

## פְּסַחַּז עַל שׁוּם מַה?

# Pesach, the Mikdash and Memory

### How to Mourn

Once, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, left Jerusalem, and Rabbi Yehoshua followed after him. And he saw the Holy Temple destroyed. [Rabbi Yehoshua said: Woe to us, for this is destroyed –] the place where all of Israel's sins are forgiven [Rabbi Yohanan] said to him: My son, do not be distressed, for we have a form of atonement just like it. And what is it? Acts of kindness, as it says (Psalms 89:3), "For I desire kindness, not a well-being offering." (Avot deRabbi Natan 4)

When the Temple was destroyed a second time, there was an increase in the number of ascetics among the Jews, whose practice was to not eat meat and to not drink wine. Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: My children, for what reason do you not eat meat and do you not drink wine? They said to him: Shall we eat meat, from which offerings are sacrificed upon the altar, and now the altar has ceased to exist? Shall we drink wine, which is poured as a libation upon the altar, and now the altar has ceased to exist? . . .

Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: My children, come, and I will tell you how we should act. To not mourn at all is impossible, as the decree was already issued. But to mourn excessively impossible, as the Sages do not issue a decree upon the public unless a majority of the public is able to abide by it.

Rabbi Yehoshua continues: Rather, this is what the Sages said: A person may plaster his house with plaster, but he must leave over a small amount in it without plaster to remember the destruction of the Temple. . . (Bava Batra 60)

### Commemorating and Moving On

Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai also instituted that for the entire day of waving the *omer* offering, eating the grain of the new crop is prohibited. What is the reason for this ordinance? The reasoning is that soon the Temple will be rebuilt and people will say: Last year, when the Temple was in ruins, didn't we eat from the new crop as soon as the eastern horizon was illuminated on the morning of the sixteenth of Nisan, as the new crop was permitted immediately? Now too, let us eat the new grain at that time. (Rosh HaShanah 30a)

### Which Rabban Gamliel?

And even Rabban Gamliel, was coming on a boat at the time, and a large wave swelled over him and threatened to drown him. Rabban Gamliel said: It seems to me that this is only for the sake of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus. Rabban Gamliel

stood on his feet and said: Master of the Universe, it is revealed and known before You that neither was it for my honor that I acted, nor was it for the honor of the house of my father that I acted; rather, it was for Your honor, so that disputes will not proliferate in Israel. The sea calmed from its raging. (Bava Metzia 59)

## Rabban Gamliel's Rules

רבן גמליאל היה אומר, כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח, לא יצא ידי חובתו, ואלו הן:  
פסח, מצה, ומרור. פסח, על שום שפסח המקום על בתי אבותינו במצרים

Rabban Gamliel would say: Anyone who did not say these three matters on Passover has not fulfilled his obligation: The Paschal lamb, *matza*, and bitter herbs. **The Paschal lamb is brought because the Omnipresent passed over [pasah] the houses of our forefathers in Egypt** (Mishnah Pesachim 10:5)

רבן גמליאל היה אומר: כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח, לא יצא ידי חובתו, ואלו הן: פסח, מצה, ומרור. פסח שהיו אבותינו אוכלים בזמן שבית המקדש היה קיים, על שום מה? על שום שפסח הקדוש ברוך הוא על בתי אבותינו במצרים

Rabban Gamliel was accustomed to say, Anyone who has not said these three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his obligation, and these are them: the Paschal lamb, *matsa* and *marror*.

Paschal lamb **that our ancestors were accustomed to eating when the Temple existed**, for the sake of what [was it]? For the sake [to commemorate] that the Holy One, blessed be He, passed over the homes of our ancestors in Egypt (Haggadah)

## How Far Should You Go to Remember?

שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין בשר צלי, שלוק, ומבשל, הלילה הזה כולו צלי

As on all other nights we eat either roasted, stewed, or cooked meat, but on this night all is the roasted meat [of the Paschal lamb] (Mishnah Pesachim 10:2)

Rabbi Tzadok said: There was an incident with Rabban Gamliel, who said to his slave Tavi: Go and roast the Paschal lamb for us on the grill. (Mishnah Pesachim 7:2)

Also he [Rabban Gamliel] declared three decisions of a lenient character: . . . And roast a kid whole on the night of Passover. (Mishnah Eduyot 3:11)

מקום שנהגו לאכול צלי בלילי פסחים — אוכלין, מקום שנהגו שלא לאכול — אין אוכלין.

In a place where people were accustomed to eat roasted meat on Passover evenings,, one may eat it. (Mishnah Pesachim 4:4)

Rabbi Yosei said: Theodosius [Todos] of Rome, instituted the custom for the Roman Jews to eat kids roasted [*mekulas*] whole on the evenings of Passover, The Sages sent a message to him: If you were not Theodosius, we would have decreed ostracism upon you, as it appears as if you are feeding Israel consecrated food, outside (Pesachim 53a)

### **Telling or Doing?**

It happened once [on Pesach] that Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon were reclining in Bnei Brak and **were telling the story of the exodus from Egypt** that whole night, until their students came and said to them, "The time of [reciting] the morning Shema has arrived." (Haggadah)

A man is obligated to be involved **with the laws of Pesach the whole night**, . . . It happened that Rabban Gamliel and the Elders were [once] reclining in the house of Beitos ben Zunin in Lud, and they were involved with the laws of Pesach the whole night until the call of the rooster. (Tosefta Pesachim 10:8)

### **What's Your Frame of Reference?**

From what time does one recite *Shema* in the evening? From the time when the priests enter to partake of their *teruma*. (Mishnah Brachot 1:1)

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: The Rabbis only derived [that an opening more than twenty cubits high is not considered an entrance] from the doorway of the Sanctuary. (Eruvin 2a)

as it is written: "A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey" (Deuteronomy 8:8), and Rav Ḥanin said: This entire verse is stated for the purpose of teaching measures (Sukkah 5b)