

INSIGHTS INTO PESSACH

The gimatria of the word פסח is 148. Were we to add $1+4+8$, we would get 13, which is the gimatria of אהבה – love. Pesach is a time of love, as the passuk says ועתך – עת דודים – it was a time of love, referring to the exodus from Egypt. Furthermore, the gimatria of קמח – flour, is also 148, which we use to make Matza. The Gimatria of לחם – bread, is 78, and יין – wine, is 70. together this too is 148. Matza is also called לחם, so the לחם of Matza and the יין – wine, are the vehicles of our celebration on Pesach.

It is well known that we have a practice to distribute קמחא דפסחא – flour for passover, every year to the needy of the community. Why? Because the gimatria of פסח is 148, the same as קמח – flour, and also the same as חונן דל – mercy of the disadvantaged. We must distribute goods to the disadvantaged so that they will have what they need for a proper Seder.

Another explanation, by Rav Naftali of Rofshitz, is given. With regards to the holiday of Pesach the Torah writes שבעת ימים תאכלו מצות – it takes a lot of money to afford matza for seven days. In contrast, by succot it says בסוכות תשבו שבעת ימים and its free to sit in a succah! Therefore the established practice of distributing mass funds was established on Pesach and not on Succot.

HOLIDAYS OF TZEDAKA

On three annual holidays is there an established practice to specifically distribute funds to the poor. Those are Yom Kippur, Pessach and Purim. Yom Kippur has the Kapparot which go directly to the poor, Purim has Matanot LaAniyim and Pessach has Kimcha DePischa. The final letters of these three holidays together spells רחם – have mercy. The gimatria of them is 248 the same as Avraham, and we know that Avraham personified the trait of Chessed.

Additionally, the first letters of the above holidays together spells כסף – money. The most impactful act of mercy toward those less fortunate is that of giving ones money to those people and assisting them in living well with dignity.

THE HEALING MATZAH

The Haggadah says about the wicked child: You should whack his teeth, saying: Had you been present at the time you would not have been redeemed. But the obvious question is: Is hitting him the best response at the moment? Will it make him consider Teshuva any more than without hitting? Probably not. But there is a

gimatria lesson hidden. The Gimatria of רשע is 570. If you take the word שניו (Teeth) out, by subtracting it from רשע, you get $570-366=204$. The Gimatria of 204 is צדיק – Therefore, by removing the element of wickedness from within the Rasha, you make him a Tzaddik, and worthy of redemption.

PESSACH = 613

The word פסח in Milui Gimatria is פ"ה – 85, סמ"ך – 7, 408 – 120 altogether 613! This is to teach us that he who fulfills Passover properly, it is as if he fulfilled all 613 commandments.

THE HEALING MATZAH

The Pri Tzadik, Rabbi Tzadok HaCohen of Lublin used to say that by establishing seven days of the year in which we are meant only to eat Matza and not bread, it contained within it healing value. Leavened bread, he would say, has unhealthy properties. But we could counteract these properties by undergoing an annual seven day "Detox" period. This, he said, is alluded to in the Passuk in Yeshayahu. מחץ מכתו ירפא – that Hashem will heal all wounds, but מחץ has the same letters as חמץ. Therefore, the message is that all the negative properties of חמץ that we may have all year long are counteracted upon by the seven days a year in which we refrain from eating Chametz, and eat only Matza.

MATZA SHMURA

Why is the matza we eat at the seder and on pesach called matza shmura? The answer is that during the sin of Adam and Eve, when the snake persuaded them to eat from the tree of knowledge, all of the fruits of the earth were cursed, and were infused with a venom. The only thing that was spared was the wheat that would be watched from the moment of harvest for the purpose of Matza. This is alluded to in the gimatria, for the gimatria of the word נחש – snake is 358. Solar year has 365 days. Deduce the 358 from the 365 and you are left with 7. this corresponds to the seven days of the year that were not affected by the snake in that first sin.

THE WINE OF THE PLAGUES THAT SAVED - STORY

It was customary that every year, after spilling the wine of the 10 plagues in the Pessach seder, The Alter of Shfuleh would carefully dispose of the wine. According to the kaballah, that wine has dangerous *kochot* to

cause harm, and he was extra careful that it be disposed of properly. One year he did not do this, and his family members noticed the change, and knowing that every decision he makes is calculated, they knew that he had good reason for this. He collected the spilled wine in a little container, and took the container with him into his room.

On chol hamoed of that Pessach a man came to visit the Alter of Shfuleh. His name was Rav Ze'ev Pundekai, a very well known chassid. The Alter was very happy to see him and greeted him very warmly. He gave Rav Ze'ev the, royal guest treatment, and before sending him off on his way, he handed him something. "I want to give you something you will surely find very useful in the near future, it is the spilled wine from my seder that was spilled while I recited the 10 plagues. Keep it well in your home." He went on to tell Rav Ze'ev, "But this wine isn't saved for you. It's usefulness will soon be revealed to you," and wished him goodbye with that cryptic message. Rav Ze'ev kept it tightly, and when he got home, he told all his children to be very careful with it, and not to touch it.

Rav Ze'ev owned and managed a number of inns for a living. Many of the farmers who worked in the area would come regularly to the tavern in Rav Ze'ev's inn to drink a little vodka and to relax after their hard days at work.

Many months went by and it was a stormy October night, and it was snowing raining and no one came to the tavern. Suddenly a wagon pulled up in front of the entrance to the tavern. Three Russian farmers entered asking for a strong drink. Just as he brought the three their vodkas, they stood up, holding guns.

"Fool! You think we would shlep out in this disgusting weather for some vodka? We came to rob you. Don't move." They proceeded to tie him and his eldest son who was with him up. Then they went upstairs to his private residence and tied his wife and other children up. Then they made their way across the property, collecting whatever valuables they could into their suitcase. He was powerless. Just before leaving, one of the bandits noticed a locked chest in Rav Zeev's bedroom. He broke it open to find the wine, in a glass container. He assumed this must be a rare and prestigious wine.

"Look here," he shouted. "This must be a very expensive wine as he has it locked up alone. Let's drink some of it." He poured himself some and was amazed. "I never tasted a wine like this before." He gave some over to his partners and they were all amazed. And then, all of a sudden, all three of them collapsed on the floor, in a

deep sleep. Rav Zeev remembered what the Alter told him, that the wine would serve him well, one day, and this was the day. He made his way over to the kitchen, and leaved against a knife until it cut open the the rope in which he was tied. He immediately untied the rest of his family members, and hurried to tie those bandits, before calling out for the police to have them taken away. When the police came, the three men were still asleep. Baruch Hashem, the great wisdom and piety of the Alter of Shfuleh saved Rav Zeev and his family.

THE POWER OF SHABBAT

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת

"Thus shall the children of Israel observe the Sabbath"

I heard a wonderful Dvar Torah from Rav Benayahu Shmueli. Its is well known that Shabbat serves as the wellsprings of blessing that pour into the following week. The Zohar writes that physical blessing comes down from Heaven, first, through the Beit HaMikdash, then Yerushalayim, then Eretz Israel, and then to the entire world. But now that we have no Mikdash, most of the שפע – blessing, that comes down to the world, goes to the Goyim.

An allusion to all of this: material blessing is referred to often as מזון – Mazone, which equals 103 in Gimatria. Additionally, when Avraham prayed at the Mikdash, he called it הר. (With the כולל) It equals 206, twice the value of Mazone. Yitzchak referred to the Mikdash as שדה, equaling 309, three times the value of מזון, and Yaacov called it בית, i.e. 412, four times the value of מזון. Include Moshe's תפילה to enter Israel, and תפילה equals 515, five times the value of מזון.

Now, if we take the first letters of all of those words we get the word השבת – and this alludes to what the Zohar was saying that Shabbat serves as a channel which provides the entire week with its blessings of sustenance.

רציתי לברך אתכם ביום שמח, שפרנסתכם
פורח. בריאותינו תתמיד ולא כאורח. חיוך תצמח כעציץ
לא יתאדה כריח על שפתינו כאור זורח, וכספנו
ונזכה לראות בביאת משיח
אמן ושבת שלום

Shabat Shalom!!! - Rav David Yaacov

ד"ת לעילוי נשמת
יוסף חיים בן שרה

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.