

in Hashem (see his commentary e.g. on Shemos 13:16, s.v. *Ve'atah Omar*, and Shemos 20:2-3). As well, it can shed light on the mitzvah of zechiras yetzias Mitzrayim, the obligation to mention yetzias Mitzrayim daily.

5. *Bereishis Rabbah* (20:9): הקיש גאולה לפרנסה, ופרנסה לגאולה, שנאמר (תהלים קלו) ויפרקנו מצרינו וסמיך ליה (שם) נותן לחם לכל בשוה, מה גאולה פלאים אף פרנסה פלאים, מה פרנסה בכל יום אף גאולה בכל יום. See similarly *Tannah D'bei Elyahu* (Parsha 2) אמר דוד המלך אני אניד צדקותיו וחסדיו: (Parsha 2) של הקדוש ברוך הוא, שהוא עושה עם ישראל בכל שעה ושעה ובכל יום ויום, בכל יום אדם נמכר ובכל יום נפדה, בכל יום רוחו של אדם ניטלת הימנו וניתנת לבעל הפקדון, ולבקר מחזירין אותה עליו, שנאמר בידך אפקיד רוחי (תהלים ל"א ו'), בכל יום עושין לו ניסים כיוצאי מצרים, בכל יום עושין לו גאולה כיוצאי מצרים.

The Long Shorter Way: A Strategy for Geulah

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Over the years, my wife and I have had the zechus to lead Sedarim for diverse audiences in a variety of locations. For some of those years, we ran communal Sedarim here in Washington Heights under the auspices of the local Jewish Community Council for over 100 mostly elderly Jews who otherwise may not have had a Seder to go to. Often, they were constrained by the time that their aide was able to be by their side before bringing them home. In an effort to accelerate the pace of our Seder, I consulted with Rav Hershel Schachter regarding which parts I could skip. He recommended following the Rambam's Haggadah at the end of *Hilchos Chametz u'Matzah* and leaving out anything that does not appear in the Rambam's edition. At the Seder that year, when we arrived at Dayenu, I shared that since it doesn't

appear in the Rambam's Haggadah we would be skipping it to save time. Needless to say, this wasn't very popular among participants, many of whom had sung Dayenu at their Seder for more than four score and seven years, and they proceeded to sing it with gusto.

אמר רבי יהושע בן חנניה מימי לא נצחני אדם חוץ מ ... תינוק ... פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך וראיתי תינוק יושב על פרשת דרכים ואמרתי לו באיזה דרך נלך לעיר אמר לי זו קצרה וארוכה וזו ארוכה וקצרה והלכתי בקצרה וארוכה כיון שהגעתי לעיר מצאתי שמקיפין אותה גנות ופרדיסין חזרתי לאחורי אמרתי לו בני הלא אמרת לי קצרה אמר לי ולא אמרתי לך ארוכה.

Said Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananiah:

"Once a child got the better of me." ...

"I was traveling, and I met with a child at a crossroads. I asked him, 'which way to the city?' and he answered: 'This way is short and long, and this way is long and short.' I took the 'short and long' way. I soon reached the city but found my approach obstructed by gardens and orchards. So, I retraced my steps and said to the child: 'My son, did you not tell me that this is the short way?' Answered the child: 'Did I not tell you that it is also long?'"

Talmud, Eruvin 53b

We all love shortcuts. Project creep, slipping deadlines, and a to-do list that seems to get longer each day — these experiences are all too common in both life and work. An ever-growing array of “life hacks” aim to help us save time and money and/or achieve our goals and dreams faster. New acronyms and movements have arisen in our lexicon such as FIRE: Financial Independence, Retire Early. And, especially on the heels of a pandemic, whether in our professional or personal lives, many of us feel even more pressure to optimize our time,

productivity, and relationships.

The Seder presents us with an alternative. Making haste certainly has its time and place, as the matzah clearly reminds us. Yet, despite the presence of this core symbol, a different message seems to take center stage on Seder night. Before we even start the Haggadah, many families and communities frequently sing together the steps of the Seder: Kadesh, Urchatz, etc. Matzah will have its turn at our Seder, but it's part of a broader narrative. As we each become the evening's MC announcing the “order” of proceedings and outlining the exact steps that are ahead of us, the implication is clear: No shortcuts. No omissions.

Almost as soon as we begin the Haggadah, we go even further. On this night at least, not only are we not going to be taking any shortcuts, but (to use the Rambam's version), “*v'chol hama'arich beyetzias Mitzrayim harei zeh meshubach*” — we are encouraged to tell the story at great length. This is reinforced by another dominant symbol of Seder night, the *arba kosos*, the four cups of wine, representative of four expressions or stages of unfolding redemption. Emerging from our narrow places and ideologies is a multi-step process that takes time.

In fact, it is Hashem, *bichvodo u'veatzmo*, who teaches us this lesson in the opening verse of Parshas B'shalach: *v'lo nacham elokim, derech eretz p'lishtim ki karov hu ...* Hashem did not lead us via the land of the Plishtim because it was (too) near. The quicker path may have had disastrous consequences.

In the drive for profits, companies unsurprisingly have a proclivity to the short longer way. For example, many want to hire “multitaskers” capable of

completing multiple tasks *b'chipazon* so that productivity appears to be high. Maybe you have experienced working in an environment like this, where there is constant pressure to juggle and excel in multiple priorities. In the short term, profits may have increased and targets exceeded. But in the long term, might the pressure to perform impact and corrupt the quality of the work or the quality of relationships with team members?

As an advisor in the Shevet Glaubach Center for Career Strategy and Professional Development at Yeshiva University, I coach students and alumni on evaluating job descriptions, clarifying and upholding their values, and navigating company culture. We encourage developing a personalized multi-stage strategy. They become the captains of their fate, adept at taking the long shorter way. Rather than shortcutting the process, they engage each step of the journey, building and cultivating a great LinkedIn network, attending networking and educational events, identifying areas for professional development, and building relevant industry experience.

As for me, despite the Rambam's omission of Dayenu, I will continue to include it in my Seder. Each stanza is an important and intrinsically valuable step in the unfolding march to freedom. Our Seder shows us how articulating, delineating, and following each step helps us define, refine and achieve our goals. This is the long shorter way.

The Conflicting Themes of the Exodus: The Two Answers to the One Question

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The Seder experience is akin to a multimedia classroom, with an emphasis on audio (songs), visual props (the Seder plate), the experiential (different tastes, leaning, etc.), and, of course, questions and answers. All these elements point to an experience that is both meant to have a child wondering “Why is this night different?” and to provide the tools for a parent to capably answer that question.

So why indeed is this night different? What is the all-important answer that we are so committed to memorably provide, and why does it seem so important for us to care? I believe that the sophisticated lesson plan of the Haggadah means to point us toward two separate answers to this one important question.

That the Exodus is of critical importance to the Jewish story is obvious. So much of the Torah's narrative describes the descent into Egypt and the subsequent redemption. We were commanded to observe countless mitzvot as a reminder to remember that we were taken out of Egypt. Again and again (over 80 times!), the Torah

reiterates that the Exodus is the underlying reason why this or that mitzvah should be performed.

Why is this story so critical to mitzvah observance? Through the ten plagues and the splitting of the sea, it became clear to the Jewish people that there existed a Creator who was the master of the natural world. Moreover, it displayed how this Creator still involved Himself with the goings-on of the world, and with the subsequent giving of the Torah, it was apparent that G-d provided a purpose for our existence. The theological misconceptions that existed until that point in history were debunked by the events of the Exodus.

So, explains the Ramban, yetziat Mizrayim would forever be the fundamental reason behind many of the ritual Mitzvot. Why perform mitzvot that are *bein adam l'makom* (between man and G-d)? Who and what is the nature of this G-d who commands us? Simple: He took us out of Egypt. Through this experience, we “met” Him, understood Him, and began our relationship and covenantal responsibilities with Him.

So on the one hand, yetziat Mizrayim leaves us with very important theological lessons.

But there is another type of mitzvah, the sort that exists between man and his fellow man, where this phrase is also mentioned. How are these interpersonal allusions to Egypt explained?