

## Why is this Night Different from all other nights?

### Exploring differences between "Telling the Story" of Seder night, and "Remembering Yetzias Mitzrayim" every day of the year

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A primary mitzvah of the seder night is *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*, to tell the story of the Exodus. The mitzvah is stated in Parshas Bo at the time of the redemption, "And Moshe told the people, 'Remember this day upon which Hashem took you out of Mitzrayim.'"<sup>1</sup> The Rambam explains that, at a bare minimum, the requirement of seder night is like that of Kiddush of Shabbos about which the Torah states, "Remember the day of Shabbos."<sup>2</sup> This requires us, at least, to declare the significance of the day.

The Torah, however, gives us further guidance regarding the nature of the mitzvah of the seder night. "You shall tell your child on this night, 'Through this Hashem did for me, when He took me out of Mitzrayim.'"<sup>3</sup> And, "When your child will ask you, 'What's this?' You shall tell him..."<sup>4</sup> Additionally, as the time for redemption neared, Hashem specifically told Moshe that the reason that Hashem was displaying His mastery and subjecting the Mitzriyim to the plagues was "So that you will relate to your son, and your son's son, that which I made a mockery of Mitzrayim."<sup>5</sup> These Pisukim, and the traditions associated with them, produce the Hagadah of seder night in which we endeavor to employ a question/answer format to transmit and to remember Yitzias Mitzrayim. We do this by making the effort to truly relive the redemption, as the Hagadah states at the conclusion of Maggid, "One is obligated to view himself as if he personally was redeemed from Mitzrayim."

#### The Mitzvah of Zechira/ To Remember Daily

In addition to the mitzvah of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* of seder night, there is a mitzvah of *Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim* every single day and night of the year. The Mishnah in Brachos tells us, "One must mention *Yetzias Mitzrayim* even at night."<sup>6</sup> This is based on the possuk, "So that you should remember

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<sup>1</sup> Shemos 13:3.

<sup>2</sup> In Mishneh Torah, Chometz Umatza 7:1, the Rambam bases the initial obligation on this possuk, and views the possuk of Vhigadito as an explanation of how to do the mitzvah. In Sefer Hamitzvos Asin 157, the Rambam quotes the Mechilta which states that Ki Yisholcha Bincha, which represents the question/ answer format, is ideal. If the child doesn't ask, then there is an obligation of Vihigadito. If one is alone, one still has an obligation of Zachor, which the Rambam in Mishneh Torah compares to Kiddush. Interestingly the Talmud in Pesachim 116a and codified by Rambam 7:3 and Shulchan Aruch 473:7 maintain that even when a person fulfills this mitzvah alone he should do so in the question/answer format.

<sup>3</sup> Shemos 13:8.

<sup>4</sup> Shemos 13:14.

<sup>5</sup> Shemos 10:2.

<sup>6</sup> Talmud, Brachos 12b.

the day that you left Mitzrayim all the days of your life."<sup>7</sup> The Mishna infers that, "days of your life," refers to the daytime, while "all" comes to require such remembering at night as well.<sup>8</sup>

The Rambam maintains that the reason that the third paragraph of shema was codified as part of shema both day and night is because it contains mention of the Exodus.<sup>9</sup> By reciting it we fulfill our obligation of daily zechira. Noteworthy is that the Mishnah Berurah rules that even if a person totally missed the time for the morning Kriyas Shema, he is still obligated to recite the final statement of Kriyas Shema to fulfill the daily mitzvah of *Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim*.<sup>10</sup>

### Overview

In this article we will explore the mitzvah of daily remembrance of *Yitzias Mitzrayim*<sup>11</sup> and contrast it with the mitzvah of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* of seder night. In particular we will discuss (a) the differences regarding how elaborate one must be in discussing *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, (b) whether articulating is required or contemplation is sufficient, (c) is there a difference in the strength of these two mitzvos, and (d) whether women are obligated or not.

### How Much and What To Say

The most noticeable difference between the daily zechira /remembering, and the sippur of seder night is that the sippur of seder night is preferably to be done at great length, and through dialogue and communication, in contrast to the daily mention which can be fulfilled by simply saying, "Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim."<sup>12</sup> Some say that this is implied by the very usage of the word "Vihigadito- and you should tell" which is used when one is speaking about something at length.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Devorim 16:3.

<sup>8</sup> Torah Temimah note 22 learns that this is not a Ribuy/inclusion to include night, but rather a clarification. The word "All" tells us that in this case "days" does not come to exclude nights as it sometimes does. As such the mitzvah would be relevant to both daytime and nighttime. The Torah Temimah does not explain how we infer two separate mitzvos per calendar day if (as he learns) it is not a Ribuy/ inclusion. According to the Torah Temimah's approach, we should consider the question: How do we know that the Torah isn't simply saying that the mitzvah of zechira/remembering can be done either by day or by night, as is the case with Tefillin Midiorayso.

<sup>9</sup> Rambam Kriyas Shema 1:3. See Talmud Brachos 14b that one could have fulfilled this obligation by reciting a different passage relevant to *Yitzias Mitzrayim*.

<sup>10</sup> 58:27.

<sup>11</sup> It is noteworthy that although there are "Sheish Zechiros" six statements which we must remember, it is only the mitzvah of *Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim* which is accepted definitively as a daily obligation, and incorporated into the daily davening. This is presumably because the possuk explicitly states by this mitzvah, "All the days of your life."

<sup>12</sup> P'ri Migadim in Pesicha Koleles- Kiriya Shema, paragraph 4. Although the P'ri Megadim disagrees and maintains that both seder night sippur and daily zechira can be fulfilled with this formula, his presentation of this view is insightful and is used here to explain the more popular view that there is a difference between these mitzvos. See, for example, Sefer HaChinich 21 where he defines the mitzvah as "to give thanks to Hashem" and "to discuss the miracles." Even according to the P'ri Megadim's approach that the mitzvah of sippur on seder night can be fulfilled with a simple statement, we may still regard this as a distinction between the two mitzvos. Even if our lengthy Haggadah is not Biblically required, it is certainly Biblically-proper to expound and share with the children based on the possuk "V'Higadito". This dimension does not exist by the daily zechira.

<sup>13</sup> P'ri Migadim *ibid*.

From the Hagadah's response to the wise son<sup>14</sup> it is apparent that one can fulfill the mitzvah of sippur on seder night even by discussing the relevant halachos.<sup>15</sup> While this is intriguing, it is not a difference between the annual sippur and the daily zechira as one can fulfill the daily mitzvah of zechira as well with the recital of a relevant halacha.<sup>16</sup>

### Must One Articulate?

Another area of significant debate is whether the mitzvah of daily zechira requires that a person articulate the statement. Perhaps, unlike *sippur* of seder night which is the result of "Vihigadito-" to tell your child, and "Ki Yisholcho Bincha-" to respond to the child's questions, *zechira* might not have to be verbalized.<sup>17</sup> Basis for this distinction can be found in a Gemora in Megilah<sup>18</sup> regarding the mitzvah to remember what Amaleik did to us. The Talmud states, "*Zachor- Remember*, might mean in one's heart. But when it says *Lo Sishkach- Don't forget*, it becomes clear that Zachor- Remember is to be done verbally." It follows that the simple understanding of "Zachor- Remember" means in one's heart without a requirement to verbalize. Indeed, the Be'er Heiteiv<sup>19</sup> cites a ruling that hirhur (thinking) about Yetzias Mitzrayim is sufficient for this daily mitzvah.

The basic understanding of this mitzvah, however, is that it does require dibbur (articulation).<sup>20</sup> The reasoning for this approach appears to be that daily zechira is understood to be an extension of the mitzvah of V'Higadito- Telling the story of seder night. Although zechira is an abridged form of sippur, it too, requires articulation.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> "Tell him the laws of the Pesach: One may not eat dessert after the Korban Pesach"

<sup>15</sup> This is presumably learned from the Torah in Devorim 6:20-24 where the child asks, "What is the significance of these laws that Hashem commanded." And the Torah proceeds to describe the response which includes, "We were slaves... and Hashem took us out... He places great signs and retribution upon the Mitzriyim as we witnessed... and He commanded us to observe all of these laws." See Haggadah of Brisk p. 116-7 where he cites Tosefta 10:8 that the obligation of seder night includes the halachos. This may explain why in the opening paragraph responding to Ma Nishtana we declare, "Even if we are very knowledgeable, we still have a mitzvah to tell the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim." Many point out, that, of course, even a scholar has an obligation to do mitzvos. Perhaps the Haggadah means to say that even though the scholar could easily fulfill his mitzvah on seder night by simply learning the relevant halachos, it is a mitzvah even for him to use much of the night to tell the story.

<sup>16</sup> Mishnah Berurah 67:3 rules that one can fulfill the daily zechira as well by reciting such a halacha. This is based on the Talmud Brachos 13b that says that during his morning lecture Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi would include a halacha on the topic of Yetzias Mitzrayim so as to fulfill the daily mitzvah of zechira without interrupting the lecture.

<sup>17</sup> Bisomim Rosh 173 and Teshuvos HoRosh, cited in Sedei Chemed 2 pg. 352 suggest that this zechira is unlike the mitzvah to remember what Amaleik did to us where the possuk states both "don't forget," and "remember," indicating that the requirement to remember is more than just in one's mind.

<sup>18</sup> 18a.

<sup>19</sup> End of Chapter 67. Sdei Chemed also cites Teshuvos Horosh 24-2 who writes that since the mitzvah can be done in one's mind we do not recite a bracha upon it.

<sup>20</sup> Shaagas Aryeh 13. See Minchas Chinuch who considers that the difference between sippur of seder night and zechira of all year is that zechira can be done by merely thinking about yetzias mitzrayim. The Minchas Chinuch summarily rejects this possibility by citing the view of the Shaagas Aryeh.

<sup>21</sup> Torah Temimah, Devorim 16:3, note 22.

In a fascinating ruling, the Chasam Sofer suggests that although a person cannot fulfill the daily zechira by thinking alone, he would be able to fulfill this mitzvah by listening to another person's recital, even if that person is not obligated in the mitzvah.<sup>22</sup> Normally we only say Shomeah K'Oneh (one who hears is as if he said) when one hears from a person who is included in the mitzvah. Thus, for example, one can fulfill the obligation of Kiddush on Shabbos by listening to an adult reciting Kiddush, but not through the recital of a child. By the daily zechira, however, the Chasam Sofer suggests that although thinking is not sufficient, hearing a non-obligated person's recital would be sufficient<sup>23</sup> because, at its essence, the mitzvah is to remember and not to recite.

### **Part of 613 ?**

The Minchas Chinuch suggests another sophisticated distinction in the strength of these two mitzvos, based on the fact that sippur is counted as one of the 613 mitzvos, while zechira is not. Although zechira is a mitzvah of the Torah, the fact is that it was not stated in the Torah as a command (as was "Vihigadito- You shall tell...") but rather as proper behavior, "In order that you should remember...". The Minchas Chinuch maintains that the rule that "if one makes an oath to violate a mitzvah it does not take effect," only applies to mitzvos of the 613. Since daily zechira is not a mitzvah of the 613, the oath would take effect and would require annulment.<sup>24</sup>

### **Are Women Obligated ?**

Another area of debate is whether women are obligated in the mitzvah of daily zechira. All agree that women are obligated in the mitzvos of the seder.<sup>25</sup> When it comes to the daily zechira, however, there is discussion whether the mitzvah of zechira that comes each night and day should be viewed as a Mitzvas Asey Shehaziman Giromah (a positive mitzvah which is time oriented), in which case women would not be obligated.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, the Mishnah Berurah does obligate women in this mitzvah.<sup>27</sup>

### **In Summation**

In summation, we have discussed four significant differences between *sippur* and *zechira*.

- The daily zechira is observed with a brief statement, while sippur of seder night is supposed to be more lengthy.
- Zechira may possibly not require articulation, while sippur most definitely does.
- Zechira is a mitzvah which is not necessarily one of the 613.

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<sup>22</sup> Teshuvos Orach Chayim 15.

<sup>23</sup> Although in most cases a person would recite the passage for themselves, in the case of a patient who has trouble talking, an adult can recite the passage by virtue of the rule Shemeyah K'Oneh. If, however, an adult was unavailable, according to the approach of the Chasam Sofer, the patient might be able to listen to a child's recital of the daily zechira and thus fulfill at least this particular mitzvah.

<sup>24</sup> Mitzvah 21.

<sup>25</sup> Shulchan Aruch 472:14, based on Talmud Pesachim 108. The reason cited is that "they too were part of the miracle."

<sup>26</sup> Shaagas Aryeh 12 cited in Mishnah Berurah 70:2.

<sup>27</sup> 70:1.

- Zechira might not be obligatory for women, while participating in the sippur of seder night most certainly is.

On a practical level, both men and women should observe the mitzvah of zechira both day and night of every day, by articulating a brief statement. As they fulfill the mitzvah, they should be aware of the mitzvah and have intent to fulfill it.<sup>28</sup> The daily zechira is a mitzvah which ensures that we remain in touch with this inaugural experience of our history. It ensures that we do not arrive at the annual Pesach seder out of touch.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, it is the lively annual Pesach seder that ensures that the details of that experience will remain with us forever.

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<sup>28</sup> See Mishnah Berurah 46:31. An example of a brief statement to fulfill this mitzvah is presented by the Talmud, Brachos 14b.

<sup>29</sup> If one were to arrive at the Pesach seder without "remembering" throughout the year, it would be similar to one who is out of touch with Judaism except for the annual tribute of the High Holidays. Daily reminders and experiences help ensure that the annual grand experience will be meaningful.