



## Eliyahu HaNavi Who Is Destined to Reconcile the Hearts of Fathers with Their Children Instituted the Practice to Recite 'ברוך' Four Times Even for the Wicked Son

It gives me great pleasure to add an important point regarding the reason the author of the Haggadah mentioned the term "ברוך" four times in relation to the four sons. In the introduction to the Pesach Haggadah Tzemach Menachem, the esteemed Rabbi Aharon Menachem Mendel of Radzymin, ztz"l, presents a tremendous chiddush. It was transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation in the name of Rabbi Bunem of Peshischa, zy" a, that Eliyahu HaNavi Zachur LaTov compiled and arranged the Pesach Haggadah based on the fact that throughout the Tanna D'Vei Eliyahu he employs the phrase "ברוך המקום ברוך הוא" more than thirty times.

He explains magnificently that the reason Eliyahu HaNavi compiled the Haggadah is because the geulah from Mitzrayim was a preparation and antecedent of the future geulah. As the Gemara teaches (R.H. 11b): "בניסן נגאלו, בניסן עתידין ליגאל, מנלן, In Nissan, they were redeemed; in Nissan, they are destined to be redeemed. From where do we know this? The Torah says (Shemos 12, 42): "It is a night of anticipation," a night that has been anticipated since the six days of creation and onward. Along these lines, it is written (Michah 7, 15): "כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים—as in the days you left the land of Mitzrayim, I will show it wonders.

Elsewhere, we find an explicit, illuminating passuk (Malachi 3, 23): "הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליהו הנביא לפני בוא יום ה' הגדול והנורא, והשיב לב: behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers. Therefore, Eliyahu HaNavi himself compiled the Pesach Haggadah recounting the incredible miracles associated with "yetzias Mitzrayim" to trigger the future geulah that he himself will come to herald.

With this in mind, the Tzemach Menachem explains the rationale for the accepted Jewish minhag presented in the Chok Yaakov to pour a fifth cup along with the fourth cup in honor of Eliyahu HaNavi. It is also customary to open the door in his honor and welcome him into our homes to show Eliyahu that we have fulfilled all of our obligations with great joy—everything

that he outlined for us in the Haggadah. Thus, it is now time for Eliyahu HaNavi, z"l, to fulfill the task assigned to him—to come and inform us of the arrival of the complete geulah—swiftly, in our times; and that we should be privileged to be in Yerushalayim next year with our righteous Mashiach!

### "אליהו בארבע": Eliyahu HaNavi Is Destined to Heal and Rectify All of the Four Sons

It appears that this is why Eliyahu HaNavi instituted that we recite on the night of the Seder the formula: "ברוך המקום, ברוך הוא, ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל, ברוך הוא" four times. Thus, we express our gratitude to HKB"H for all four sons, even the "rasha." After all, HKB"H promised us: "Behold, I send you Eliyahu HaNavi before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem. And he will turn back the hearts of fathers with their sons and the hearts of sons with their fathers." In other words, Eliyahu will influence even the children who have strayed to return by performing teshuvah. Therefore, it was fitting for him to teach us to recite the word "ברוך" four times for each of the four sons.

This explains fantastically the pronouncement in the Gemara (Berachos 4a): "אליהו בארבע"—Eliyahu in four. Now, the gematria of אליהו equals ב"ן (son), consistent with the fact that Eliyahu returns every son to his Father in Heaven. Therefore, the pronouncement "אליהו בארבע" indicates that Eliyahu, whose name has the same gematria as the word for son—ב"ן—is "in four"—or fourfold—meaning that he will return all four categories of sons to the path of righteousness.

The Megaleh Amukos (Chayei Sarah) points out that four times 52 (אליהו) equals the gematria of 208 (פינה"ס); and we know that Pinchas is Eliyahu. This alludes to the fact that Pinchas zealously rescued all four categories of sons from sinning, when they were tempted to emulate the licentious behavior of Zimri ben Salu, one of the princes of Yisrael. Similarly, le'asid la'vo, as Eliyahu, he will once again save and rectify all four sons, as it states: "והשיב לב אבות על הבנים ולב בנים על אבותם". At that time, even the "chacham" will be privileged to learn Torah from him. For, as we know, this is alluded to by the term תיק"ו, which is an acronym for ת'שבי י'תרץ ק'ושיות ו'איבעיות—Tishbi (Eliyahu/Pinchas) will answer and resolve all outstanding difficulties and questions.

“And as for the one who does not know how to ask, you should open the discussion for him”

## Encouragement for the Righteous Women in Whose Merit They Were Redeemed from Mitzrayim—Who Educate the Young Children Who Do Not Know How to Ask

“ושאינו יודע לשאול את פתח לו, שנאמר והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים.”

And as for the one who does not know how to ask, you should open the discussion for him, as the Torah says: “It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Mitzrayim.” All the commentaries note that the author of the Haggadah expounds on the passuk “והגדת לבנך”—and you shall recount to your son—as the answer to give the child “who does not know how to ask,” even though this passuk was already expounded in the response to the “rasha”: “ואף אתה הקהה” את שניו ואומר לו, בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים, לי ולא לו, אלו היה שם לא את שניו ואומר לו, בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים, לי ולא לו, אלו היה שם לא. You, too, should blunt his teeth, and say to him: “It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Mitzrayim” —for me, but not for him. Had he been there, he would not have been redeemed.

We will first explain why the author of the Haggadah opted to formulate the instructions to the parents regarding this son with a feminine pronoun “את פתח לו” rather than “אתה פתח לו” with a masculine pronoun—as he does regarding the “chacham”—“ואף אתה” —and the “rasha”—“ואף אתה הקהה את שיניו”—. It seems that this was done deliberately by the author of the Haggadah to encourage and support the mothers on the Seder night. As we know, Chazal attest to their merit and virtue in the Gemara (Sotah 11b): “בזכות נשים צדקניות שהיו באותו הדור נגאלו ישראל ממצרים”—in the merit of the righteous women who were in that generation, Yisrael were redeemed from Mitzrayim.

Let us elaborate. The men in that generation were overwhelmed with extremely difficult labor all day long. As such, they were incapable of educating their small children. Therefore, perforce, the righteous women, their mothers, had to fulfill the fathers’ roles inculcating in their children a firm emunah in Hashem. As a result, they did not change their names or modify the way they dressed. Thus, they grew up to follow the ways they were taught by their righteous mothers.

In reality, this is true of every generation. Although the essential mitzvah of “chinuch” to teach the children Torah is

the obligation of the father; nevertheless, the mother is also responsible to a very significant degree for the “chinuch” of the children. This holds true especially for the infants and young children, who mostly stay at home with their mothers. The mothers teach them to recite “modeh ani” every morning, to perform “netilas yadayim,” and to recite the proper Berachos over the food they eat. They instill in them a love of Torah and the attribute of “yiras shamayim.” This prompted Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of men, to say (Mishlei 1, 8): “שמע בני מוסר אביך ואל תטוש—hear, my child, the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother.”

This is the lesson taught in the Gemara (Chullin 24b): “אמר רבי עקיבא על רבי חנינא שהיה בן שמונים שנה, והיה עומד על רגלו אחת וחולץ מנעלו ונועל מנעלו, אמר רבי חנינא חמין ושמן שסכתני אמי בילדותי, הן עמדו לי בעת זקנתי.” They said of Rabbi Chanina that even when he was eighty years old that he would stand on one foot and take off his shoe and put on his shoe. Rabbi Chanina said: The hot water and oil that my mother applied to me in my childhood stood me in good stead in my old age—i.e., he attributed his extraordinary, good health to his mother. He is teaching us that the warmth and wisdom provided by his mother’s nurturing in his childhood assisted him throughout his life—even when he was elderly, even in difficult situations, and even when he could no longer stand on two feet.

In this manner, we can explain the wonderful relationship between the “chinuch” of the young child categorized as “שאינו יודע לשאול” and “yetzias Mitzrayim.” We will refer to the interpretation of the holy Admor, the Maharid of Belz, zy”a, of the question Pharaoh asked Moshe Rabeinu (Shemos 10, 8): “מי ומי ההולכים”—exactly who will be going? Recognizing his desperate, dire situation, compelling him to allow Yisrael to go and serve Hashem for three days, per Moshe’s request, Pharaoh figured that only the men would go, but the young children would remain in Mitzrayim. After all, as the saying goes: If there are no kid-goats, there will be no adult goats. So, without the children, there would be no continuity to the chain of kedushah of the people of Yisrael, chas v’shalom.

Moshe Rabeinu, however, intuited Pharaoh's malicious intent and responded emphatically (ibid. 9): "בנערינו ובזקנינו נלך"—**with our young and with our old, we will go.** He indicated that for the people of Yisrael, the young precede the old in the matter of "chinuch." This elicited Pharaoh's outrage (ibid. 10): "יהי כן ה' עמכם: כאשר אשלח אתכם ואת טפכם ראו כי רעה נגד פניכם, לא כן לכו נא הגברים ועבדו." **"So be it. May Hashem be with you when I will send you and your children! Beware, for evil faces you. This is not right. Only the (adult) men should go and worship Hahem; for this is what you request."** And he had them expelled from Pharaoh's

**presence.** Pharaoh was enraged by Moshe Rabeinu's desire to educate even the younger members of the holy flock.

Thus, we can appreciate the vital importance of the righteous women who teach their young progeny the ways of the Torah and "yiras shamayim." This is what prompted the author of the Haggadah to formulate this directive with a feminine pronoun: "ושיאינו יודע לשאול" **את פתח לו.** By initiating the young children's "chinuch" in every generation, they ensure that Moshe Rabeinu's pronouncement will be fulfilled: **"With our young and with our old, we will go."** In this merit, the following will become a reality: **"As in the days you left the land of Mitzrayim, I will show it wonders."**

## The Profound Lesson Learned from the Egyptians Enslaving Yisrael Initially בְּפֶה רַךְ and Afterwards בְּפֶרֶךְ

In the section of Maggid, it says: "ויתנו עלינו עבודה קשה כמה שנאמר: ויעבידו מצרים את בני ישראל בכפרך"—**and they burdened us with hard labor, as Scripture relates (ibid. 1, 13): "The Egyptians enslaved Bnei Yisrael with crushing (backbreaking) labor."** Expounding on this passuk, the Gemara presents two interpretations (Sotah 11b): "רבי אלעזר אמר כפה רך, רבי שמואל בר רב הונא אמר כפה רכה"—**Rabbi Elazar said this means with a soft mouth** ("peh rach," indicating that they were initially spoken to gently and persuasively); **Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini said this means (literally) with crushing labor.** Rashi comments: **"With a soft (gentle) mouth" means that they initially enticed them with kind words and good pay until they got them accustomed to labor.** So, in reality, both interpretations were true. Initially, the Egyptians enticed them with kind words and financial reward, but, in the end, they forced them to perform backbreaking labor as slaves.

With this understanding, we can explain a statement in the Mishnah (Pesachim 116b) presented in the Haggadah: "בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים"—**in each and every generation, one is obligated to view himself as though he has departed from Mitzrayim.** As explained, in Mitzrayim, they lured Yisrael into their trap initially by speaking to them kindly and persuasively. In similar fashion, in every generation, the yetzer hara initiates its trap slowly with gentle persuasions—**כפה רך**—so that a Jew will become a bit lax in his service of Hashem. Ultimately, the Jew becomes so lax that he actually sins. Then, it punishes the Jew with afflictions—**כפרך**—G-d, help us. This is

the meaning of the statement (B.B. 16a): הוא שטן, הוא יצר הרע, הוא מלאך המות"—**he is the Satan; he is the yetzer hara; he is the Malach-Hamaves—they are one and the same.**

The Gemara explains its multiple personalities as follows (ibid.): "במתניתא תנא, יורד ומתעה, ועולה ומרגיז, נוטל רשות ונוטל נשמה"—**a Tanna taught in a Baraisa: It descends and lures people into sin; it ascends and incites (G-d's wrath against the sinner); it takes permission (to kill the sinner) and takes his soul.** Rashi explains that at first when it descends to lure and mislead people, it is called the **"yetzer hara"**; afterwards, when it ascends to prosecute the person before the heavenly court, it is called the **"Satan"**; subsequently, when it receives permission from above to kill the sinner and it descends to take his neshamah, it is called the **"Malach Hamaves."** In short, the yetzer hara itself comes initially to entice a Jew **"כפה רך"**—with gentle persuasions; it then ascends to present its accusations and prosecute the Jew; finally, it descends to inflict the punishment **"כפרך"**—with pain, and suffering, and even death—may the Merciful One save us!

**בְּפֶה רַךְ Vowelized with a Segol Alludes to בְּפֶה רַךְ whereas בְּפֶרֶךְ Vowelized with a Kamatz Alludes to בְּפֶרֶךְ**

We can suggest that HKB"H gave us the mitzvah of Korban Pesach to combat these two approaches of the yetzer hara—initially **"כפה רך"** and subsequently **"כפרך"**. This mitzvah aimed at atoning for the sins committed by our ancestors in Mitzrayim, as it is written (ibid. 12, 21): "משכו וקחו לכם צאן למשפחותיכם ושחטו הפסח"—**draw away and take for yourselves sheep for your families and slaughter**

**the Pesach offering.** They expounded in the Mechilta: **Withdraw your hands from the practice of avodah-zarah and take for yourselves sheep for the sake of performing a mitzvah.**

Now, we find the name of this korban—**פסח**—vowelized two different ways. When it appears in the middle of a passuk, the vowel under the letter **“pei”** is a **“segol”** (three dots forming a triangle pointing downward); as such, it is pronounced **“pesach.”** But when it appears at the end of a passuk, the vowel under the **“pei”** is a **“kamatz”**; as such, it is pronounced **“pasach.”** We can propose that when the vowel is a **“segol,”** it alludes to the yetzer’s initial approach **בפה רך**, which is also vowelized with a **“segol.”** Just as this vowel is only used in the middle of a passuk; so, too, this tactic is only used by the yetzer as an intermediate step. In contrast, at the end of a passuk, when the vowel is a **“kamatz,”** it alludes to the yetzer hara’s ultimate goal—to inflict punishment itself on the sinner **בפּוֹרֵךְ**, which also has a **“kamatz.”**

Based on this, we can explain the practical impact of a teaching in the writings of the Arizal (Sha’ar HaKavanos, Pesach, Drush 3). He asserts that **פסח** is an abbreviation for **פה סח**—**a mouth that speaks.** This alludes to the fact that we are obliged to open our mouths and recount the events of **“yetzias Mitzrayim.** Now, in keeping with our current discussion, we can suggest that **פה סח** implies that one is obliged to teach the members of one’s household that the Egyptians trapped Yisrael by enticing them and enslaving them initially **בפה**

**רך**—i.e., they promised to pay the people of Yisrael handsomely to persuade them to work for them; ultimately, of course, they were forced to perform backbreaking labor under miserable conditions as slaves without pay. This will help our children comprehend the tactics of the yetzer; it sets its trap with gentle persuasion, so that it can ultimately inflict true suffering and punishment.

It gives me great pleasure to suggest an allusion to this in HKB”H’s prefatory remarks to Yisrael prior to Matan Torah (ibid. 19, 5): **ועתה אם שמוע תשמעו בקולי ושמרתם את בריתי והייתם לי סגולה מכל: “ועתה אם שמוע תשמעו בקולי ושמרתם את בריתי והייתם לי סגולה מכל: “and now, if you hearken well to Me and you will keep My covenant, you will be a treasure (“segulah”) to Me from among all the peoples.** The Shem MiShmuel (Nitzavim 5676) writes in the name of the esteemed Rabbi David of Lelov, zy”a: **“You will be a ‘segulah’ like the vowel ‘segol’—such that even if you turn (rotate) it to any side (in any direction), it maintains its shape.**

In keeping with what we have discussed, we can suggest that this alludes to the fact that every Jew must strive to overcome the yetzer hara while it is just beginning to set its trap—when its approach is associated with a **“segol”** under the letter **“pei”**—namely, **בפה רך**. We must not be duped and enticed by its subtle, tactical lies. This will save us from ultimately becoming its true victims with a **“kamatz”** under the **“pei”**—namely, **בפּוֹרֵךְ**. If we succeed, we will merit being a **“segulah”** among the nations.

## We Open the Door after Drinking the Third Cup to Evoke the Merit of Rachel Imeinu Who Opened the Door for Leah

It is a prevalent, time-honored, Jewish minhag to open the front door of one’s house before reciting **“שפוך המתך”**. This is brought down by our esteemed possek the Rama (O.C. 480): **There are some who say that “שפוך המתך” should be recited prior to “לא לנו”, and to open the door to commemorate that it is “leil shimurim” (Night of Protection; a night of fulfillment of anticipations). In the merit of this emunah, Mashiach will come, and HKB”H will pour out His wrath on those who deny (disavow) Hashem; this is the prevalent practice.**

I would like to present to our royal audience a novel rationale for the minhag to open the door and recite **“שפוך המתך”** specifically after drinking the third cup of wine. Both the Maharal of Prague in *Gevuros Hashem* (Chapter 60) and the Shela hakadosh (*Maseches Pesachim*) write that drinking the four cups of wine

was instituted to symbolize the four Imahot—Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, and Leah—because women are compared to fine wine, as we find in the passuk (Tehillim 128, 3): **“אשתך כגפן פוריה: “אשתך כגפן פוריה—your wife is like a flourishing vine in the inner chambers of your home.**

In his sefer *Sifsei Da’as* (Tzav 178), the Kli Yakar adds a pertinent tidbit related to the following teaching in the Gemara (*Pesachim* 108a): **“בין הכוסות הללו אם רצה לשתות ישתה, בין שלישי לרביעי: “בין הכוסות הללו אם רצה לשתות ישתה, בין שלישי לרביעי: “between these cups (the first and the second, or the second and the third), if one wishes to drink (more wine), he may drink; between the third and fourth (cups), he may not drink (more wine). He suggests a fascinating rationale for this ruling: **The reason being that the third and fourth (cups) represent Rachel and Leah, who were married to one husband.****

Accordingly, the third cup represents Rachel, and the fourth cup represents Leah.

This enlightens us as to the rationale for the sacred minhag to open the door after drinking the third cup representing Rachel Imeinu. We do so to evoke the merit of Rachel Imeinu who opened the door of her home so that Leah would not be embarrassed. As the Gemara (Megillah 13b) explains, Yaakov Avinu was wary of Lavan's duplicity and suspected that Lavan might substitute Leah in place of Rachel. Therefore, he gave Rachel signs, so that he would be sure he was with Rachel and not Leah. Despite his precautions, Lavan succeeded in inserting Leah in place of Rachel; and so that her sister would not be humiliated, Rachel gave Leah the prearranged signs,

## On Account of Rachel HKB"H Will Mercifully Return Yisrael to Their Rightful Place

Following this line of reasoning, we will now explain the reason we open the door and recite "שפוך חמתך". According to the Midrash (Petichta D'Eichah Rabbah 24), at the time of the churban of the Beis HaMikdash, each of the holy Avos and Moshe Rabeinu came to weep and plead with HKB"H. He did not respond to them until Rachel Imeinu came and pierced the gates of heaven with her wailing. HKB"H responded to console her and give her moral support. It behooves us to present a translation of this moving passage from the Midrash as we approach this holy festival on which we pray for the geulah:

**At that precise juncture, Rachel Imeinu rushed to HKB"H and said: Master of the Universe, it is known to You that Your servant Yaakov loved me deeply; he worked for my father seven years for my hand. When those seven years were completed, and the time arrived for me to marry my husband, my father planned to replace me to my husband with my sister. This was very difficult for me, because I was aware of his plan; I informed my husband, and I gave him a sign, so that he could distinguish between**

**me and my sister, so that my father would not be able to replace me.**

**Afterwards, I consoled myself and endured my desire, because I had mercy on my sister, so that she would not be disgraced. So on the evening that my sister was substituted and given to my husband, I gave my sister all the signs that I had given to her husband, so that he would think she was Rachel . . . And I am but flesh and blood, dust and ash, I was not jealous of my surrogate, and I did not cause her to be humiliated and disgraced. And You, the King, the living and everlasting G-d, Who is merciful, why are you jealous of idol-worship, which is meaningless? And You exiled my children, and they were killed by the sword, and enemies did with them as they pleased.**

**The compassion of HKB"H was immediately aroused, and He said: For you, Rachel, I will return Yisrael to their place, as it is written (Yirmiyah 31, 14): "Thus said Hashem: A voice is heard on high, wailing, bitter weeping; Rachel weeps for her children; she refuses to be consoled for her children, for they are gone." And it is written (ibid. 15): "Thus said Hashem: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for there is reward for your accomplishment, etc." And it is written (ibid. 16): "There is hope for your future—the word of Hashem—and your children will return to their border."**

This explains very nicely the rationale for the sacred minhag to open the door after drinking the third glass of wine, and to recite "שפוך חמתך" immediately afterwards. For, the third cup represents Rachel Imeinu, who opened her door to allow her sister Leah to take her place and gave her the prearranged signs, so that she would not be humiliated. In that merit, HKB"H assured her: **"Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; for there is reward for your accomplishment . . . And there is hope for your future—the word of Hashem—and your children will return to their border."** Hence, at that precise moment, we pray for the geulah from the galus of Edom in the merit of Rachel: "שפוך חמתך על הגוים אשר לא ידעוך"—**pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not acknowledge You.**

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