were made until the time they were removed from the *Shulchan*.

We learn that the source of the influence of goodness in the world is derived from the *Shulchan* and the sustained warmth of the *Lechem haPanim*. To be further developed...

Creation and Continuation (read: Renewal)

Tehillim 33:9: הוֹאֵה הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא-צְוָה וַיַּעֲמַד = He spoke and it was; He commanded and it stood fast.

The *passuk* teaches us that a big difference exists between what we observe (common understanding) vs. what's really going on in *פְּנִימִיּוֹת* (deep, penetrating thought).

It seems at first blush that the *passuk* is describing two separate moments - the time Hashem commands that something come into existence (אָמַר וַיְהִי), and then the continuation of the item in existence – maintaining what already exists (צְוָה וַיַּעֲמַד).

In fact, they are one in the same, says Rav Hutner. Externally, we see items/people as only a continuation from when first created; In reality, internally, Hashem is renewing existence every instant. וּבִטְוִיבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם תָּמִיד מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית

Moshe Rabbeinu: The Ageless Wonder

Shevach of Moshe that he never waned in his lifetime. Devarim 34:7:

וּמִשָּׁה בֶן-מֵאָה וָעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה בָּמָתוֹ לֹא-כִהְתָּה עֵינָיו וְלֹא-נָס לְחָה

Moshe was on such a high level that the *d'mus* of *chiddush* broke through the *d'mus* of *hemshech*; i.e. the inner character - 'renewal', broke through the outer character - 'continuation'.

If Moshe was just 'continuation', then we would have seen him get older and older, but the *פְּנִימִיּוֹת* of *chiddush* broke through to Moshe's externality, and he didn't appear to age.

We find this on smaller scale with *Talmidei Chachamim* (Gemara Shabbos 152b) – as the tzaddik gets older and continues to learn, he gets wiser. Typically, as time passes, things lose their splendor and shine. But the more time that passes for the wise student to learn, the more illuminated he becomes.

Regarding *Chachamim* we see this 'improvement' only in intellect / דעת. The *chiddush* of Moshe was that this refreshing also happened to his external body.

In a few places, the Maharal writes that all the *inyanim* of the Mikdash parallel the *פְּנִימִיּוֹת* of the natural world; i.e. what occurred in the Mikdash reflected what was really happening at the core of existence.

We see *PNIMIYUS* through the *Lechem HaPANIM*... *פְּנִימִיּוֹת מְלִשׁוֹן פְּנִים*

It appeared the bread remained warm because that's how it came out of the oven, but really the heat kept being renewed every second as its own, new creation.

כי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא-צְוָה וַיַּעֲמַד - *Amidah* is a *Va'yehi*; continuation is actually a renewal or re-creation.

Appreciating the Appreciation of Wine

Gemara Megilla 16b explains that when it says Yosef sent Yaakov מְטוּיב מִצְרִים (Breishis 45:23), it means he sent him aged wine. "Elders get pleasure from aged wine."

Wine has unique characteristic that it improves with age.

Older people have uniqueness of extra *ruchniyus*, so they have greater appreciation for aged wine.

Adage: "For an old simcha, you don't say *shira*." The soul only says *shira* in response to התחדשות.

In world of *gashmiyus*, the only thing that can capture the concept of improvement with time is wine.

Hopefully we can merit both parts of the *passuk*: The birth of new things (וַיְהִי), their continuity (וַיַּעֲמֵד), and the realization that the continuity is in fact constant re-birth (וַיְהִי), with opportunity for improvement.

Returning to the four cups of wine, the nature of the wine that is constantly renewing and improving, helps us appreciate the התחדשות of this time of year, of Yetzias Mitzrayim, and the edict on *Leil Seder*, בְּכֹל דּוֹר וָדוֹר חַיֵּיב אָדָם לְרִאוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּאִלוֹ הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם

Leil Seder is not just a commemoration of what happened thousands of years ago. True, we are a genealogical continuation of Yetzias Mitzrayim, but we are also a rebirth and renewal of that *Geulah*.

Finding our Source and Raising our Performance

Rav Avraham Zvi Kluger *shlit"a*, channeling the writings of the Kedushas Levi, writes that employing an *Ayin Tova* is looking at something beyond its encasement and seeing the source – the אֱלוּקוֹת that's in everything, sustaining and renewing.

Ayin Rah is looking at reality as independent and apart from Hashem, cut off from its life force.

Chametz is the belief that things have stature unto themselves, separated from אֱלוּקוֹת.

A misguided, unenlightened עבד only sees the surface and what's in front of him. An עבד ה', by contrast, recognizes that Hashem is running the world, and feels privileged to serve the King.

Oro Shel Mashiach, says Rav Kluger, is not just the light of what will be when Mashiach comes; it is also the lens we can look through right now to view ourselves and everything around us; seeing that everything in the world radiates Hashem.

The Apter Rov (Ohev Yisrael) on Parshas Noach, writes that אָמוּנָה is from the word אָמַן (found in Megillas Esther 2:7: וַיְהִי אִמָּן אֶת-הַדָּסָה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר): Drawing out (אָמַן) that which is hidden (אֶסְתֵּר). It is a language of presently raising up and nurturing. **Emunah is not just belief in something that will occur in the future. It is an ACTIVE FORCE that has the ability to change present reality.**

Time-Awareness and Ceaseless Wonders

Sfas Emes quotes the Zohar in Parshas Balak, and explains that the verse in Tehillim 136:4 – לְעִשָּׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת לְבָדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ – doesn't just mean that 'only Hashem performs massive miracles/wonders', but also that 'only Hashem knows the full reach and consequences of the wonders'.

Sfas Emes adds that even though Bnei Yisrael at the time of Yetzias Mitzrayim physically saw the miracles Hashem performed, they couldn't know, fully appreciate or conceive the far-reaching effects of the miracles.

Hashem's actions are כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ. Forever and boundless, constantly bearing fruits. We are living proof of Hashem's enduring kindness, and at the Seder we are particularly tapped into that concept, as we ponder our humble beginnings as slaves and the path Hashem lead and leads us upon toward true, meaningful freedom and redemption.

We are constantly studying, remembering, referencing Yetzias Mitzrayim because the *Geulah* of Mitzrayim is constantly renewing itself in the world and in us. Every mitzvah we perform is not just a continuation but a new form of *Geulah* and expression of our expanding love for Hashem.

We are not just a continuation of our past, but we also look to the present and future. We are moving toward something, not only an outgrowth of the past. Rav Soloveitchik zt"l writes about the three dimensions of "time-awareness" for a Jew:

1. **Retrospection:** re-experience the past
2. **Appreciation:** valuing the present; every moment is a chance for greatness.
3. **Anticipation:** aspire to something greater and the promises of the future; Mashiach

Rabbi Shmuel Goldin points out that the Seder incorporates all three in the structure of the Haggada, injecting us *with* and *into* our people's historical flow:

- 1a) Preliminary rituals: *Kadesh, Urchatz, Karpas Yachatz*
- 1b) **Past:** *Maggid* (Goals: Historical awareness, Historical personalization/participation, Historical Perpetuation)
- 2) **Present:** *Rachtza, Motzi Matza, Maror, Korech, Shulchan Oreich, Tzafun, Bareich*
- 3) **Future:** *Hallel, Nirtza*

[The following is my own, humble amalgamation and should be treated merely as a suggestion...]

We conclude the Seder with *Nirtzah*, and in that final summary we reference all three dimensions of time – **past**, **present** & **future** – with a stress on the future. Contained within this final paragraph are the concepts discussed above:

The order of the Pesach service is now complete, according to all its statutes.	חֶסֶל סְדוֹר פֶּסַח כְּהִלְכָתוֹ כָּכֹל מִשְׁפָּטוֹ וְחֻקָּתוֹ
Just as we merited to have a Seder in Mitzrayim, and just merited to complete one in our homes...	כְּאֲשֶׁר זָכִינוּ לְסֵדֵר אוֹתוֹ
We want to merit the full performance of an authentic Korban Pesach in the time of Mashiach, with the Beis HaMikdash.	כֵּן נִזְכָּה לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ
Hashem Who dwells on high is not confined to or defined by time – He is timeless. Hashem's actions are forever and boundless, the full extent and purpose of such actions are therefore incomprehensible to human understanding. כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ	זָךְ שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָה
Raise up now the congregation who cannot be measured.... Constantly renew us - הִתְחַדְּשׁוּת. Lift us up - אֲמוּנָה Help us realize the true source of everything that's in front of our eyes - אֱלוּקוֹת. Infuse our lives with appreciation for the small-scale redemptions that occur every day. Improve us like a fine wine. Our potential, as Hashem's representatives, is immeasurable. Empower us to realize how much we can accomplish with every second that You choose to give us life; כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיְהִי הוּא-צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֵד	קוֹמִים קְהֵל עַדַת מִי מְנָה
Speedily, lead the firm saplings You have planted, redeemed to Zion with joyous song. Bring the full and complete <i>Geulah</i> speedily in our days...	בְּקִרְוֹב נְהַל נְטַעֵי כִנָּה פְּדוּיִם לְצִיּוֹן בְּרִנָּה
לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם הַבְּנוּיָה	