

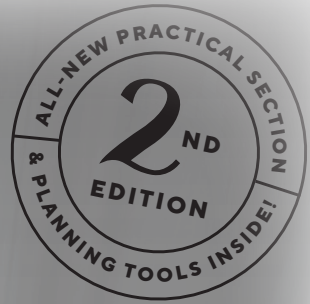


T H E H A G G A D A H

YOUR STORY. YOUR MISSION.

Your guide to drawing concrete growth from the Seder

R A B B I L E V I L E B O V I T S



T H E H A G G A D A H

YOUR STORY. YOUR MISSION.

Your guide to drawing concrete growth from the Seder

RABBI LEVI LEBOVITS

The Vaad Project



A Community Initiative of Yeshiva Toras Chaim, Denver

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Leadership & Learning – Our Legacy

Rabbi Yitzchok Wasserman
Rosh Yeshiva

Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan
Rosh Yeshiva

כ"ה אדר ב' תשפ"ב
March 28, 2022

We would like to commend Rabbi Lebovits on his major accomplishment. In this brief kuntres, he has created a practical approach to helping yidden across the spectrum absorb the deeper message of the Seder and translate it into concrete growth. Learning this sefer is certain to elevate one's Seder and one's general avodas Hashem.

יצחק וואסרמאן
יצחק וואסרמאן

ישראל מאיר קאגן
ישראל מאיר קאגן



בהנהלת הרב ראובן לויבסטר שליט"א

כ"ו אדר ב' תשפ"ב

March 29, 2022

There is nothing more central to the Jewish nation than Emuna. And the time we are building our Emuna is by sitting on the Seder-night and telling the story of the Hagadda. But the story has to be relevant to us.

My good friend HaRav Levi Lebowitz's י' has a special gift, to make things relevant to people of our generation. I am very impressed with his new publication, and everyone who wants to experience *כאילו הלא יצא ממצרים* will find in this book a way to do this.

With much appreciation for the his tribute to the *פרט' פרט'*

Reuven Leichter

WHAT'S YOUR SEDER TAKEAWAY?

Ahh. Another beautiful Seder.

Sparkling divrei Torah. Stirring singing. Delicious brisket. Family togetherness. Struggling to keep your eyes open as you mop up the late-night wine spills, you sigh in contentment. What a beautiful experience you just enjoyed!

A cousin stops you on the way into the kitchen, hands full of dirty glasses. "How'd you like the *vort* (Torah thought) I shared during the meal?" he asks. "The one about carrying the Seder into your life?"

"Beautiful, beautiful," you beam at him.

And then you stop, and furrow your brow.

You've heard many such divrei Torah. Insights about how much there is to gain from the Seder. About the power the Seder holds to impact your avodas Hashem. About the importance of growing from the Seder, using it to strengthen your connection to Hashem and commitment to Torah and mitzvos.

But *you've* never really left your Seder with that kind of concrete growth.

Your eyes follow your cousin as he disappears into the kitchen. *Carry the Seder into your life?* What does that mean?

How are you supposed to do it?

You shake your head. *Too tired to think about this now.* You try to get back to your previous train of thought – because your Seder really had been beautiful.

Yes, says a little inner voice you barely hear, *but... what did I really gain from it all? What am I coming away with?*

What if you had a concrete answer to share with that inner voice? What if you really knew how to extract the growth you're supposed to be gaining from the Seder?

What if your Seder wasn't just a nice, inspiring experience? What if it could change your life? Help you reach a completely new level in your avodas Hashem?

On the Seder night, our mitzvah is to retell the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim (the Exodus). And we do. We talk about Pharaoh and torture and Makkos and miracles.

But there's a deeper story the Haggadah is trying to tell us.

Yetzias Mitzrayim is not just the story of how our ancient forefathers gained freedom from Egypt. It's the story of the birth of the Jewish people as a nation. It tells us the purpose for our creation. It tells us about Hashem's plan for helping us achieve that purpose. And it gives us marching orders so we can actually go ahead and achieve it.

These marching orders apply to every single member of the Jewish people. Including you.

Yes. The story of Yetzias Mitzrayim is a story about you.

It tells you about the purpose of *your* creation.

It tells you about Hashem's plan to help *you* achieve that purpose, that mission.

And it gives you marching orders so you can go ahead and achieve it. Starting today.

The real story of Yetzias Mitzrayim hasn't ended yet. We're still living it. And we're meant to continue living it "kol yemei chayecha," every day of our lives. Living the story of Hashem's plan for us. Bringing our mission to completion.

Not sure what all this means? Don't worry. That's what the Haggadah is for – to tell you your story. To help you actively step into it, so you can really live it, move it forward.

This guidebook is here to help you through the process. Based on the teachings of Rav Reuven Leuchter shlita, these pages help you draw the messages you're meant to draw from each section of Maggid – and turn the inspiration into a concrete plan of action. So you can learn what you're here in this world to do. And actively start doing it.

Read this guidebook, and you won't just have an inspiring Seder. You'll come out with a clear path toward real, ongoing growth. You'll take your place as a hero in the ultimate story of life. The place Hashem has been waiting for you to fill for 3335 years.

Levi Lebovits

Adar 5783

הא לחמא עניא

This is the bread of affliction...

WHY MATZAH?

“Once upon a time...” That’s not how our Sages introduce our story – *your* story. Instead, they launch into a speech about Matzah. “This is the bread of affliction that our forefathers ate in Mitzrayim...”

Why kick off the night with matzah?

Because matzah is meant to wake us up about something. To help us put on the glasses we need to get the right message out of our Seder.

Matzah has a dual identity. At the beginning of the Seder, it’s “lachma anya,” the bread of poverty. The simple, tasteless fare baked by harried slaves who had no time or means to prepare anything else.

By the end of the story, it transforms. It’s the bread of freedom. The bread Hashem told the Jews to use when eating their Korban Pesach (Pesach offering). The bread that baked on the backs of ecstatic freedmen marching out of Egypt.

Same matzah. Nothing changed.

That's why it's the perfect vehicle to help us make a certain paradigm shift.

We're used to thanking Hashem for freeing us from Mitzrayim. We were in a terrible situation, and He swooped in and rescued us. We assume the parts of the Haggadah talking about the slavery are just there to help us appreciate Hashem's salvation.

Matzah's here to remind us: you're telling a different story.

You're telling the story of the creation of Hashem's chosen people. The story of His master plan to birth us, equip us with the tools to fulfill our purpose, and guide us throughout history until we finally achieve the goal He set for us.

Every detail of that story was part of His plan. Every detail served a positive purpose. Both the redemption *and the slavery* played an equally crucial role in developing Klal Yisrael. In furthering Hashem's plan for us.

And that wasn't just true then, in Egypt. Every event in our history, every happening in our lives – it's all matzah. It's all just another detail in Hashem's plan for us. Some parts are sweeter, some more bitter. But each one plays an integral role in our story. In helping us move forward and actualize our purpose.

Open your eyes, the matzah tells us. Pay attention to every detail you hear tonight. They're all important. They're all part of Hashem's plan to get the Jewish people where they needed to be – and to get *you* where *you* need to be.

כל דכפין ייתי ויכול

Whoever is hungry – let him come and eat!

NO MORE BARRIERS

"Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat..." A beautiful thought, definitely. But what does it have to do with our story? And why, of all festival nights, do we make this invitation at the Seder?

Yetzias Mitzrayim is about nationhood. About Klal Yisrael's creation. Klal Yisrael's purpose.

Before there was a Jewish people, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and Yaakov's sons did extraordinary things to sanctify Hashem's Name. But there's something about a united nation that allows it to accomplish more than any number of individuals. So there needed to be a complete Jewish People. Only as a nation, only as Klal Yisrael, could we truly fulfill the world's purpose.

During the year, we identify ourselves by lots of different markers. Where we're from. How educated we are. Our level of observance. Our politics. Our social rank. Our personal ideas about who we are and the types of people we associate with.

On the Seder night, these things fade into the background. It's time to identify ourselves first and foremost as part of Klal Yisrael.

Think of it like this: you've flown to Eretz Yisrael for a family wedding. You don't really speak Hebrew. Your cousins and their social circle, however, don't speak much English. So you find yourself feeling very lonely and bored at the wedding.

Suddenly, you hear someone say, "Is this seat taken?" Looking up, you see a fellow dressed totally differently than you, several years younger than you, and clearly culturally different.

But... he's speaking English!

So you invite him to sit next to you, and start schmoozing blissfully. By the end of the night, you're shaking hands warmly and wishing each other well like best friends before parting.

Ordinarily, the fact that you speak English takes up a pretty small part of your identity. But, lonely and confused as you're feeling at this wedding, this stranger's English-speaking abilities transcend all the differences between you. For this one evening, "English speaker" dominates your identity, making you feel united with this fellow speaker despite your disparities.

At the Seder, it's the same. For this one night, we're totally focused on being part of Klal Yisrael. The barriers that normally exist between us and so many other members of our

nation temporarily fade.

Suddenly, we're ready to welcome ANY needy Jew. Whether or not we understand their lifestyle, agree with their point of view, or mesh with their personality.

They're part of Klal Yisrael. At the Seder, that's all that matters.

השתא הכא

Now we are here...

WORKING TOWARD THE HAPPY ENDING

A prayer for the final redemption seems a little off-topic. Why did our Sages include it here?

Because the story of the Exodus isn't just the story of our escape from Egypt.

It's the story of how our nation took on our special mission of bringing Hashem's presence into the world.

That story isn't over yet. We're still working, every day, to reveal more of Hashem's presence in His world. To bring the day when the entire world finally accepts Hashem's kingship.

That's our ultimate happy ending.

We're on this mission to establish Hashem's sovereignty. And though we're accomplishing tremendously, the world we live in has its restrictions.

For our mission to truly reach completion, we need Moshiach to come and bring us to Eretz Yisrael. Only then, only there, can Klal Yisrael declare true victory.

So on this night, when we're recommitting to our mission, we pray: please Hashem, help us make it to the end. Help us really bring success to Your mission.

Next year in Eretz Yisrael!

מה נשתנה

Why is this night different?

THE MA NISHTANA MINDSET: OUR KEY TO SEDER TRANSFORMATION

You might have asked yourself this question a few times already: if the Seder is really supposed to strengthen our avodas Hashem and help us live our lives with a new sense of purpose... how come we feel like that's never happened before?

To a large extent, the answer has to do with our attitude.

We might love the Seder. We might look forward to it with tremendous excitement. But we also probably approach it with a bit of a "been there, done that" feeling.

After all, we've gone through it tens of times. We feel like we have a pretty good picture of what it has to tell us. So we listen to the words with half an ear, focusing instead on the cute things our kids are saying or the tangential divrei Torah our guests bring up.

That's not how Chazal wanted us to approach the Seder.

They knew about the deeply relevant message the Seder contains. They wanted us to discover that message and mine it for all the inspiration we can.

So they focused the Seder on questions. They filled the night with questionable practices, and even gave us a starter set of questions to ask – the Ma Nishtana.

Questions show that we're personally interested. That we feel like something is relevant enough for us to explore.

We're used to thinking of Yetzias Mitzrayim as a story that happened to others. Our Sages want us to realize that it's actually *our* story as well. A story that, when we tell it, we can draw the strength we need to play our own roles well going forward.

That's why Chazal told us to ask questions: "Get into an exploration mindset. Be interested. Be curious. Be present. Be involved. Don't just read the Haggadah as a script. See it as the script Hashem handed *you* so you could fulfill your life's mission – every day."

When it's *our* life's script, we'll find plenty of questions to ask. *Wait, what does this mean for me? What am I supposed to be taking from that? What should I do with this new knowledge?*

That's what we call the Ma Nishtana Mindset. It's a mindset of involvement. Of taking things personally. Of seeing the Seder as your story, and genuinely trying to understand it so you can live a better story going forward.

עבדים היינו

We were slaves...

WE WERE THE SLAVES!

When saying "Avadim Hayinu," here's what we're not saying: A long long time ago, our ancestors were slaves, but because we're descended from them, we're going to take poetic license and use pronouns like "we."

Nope. We – you, me – really were threatened with Pharaoh's slavery. As part of the Jewish nation, we – you, me – needed Hashem's salvation just as much as the enslaved Jews did back then.

Why?

Because Pharaoh wasn't just interested in exploiting the Israelites crowding up his land. Oh, no, he was far too invested for that to have been his only agenda.

So what was his real target? The whole concept of a "Jewish people." Why? Because we were a major threat to his worldview, his dreams, his life-philosophy.

Pharaoh wanted to keep the world centered around mankind – around *their* wants, *their* plans, and *their* glory. As the Jewish people, our job is to serve as the world's reminder that life is about Hashem. That we're all here for a higher purpose. That living just for one's self is empty and wrong.

Pharaoh wanted to rid his world of this frustrating reminder. So he enslaved us. He tried to break our spirits, to uproot our identity until we were just another low, self-centered nation.

His plans didn't just endanger our forefathers. They threatened us as well. Pharaoh was fighting against the concept of Klal Yisrael. As part of that entity, we too were in danger of being enslaved. Subjugated to his worldview. Stripped of who we really are.

ואילו לא הוציא הקדוש ברוך הוא
את אבותינו ממצרים...

Had Hashem not taken our forefathers out of Egypt...

NO MISSION, NO HISTORY

"If Hashem hadn't taken us out of Mitzrayim, we would still be trapped there today."

Many people struggle with this statement. Why? Because it's a historical impossibility. Ancient Egypt doesn't exist anymore.

Ah. But who says we have the right definition of "history?"

Most of us view history as something that just... happens. It's a natural process driven forward by people and their actions.

Emunah tells us something else. Hashem is the one controlling the flow of history and moving it forward.

And there's only one reason He keeps history moving at all – to fulfill the purpose He created His world for.

Who are Hashem's on-the-ground agents achieving this

purpose? Us. The Jewish people. Now, here's the thing: if Hashem hadn't taken us out of Egypt – i.e. formed us into "The Jewish people" – there would be no nation on earth capable of fulfilling His mission for the world.

So He wouldn't have had any reason to move history forward. Nothing would have changed. History would have stagnated. 3335 years later, the same line of Pharaohs would be sitting in the same palaces of Egypt, ruling over the same hapless nation of slaves – us!

We aren't just a remarkable little nation that miraculously survived throughout history.

History happened – and keeps happening – only and entirely so we can fulfill our mission in this world.

Those events in the news – war, international health crises, world leaders shaking fists at each other, wild inflation, threats of this and that – they're all happening for *you*. They're supporting events in your story. So you can get up and move that story forward. So you can fulfill the mission at the heart of your story.

ואפילו כלנו חכמים... מעשה ברבי אליעזר

***Even if we were all men of wisdom...
It happened that Rabi Eliezer...***

WHEN IT'S YOUR STORY...

We end Avadim Hayinu like this: even if we were all wise men, elderly, filled with understanding and knowledge of Torah – even if we knew our history inside out – we'd still be commanded to retell the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

And then, in the next paragraph, we see this statement come to life. The Haggadah gives us a peek at the Seder of Rabi Eliezer, Rabi Yehoshua, Rabi Elazar ben Azaryah, Rabi Akiva, and Rabi Tarfon.

These five rabbis were some of the greatest “wise men” in our nation’s history. They understood the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim better than most anyone else. And yet they got so absorbed in their storytelling that they totally lost track of time.

Why?

Because when it’s *your* story, you get absorbed.

They understood that Yetzias Mitzrayim was their story. The story of the purpose behind their existence. A story that hadn’t ended, but was still developing. A story in which they wanted to play their parts successfully.

The story of Hashem’s involvement in their lives. The story of the mission He had entrusted to them since the days of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

They felt its relevance. They knew they belonged in it. They recognized their responsibility to carry it forward.

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה

Rabi Elazar ben Azarya said...

YETZIAS MITZRAYIM: OUR COMPASS FOR LIFE

People often find this section confusing. Sure, it mentions Yetzias Mitzrayim, but it isn’t a commentary on the story. It’s actually a halachic discussion about a mitzvah totally separate from the Seder – the mitzvah to remember Yetzias Mitzrayim every day of our lives.

Why does this section belong here?

Because it helps us realize how central Yetzias Mitzrayim is to our lives. It reminds us that we’re supposed to be living the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim – the story of our mission to bring Hashem’s presence into the world – every single day.

This awareness needs to guide “all the days” of our lives. The ‘days’ themselves, when things are good, when we can sense Hashem’s goodness – and the ‘nights,’ when His kindness is hidden.

And we need to let this awareness direct our every action, every reaction, every decision – even once Moshiach comes.

We need to live as “Yetzias Mitzrayim Jews.” Jews who center their lives around their mission.

That’s the goal of the Seder. Tonight, we experience the story in-depth. We then carry that experience with us throughout the year, letting its message guide us every day.

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא

Blessed is the Omnipresent; blessed is He...

THE CLIMAX OF THE STORY

We’re in the middle of telling the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim, right? So why are we suddenly bursting into song about how grateful we are that Hashem gave us the Torah?

Rashi, Shemos 3:11-12: Hashem tells Moshe to go to Egypt and redeem the Jewish people.

Moshe responds with a question: why? Klal Yisrael had fallen so low. How did they merit redemption?

Hashem’s answer: Klal Yisrael is destined to receive the Torah on Har Sinai.

Why did Hashem create us, the Jewish people? Why did Hashem birth us as a nation through Yetzias Mitzrayim? So we could fulfill creation’s purpose – revealing Hashem’s presence in this world.

That’s our mission. That’s why we’re here. Klal Yisrael. Me. You. To take this earthly world and make it G-dly.

How do we do that?

We don't need to guess, or make things up. After freeing us from Egypt, Hashem gave us the Torah. Now, we have complete clarity on the extent of our mission: to keep the Torah. To reveal Hashem's glory in this world by filling it with Torah, with mitzvos.

Torah and mitzvos are the means by which we express Hashem's kavod in the world. When we do mitzvos, we fulfill Hashem's will. We acknowledge His kingship. We reveal His glory. We increase His presence in the world.

And each mitzvah speaks to a different aspect of Hashem's glory. When we keep Shabbos, we testify to the fact that Hashem created and runs the world. When we pray, we "reinforce" His place as the sole Provider of our needs. When we treat our spouses kindly and respectfully, we literally bring more Shechina (Divine presence) into our home.

Our mission is about dedicating ourselves to the Torah. That's how we live our story to completion. Our collective story as Klal Yisrael, and the individual stories of each of our lives that contribute to Klal Yisrael's story.

Without the Torah, we'd be nowhere. How can we not be grateful?

כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה

Corresponding to four sons does the Torah speak...

A PERSONAL TORAH

"Little old me" syndrome. Does that sound familiar?

Reading about our nation's mission, you might just be thinking, "Klal Yisrael is a big nation. There are plenty of tzaddikim, scholars and heroes who can do a great job fulfilling this mission. Chazal don't really expect it of me. Who am I, anyway?"

That's where the Arba Banim come in.

With this section, our Sages are telling us – The Jewish peo-

ple's mission isn't just for the tzaddikim. Every one of us has a unique slice of the greater mission, our own way to bring Hashem's glory to the world.

And just like Hashem charges each of us with a unique mission, He also fits us with unique challenges, obstacles to success in our missions.

When we give over the message of the Exodus to our children, we need to keep this in mind. We need to speak to each child differently, telling them what they specifically need to hear to rise above their challenges and succeed in their mission.

That's what the Haggadah accomplishes through the Arba Banim. It reaches out to four very different types of Jews, teaching each how to combat their unique challenge so they can draw full inspiration from the Seder.

THE WISE SON: FROM HEAD TO HEART

The wise son is someone who's enthusiastic about learning, about knowing, about getting things right. He wants to perfect his knowledge of every last mitzvah and halacha.

So we teach him all the laws of Pesach. But in doing so, we make sure to emphasize one specific halacha: don't eat anything after the Korban Pesach (the Pesach offering). Let the taste of Yetzias Mitzrayim linger in your mouth.

Yes, Wise Son. It's critical to focus on the technical details. It's important to make sure you're always gaining new knowledge.

But don't let your Judaism stay intellectual. Don't lose the forest for the trees.

Make sure that you're letting in the ta'am, the taste, of the Seder as well. That you're leaving room for its message to touch you and change you.

When you learn to do that, you'll be able to approach your mission with genuine devotion.

WHAT MAKES THE WICKED SON WICKED?

It's not the cigarette. It's not the spiked hair or the slingshot.

If we ignore the illustrations and just read the Haggadah's words, the rasha's problem becomes clear. "L'fi shehotzi es atzmo min haklal" – he's separated himself from the rest of the Jewish community.

This rasha might keep halacha impeccably. He might be extremely learned. So what's his problem? He's not living for a greater mission. He feels like he can go it alone, do his own thing. He's focused only on *his* life, on *his* needs. Klal Yisrael just isn't important to him.

Sorry, rasha. Without Klal Yisrael, you wouldn't be here. As part of the Jewish people, you were created to live for a greater purpose. Living for yourself – even if you do all the right things – means you're missing the point of life.

That's your job at the Seder – to mentally become a part of Klal Yisrael. To start living for Klal Yisrael's mission.

SIMPLE SON, SIMPLE GROWTH

The simple son isn't such an intellectual heavyweight. He's not cut out for all these deep concepts. But that doesn't mean his mission is any less crucial in Hashem's eyes.

He just needs to learn that simplicity doesn't have to handicap him. A simple message – that Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim with a strong hand so we could become His nation of earthly ambassadors – can be internalized deeply.

So deeply, that it can permeate a person's life and inform all his choices.

Simple as he might be, the tam can learn to live for Hashem's mission too.

WHY THE FOURTH SON COULDN'T ASK

Why isn't this son asking anything? Because he's tuned out. He isn't interested in the Seder. He's a practical sort of guy – focused on the present and future.

He doesn't see why this history lesson is relevant to him.

So what's our task here? To show him why it's relevant!

To help him understand that we're only referencing the past

so we can live a better present. That we're not just sitting around commemorating some old story. We're arming ourselves with the tools to take our own places in that story.

See, Fourth Son? Hashem didn't just free our people so we could live the easy life. He redeemed us "ba'avur zeh" – so we could fulfill our mission. So we could accept His Torah and start bringing His presence into this world.

You didn't have anything to ask, Fourth Son, didn't find the Seder relevant, because you didn't know about your mission. Now, you know. And you're ready to start incorporating it into your life.

מתחלה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו

Originally our ancestors were idol worshippers...

MIRACLE CHILD

Now that we've gotten clear on our mission, it's time to get deeper into the story.

We follow the Haggadah back, back, back to the beginning of our nation's history – the time of our forefather Avraham.

"In the beginning..." Hashem creates an incredible world. Fills it with physical expressions of His glory. With kedusha. With opportunities to draw close to Him.

It isn't long, however, before things veer totally off course. Kedusha evaporates. The people forget about Hashem. Everyone turns their backs on Him and starts worshiping idols – lowly, earthly sources of instant gratification.

Hashem wants to steer His world back on track. So He starts with one man – Avraham Avinu.

Avraham begins life as an idol worshiper like all the rest. Only when Hashem inspires him does he start searching for a Creator. That seed of inspiration, planted by Hashem, eventually develops into Avraham's complete devotion.

As time passes, Hashem develops Avraham's family into a nation with the power to fulfill the purpose of the world.

Well, that isn't quite it. More accurately, Hashem launches a supernatural process that brings Avraham's family into existence. Avraham and his wife Sarah physically can't have children. But Hashem grants them a miracle child – Yitzchak. Yitzchak and his wife are also physically infertile. But Hashem grants them their own miracle children.

Yaakov has children through miracles as well. Then, after his descendants settle in Egypt, miracles propel their explosive growth.

Why did it all have to be through miracles? Why couldn't Avraham and his descendants have children like everyone else?

Because their children were special. Their children were destined to become the holy nation that brought – and continues to bring – Hashem's presence into this world. If we'd developed naturally from Adam's descendants, we wouldn't be able to do that. We would have the same problem as all the other nations of the world.

These people come from earth – which ties them down to their earthly temptations. That's why they all center their lives on physicality, on serving their lower selves. They don't have what it takes to transcend, to live for Hashem.

Hashem knew that a nation who could do that – who could fulfill the world's elevated purpose – needed to come from above. We needed to be born out of miracles.

We're all miracle children. You – me – none of us have a natural right to exist. Hashem Himself willed each of us into being.

Why? For one purpose. So we could fulfill His mission.

Living for Hashem's mission isn't extra credit. It's the only reason He allows us to exist.

ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל... והיא שעמדה לאבותינו ולנו

Blessed is He Who keeps His promise to Yisrael; blessed is He!... It is this that has stood by our forefathers and us...

HASHEM'S EVERLASTING PROMISE

In many Haggadahs, a fearsome band of Pharaohs, Caesars, crusaders, Inquistors, Cossacks, Nazis, and Arafat-doppel-gangers decorate the "V'hi She'amda" page.

Why? Why have so many of history's leaders been obsessed with destroying us?

Because they're all earth-centered people. They live for this world. Their goal? To squeeze every last drop of gratification out of their physicality.

Which means that we Jews are an exasperating thorn in their side.

We're all about living for Hashem. We're the conscience, the voice of morality, that gets in the way of their desires.

Hitler y"sh said it himself: "Conscience is a Jewish invention." That's why he and countless other "Pharaohs" have done their best to wipe us out.

But they've never succeeded.

Right at the beginning, Hashem made a promise to us. That there would always be a Jewish people. That He'd keep us alive for eternity. And by keeping that promise throughout history, He's shown us how committed He is to protecting our nation.

Why? Because He's chosen us to fulfill His mission. To be that voice of kedusha and G-dliness in His world.

צא ולמד

Go and learn...

STORYTIME!

Once upon a time, when the Bais Hamikdash stood, Israel's farmers used to journey from all across the land to donate bikkurim, the first fruits of their harvests, to the Holy Temple.

Part of the donation ceremony included a short thank-you prayer. This prayer contained four pesukim (verses) describing the Exodus.

The first one speaks about going down to Mitzrayim, and growing into a nation. The second details the cruelty the Egyptians treated us with. The third talks about how Hashem heard our cries for salvation. The fourth describes that salvation.

Why did Hashem decide to feature Yetzias Mitzrayim in this thank-you prayer for a successful harvest?

To remind the farmers that everything they had – their farm in Eretz Yisrael, their plentiful crop, their prosperity, their freedom – was only because of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Only because of the mission they were part of. Only to enable them to fulfill their mission.

When our Sages composed the Haggadah, they took these four pesukim, added some commentary, and made this our core script for retelling the Seder story.

Why? Because they wanted us to approach the story with the same attitude as the bikkurim farmers. As *our* story. The reason we're here. The reason we have all that we do.

They wanted us to think: we're here today because Hashem charged us with a mission to bring His presence into the world. On the Seder night, telling the story of how it all began helps us reorient ourselves so we can keep living this story, living our mission, every day.

אַרְמִי אוֹבֵד אָבִי

An Aramean attempted to destroy my father...

CONCEPTION OF A NATION

“Mitchila ovdei avodah zarah” told us Chapter 1 of our story. Now we begin Chapter 2.

In this chapter, Lavan tried to uproot the Jewish nation by destroying Yaakov Avinu. Miraculously, Yaakov escaped – and descended to Mitzrayim.

That’s when we really began to become a nation.

Egypt was like a “womb.” It was perfectly conditioned to develop us into a people worthy of serving Hashem.

Like a baby during pregnancy, we multiplied exponentially. Trapped though we were within a strange “motherland,” we managed to hold onto our distinct identity. We kept our own names. Our own language. Our own mode of dress.

We became a nation apart – a nation who would one day rise above all others.

בְּדָמִיךָ חַיִּי

Through your blood shall you live!

CLOTHED WITH MITZVOS

After 210 years, we’d developed into something beautiful. We’d managed to resist the challenge of Egyptian suppression and held strong to distinctness. We were ready to leave Mitzrayim and claim our special identity.

There was only one problem – we didn’t look the part yet.

We were “naked” of mitzvos.

Clothing identifies a person. A white coat signals a doctor.

A uniform signals a soldier. When they're not wearing their special clothes, we have no external way of telling who they are.

As the Avos's children, we'd preserved their heritage – their mission of revealing Hashem's glory in the world – inside. But we hadn't yet actualized it externally.

For that, we needed mitzvos.

Enter two special mitzvos Hashem gave us to fulfill right away – milah (circumcision) and Korban Pesach.

Why these two? Why were they the ones chosen to help us actualize our identity?

Because as Jews, our identity *is* our mission. We don't live for ourselves. We live for something greater – Hashem's glory.

And these two mitzvos gave us concrete opportunities to show total selfless dedication to Hashem.

Through bris milah, we removed a part of our own bodies for Hashem. And when we brought the Korban Pesach, we literally put our lives on the line for Him.

The Egyptians looked at sheep as "gods." Hashem instructed us to capture these "gods," keep them tied to our beds for four days, slaughter them, and paint their blood on our doorposts – all in full view of the Egyptians, who would very likely have killed us for our "crimes."

We shed our own blood through bris milah. We risked our lives for the blood of the Korban Pesach. And Hashem declared, "By your blood you shall live!" Through those acts, we clinched Hashem's desire to grant us the eternal life that comes with adopting His mission and following His Torah.

וירעו אותנו המצרים

And the Egyptians did evil to us...

A CALCULATED PLAN

Now, we get into the painful details of our slavery.

Why did the Egyptians want to enslave us? From what we see in the Haggadah, they weren't all that interested in free labor. In fact, the work they made us do was totally unproductive.

They didn't actually care about what we could do for them. They just wanted to destroy our nation's identity. To wage a psychological war against our Jewishness.

Why?

Because of our mission.

Because we exist to bring awareness of Hashem's authority to the world.

Pharaoh wasn't interested in that awareness. He wanted to "free" himself of Hashem's kingship so he could follow his own depraved agenda in peace.

When he first started plotting against the Jews, he used the words, "Let's scheme against *Him*" (Shemos 1:10).

This wasn't just about subduing a group of people. Pharaoh was declaring war on *Hashem*.

How? By destroying our sense of self as a nation.

Without awareness of who we are, we wouldn't be able to bother him about Hashem's sovereignty.

That's why Pharaoh worked so hard to break our spirit. That's why the "taskmasters" he appointed over us weren't actual taskmasters – they were just there "I'ma'an anoso," to torture us. And that's why, according to our Sages, we were forced to perform a special type of "backbreaking labor," with men doing women's work and women doing men's.

Pharaoh engineered all this for one reason – to erase our proud identity as Jews. To throw us off course, make us forget our mission. To erode our sense of self until we became just another earthbound, nothing-special nation.

ונצעק אל ה' אלקי אבותינו

And we cried out to Hashem, the G-d of our forefathers...

SPARKING THE GE'ULAH

“And we cried out to Hashem... and Hashem heard our voice...” It wasn’t like Hashem hadn’t been paying attention until we cried out to Him. As much as we yearned to be freed, He yearned to redeem us.

But we had to be the ones to start the process. We needed to reach out to Him through tefillah.

Why?

Because His goal in redeeming us was to make us His special people. To entrust His mission to us. That’s what He had promised the Avos, who had taken that mission on for themselves.

But were we, their descendants, still on board with the mission?

Hashem wanted to determine that with complete clarity. So He plunged us into the agony of Egypt. He squeezed, squeezed, squeezed until the pain was unbearable.

Our response? Davening to Him.

If at our core we didn’t completely identify with our forefathers’ mission, and live with emunah in Hashem’s plan to help us fulfill it, the slavery and torture would have broken us. We would have given up, cursed Hashem, lost all belief in our special identity.

But we didn’t. Deep, deep inside, we were still His children. Still connected to Him. Still fully confident in the fact that

Hashem *would* rescue us from Egypt, so we could fulfill our mission.

It wasn't that Hashem heard us crying, and rescued us out of pity.

He heard our emunah. He heard that our Avos's heritage was still alive within us. And He knew that by redeeming us, He really could fulfill His promise to them. We were truly fit to become the Am Hashem, His eternal torchbearers.

יוצאנו ה' ממצרים

And Hashem took us out of Egypt...

THE REAL EXODUS

The title of this section promises to describe the Exodus – but the content underneath is all about the Makkos! The Haggadah barely says a word about when we actually left Egypt.

Why?

We're used to thinking of the Exodus as physical freedom. We were enslaved in Mitzrayim. When Hashem took us out, we became free men.

Really, though, Yetzias Mitzrayim was about spiritual freedom. About liberating us from the earthly nations' lowly, gratification-centered mindset and helping us transform into the purveyors of holiness to this world.

The real exodus happened when we made that switch. When we took on our mission and became Hashem's elevated nation.

How did Hashem make that happen? Through the Makkos.

During the Makkos, Hashem totally uprooted nature, turned the world upside down, and did it all Himself ("I and not an angel"). Why did He go to such unusual lengths? To show us just how important our nation – our mission – is to Him. So important, that He was willing to turn over the world so we

could fulfill that mission.

By showing us just who we are to Hashem, the Makkos gave us our identity as Hashem's Chosen People. They freed us from the darkness of the Egyptians' earth-centered world-view and awakened us to Hashem's sovereignty – and our role in bringing it to the world.

The Makkos freed us to become the Jewish people.

רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר...

Rabi Yosi Haglili Says...

A NEW MODE OF EXISTENCE

People react to this section two different ways.

If they have a strong background in Gemara, they fix their attention on the Tannaic arguments and plunge into complex Talmudic discussions about how to understand this opinion versus that opinion versus yet another one.

Everyone else just zooms through the section, brain slightly turned off until they hit the welcome familiarity of "Day-day-yeinu, Day-day-yeinu..."

But there's a message to be gained from here, just like the simpler sections.

How can we draw it out without getting bogged down by the details?

First, we should remind ourselves – yet again – that Yetzias Mitzrayim wasn't just about leaving Egypt. It was about breaking free of the Egyptian influence that keeps us from fulfilling the mission Hashem created us for.

These Tannaim understood this. And they all agreed that while the messages behind the Makkos in Egypt impacted us and "liberated" us spiritually, they were only as powerful as a finger compared to the "hand's-worth" of power behind the messages at the Sea.

In this section, each Tanna is simply presenting a different way of breaking down the details. They're all backing the same core message – that while the process of breaking free from Mitzrayim began during the Makkos, it culminated even more powerfully at the Yam Suf.

Makkas Bichoros, the climax of the Makkos, showed us Hashem's personal investment in us as His nation. It gave us our identity as the Am Hashem, bearers of Hashem's mission. It taught us that we don't belong among the rank and file of earthly nations – that our place is with Him.

Which could have left us thinking we were destined to live totally removed from this world. But we aren't. We're meant to engage with the world and fill it with Hashem's presence and glory.

In countless Haggados, illustrations show the Red Sea piling up on two sides of a dry ocean-bed. But the reality at the Yam Suf wasn't so simple.

The Torah says we crossed the Yam Suf "b'soch hayam, bay-abasha" – on dry land, *within the sea*.

At Kriyas Yam Suf, Hashem introduced us to a new level of existence – living in the natural world, but on a miraculous plane, benefiting from Hashem's direct involvement. This type of existence enables us to bridge the spiritual and physical worlds. To introduce the physical world to Hashem's glory and holiness.

Throughout history, we've seen this play out time and again. Simply surviving as a people until now proves that we live a miraculous existence. And Hashem grants us this existence for one reason – to help us fulfill His mission for this world.

דיינו

It would have been enough for us!

EACH GIFT STANDS ALONE

Dayeinu – what a beautiful song. So much gratitude! So much enthusiasm!

But ... does it make sense? How can we say that each of these gifts would have been “enough” without the others? What would it have helped us if Hashem had brought us out of Egypt, but hadn’t taken care of us in the Desert?

It’s a famous question. There are many beautiful answers. Here’s the one that fits our approach best.

Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim so we could fulfill our purpose – establishing His authority and revealing His presence in the world.

According to Rav Yerucham Levovitz, every single one of the gifts listed in Dayeinu gave us enough spiritual power on its own to complete that mission.

An example: “Hotzianu miMitzrayim,” taking us out of Egypt.

While in Mitzrayim, we weren’t yet a formal nation. We were a massive family with mere echoes of an identity. By rescuing us from Egypt, Hashem solidified us as the nation “Klal Yisrael.” He cemented our identity as His servants, His ambassadors. Through Yetzias Mitzrayim, we officially became His. Officially took on responsibility for our mission.

Next example: “Harag es bechoreihem,” killing the Egyptian firstborns.

For this Makkah, Hashem didn’t rely on angels or proxies. He personally came down and destroyed the Egyptian firstborns. That showed us just how important we are to Him – “B’ni bechori Yisrael,” “My firstborn child, Yisrael.” We aren’t regular humans, taken care of by Divine messengers. We’re Hashem’s children.

He cares for us personally. He Himself does whatever it takes to sustain us. He upholds our mission no matter what. That gives us the confidence to push forward, even when the going gets rough.

Yet another example: “Karah lanu es hayam,” splitting the sea for us.

When Hashem split the Yam Suf, He demonstrated that when we serve Him, natural limitations won’t hold us back. Hashem granted us, His ambassadors, a supernatural existence within the natural world. We’re more powerful than the bounds of nature. And we need to use that power to serve Hashem, to further our mission.

Example four: “Sipeik tzarcheinu bamidbar arabaim shana,” filling our needs in the Desert for forty years.

Those years in the Desert, when Hashem sustained us totally on miracles, showed us that even when the world abandons us, He takes care of our every need – “We eat from His lofty table.” This brings home just how much He loves and cares for us. It strengthens our relationship with Him. Makes fulfilling His mission more of a personal desire of ours. And empowers us to focus on our work, because we know He’s taking care of us.

And one more example: “Banah lanu es Beis Habechirah,” building for us the Holy Temple, so we could atone for our sins.

When people in a relationship betray each other, they often damage their relationship beyond repair. With Hashem, however, there’s no such thing as “beyond repair.” By giving us the Beis Hamikdash, Hashem built into our relationship a way to restore it when we damage it.

Look how much Hashem wants us! He knows our relationship won’t be perfect, but He’s so committed to making it work, to making it as free and pure as possible, that He gives us a guaranteed way back to Him. Again, an idea that strengthens our relationship, and makes us want Him as well.

Like the gifts of a groom to his bride, each gift of Dayeinu

shows us in its own way how deeply invested Hashem is in our relationship. Therefore, each one sparks our desire to reciprocate, to invest in our side of the relationship – avodah. Kiddush Hashem. Mission.

רבן גמליאל היה אומר

Rabban Gamliel used to say...

THE SEDER TAKEAWAY

If you read only one section in this guidebook, let it be this one. In a nutshell, it's the point of the Seder (and your life).

As you might have known, the Haggadah says the same thing about this section: even if you can't go through the full Seder, you **MUST** do at least one thing – recite Rabban Gamliel's explanations of the Seder's three mitzvos (Korban Pesach, matzah, and maror).

You might be confused. *I thought our job at the Seder is to tell the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim. How can some sentences about the night's mitzvos be the most important part of the Haggadah?*

Excellent question.

Let's take a look at the posuk that obligates us in retelling the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

Here's what we'd expect it to say: "And you shall tell your son on that day saying: zeh asah Hashem li – this is what Hashem did for me – betzeisi miMitzrayim – when I left Egypt."

But that's not what it says.

Here's the complete version:

"And you shall tell your son on that day saying: **ba'avur zeh** asah Hashem li – **because of this** Hashem did for me when I left Egypt."

Because of *what*?

What are we really supposed to be telling our children to-night?

There's the "what" of Yetzias Mitzrayim, and then there's the "why." The story itself, and the message we're supposed to be taking from it.

We're used to thinking that our mitzvah is to tell the "what." But that's not enough.

The Torah actually commands us to tell the "why." The "what" is just the medium for the message. Because when we understand Hashem's "why" behind the Exodus, we can adopt His "why" as our "why" – and live by it.

So – what's the "why?"

Back to our posuk: All the miracles of Yetzias Mitzrayim happened "ba'avur zeh" – so we Jews could serve Hashem with His mitzvos, filling the world with His presence.

So that in 2022, you and I could sit at our Seder table and fulfill these three mitzvos – Korban Pesach, matzah and maror.

So that we could use the lessons of those three mitzvos to shape the way we live as Jews.

What are those lessons?

Pesach: The Korban Pesach represents our mission like no other mitzvah.

Why?

Think about that first Seder night. It was the night of Makkas Bichoros (Plague of the Firstborns). On that night, something awesome occurred.

Previously, Hashem had sent angels to perform the makkos. On this night, however, He Himself came down to destroy the Egyptian firstborns.

Generally, humanity doesn't do well when Hashem makes a full personal appearance in this world. In the times of the Beis Hamikdash, Hashem's presence rested in Kodesh HaKodashim, the Holy of Holies. Unless it was the Kohen Gadol, coming in on Yom Kippur to perform the Yom Kippur service, anyone who entered the Kodesh HaKodashim met

instant death.

What was different about the night of Makkas Bichoros? Why didn't His presence take our lives then too?

Because of the special pact sealed then.

On that night, when we brought the Korban Pesach, we officially accepted our eternal mission – bringing Hashem's presence into the world.

On that night, we weren't just witnessing Hashem's revelation. We were partners in it. We were part of its cause.

That's what protected us.

We call this holiday Pesach because Hashem "passed over" the Jewish homes when killing the Egyptian firstborns. But He wasn't just skipping over our houses to avoid harming us. He was jumping to make space for us. To "carve out a place" for the new partners in His revelation.

That's what we're really celebrating on the Seder night. This partnership.

At the Seder, we're marking the moment when we launched our mission. When we solidified our special relationship with Hashem, and finally became His nation.

Matzah: Matzah reminds us that this special mission takes serious work to maintain. That living for our mission means being willing to push ourselves beyond our comfort zone. That if we really want to grow, we often need to "take the plunge" even when we don't feel quite ready.

Before leaving Egypt, we started preparing bread to take on our journey. Suddenly, though, Hashem sent the message that we needed to leave *now*.

So we threw our plans to the winds, packed up our unrisen dough, and hurried after His call.

Hashem sends each of us that sort of summons. Forget your plans. Drop your comfortable routines. Follow Me.

If we want to live as "Yetzias Mitzrayim Jews" – if we want to live for our mission – we need to train ourselves to answer

that call. To turn away from convenience, and follow Hashem.

Maror: Maror – the symbol of suffering. On the Seder night, it helps us build the right perspective about life’s challenges – that every bit of pain has a purpose.

We’ve heard this before. Hashem gives us challenges to help us grow.

But let’s take a moment to think about what it really means.

Without struggles, our lives would be meaningless. We would never get anywhere, achieve anything.

Accomplishments don’t generally happen in our comfort zones. Challenges and pain are the opportunities Hashem gives us to build something of ourselves. To grow beyond our small, ordinary selves and reach greatness. To accomplish our mission in this world.

In the times of Yetzias Mitzrayim, the maror of slavery enabled our ancestors to rise above the small, ordinary citizens of the world and become the Chosen Nation of Hashem.

In our own stories, the struggles we face have been tailor-made to help us achieve greatness in our individual chelek (portion) of our nation’s mission.

Chronologically, the “maror” of slavery appeared in our nation’s story before “Pesach” and “matzah.” Why, then, did Chazal reverse the order here?

Because they wanted us to understand that maror isn’t something to mourn or wish away. It isn’t something to put behind us.

It’s something to take advantage of.

When pain enters our lives, we’re meant to respond actively. To embrace it. To engage with it. To examine it and think about how we can use it to build ourselves into better people.

That’s why we mention the maror after Pesach and matzah. We’re acknowledging that we don’t just commemorate the maror to highlight how grateful we are for Hashem’s salvation.

No. We’re recognizing that the maror played – plays – just as important a role in our story as the miracles of our redemption.

“Ba’avur zeh.” It’s not just about retelling the story. It’s about using the story for its intended purpose – to acquire these three mindsets. And to live by them every day as we serve Hashem.

That’s the true purpose of the Seder.

That’s why if we skip these three sections, we leave our obligation unfulfilled.

בכל דור ודור

In every generation...

PART OF THE TEAM

“In every generation, a person must see himself as if he left Egypt.”

No, this isn’t a metaphor. In fact, the Haggadah further emphasizes, “It wasn’t only our forefathers that Hashem redeemed; rather, *WE* were redeemed *with them!*”

Yes, it’s chronologically impossible. But it’s still true. We were redeemed along with our forefathers.

There’s something called “the Jewish nation.” It’s an entity that just *is* – that transcends time and space. And every individual Jew, explains the Maharal, is a part of that timeless entity.

Let’s think, l’havdil, about sports fans. The moment they identify with a certain team, everything suddenly becomes “we.” “We won!” “We haven’t had such a great season since 1953!”

It doesn’t matter that “we” weren’t physically part of the victory. That “we” probably weren’t even alive in 1953. That the membership of the group called “we” constantly changes.

“We” are part of “the team” – and that makes its history and accomplishments ours as well.

We 2022 Jews may not have been physically present at the Exodus. But we *are* part of the Jewish nation. That means that we're part of its entire history – beginning with Yetzias Mitzrayim.

The Nation was redeemed – so we were too. As members of “the team,” we left Mitzrayim – and launched our eternal mission – along with our ancestors.

הלל

Hallel

THANKS AND THOUGHTS

Now we know.

We know about the real story of Yetzias Mitzrayim. And about our – your – places in it.

No longer do we think we're dealing with ancient history. Now, we're aware that Yetzias Mitzrayim is our story too.

It's the story of Hashem lifting us above all others and charging us to complete the world's purpose. It's the story of our mission as His eternal partners, His royal torchbearers.

He's given us so much. It's time to express our gratitude.

“Thank You, Hashem,” we exclaim, “for raising us up from the garbage heaps and establishing us with nobles.” We were trapped in a dungeon of impurity. Hashem smashed the locks, set us free, and elevated us by handing us the same mission He handed our Avos.

As torchbearers of this mission, we're unstoppable. Nothing can stand in our nation's way – not history, not humanity, not nature. “Why does the Red Sea flee and the Jordan River retreat? Before the Master does the earth tremble – before the G-d of Yaakov.”

The very laws of nature step aside to help us move forward in our mission.

We – me and you – were chosen from billions and billions of people for this mission. We're some of the unbelievably lucky few to have been saved from the lowly, empty whirlpool of this world – and brought close to Hashem.

He's invested so much in us. Given us such powerful spiritual advantages. Gifted us with the privilege of making this world a home for His Shechina.

So, let's sing! Let's allow our gratitude to burst forth.

And then, as our song winds to a close, as we push back our chairs for rachtzah, let's remember that though Maggid might be over, our story isn't.

It's time now to focus on measuring portions and crunching matzah and swallowing maror. Then we'll sit down to a royal meal (mmm, that brisket!) and savor the late-night family time.

But as we do, let's not forget the clarity we gained from this year's Maggid. Let's remember that we were created, freed from Egypt, and sustained until this day for a purpose – to reveal and increase Hashem's presence, His holiness, in this world.

Let's allow this question to linger in our minds: how will we stay focused on our mission so we can truly live by it "kol yemei chayecha?"

LIVING YOUR MISSION

*A practical guide to turning the Seder's
message into concrete growth*

NOW WHAT?

It's 2 am. You're sitting amid the settling sparkles of a magical Seder.

After reading this guidebook, you've gained a completely new perspective on Yetzias Mitzrayim, on the role it plays in your life. You're excited. Awakened. Inspired.

What are you going to do about it?

Is this going to be one of those spiritual fires that burns bright inside you for a day or two – but dies down before it can fuel practical growth?

Or this time, will the inspiration actually carry over into your life?

Because, after all, that's the entire purpose of your life.

We're supposed to emerge from the Seder identifying as "yotzei mitzrayim." Before you read this guidebook, that meant "people who left Egypt." Now, you know it means "people who were given existence so they could manifest Hashem's Shechina (Presence) in the world."

As the Torah tells us (Shemos 29:46): "...Ani Hashem Elokeihem asher hotzeisi osum mei'Eretz Mitzrayim l'shochni besochum..." "I am Hashem, their G-d, Who took them out of Mitzrayim so I could dwell in their midst."

That's the essence of our mission. To bring Hashem's presence into our midst. Into our lives and the lives of those around us. To take the physical world, and fill it with holiness, with Hashem's glory.

It's the core message of the Seder. You were brought into existence solely and completely so that you, in your unique way, could fill the void of holiness in Hashem's world.

If it weren't for that mission, you wouldn't be here. None of us would. We wouldn't have made it past Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar and Haman and Antiochus and Titus and Tourquemada and Chmelnicki and Hitler and Stalin.

Jews love this joking line about Jewish holidays and their

backstories: "They tried to kill us. We won. Let's eat."

Sure, it's funny. But it's missing the point in the most colossal, even tragic way.

"They tried to kill us. We won – because of the mission we're still committed to fulfilling. Let's make sure we're living for the mission!"

But it isn't so simple, is it?

Living to fill a void of holiness in this world sounds like something only storybook Jewish heroes do.

Like Avraham Avinu. Chazal teach that no one on earth called Hashem "Adon," "Master," until Avraham appeared. He saw a world devoid of the acceptance of Hashem's rule – and dedicated his life to changing that.

Like – skipping to modern times – Rav Yisrael Salanter, who noted the superficiality of people's avodas Hashem and introduced the world to Mussar.

Like Sara Schenirer, who saw hordes of uninspired religious girls leaving the fold and launched the revolutionary Bais Yaakov movement.

Like Rav Meir Shapiro, who gave every man in Klal Yisrael the ability to learn the entire Shas.

Like Rav Noach Weinberg, who looked at the "spiritual holocaust" of Jewish assimilation and took it upon himself to reverse the tide.

Like Rebbetzin Henny Machlis, who saw the hungry and lonely of Klal Yisrael and made it her business to feed and warm every single one of them.

We aren't like them. We're just – us. Plain little people who happen to share a heritage with these giants.

We're supposed to become Torah revolutionaries too? We're supposed to devote our lives to infusing the world with holiness?

Yes. We are. We can – and we must. We don't have to do it on the same scale as these Torah greats. But we can still focus our lives around our mission. We can still use our unique

makeup to bring change, kedusha, G-dliness to the world.

Read through this next section, and you'll learn how to think – and ultimately, live – like a yotzei Mitzrayim, a “mission Jew.” First, you'll learn four mindsets that enable a “mission Jew” to truly center his life around the purpose he was created for. Then, you'll find some powerful practical tools for keeping the fire of inspiration burning bright – and turning it into fuel for real, measurable growth.

HOW A MISSION JEW LOOKS AT JUDAISM

Most good Jews look at Judaism as a full-time job. “Mission Jews” look at it like they're entrepreneurs.

What's the difference?

An employee is hired to get work done. His boss sends tasks his way, and he faithfully completes them. If he's very dedicated, he'll give the work his all, waiting until he checks every box on the list before he goes and does his own thing.

An employee responds. Give him responsibilities, and he'll take care of them. Give him instructions, and he'll follow them.

An entrepreneur isn't just a responder. An entrepreneur is a *creator*.

Entrepreneurs are out to build something. To innovate. To bring dreams to reality.

Look at Avraham Avinu, the world's first “mission Jew.” He didn't just *respond* to the need for chesed by hosting guests that came his way. He had a burning ambition to infuse the world with chesed. His passion was so insatiable that Hashem literally had to dress angels as guests so Avraham would have someone to serve, some way to “create” through chesed.

Thinking like a mission Jew means changing our mindset from “responder” to “creator.”

Before, we looked at Judaism as a checklist of responsibilities. But a creator sees so much more than that in Judaism. A creator sees each area of avodas Hashem as an opportunity to build, to bring new levels and facets of kedusha to the world.

A responder looks at tefillah as something he needs to get done – on time, with concentration, following all relevant halachos.

A creator looks at tefillah as an opportunity to bring himself to a new level of emunah in how precisely Hashem directs his life. Or, to express his gratitude for the beautiful life Hashem has given him. (While davening on-time, with concentration, following halacha.)

If you were a responder, and your spouse launched into a monologue about how stressful their day was, you would do your best to listen patiently, say validating things, and not roll your eyes.

If you were a creator, you would think, “How can I use this conversation to build my spouse, or our marriage?” Maybe you’d take the opportunity to make your spouse feel truly valued and seen. Or, to strengthen your gratitude toward them for all they do for the family.

Sure, we can live like responders and still fulfill all our obligations. But if we want to live for the mission of “l’shochni b’sochum,” we need to think like creators.

Because when we do, we’re actively bringing more of Hashem into the world.

HOW A MISSION JEW LOOKS AT *MITZVOS*

There are two parts to every mitzvah.

There’s the technical part, the how-to. Then there’s the message behind the mitzvah. Its heart. The opportunity within it to actualize G-dliness.

Let’s dissect a mitzvah. How about tzedakah?

After a long day at work, you finally get to sit down to dinner and bond with your family. But you've barely landed in your seat when you hear someone knocking. Dragging yourself up, you pull a few dollars from your wallet and open the door.

If you hand the money to the collector, say, "hatzlacha," and rush back to the table – good. You got the mitzvah. You followed Hashem's instructions. You checked the box.

But if you want to live like a "mission Jew," you need to do a bit more.

You need to remember that Hashem gave us the mitzvah of tzedakah so we'd learn to care about others. You need to look, really look, at the collector in front of you, and register that this is someone in need. In pain. That way, when you hand him that same few dollars, you do it out of a real desire to ease the suffering of a brother.

You haven't simply checked a box. You've used the mitzvah as an opportunity to "create," to infuse new G-dliness into the world.

What themes can you spot behind the mitzvos you do every day? What facets of G-dliness can you actualize through them?

Your next Asher Yatzar: new appreciation for how your health enables you to take care of your family.

Your next Torah-study session: renewed awareness of the fact that you're *learning Hashem's words*.

The next compliment you give a friend: a boost of positivity to their self-image.

Mitzvos are the tools Hashem gave us to fulfill our mission of infusing this world with G-dliness.

Let's see them as such.

Instead of looking at them as boxes to check, let's work to find within them opportunities to create. To fill voids of holiness large and small, and bring more of Hashem's presence into the world.

HOW A MISSION JEW LOOKS AT *HIMSELF*

As you learn about the differences between creators and responders, about how a “mission Jew” views every aspect of his Judaism, you might find yourself thinking this discouraging little thought:

“But... what does it really matter whether I become a “creator” or not? What do my ‘creations’ really do for the world?”

We’re *not* Rav Yisrael Salanter. We’re *not* Sara Schenirer. We aren’t sweeping the Jewish world with our spiritual innovations.

Compared to theirs, our “creations” look miniscule. In the grand scheme of things, what does it really matter whether we continue living as responders, or put in the work to live as creators?

To answer this question, let’s remind ourselves about some of the foundations we’ve learned in this Haggadah guide.

As parts of the Jewish people, you and I shouldn’t be here. From the miracles behind our ancestors’ births to the miracles that allowed our people to survive 2000 years of attempted annihilation, it’s clear that we’re only here because Hashem wants us here.

If we exist, that means we have something to contribute to the mission He created us for.

As we learned in “Tzei Ulemad,” the Jewish farmer bringing his bikkurim (first fruits) to the Beis Hamikdash recites a long prayer detailing every bit of history that brought him to his fruitful farm in Eretz Yisrael.

Why mention the full history of Yetzias Mitzrayim in that prayer, we asked. And we answered that this was the farmer’s way of acknowledging his place in the story of the Jewish people. He was making clear that everything he had, everything that had brought him to this day, had all been given to him because of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Because of the mission he was created to fulfill.

We may not be farmers, but we can say the same thing.

Every single one of us is different. Each of us has our own story – our own family, experiences, circumstances, personalities, skills and flaws.

Why? Why did Hashem bother to make each of us so completely unique, with such unique lives?

Because He needs each one of us to fulfill a specific part of the greater mission.

Something nobody from the beginning of time has ever accomplished – and what nobody until the end of time will ever be able to accomplish.

That's why our creations matter. No matter how large or small we look, our avodas Hashem is crucial. We are crucial.

You are crucial.

Your decision between remaining a simple responder and stepping up to the spiritual creator's plate carries real consequences for the rest of the world.

HOW A MISSION JEW LOOKS AT A CHALLENGE

So we really are important. So our "creations" make an impact. So Hashem is depending on us to fulfill a part of His mission nobody else can.

It's flattering, of course, to be given such responsibility. But... who says we can do it?

Living for our mission sounds like hard, high-level work. What if we're not big enough for it? Who says we have it in us to break out of responder mode and fill the voids of holiness we see around us?

When we have these kinds of doubts, we might find it helpful to remind ourselves of another lesson the Haggadah has taught us.

We didn't just learn from the Haggadah about existing for our mission. We also learned that Hashem involves Himself

intimately in helping us fulfill our mission.

Remember Makkas Bechoros (Plague of the Firstborns)? “Ani v’lo malach. Ani v’lo saraph.” Though Hashem assigns most worldly tasks to angels, He personally came down to Mitzrayim to strike the Egyptian firstborns.

Why? To show us how beloved we are to Him. How important our mission is to Him.

Hashem Himself took us out of Mitzrayim. And, as we learned in “V’hi She’amda,” He’s kept us alive miraculously through millenia of genocide plots both physical and spiritual.

Why? To keep our mission alive. To sustain those pursuing it.

In “Dayeinu,” we ran through an extraordinary list of miracles and spiritual gifts Hashem granted us. Each gift alone, we learned, carried enough spiritual power to fuel us in our mission.

Why? Because Hashem is invested in our success. He wants us to succeed far more than we do.

It’s been true throughout history, and it’s still true today. Hashem has our back. He’s here to help us. Yes, living for our mission isn’t easy. But we’re not alone in this work.

Hashem is standing by, ready to provide us with the strength and tools we need to find success.

BECOMING A MISSION JEW

Are you ready?

After reading through this guidebook, you’re brimming with the feeling that you wish you could actually *do* something.

You were given your life so you could accomplish great things with it. You’re here to make yourself a more G-dly person, and the world a more G-dly place.

How can you fill your daily life with this awareness? How can you hold onto the inspiration you’re feeling now?

Ultimately, of course, becoming a “mission Jew” is the work of a lifetime. But we’re about to present a plan that will help

you jump into the journey. You'll experience what it means to live for your mission – Klal Yisrael's communal one, and your personal one within it.

Finding a Void of Holiness to Fill

Let's start with step one.

Earlier, we mentioned the names of some Torah legends. We described how they noticed specific voids of kedusha, of holiness, in the Jewish world, and launched revolutions to fill those voids.

Now, we're going to walk through how you and I – on a smaller scale – can do the same thing.

What are some voids, some spiritual problems, in the world around us? What are some we can spot within ourselves?

For many of us, the answer might be "too many." We can see multiple gaping ones in our community. In our circle of friends and family. Suffering people. Spiritual weaknesses. Oh, and plenty of those within ourselves as well.

But it isn't our job to fix every one of the universe's problems. Right now, it's our job to pick *one*.

Hm. Pick one. But... which one to pick?

Qualification #1: It has to be something you're passionate about.

What's a part of Yiddishkeit you feel especially connected to? Or, that feels especially important to you? What's a spiritual lack – in the world around you, or in yourself – that bothers you every time you think about it? What's a unique skill or service you can contribute?

Do you feel especially connected to Shabbos, and maintaining its sanctity? Maybe you know you care deeply about becoming truly learned in Torah. Maybe you're really bothered by the fact that so many Jews need tzedakah. Maybe you love bringing joy to suffering people, and you're good at it too.

Our interests, our talents – they're G-d-given, just like ev-

everything else in our lives. They're road signs Hashem places along our spiritual paths to guide us toward fulfilling our personal missions.

Listen to yourself. Let your inner thoughts guide you. And remember that your passion is important. We all know how successful we are when we work on things just because we "know we should."

Passion and interest are drivers. They keep us going when things get difficult and we're tempted to drop this new goal we're working towards.

The more personal interest you feel, the better.

Qualification #2: It has to be something specific.

You might feel connected to Shabbos, but deciding to "work on your Shabbos" doesn't give you enough direction.

When we're picking our area to focus on, we need to make sure it's specific enough to become a goal we can work towards.

Maybe you want to make Shabbos a day of conscious connection to Hashem. Or you want to perfect your halachic observance of Shabbos.

What about our tzedakah example? Instead of worrying about everyone who needs tzedakah, perhaps you're specifically drawn to helping needy people marry off their children respectably.

Take a minute (or an hour, or a few days) to think about the void of kedusha – in the world around you, or inside you – that you personally want to fill.

Once you've thought of it – now what?

Passion alone isn't enough to accomplish great visions.

We need a practical plan to help us start small and move forward. We need accountability to help us stick to our goals. We need support to keep us motivated and inspired.

That's why this guidebook comes with two simple-but-powerful **planning sheets**.

After Yom Tov, fill them out, and you've got a framework that enables you to break your vision down into a doable, practical plan.

Instead of thinking about living for a mission, you'll be able to actually concretize that mission – and stick to it.

Instead of wanting to take action but forgetting about it, you'll have a weekly guide that keeps you on track and helps you move your plan forward.

Instead of losing motivation once the freshness of the Seder's message fades, you'll gain fuel that keeps the inspiration simmering steadily through every week, every day.

These planning sheets provide a unique amount of structure – but don't let that overwhelm you. They aren't here to box you in. Their questions aren't set in stone. They're simply here to support you. They're yours to customize as you'd like.

Curious what these planning sheets include?

Let's start with the first one – your Vision Sheet.

THE VISION SHEET

A few pages up, we spoke about finding a void of holiness you feel passionate about filling. This first planning sheet will help you concretize your vision for filling that void, and turning it into a specific goal you can accomplish.

See pages 66–75 for both planning sheets and for information to access printable versions.

How to Fill Out Your Vision Sheet

Let's start with...

Question 1: What void of holiness do I want to fill?

As we mentioned earlier, this can be a void you notice in the world around you, or in yourself. It can be a community need. It can be at the family level. It can be very personal, something between you and Hashem.

My Shabbos isn't what it's supposed to be. I want to focus on making it truly a "Shabbos Hayom L'Hashem."

I feel strongly about Ahavas Yisrael – I care a lot about making sure my fellow Jews feel loved and cared about.

I really want to be better about tefillah. I want to be a person who treats tefillah properly and davens with kavana (concentration).

Remember, you're meant to pick an area you feel personally pulled to work on. Remember to make it specific enough to give you direction. And remember that you don't need to rush your choosing process – take your time.

Question 2: Why am I passionate about this?

What is it that's pulling you toward this area? What makes it important to you personally? What's the story behind your choice?

I didn't fit in socially as a kid. I know how painful it is to feel lonely, to feel "outside the circle." That's why I care so much

about helping other lonely people feel seen and cared about and happier.

My father, may he rest in peace, talked to Hashem all day. Watching him daven was like watching a real, passionate conversation. I want to enjoy the same level of emunah and connection to Hashem that he did.

Sometimes, the reason you state can be self-serving – and that’s just fine.

I want to work on my shalom bayis in my marriage because I want my kids to grow up in a safe, loving home with amazing role models when it comes to marriage.

I want to strengthen people in their knowledge of hilchos Shabbos because I see a real need there – but also because I find halacha fascinating, and I enjoy the challenge of giving over information in a compelling, effective way.

Why is this question important? Because when we can clearly express why we’re passionate about the cause we’re choosing to work on, we feel more committed. More motivated. More plain-old-interested.

A responder does things because someone else told him he has to. A creator feels passionate about what he’s putting out. It’s coming from him. He’s emotionally connected to it.

The more clearly we can nail down why we’re interested in the work we’re choosing, the easier it will be to operate like a creator. Like someone on a mission.

Question 3: What’s a specific project I can take on to start accomplishing this?

We can’t just decide we want to make all the lonely people in our community feel connected. Nor will we get very far if all we tell ourselves is, “I want to have a more peaceful marriage.”

We need to get concrete. We need to identify an actionable sub-goal within our greater vision that will help us start filling the void we want to fill.

A few things to keep in mind when picking our sub-goal:

It needs to clearly connect back to our vision. When we're choosing it, it's best if we can articulate that connection.

Like our greater vision, we need to feel personally interested in this project. Because, again, if we don't want to do it, chances are – we won't.

And, it needs to be something we actually have the ability to do. So we can actually do it.

The person in our ahavas Yisrael example might choose a project like this: *There's an elderly woman down my block who can't really leave her house. I want to work on bringing happiness and connection into her life on a steady basis.*

The one who wanted better shalom bayis might decide to work specifically on communicating peacefully with their spouse.

The son who admired his father's tefillah might decide to focus simply on perfecting his daily Mincha.

Of course, these projects won't completely fill those voids of kedusha we're working on. But when we're passionate about something, we don't stop at one project. Once we've made this specific project happen – in a month or two or six or a year from now – we move on to another one (and fill out a fresh copy of our Vision Sheet).

As you're working to figure out your project, remember – nothing about these planning sheets are set in stone. You might have struggled until now to think of a greater area of passion, but easily thought of a specific project. Don't worry about the fact that you "went out of order." Just think about how your specific project might connect to a larger area of Yiddishkeit, a larger void of holiness you could work toward filling.

Question 4: What does success look like to me?

Here's where you get to imagine your happy ending. What will it look like when you make your project happen?

What are you doing differently? How do you feel? If your project benefits other people, what about them? How do

their lives look different? How do they feel? What feedback are you getting?

Take your time to flesh this vision out. It will help you clarify exactly what you're looking to achieve – and help keep you motivated as you work towards it.

Question 5: Task breakdown:

Here's where we start to get super-practical. Here's where we move from simply wanting to make something happen to, well, making it happen.

Think: what are all, or at least several, of the different tasks you need to do to complete your project?

Not sure where to start? Speak to a mentor – that's an excellent first step if you feel you need it. Or, you could brainstorm with friends or family members: "I really want to make this happen. What do you think I need to do?"

The person looking to help their elderly neighbor might list things like:

1. *Find a weekly time I can go visit and schmooze.*
2. *Call some families in the community and arrange a rotation where each one brings a Shabbos day meal to her house and eats with her.*
3. *See if I can get some talented high school girls to play music or sing for her.*
4. *Learn a book on ahavas Yisrael once a week so I get the encouragement I need to keep this going...*

The person in our tefillah example might list:

1. *Get a friend to learn sefer X on tefillah together a few minutes after davening*
2. *Shift my schedule so I can leave work a few minutes earlier and I'm not running like a madman into Mincha*
3. *Leave my phone in my car when I go into shul for Mincha*
4. *Learn a book on emunah with my family at the Shabbos table*

5. *Work on having kavana in the first blessing of Shemoneh Esrei*
6. *Talk to my Rav about different ways I can work on my kavana...*

When and how will we get all these things done? Don't worry – that's what our second planning sheet is for.

For now, our job is simply to think practically and list different tasks that will bring us to our goal. As we do, we're building the next layer of our plan to actually accomplish a part of our mission.

Question 6: I'm dedicating this project in the merit of:

Now is a good time to take a pause. To remember that what we're doing here is... huge. Incredible.

We're taking the message of the Seder to heart. We're consciously working to fulfill our mission of "I'shochni b'sochum."

We're doing it. We're making a plan to step out of our comfort zone and fill a void of kedusha, of Hashem's presence, in His world.

We're accumulating real merit in Heaven – merit we can dedicate to someone close to our hearts.

We can dedicate our project in someone's memory. As merit for a sick person's recovery. For someone to find their match or have children.

We can even dedicate it for ourselves – as merit for our own success in this mission we're pursuing. It's a real undertaking, and we need all the support we can get.

Which brings us to...

THE WEEKLY CHECK-IN SHEET

Think big, start small.

That's how anyone achieves anything worthwhile. They think big – cast an ambitious vision. Then they start small – pick one simple baby step to start with.

Our Vision Sheet allowed us to think big. Now, it's time to start small. To initiate the growth we're dreaming of as we lay our plans.

As you might have guessed, the Weekly Check-In Sheet is designed to be your weekly companion on your journey toward your mission. It's been fitted out with different features and devices to help you stay motivated and interested in your work.

It's your tool to keep the Seder's inspiration simmering steadily – and to turn that inspiration into concrete growth.

How to Fill Out Your Weekly Check-In Sheet

Once a week – it helps to pre-arrange a regular time – you'll sit down with your Vision Sheet and a fresh copy of the Weekly Check-In Sheet.

First, you'll review your Vision Sheet.

Why take the time to do that? Because life is busy. Even if you spent significant time the past week working on your project, you might not still be clear on *why* you're doing it.

Taking a minute or two to remind yourself of the “why” behind your work keeps you motivated. It keeps you grounded, connected to your plan and your mission. It sends you a fresh boost of passion. It gives you a sense of the weight, the specialness, the significance, of the work you're doing.

And when you're done, you get to check off the box on your Weekly Check-In Sheet next to “I reviewed my Vision Sheet.”

“This Week”

The first time you use your Weekly Check-In Sheet, you'll skip the “Last Week” section. Instead, you'll start with the question called “This week's step.”

Remember – we're starting small.

Referring back to the “Task Breakdown” section on your Vision Sheet, choose ONE SMALL STEP that will enable you to start accomplishing one of those tasks.

Think an entire task fits the picture of a small step? Great.

Just make sure you're truly choosing something small and doable.

Here's an example from our friend who wanted to improve his tefillah:

Set up my chavrusa-shaft (partnered learning session) on tefillah.

The next line asks you, "How does this step move my bigger project forward?" Answering this question helps you make sure you're choosing an effective move. It also increases your motivation by connecting your thoughts back to your passion and vision.

Back to our davening friend: *Setting up this chavrusa-shaft will enable me to learn sefer X on tefillah, which will uplift my tefillah and help me feel a more genuine connection to Hashem.*

After that, you'll take your chosen step and break it down as nitty-grittily as possible. What exactly needs to get done for you to accomplish this week's step?

1. *Decide which friend I want to be my chavrusa*
2. *Call the friend and ask him about it*
3. *Choose a sefer to learn together*
4. *Decide how much time we'll give to it after davening (10 minutes?)*

Then comes the optional section for those who like their plans to be totally concrete: "When will I do these tasks?"

You can choose times and mark them down. You can set reminders in your phone. Or, if this section feels too structured, you can ignore it.

Like the rest of this sheet, it's simply here to provide inspiration, to give you the help and support you need. Feel free to make the sheet your own, changing or adding questions if you feel you need things to be different.

The next section asks us to be honest with ourselves. To acknowledge that no matter how small of a step we choose,

we're still moving out of our comfort zones. Which means we still might have a very hard time doing the work.

So let's take a minute to ask ourselves: "Where am I going to encounter resistance to doing this work?" What about it might be hard?

Here's what our davening friend had to say:

I might be embarrassed to ask my friend. I might feel weird or silly.

Let's see what he comes up with for the next question: "What can I do to make things easier and cut down the resistance?"

I'll make sure to pick a friend I don't feel judged by. Yaakov or Danny.

You might answer this question with a practical idea. Or maybe you'll put down a thought or quote to encourage yourself. Or, you'll just promise yourself a little reward.

"Last Week"

Now that we've finished our "This Week" section, let's circle back to our "Last Week" section.

This section first comes into play the second time you use this sheet. Its purpose? Two things: to reflect on how you're doing with your work, and to figure out whether or not you're ready to move on to your next step.

Remember – there are no wrong answers here. We're not working with a deadline. We're not competing against anyone. If we didn't achieve our goals for last week, that's okay.

We're still Hashem's precious torchbearers. We've still embarked on an incredible journey. We're still "mission Jews." Asking ourselves how last week's step went and what we can do better if it didn't go well is simply our way of picking ourselves up and getting back on track.

If last week's step went great – great! Make sure to fill out the section asking you to celebrate your success.

Even if last week's step didn't go as well as you would have liked, try to fill that section out. Success breeds success. The

more success you're able to credit to yourself, the more motivated you'll be to keep succeeding.

Are you ready to move on to your next step? If you answer yes, go ahead and fill out your "This Week" section.

If not, simply turn back to last week's Check-In Sheet and remind yourself what you're supposed to be doing. You can even re-input the information into your new "This Week" section if you feel that would be helpful.

And Finally...

The tefillah.

Because, as we described when we talked about how a "mission Jew" looks at a challenge, Hashem has our back.

We're not alone in this work. Hashem wants us to succeed even more than we do.

He's waiting to help us. So, let's ask.

Hashem, I'm doing this for you.

I'm doing this because at the Seder this year, I was reminded about the purpose You created me for. About the mission you want me to pursue every day of my life.

I'm doing this because I want to bring more of Your presence into this world.

Please help me. Please make this project succeed.

Please help me fill this world with Your glory!

*For printable copies of both planning sheets,
please email llebovits@vaadproject.org*

VISION SHEET

What void of kedusha do I want to fill?

Why am I passionate about this?

What's a specific project I can take on to start accomplishing this?

What does success look like to me?

Task Breakdown:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

I'm dedicating this project in the merit of:

WEEKLY CHECK-IN

LAST WEEK:

☐ I reviewed my Vision Sheet

How did last week's step go?

What's one thing I can celebrate about last week's work?

Am I ready to move on to the next step?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If last week's work didn't go well, what can I do differently to ace it this week?

TEFILLAH:

Please, Hashem, bless my efforts and help me succeed in my personal mission to bring more of Your Presence into this world.

WEEKLY CHECK-IN

THIS WEEK:

This week's step:

How does this step move my bigger project forward?

What do I need to do to get that step done?

1.

3.

2.

4.

Optional: When will I do these tasks?

Where am I going to encounter resistance to doing this work?

What can I do to make things easier and cut down the resistance?



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This booklet has been dedicated as a
z'chus for the refuah shleimah of
Yitzchak Elimelech ben Chana Sorah
and
Yitzchak ben Chaya Bracha

Dr. Jennifer Rudin
Infectious disease specialist
412-856-0226

In honor of those who are
deepening their Avodas
Hashem by learning from
Rabbi Lebovits.

Zvi and Shoshana Gelt

Love and shalom to all
my loved ones.

Mark Levandovsky

In memory of Joyce's parents,
Joseph and Shirley Goldwasser,
יוסף בן משה ושרה בת יהודה ע"ה

And in thanks to Rabbi Lebovits
and the Vaad Project from the
countless people whose lives
have been enriched through his
teachings and Ahavas Yisroel!

שילכו מחיל אל חיל

Avraham and Joyce Litzman

L'ilui nishmos our dear parents:

חי-ה בת ר' חיים לייב הלוי

ר' מאיר בן מרדכי

איסר בן ישראל

לילה בת הרשל

Effie and Simmy Sonstein

Mazel tov,

Rabbi Lebovits,

on your latest publication! You continue to inspire and motivate us to grow in our Judaism. We are grateful for everything you do not only for our Vaad, but also for the entire Jewish community. Looking forward to continuing the journey with our favorite Rabbi “Nudge” :)

Sincerely,

**Alan, Darren, Gerardo, Jake,
Michael, and Scott**

L'ilui nishmas R' Boruch Taub,

ברוך יוסף יחזקאל בן חיים ע"ה

Mordechai Zimberg CPA



216.333.4927

In honor of
Rabbi Lebovits
for all that he does for
the community.
Bob and Allison Weiss

In memory of our beloved parents,
Dr. Juda Ber and Rivka Bickel.
Margaret and Shmuel Angel

In honor of
Rabbi Levi Lebovits and family
for all of the great and holy work they do for the
Jewish community.
Hank and Sherrie Brandon

In memory of our parents,
Alex and Annette Englander
and
Jack and Renee' Breitbart.
Larry and Leslie Englander

In memory of
Neil and Marilyn Moskowitz,
excellent parents who instilled in their
children a deep love of Judaism.
Adam Moskowitz

In honor of

Rabbi Lebovits

for making Pesach more meaningful
to us and Jews all over.

Love,

Casey and Brett Perry

We wish our family and friends a Zissen Pesach.

Rob and Vicki Trachten Schwartz Foundation

To **Rabbi Lebovits**,
the consummate, teacher, Rabbi and friend.
Your love of Hashem, Torah and the Jewish
people shines from everything you do.

With gratitude,

The Avners

Looking forward to another great Seder with
Rabbi L.'s inspiration and wisdom.

Next year in Jerusalem!

Jay and Wendy Greenwald

In memory of our dear Uncle Abe,

Avraham ben Zvi, a"h.

May this publication be an aliyah for his neshama.

Chana and Yudi Levine

We gratefully acknowledge Hashem for all the
kindness and blessings He bestows upon us. May
we continue to merit the spreading of wisdom
and joy which teachings like this bring....

Joyfully,

The Margulies family

To my Friend and Mentor:

Rabbi Lebovits

Wishing continued success,

Harvey & Jenna Pacht

May the world heal physically and spiritually
with the coming of Mashiach in our lifetime.

Anonymous

To my parents,

Gita Faygel bat Israel Yitzchak and Ephraim ben Shmuel,

of blessed memory, and in gratitude to
Rabbi Lebovits' dedication to sharing Torah
knowledge filled with wisdom and insight.

Trudy Rubinson

L'ilui nishmas

Gittel bas R' Yitzchak a"h

Anonymous

In loving memory of my father:

Dr. Ira Weiss

ר' ישראל משה בן אליעזר הלוי ז"ל

Whose dedication to Torah and personal growth was
an inspiration to all who knew him.

Daniel & Nicole Weiss

T H E V A A D P R O J E C T

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