

Sefer Vayikra

THE PENSON FAMILY EDITION

FOR THE REFUAH SHLEIMA OF RIVKA BAS SHOSHANA

פסח

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Havdalah - The Secret of Pesach

Transcribed from "TAPE #E-271 - Havdalah: The Secret of Pesach" The last lecture the Rov gave before his passing on the 27th of Nissan 5761

Hashem Makes Havdalah

In the weekday brachos of shemonah esrei, the first bracha is אתה חונן לאדם דעת. You, Hashem, bestow understanding upon man. This is the great gift of *da'as*. Only man possesses it. And in that bracha we include, when necessary, the subject of *havdalah*. We say אתה חוננתנו on *motza'ei Shabbos* and on *motza'ei Yom Tov*.

So why is *havdalah* connected to this subject of *da'as*? And our Chachomim tell us, אין דעה, הברלה, מנין. If you don't have *da'as*, then you're not able to make a proper *havdalah* - a correct and accurate separation between different things. Now, this is a *yesod* in understanding all the things of the world and of the Torah. In order to make a proper *havdalah*, you must have *da'as*. Otherwise, you mix things together that don't belong together.

This great gift of *da'as* was given to us so that we should use our minds to understand how to make *havdalah*. And if that's the purpose of *da'as*, then we see that it is a superlative function of our lives to continue making *havdalah* - to always utilize the gift of *da'as* to understand the difference between one thing and another.

We say, בין קודש לחול. Looking at them they seem the same. And if you don't have *da'as* you might even treat them the same. And that would be a very serious error. A person must understand that *kodesh* must be handled with the utmost respect. Anything that is *kodesh* must be appreciated as such.

And people who never learned *da'as* are constantly making mistakes in differentiating and in separating between *kodesh* and *chol*. They don't know it and they may never even realize their errors. But it's a very important and fundamental separation - the separation בין קודש לחול.

Similarly, בין ישראל לעמים. To understand the difference between Yisroel and, l'havdil, the other nations, is a fundamental purpose of *da'as*. It is of utmost necessity to make this *havdalah*. And אין דעה הברלה מנין. You need a great deal of training of the mind to make *havdalah* between Yisroel and all of the nations of the world. It's not as simple as people think. You must sharpen your *chush*, your sense of *da'as*, in order to realize the tremendous distance between ישראל לעמים. And even if you spend all your life thinking about that subject, it's still not enough. אין דעה הברלה מנין! It's such an important *havdalah*, and it has to be understood on a fundamental level.

We also say, בין יום השביעי לששת ימי המעשה. Now, every loyal Jew knows the difference between the Shabbos and the weekdays. But you don't know. You think you know, but you don't! You have to study what Shabbos means. It requires *da'as*. What is the effect of Shabbos on your *neshama*? On your life and on your character in *Olam Haze*? What is the effect of Shabbos on you in *Olam Habah*?

And if you didn't study it - if you didn't study these things - then although you say the words, it's not a full *havdalah*. You need to study and think about the *havdalah* between these things in order to appreciate the vast difference between them. אין דעה הברלה מנין. Without *da'as*, without study and contemplation, there can be no *havdalah*. Of course you'll tell me, "I make *havdalah* all the time," but it's nothing. It's just words, just words.

It's an important subject that you're hearing now. Don't think it's a small thing. And who is the only one

who can make the *havdalah* properly? ברוך אתה ה' המבדיל בין קודש לחול. You, Hashem, are capable of understanding what the true difference is. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is the one who knows the full difference. He is the One who is המבדיל. He made the *havdalah* and therefore only He really understands the *havdalah*. And we have to spend our lives studying the *havdalah* in order to understand it properly.

The Secret of *Shatnez*

In Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer we are given a reason for the *din* of *shatnez*. Everyone knows that *shatnez* is one of the *chukim* - and yet a reason is offered. We know that Kayin brought מפרי האדמה. And according to Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer, some *pishtan*, some flax, was included in his gift or is a *remez* for his gift. So *pishtan*, flax, represents Kayin. And the korban of Hevel, the צאנו is symbolized by *tzemer*, wool. Maybe he actually brought *tzemer* as well. But, in any case, it is symbolized by wool. And Hakodosh Boruch Hu made a decree that the two should never mix. The flax of Kayin and the wool of Hevel should not mix.

Now, Kayin you should know, was an important personality - a very great man. He was a son of Adam and Chava! And we know also that Hakodosh Boruch Hu spoke to him. And when Kayin saw how Hakodosh Boruch Hu turned away from his korban and favored the korban of Hevel, he became terribly discouraged. ויפלו פניו - his face fell down. That means that he became terribly discouraged. Because Kayin knew that the purpose of man in this world is למצוא חן בעיני ה' - to find favor in the eyes of Hashem. That's why you're in this world. You're here to find favor in the eyes of Hashem.

Now, Kayin wasn't entirely rejected by Hashem. Only that He elected was chosen. And that, to Kayin was a tremendous defeat. He desired to be the best. He desired to be the closest to Hashem. You should know, that Kayin was closer to Hashem than the best people of our generation. I'm not saying he was a little better than the best of our generation. No; much more than that. And yet, he wasn't satisfied. Kayin understood why he was in this world. And he wanted to be the best. Everybody should desire to be the best. And when Kayin saw that Hevel was granted favor,

then - וירע לקין. Even more than that, it says, וירע לקין. He was terribly distressed! He was overwhelmed with sadness.

Now, Hakodosh Boruch Hu had a reason. It's not so simple. You have to have more explanation to understand why the korban of Kayin was not accepted as was the korban of Hevel. But whatever the reason is, Hakodosh Baruch Hu found a certain excellence in the korban of Hevel that He didn't find in the korban of Kayin. He was *mavdil*. He made *havdalah*. If we had been present, I don't know whether we would have seen any difference. Why not favor the korban of Kayin? Why not? פרי האדמה! Why not?

However, Hakodosh Baruch Hu did see a difference. And Hakodosh Baruch Hu said that the korban of Hevel is superior to that of Kayin and therefore I am going to make a *chok* forever. The *chok* of *shatnez*. That's what the Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer says. You can't mix wool and linen. Wool and linen should not mix. Now, it's not because linen is not kosher. You can wear a linen garment. Hashem didn't *pasul* linen. He didn't say it's *treif*. But it's the mixing that is the problem! You have to make *havdalah* between the one whom Hashem chose and the one who was not chosen.

Separating Between the Great and the Greater

That's a very important lesson. There's nothing wrong with linen. You can wear a linen *begeh* as long as it's not mixed with wool. Why shouldn't you wear linen?! There's nothing wrong with that. But linen has no business together with wool. That's the *gzeirah* forever and ever. You have to keep in mind the tremendous difference between a good man and a better man. אינו דומה שונה פרקו מאה פעמים למאה ואחת. Here you have a person who learns a certain *inyan*, a certain *sugya* a hundred times. A *tzadik*. A *shakdan* and a *mivakeish emes*. He wants to know the Torah, so he reviews it a hundred times! And still, it's אינו דומה. There's no comparison between him and the one who did it a hundred and one times!

Why אינו דומה? Sure it's דומה! It's only one more time. One time to a hundred is not a big amount. But still, it's אינו דומה, because Hashem has the infinite *Da'as* to understand the difference. There's a

tremendous difference between a hundred times and a hundred and one times. That one time! We don't see it, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu sees it. Hashem says, אינו רומה!

The possuk says, ושבתם - "Someday you will come back, וראיתם - and you will see, בין עובד אלוקים לאשר לא, בין עובד - between the one who is a servant of Hashem and the one who is not His servant."

Who is this עובד אלוקים? The Gemara says that it's the one who learns *mei'ah v'achas*, a hundred and one times. And the one who learns it only a hundred times is called a לא עבדו. He didn't serve Hashem. That's a tremendous thing to say! לא עבדו?! He didn't serve Hashem?! A hundred times he learned it! That's not serving Hashem?! No, it's לא עבדו, the gemara says. Compared to the other one it's called לא עבדו.

Right now, we're not capable of seeing a difference. But someday, ושבתם וראיתם - you will come back and you will see the tremendous difference. And just like Kayin was extremely overwhelmed with grief, so too all those people will see how their *chaveirim* excelled a little more - even just a little better, a little more perfect - and they will be distressed. Because it's not a little. That little bit is not little at all! That little bit is so tremendous, that Hashem will show His favor to those who added one more time.

And so, forever and ever we have to teach ourselves that no matter how important Kayin was, no matter how sincere his korban was, but still Hevel was superior. Kayin was a great personality. He was a great man. Hashem even spoke to him. And nevertheless, Hakadosh Baruch Hu saw that Hevel was superior - in a way that we wouldn't.

Now, besides the important lesson of being intent on, and striving to become better than you are. Besides the important teaching, that you shouldn't be satisfied with what you have already accomplished. It's of utmost necessity that you should always forge ahead more and more because you can never tell what you can make out of yourself! But besides that, we're going to learn now, how very great is the spiritual value of *ruchniyus*. And how very vast is the separation between someone who is great and someone who is greater. When it comes to *gashmiyus*

it may seem to us only a minor difference. You may not even see the difference. But when it comes to *ruchniyus* the difference is vast. Sometimes it's so vast that we're astonished to see the difference. ושבתם וראיתם בין עובד אלוקים לאשר לא עבדו. "But both of us were *tzadikim g'murim*," you'll say. No, that's not enough. He is bigger than you and that difference makes all the difference in the world.

Shem Pulls Ahead of Yefes

Another example: When Noach drank wine, he fell asleep and became uncovered. And the possuk says, ויקח שם ויפת את את השמלה. And Shem and Yefes took a garment to cover up their father. Now, it doesn't say ויקחו - "And they took." It says, ויקח - and he took. Because Shem is the one who began. He's the one who first started it. And as soon as Yefes saw what Shem was going to do, he immediately came and joined in. He also took hold of the *begeh*. You have to know that Yefes was a great personality. He didn't have to be told to join in. ויקח שם - and Shem took the *begeh*. And Yefes leaped up, "I also want a *cheilek*!" And both of these *tzadikim* walked backwards in order to honor their father and they covered him up.

Now, Cham is left out of the picture. Cham certainly has no comparison to these two *tzadikim*. But even among these two *tzadikim* Hashem gave His declaration forever and ever. יפת אלוקים ליפת - Yes, I'm going to give *harchava*, wide dominion and power to Yefes. He'll spread over the world. A *tzadik* deserves recognition. Yefes will not be forgotten. What he did is forever and ever. But וישכון באהלי שם. Where will the *sh'china* dwell? Where will Hashem reside? Only באהלי שם - only in the tents of Shem.

That's a tremendous statement. The *sh'china* will not be in the אהלי יפת. Only in the אהלי שם. Even though both of them were engaged in the mitzvah. What did Yefes do? He joined in. He joined in wholeheartedly. Shem only began it. So what? What about it? And the answer is that the one who begins is infinitely greater. The *chiluk*, the tremendous difference between the one who thought of it first and the one who joins in fully, is so vast that Hashem will never forget that.

And although **יפת אלוקים ליפת** - "I'm going to give him **הרחבה**," says Hashem. **יפת** means **הרחבה**. I'm going to give him wide power in the world. His children will fill up the continents. They will build big cities. They will be very learned men. And there will even be tzadikim among them. Yes, there will be tzadikim among them as well. But, **וישכון** - the *sh'china* will not dwell there. **וישכון באהלי שם**. The *sh'china* will reside only in the tents of Shem, forever and ever.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the source of Da'as. He is the One who knows how to make *havdalah*. And He understands how tremendous is the difference between **שם** and Yefes. We don't understand it. We see a difference, but not to that extent. Such a difference doesn't even enter our minds at all. Because we don't have the minds big enough. **אם אין רעה הברלה**. You need understanding to make such differences. Hakadosh Baruch Hu makes that *havdalah*.

Avraham Avinu Keeps Far Away

And now we come to our Avos. You know, Avraham Avinu lived a peculiar kind of life. He was a wealthy man. He could have settled anywhere. And he had where to go. He had places to settle. For instance, in the city of Shalem was a good town under the rule of Malki-tzedek. The king of Shalem was a tzadik. And Avraham could have just as well settled with **מלכי-צדק**. But he didn't settle there. He didn't settle anywhere.

ויתהלכו מגוי אל גוי. He went from one place to another. **וממלכה אל עם אחר**. He moved from place to place. He chose to be a **רועה צאן**, not a farmer who settles in one place. He didn't build a home. He had no business with cities or towns. He kept apart from everybody. *Agav urcha*, Hashem didn't give him any daughters either so that he shouldn't have any *mechutanim* among the gentiles. That would have joined him too much to the people around him.

So Avraham, all his life was a **נודד**, **בודד**. We are a nation that dwells alone. **הן עם לבוד ישכון**. Now, why did Avraham do that? We understand that Avraham was a man of great *dei'ah* - a man of tremendous understanding! He was the most outstanding original thinker in the world. Moshe Rabeinu was very great. But Avraham Avinu was the most original thinker. And

Avraham saw the tremendous difference between himself and all the *umos* - all the nations of the world. Even the tzadikim. Even the tzadikim like Malki-tzedek.

Now, it's true that Avraham had *talmidim*. The Rambam says that he had thousands of *talmidim*. But he still kept apart from everybody. It seems like a very queer kind of behavior. But the *shitah* of Avraham was *havdalah*. And because of this *shitah*, he became chosen by Hakadosh Baruch Hu. We cannot estimate, we cannot even fathom how difficult it was **בימים ההם** to be a wanderer among the nations. When you came to a foreign town, if they seized you and made you an *eved* you couldn't say a word. You couldn't do a thing. You had no rights. And it happened all the time. It was a common occurrence. They seized the wife of Avraham Avinu. It was only because Hashem intervened that his wife was rescued. It was a great *sakanah* to wander around alone. And Avraham risked everything. He made sure to be alone, to be on his own. For what purpose? To maintain the separation from the world. He was the father of the **עם קשי עורף**. He was the progenitor of the stubborn nation. A nation that is stubborn about not having anything to do with the *umos ha'olam*.

A Public Demonstration

And now we come to the subject of the yontif of Pesach. Pesach consists of two main elements. Pesach is really before the yontif of Pesach. The *Korban Pesach* is before Pesach. Then comes Chag Hamatzos. It's two different things - Pesach and Chag Hamatzos.

What was the outstanding feature of the *Korban Pesach*? We understand it from the words of Moshe Rabeinu himself. When Moshe heard the mitzvah of *Korban Pesach* from Hashem, he was astounded. He was astonished. "Do You mean to say that we will publicly take a sheep or a lamb to slaughter it?!" And the goy will ask, "What are you doing with that?!" Where are you going with that?!" So the Jew would say, "We're going to slaughter it." "What?! You're going to slaughter the lamb?!" You know that the Egyptians despised the *Ivrim*. The Egyptians considered the *Ivrim* a very low people. They wouldn't eat together with them. It says that in the Torah again and again.

The Egyptians wouldn't eat with the *Ivrim* because the *Ivrim* were to them *mamash a tumahdikeh* nation. If you can slaughter a lamb - a lamb was *kadosh* to the Egyptians - then they despised you. Now, why it was *kadosh* to them is not my business now to tell you. It's a well known fact. So Moshe Rabeinu said, **הן נזבח את**, **תועבת מצרים לעיניהם ולא יסקלונו**. "You mean that we'll be able to slaughter the *to'avas Mitzrayim*- that means the *avodah zarah* of Egyptians - we'll slaughter their *avodah zarah* and they won't kill us? They'll massacre us! How can we even think of such a thing!?"

Now, you might say, well, so we won't take it too long beforehand. We'll just take the lamb right before the time comes to *shecht* it. That way, the goy won't have a chance to see what we're doing. We could take the lamb - the *Korban Pesach* - for that purpose just a minute before the *sh'chitah*. No, you can't do that. Hashem says, **"מקחו מבעשור"** - On the tenth day of Nissan - long before Pesach, they had to take it.

They made a demonstration - a public demonstration. It wasn't hidden. Everyone could see the lamb. The Mitzri would ask, "What are you holding it for?" And the Yisroel had to answer, "I'm bringing a *zevach* - a sacrifice." "What *zevach*!? You're going to slaughter a lamb?!" To the Egyptians, that's a terrible thing. All of Egypt would get up in a rage and massacre the Bnei Yisroel. It would cause a pogrom of mass proportion. That's what Moshe Rabeinu expected. **ולא יסקלונו**, he said. They're going to stone us all.

So Hakadosh Baruch Hu told him, "That is the *mitzvah* of *Korban Pesach*." To slaughter what is considered by the *umos ha'olam* to be so precious. To make an open demonstration that what's important to them, what's untouchable to them, what's impossible for them to think of slaughtering - we go ahead and we disregard it completely. And with *chutzpah*, with a brazen boldness! We openly go ahead and we proclaim that we act according to the *ratzon* of Hashem and we are *shechting* the *avodah zarah* of the goyim. Of course, once you do it that way, it's not *avodah zarah* anymore. Now, it becomes *avodas Hashem* to *shecht* that lamb. It's *kadosh*. It's the *kedusha* of breaking down all the ideals of the *umos ha'olam*.

The Jewish People Revolt Against the World

The *Korban Pesach* is a revolt. Am Yisroel revolts against the world **על פי ה**. And not only in the matter of slaughtering a lamb. That's just a symbol. In general, it's a *klal gadol* that the Am Yisroel disregards the *umos ha'olam*. We are different. We are fundamentally different than the *umos ha'olam*. And this fundamental truth is so important that it had to be set down in the beginning of our history. When we left Mitzrayim and first became a nation, this *yesod* of what Am Yisroel is, was emphasized to us with the *Korban Pesach*. We disregard their holy feelings. We disregard their worship. We disregard the honor they give to their religion. To us, it's nothing at all. It's *hevel v'rik*. And that's how important it is to understand the *Korban Pesach*. The *Korban Pesach* means to throw away, to ignore, to oppose with a complete disregard, all of the ways of the *umos ha'olam*.

Now this is a very important point. Am Yisroel was chosen to be the **הן עם לברד ישכון**. We are alone - separate from all the nations of the world. We are to be entirely different. **ודרתיהם שונות מכל עם**. Everything the Am Yisroel does has to be different. And that's so important, that it's the foundation of our *kiyum*. That was the foundation of the birth of the Am Yisroel when we left Mitzrayim. Just because of this act of separating from the goyim - just because they made an open demonstration that they're breaking off in every respect from the *umos ha'olam* - that's why they're going to have a *kiyum*. That's why the Am Yisroel will survive.

Now for this you have to have *havdalah*. To achieve this separation you must know how to make *havdalah*. But *havdalah* needs *Da'as*. You have to learn *Da'as*. What is the great difference **בין ישראל לעמים**? Now, we all know. We think we know! But we don't know anything. We have to study and make our minds into Torah minds. We have to live with the attitudes of the Torah, the thoughts of Hashem. Little by little it will dawn upon us how tremendous is the difference. Even a little boy of the Am Yisroel is more important than the greatest of the *umos ha'olam*. No comparison at all! To save the life of one Jewish child, you can be *michaleil Shabbos*. But to save the life of a thousand,

even ten thousand goyim you cannot be *michaleil Shabbos*. Nothing will help. It's a tremendous difference. And what I said is not yet enough. It's only the beginning. And Hakadosh Baruch Hu is the only one who knows how great, how very vast, is the difference.

We Think Like the Goyim

Now when we talk about the *Korban Pesach*, we should try our best to understand what the *Korban Pesach* is telling us. It is teaching us that Hakadosh Baruch Hu was **הברילנו מן הגוים**. He was **הברילנו מן הטועים**. He made us different. And we should dedicate our lives towards trying to answer this question: What is the true Torah way? What is the true Torah attitude that is free of any adulteration, free from any admixture of ideas of the outside world. We don't realize that our minds are an **עירבוביא** - a mixture of true Torah attitudes with false attitudes of the outside world. And we have to make a *havdalah*. We have to separate between these attitudes.

Once upon a time every Jew lived in Eretz Yisroel. He had no connection with the *umos ha'olam*. It was a different world. A different life. They thought like Jews. They thought like the *zera Avraham*. Today when we live among the gentiles, we have to know for certain that there's an **עירבוביא** - there's a mixture in our minds. Our minds are full of outside things. Now you might say, "No, I'm a *ben-Torah*. I'm a Yeshiva man." Well, I'm sorry to tell you that even the fact that I'm speaking English to you is already an **עירבוביא**. Don't think it's a small thing.

We're so accustomed to it. We're assimilated already. We're in the American melting pot. And we're melting. Just the fact that I'm speaking English to you is a *sakanah*. I know people laugh at that. They think it's too extreme. "You have to know English. You have to make a living," they tell me. Yes, you have to make a living. But to speak English at home?! That's a tremendous *yeridah!* In Europe nobody spoke Lithuanian or Russian. It was a *bizayon* for a Jew to speak *goyish*. Even *apikorsim* spoke only Yiddish. It was a shame to speak *goyish*. But today we've accepted it.

Making Havdalah in Mitzrayim

Now, in Mitzrayim the people didn't do that. All the names are names of *lashon kodesh*. Names like **גמליאל** and **פרהצור**. Beautiful *lashon kodesh* names. **לא שינו את לשונם**. They didn't change their language. Imagine being in America two hundred and ten years. Two hundred and ten years and not changing your language! It was a *nisayon* that they went through. And Hashem expected that. And it was because of that - because they made the *havdalah* that Hashem expected of them - because of that, Hashem took them out of Mitzrayim. Now, they are ready to go out into the world and to fight back against all the errors and falsehoods out the goyim.

The possuk says: **הנה חושך יכסה ארץ** - "Behold, a darkness covers the whole world, **וערפל לאומים** - and a thick cloud envelops the nations." They are covered by a thick dark cloud of error. All the goyim live in error. So you might say, "Well, it's not so. They make some errors. But how can the possuk say that they live in error?! Are they completely covered by a cloud of darkness?!" The *teirutz* is that yes, they're all living completely in error. And the problem is that we live among them. We live with them and you have to know that we have the **עירבוביא** in our heads. That's why we say, **וקבצינו והצילינו מן הגוים**. "Please Hashem, rescue us from the goyim, **להודות לשם קרשיך** - so that we will be able to praise and elevate Your name." Otherwise, if we continue to live among the goyim, in the **עירבוביא**, then we won't ever be able to understand perfectly our duty towards you, Hashem. And that's the very great *nisayon* of the *golus* we live in.

Shechting Lambs and Slaughtering Ideas

We must know, that one of the most important functions of the **עם ישראל** is to always keep in mind that great lesson that the *Korban Pesach* comes to teach us: the most important lesson that you have to slaughter all the ideas and ideals of the outside world. Which ones? There's no end to the things that we have to be aware of. There are thousands ideas of the gentiles that we have in our heads. Thousands! And the only way to know how to be *mavdil* is to consult that one *sefer*. There's only one *sefer* in the world. Hashem's *sefer* is the only *sefer* that will tell us what is

the right way to live, the right way to think. But even with this *sefer*, you must constantly be aware. Because if you put into your mind the ideas of this *sefer* together with the ideas of the gentile world, there will still be that **עירבוביא**, and you will have to work always to clean out your mind from the *darkei ha'goyim*.

This is a very important subject, a vital function of our stay in this world, and people are not doing it. They don't even think about it. They think everything is alright. Now, it's a pleasure to see frum Jews. It's a pleasure to see people who are *shomrei mitzvos*. It's a pleasure to see *bnei Torah*. It's a *mamash* a pleasure to see that. It's a happiness to see frum girls, Beis Yaakov girls. But you have to know that it's not what it used to be. Once upon a time in Europe, way back, about two hundred years ago, the **עם ישראל** lived by themselves. They were an **עם לבוד ישכון**. They lived in small towns or in areas that were set off from the *goyim*. They lived lives that were completely separate from the *goyim*. They spoke only Yiddish in the small towns. And the streets were streets of *yiras shamayim*. We have no idea how much *emunah* every *poshuteh* person had in those days.

The Murderous Newspaper

Almost eighty years ago, Rav Yeruchem, *zichrono l'vracha*, the Mashgiach in the Mir Yeshiva, made the following statement: "We cannot understand the greatness of our great-grandmothers." We're not talking about the great-grandfathers. He said the great-grandmothers. You have no idea how much *kedusha* existed in the Am Yisroel.

This was all until the newspapers began coming in. Newspapers came in at that time and began to change the people. The people were ruined by the newspapers. At first people kept everything. They kept everything but they read the newspapers. And the **עירבוביא** began to enter their minds. Now we think, "Alright, maybe reading newspapers is a waste of time. But that's all it is - a waste of time." No, it's so much worse than that. We don't realize. The newspapers are *mamash* gentile poison. You pass by a newsstand, you look at the headlines, that's enough. But to buy it, take it home and read it?! You're bringing poison into your home.

Now, that's what caused a tremendous descent. It wiped out the *kedusha* - a large part of the *kedusha* - of the Am Yisroel. You have no idea how much we lost. I'll tell you what the Chofetz Chaim said: "Because of the newspapers," he said, "we have **אין בית אשר אין שם מת**." Every house has somebody who has been spoiled by the newspapers.

The Good Old Days in The Ghetto

But in the olden days, it was very different. Before they had contact with the *goyim*. No *goyishe* periodicals. No *goyishe* books. No *goyishe* newspapers. Even the Jewish *resha'im*, the Maskilim's Hebrew and Yiddish newspapers were treated like *goyishe* newspapers. No! No newspapers! There was only one book. Only one *sefer*. The *Toras Hashem*. The *Chumash* and the *Gemara*. The *Gemara* and the *Chumash*. That was what a Jew read. And it was from the Torah that a Jew developed his attitudes and ideals. Only from the Torah. And the Am Yisroel was *kadosh* then.

To people today it may seem like a *guzmah* - like an exaggeration. But you have no idea. You have no idea. If you read the *sefer Zichron Yaakov* - it's the three volumes - it talks about the olden days. It seems like a **הלום**! It's just a dream. But it was a true **הלום**. But even then, even two hundred years ago, before the onset of the *yeridah*, it was nothing compared to what it had been when the Am Yisroel had been together on its own land. **וקבצינו והצילינו מן הגוים** - Rescue us from the *goyim*. Not because we're being persecuted. They're not harming us. But they're harming our minds - our *neshamos*. And that's why we're so interested in *kibutz goliyos*. To free ourselves from this **עירבוביא** that's in our minds. Now, we don't sense it. We're not aware of it. But we're subject to it. No question about it. We're subject to it on many levels.

Now, when the *Korban Pesach* was slaughtered, it was a tremendous lesson. We have to slaughter the entire *inyan* of anything to do with the ideas, the attitudes, the *middos*, the *hashkafos*, the interests, the practices, the *minhagim* of the *umos ha'olam*. We're not interested! We took the *avodah zarah* of the *Mitzri'yim* and we *shechted* it **לעיניהם**, right before their eyes.

Goyim in The Yeshivos

You pass by a Yeshiva today, you see things going on. טייערע boys, טייערע boys. And yet, they're behaving like goyim. I don't want to say why and how. They're טייערע boys, behaving like goyim. Their games are goyishe games. Their sports are goyishe sports. When you go to a bar-mitzvah, you see that their dancing is goyishe dancing. It's all gentile ways. But Jews should have other ways of doing things. And instead, they're thinking in goyishe ways. Goyishe thoughts. Boruch Hashem, we're happy with them. I'm happy with them. *Kein yirbu*. And *kein yigdilu*. I love them! טייערע boys. And yet, they don't realize that they're being influenced by the outside world tremendously.

And the *Korban Pesach* has to remind us again and again, that instead of absorbing all these outside influences, we should disregard completely what is important to the goyim. It's nothing to us. We shecht the lamb and by doing so, we stand up in opposition to all the ideals of the outside world. We ignore them and demonstrate our disregard for their ideals. We are different and will remain separate. Separate in all our ways.

No Chometz And No Gentiles

And now we come to the *inyan* of Chag Hamatzos. Now, the *matzah* has two parts to it. The *issur* of *chometz* and the *mitzvah* of *matzah*. What is the *issur* of *chometz*? The *issur* of *chometz* means that we are not to have any kind of influence of the *umos ha'olam* among us. That's *chometz*. That's what *chometz* is. לא יראה לך שאור בכל גבולך. No *chometz* should be found in the Jewish *inyanim* at all. In their lives, in their homes, in the way they think, in the way they talk. לא יראה לך. You have to get rid of the *chometz*. And the *chachomim* were *machmir*. Even a משהוא, they said. To make that *havdalah*, to root out even the smallest משהוא of gentile influence. The *bedikas chometz* is really a *bedikah* to examine, "Do I have any עירבוביא of outside world influence inside of me?" And that's a very difficult *bedikah*. It can't be superficial. You have to have a *ner*. The *ner* means the light of the Torah. With the light of the Torah you examine every nook and cranny of your mind. You look for some crumbs too. Nothing of *chometz* should be found בכל גבולך.

Now you should know, that's perfection. That's the system of Avraham Avinu. He was separate from the goyim. He didn't have any gentile attitudes at all. Even to settle in a beautiful city like Shalem, under a *tzadik* like מלכי צדק מלך שלם הוא כהן לאל עליון. No! Because to settle with them means he'd absorb their ideas. And Avraham is not satisfied with that. He doesn't want their ideas. They're not good enough for him. They're very good, but not good enough for Avraham. Avraham made sure to stay separate from them. כל ימיו he was a נודד - a wanderer, never to be influenced by them. Never to settle in a town. Never to settle among them and risk being influenced by their ways and attitudes.

That was the mistake of Lot. He made that great error. ויאהל על סדום. He settled in Sedom. And it ruined him! But Avraham made sure to not settle anywhere.

Hashem Keeps Us Moving Along

And that's one of the reasons Hakadosh Baruch Hu is always moving us around in *golus*. We go from one place to another. Even in our *golus*, we don't stay in one land forever. Because we have to be taught that great lesson. We have to be taught, "Beware of identifying with that nation that you live among!" You have to de-Americanize! Of course, you have to be loyal. You have to be a patriot for the country. You have to do what's right. But don't become one of them. And therefore, when the time comes, Hakadosh Baruch Hu makes a *gzeirah* and He says, "Keep moving. Go on to someplace else." Hashem does this in order that we should never become entirely integrated with our environment.

The Modern Orthodox are making a tremendous error. They think they can be frum Jews and still be mixed with the gentile ideas. And therefore, very many of them are going lost, *nebach*. Very many. Especially their children. And therefore, only the *frummeh*, the ones who live among the *frummeh* in the frum neighborhoods, can remain with Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

It's so important to live in frum neighborhoods. Make sure, at least, that you don't have contact with those neighbors who have an עירבוביא of *chometz* in their minds. And that's the idea of *chometz*. That's the

great lesson of removing all the *chometz*, all the goyishe influences - even the crumbs - from our homes.

Becoming a Kohen

Now we come to the idea of *matzah*. You have to know that the *matzah* is a separate subject. *Matzah!* What does *matzah* come to say? Now, listen to me. It's not enough to know a *havdalah*. It's not enough to know how important it is to separate. It's not enough to know that. You also have to know how important the Am Yisroel is. You have to know that the Am Yisroel is קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני. You are *kadosh* because I am *kadosh*. And therefore, your *kedusha* is almost infinite. Yes, the *kedusha* of the Am Yisroel is almost infinite. You have to look at a fellow Jew with the greatest respect. He's *kadosh*. And his *kedusha* comes from Hashem. כי קדוש אני. You have to train yourself. It takes hard work. You have to knock that *yesod* into your head. When you see a Yisroel, you're seeing a *kadosh*. You must know that ישראל קדושים הם. Now this *kedusha* elevates us to the status of Kohanim. Hashem said to us, אתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים. We - all of us - are called "a nation of Kohanim." The truth is that every Yisroel is now given the status of a Kohen.

What is a Kohen? The *possuk* says, שפתי כהן ישמרו דעת ותורה יבקשו מפייהו. Every Yisroel must know that he has to be a learner. He has to be capable of understanding things. A Kohen must be a learner. אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל בני ישראל. The Torah is for all of the *Bnei Yisroel*. All of Am Yisroel should know - you've now been elevated to the *madreigah* of Kohanim.

Of course, there's a difference. A Kohen of זרע אהרן has different *dinim*. But nevertheless, every Yisroel, man or woman, is a Kohen. And as a Kohen you are *mi'chuyav* to do things that a Kohen has to do. A Kohen must dedicate his life to the service of Hashem. And every Yisroel knows that that's his function in life. You're here in this world to be an *oved Hashem*. You can't just remain a slab of meat your whole life. You're in this world to make something of yourself - to become more and more *kadosh*.

And that's what the *matzah* says. That's what *matzah* is telling you. Because Kohanim, when they eat the *korban mincha*, it has to be *matzah*. The *possuk*

says by a Kohen, מצות תאפה. Only *matzos* he can eat in the *Beis Hamikdash*. A Kohen eats *matzos* all year round. לא תאפה חמץ. You can't have a *chometzdikeh mincha*. And the Kohanim eat the *korban mincha* only because it's *matzah*. It's a special food for the Kohanei Hashem. And we, all of the Am Yisroel, are elevated now, for these days of *Pesach*, in order to remind ourselves that we are eating *matzah* like the Kohanim. Because we are Kohanim!

We are the *Mamleches Kohanim*. We're chosen by Hashem for our excellence and we must put all our efforts into the career of being Kohanei Hashem. Hashem tells us, אתם כהני ה' תקראו. "You'll be called - all of you - ministers to Hashem" Servants of the א-ל חי. לעתיד לבוא. Not some time in the distant future. No! Now, as soon as we came out of *Mitzrayim*, Hashem said that we must eat *matzos*. Hashem was declaring that we are Kohanei Hashem.

How To Eat The Matzah

So whenever you eat the *matzah*, keep in mind that this unleavened bread is teaching you who you really are. You are important. You are a *kadosh*. You shouldn't look down at yourself at all. You are a *kadosh*. Of course, an *anav* is someone who understands that other people are also *kadosh*. We are all *kadosh*. The truth is always that ישראל קדושים הם. The *פסוק* says כי עם קדוש לה' אלוקיך לא תבשל גרי בחלב אמו. It's not just a *guzmah*. It's not just a figure of speech. You're an *am kadosh* right now. Not that one day, in the far off future, after *Moshiach* comes, or in *Olam Habah*, you'll be an *am kadosh*. No! Right now you're a *kadosh*. And *kadosh* means something very important.

Now, only *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* knows how to make the *havdalah* between *kodesh* and *chol*. He is המבריל בין קודש לחול. But at least we have to know that there's a very big *havdalah* - a tremendous *havdalah* between *kodesh* and *chol*. You have to understand that there is vast difference between ourselves and the rest of the world. We are the *am kadosh*. We are a nation that stands out on its own. And you are part of that *am kadosh*. You must always keep that in your mind. When you're walking on the street and the *goyim* are passing by you on all sides, you're thinking,

“They’re all just scenery. It’s nothing at all. I’m a *kadosh*. I’m the reason the world was created.”

And we have to always be working, thinking, to understand that *havdalah*. That’s so essential, so necessary. Otherwise the עירבוביא in our mind is a big confusion of ideas. The עירבוביא is a mixture of *chometz* and *matzah*. You have to set yourself free from the darkness of the world around you. You have to let loose from the media. There’s no in between. You have to make that *havdalah* between yourselves and the ideas outside. אין לך בן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתורה. If you’re not filling your mind with Torah attitudes, then your mind automatically becomes enslaved to gentile ideas and ideals. And then you have the עירבוביא of *chometz* and *matzah* in your minds. And you can’t be a successful person, an *ish shalem*, if you haven’t made that *havdalah*.

You have to be like the *ochlei mincha*. Only מצה תאפה. Only *matzah*, nothing else. Your lives have to be completely dedicated to the to the service of Hashem. That’s who the *ochlei matzah* are. And you must understand that you are in this world to serve Hashem. The *chometz* of the outside world that wants to distract you from your purpose in life has to be removed. That *havdalah* should be clear to you. You’re servants of Hakadosh Baruch Hu like the Kohanim. Our lives are devoted to *avodas Hashem*.

Now people will say, “Certainly I’m an *oveid Hashem*. Certainly. But that’s only part of my life. I have to do other things too. I have a job. I have a family.” The answer is “No! Whatever you are doing in life, you are still a Kohen Hashem. Look, a Kohen can also get a job. But he’s still a Kohen.

You have to go to your office, to your store, whatever it is, to make a living. But you’re still a Kohen Hashem. You have to take care of your children, feed them, bathe them. That doesn’t in any way, affect your status. You’re a servant of Hashem. You must keep that in mind. Hashem made you a Kohen Hashem. There are no options. Nothing can change that fundamental truth. A Yisroel can never change his function in life. And therefore, the Am Yisroel, all of them without exception, should realize the

importance of being the *Mamleches Kohanim*. That’s the *matzah*.

The Sweet Marmor

Now one more element we’ll add to this and that’s *marmor*. The possuk says וימררו את חייהם. The *marmor* is a *zeicher* of our affliction. We lived in bitterness in Mitzrayim. We lived there for 210 years and we couldn’t leave. No hope! No hope at all. They believed *b’emunah*, even *b’emunah sh’laimah* that Hashem would take them out, but they didn’t see it. Many were dying. Every generation died out. What’s going to happen? When will it end? When will the end come? And finally, when they went out with song on that great day, they were full of *kesev v’zahav* and they were singing to Hashem. As they walked out of Mitzrayim, it was מצרים מקברים את מתיהם on all sides. On all sides the Egyptians were burying their dead. It was such a beautiful day. היום יצאתם בחורש האביב. A beautiful spring day. A glorious day to remember forever. זכור היום הזה אשר יצאת ממצרים. Remember this glorious day that you went out of Mitzrayim. Don’t forget that tremendous happiness. And their hearts were full of love of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Don’t ever forget that.

Now, this tremendous feeling of gratitude and love to Hashem was the result of that bitterness that they suffered in Mitzrayim. The *marmor* was the *hakdamah*, the preparation. And when we were freed from that bitterness that we suffered in Mitzrayim, life became so sweet that we became wild with enthusiasm. And now we were ready to do whatever Hakadosh Baruch Hu would say. That’s why we said אנכי ה’ אלוקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית נעשה ונשמע. That’s why at *Matan Torah* Hashem’s first words were אנכי ה’ אלוקיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים מבית נעשה ונשמע. Why did He say that? Because He wanted to tell them, “Do you remember that happiness, that exhilaration, that delirium of *simcha*? That’s how I want that you should always remember Yetzias Mitzrayim.” Always try to remember the tremendous *simcha* that came after the years of bitterness. Always try to remember that.

And therefore, the gratitude for Yetzias Miyzrayim, the *zman cheiruseinu*, is one of the important elements of the Yom Tov of Pesach. Not

only at the time you're eating the matzah. Not only during the Seder. And not only during the time of Yom Tov. But all the days of your life. כל ימי חיך. Always try to remember the great happiness and the love of Hashem that we experienced at Yetzias Mitzrayim. Morning and evening. כל ימי חיך. When you're waking up in the morning. When you're going to sleep at night. Remind yourself again and again. Whenever you have a moment, think about Yetzias Mitzrayim. And when you're mentioning it in your davening, think about what you're saying. Say it with some thinking behind the words. למען תזכרו את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חיך. We love you Hashem forever and ever. And this love will never die out. And all our efforts during the Yom Tov of Pesach should be to try to rekindle this great fire of love of Hashem. And to carry it over to all year round.

The Rav's Last Words

So once more, I'm going to repeat. The *Korban Pesach* comes to show our demonstration against the ideas and attitudes of the world. Openly! The Rambam says that they know that we don't agree with them. The gentiles know that we don't agree with them. They know that we disregard what is so important to them and we're still allowed to live among them. We do what we have to do. We say שהם משתחוים להבל וריק. They bow down to nothing. כי כל אלוהי העמים אלילים. All of their gods are nothing-gods. We say that all the time. And we have to demonstrate it openly. Now, you don't have to tell it to a goy to his face. You don't have

to insult him. But among ourselves we have to say the truth.

And the truth is that the goyim are living in darkness, in error. הנה חושך יכסה ארץ. Darkness covers the world. Their ideals and attitudes and behavior are all darkness. ועליך יזרח ה'. But only on you, the Am Kadosh, does Hashem's light shine.

And then we have to remember also to be *bodeik chometz* always. We shouldn't have any gentile things, even a crumb of gentile ideas in our minds at all.

We must always know how important we are, how *kadosh* we are. Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim to be His people. He made us His קדוש וגוי. *ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש*. And therefore we eat *matzah*, the food of the Kohanim, to show that we're elevated to a very great status in the eyes of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

And always remember the *marror*. Once upon a time we suffered. We suffered terribly in Mitzrayim and Hakadosh Baruch Hu brought us out. You redeemed us from that bitterness and we experienced such a great happiness. You chose us - הבוחר בעמו - and we will never ever forget Your love for us. We will never forget, until finally the time will come when פתחו שערים - Open up the gates, ויבוא גוי, צדיק שומר אמונים, and the righteous nation that remained loyal for so many years in *golus* will finally come home and be together again.

Rabosai, thank you for coming. You all should have *bracha v'hatzlacha* חג כשר ושמחה and many, many happy and kosher Pesachs.

Havdalah - The Secret of Pesach - Transcribed from Tape #E-271

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