

For self study on Shabbat ha'Gadol

LEIL HA-SEDER --Understanding MAGGID
[Questions for self-study and preparation]

Looking for something to study on Shabbat ha'Gadol, or to do a little more than just 'prepare a little vort' for the Seder?
The following questions should keep you 'plenty busy'!

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes, we find ourselves so involved in studying the various commentaries on the Haggada, that we never get around to studying MAGGID itself!

The following battery of questions will attempt to do just that, i.e. to help you understand how we tell the story of the Exodus in the section of the Haggada called MAGGID

[To prepare these questions, it would be helpful if you have handy a Haggada, a Chumash, and Mishnayot Pesachim. As you will notice, we will be analyzing the text of MAGGID using a methodology similar to the approach that we have employed in our study of Chumash.]

In the first section, we will explore the psukim in Chumash that command us to tell the story of the Exodus, while the second section will focus on the "mishnayot" in Mesechet Pesachim that provide 'the framework' for the Seder. Based on those questions, our third battery of questions will analyze the actual text of MAGGID, and its internal structure, as found in our Haggada.

--- b'hatzlacha!

PART I - THE SOURCE FOR 'MAGGID' IN CHUMASH

1. Ask almost anyone, and they'll tell you that our obligation to tell the story of the Exodus at the Seder is based on the pasuk: "vehigadta le-bincha..." (see Shmot 13:8). However, ask them to carefully translate the meaning of every word in that pasuk, and as you'll see for yourself, it's not so easy to understand.

For a start, take a quick read of that pasuk (Shmot 13:8), noting how it cannot be understood without knowing what the words "ha-hu" and "zeh" refer to, as well as the context of the phrase "assa Hashem li".

Therefore, to appreciate the context of 12:8, you must carefully study from 13:3 thru 13:8, as they include the entire command to 'remember the Exodus'.

[To appreciate the fuller context of 13:3-8, you should review all of the parshiot from 12:1 thru 13:8, paying special attention to 12:14 (noting how it relates to 13:3, as well as to 12:3-13) - 12:17, 12:24-27, and the story in 12:33-39.]

2. In regard to 13:3, does this pasuk imply **two** separate mitzvot - i.e. to 'remember' the day of the Exodus, **and** not to eat "chametz"; or did you understand this as **one** commandment, i.e. to 'remember' the day of the Exodus - **by** not eating "chametz"?

In your opinion, which interpretation makes more sense.

Similarly, in 13:5 - what does the phrase "ha'avodah ha'zot" refer to? Does this introduce the pasuk that follows (and hence it refers to eating matza) or does it refer back to 12:24-27 (and hence refers to offering the korban pesach). [See how the various commentators argue in this regard.]

3. Return now to 13:8. Based on the context from 13:3-7 what do the words "ha-hu" and "zeh" refer to?

Did you translate the word "ba'avur" - as 'because', or 'for the sake of', (or something else)? How does that translation affect your understanding of 13:8?

According to **your** understanding of 13:8, does this pasuk instruct us to explain to our children:

- (1) why we are eating matza, or
- (2) why God took us out of Egypt?

Then, study the classical commentators on this pasuk, noting how we find an amazing argument between Rashi (& Ibn Ezra sides with him!) against Rashbam & Ramban. In your opinion, which commentary makes more sense? Is it possible that both opinions could be correct?

4. Based on your study, would you say the source and underlying reason for our obligation to tell the story of the Exodus is based only on 13:8, or also on 13:3? [Note also Rambam Hilchot Chametz u'Matza 7:1.]

Finally, note as well Shmot 10:1-2, noting how that pasuk as well may relate to the reason for how and why we must tell the story of the Exodus at the Seder!

5. As you review the psukim cited above regarding the Biblical command to 'tell the story of the Exodus', is it clear precisely **how** we are to tell the story?

Assuming that you've read the Bible, in your opinion, at what point in Jewish History should that story **begin**?

[e.g. - would you begin with the enslavement, or would you begin back with Yaakov going down to Egypt, or with Yosef & his brothers, or with Avraham Avinu, or with Terach, or with Noah, or maybe even the story of Creation?]

Similarly, and at what point should the story **end**?

[e.g. - with the Exodus? the splitting of the sea?; Matan Torah?; Conquering Israel?; building the Temple?]

Finally, in your opinion, would you say that the primary focus of our 'story' should be to explain **WHAT** happened, or should the story also discussed **WHY** it happened? If so, explain why!

Relate your answer to this question, to your answers to the questions above (and to underlying theme of Sefer Breishit).

Keep your answers in mind, as we will discuss them in our study of MAGGID.

PART TWO - MASECHET PESACHIM

1. Review the mishnayot in the tenth perek of Masechet Pesachim, noting how they provide the guideline for how we are supposed to tell the story. Focus on the "mishnayot" from the 'four questions' until the blessing on the second cup.

Note how these mishnayot provide only a 'framework' for how to tell the story - and explain that framework (and format). In your opinion, why does this framework leave so much latitude for the person telling the story to decide for himself how to tell the story?

MATCHILIN B'GNUT...

2. The mishna provides us with a format for how to begin and end the story - i.e. we begin our story with a 'derogatory' statement, and conclude with 'praise'.

See Mesechet Pesachim 116a, where we find two opinions for how to fulfill 'matchilin bi-gnut':

Shmuel suggests that we begin with "avadim hayinu" - we were once slaves...

Rav suggests - "m'tchila ovdei kochavim hayu Avoteinu" - that our forefathers were once idol worshippers...

In your opinion, does this an argument concern **WHEN** the story begins (i.e. Rav begins the story with our enslavement/ and hence Sefer Shmot, while Shmuel begins with Terach/ and hence Sefer Breishit) - **OR** - does their argument simply reflect what is considered a more 'derogatory' statement (i.e. that our forefathers were once slaves, or that they once didn't believe in God)?

To the best of your recollection, in the Haggada (when we tell the story of the Exodus), what opinion do we follow?

3. As you probably remember, we find both Rav & Shmuel in our Haggadah; however both of their original short statements - are completed by longer statements. Refer to your Haggada, and attempt to understand why we 'lengthen' these statements.

In relation to Shmuel's opinion - be sure to compare with Devarim 6:20-24, noting our direct quote of Devarim 6:21. [In your opinion, was this Shmuel's original intention when he suggested "avadim ha'yinu"?)

In relation to Rav's opinion, be sure to see not only Yehoshua 24:1-4; but also Yechezkel 20:1-10! Based on **both** sources, do you think that Rav's original opinion refers to the fact that Avraham Avinu's father (Terach) was an idol worshiper; or that Bnei Yisrael in Egypt (immediately prior to their redemption) were still involved in idol worship (and nevertheless, God redeemed us)?

MSAYMIM b'SHVACH

4. According to the Mishna, we are supposed to conclude the story with 'praise'. In your opinion, where and when do we do this in our Haggadah?

In your answer, relate to how we discuss the Plagues, the song of Dayenu, and the first two psalms of Hallel.

LFI DAATO SHEL HA'BEN AVIV m'LAMDO

5. The next statement of the Mishna provides yet another 'format' for how to 'tell the story' - i.e. the parent must tell the story based on the 'educational level' of the child.

In your opinion, when and how in MAGGID do we apply this principle? [Do we apply this principle in 'practice' as well?]

In Part Five (of these questions) you will find an additional battery of questions that will help you appreciate how the section of the Four Sons in the Haggada relates to this Mishna.

V'DORSHIM m'ARAMI OVED AVI...

6. Review Devarim 26:1-10 - based on those psukim, be sure that you understand the meaning of this portion of the Mishna, which basically provides us with a format of how we are supposed to tell the story.

In our Haggada, do we follow this format? If so, where and when (and how do we accomplish "v'dorshim")?

7. According to the Mishna, it would seem that we should quote from Devarim 26:5-9; while in reality - our Haggada only quotes thru 26:8, but does not include 26:9. Can you explain why?

Do you think that our custom follows the original intention of the Mishna, or that our custom changed due to certain historical events?

8. Note how this commandment (in Devarim 26:1-10) to 'bring our first fruits' includes the annual recitation of a special declaration (be every individual in Am Yisrael) - better known as "mikra bikurim". In your opinion, what is the purpose of this annual declaration (see 26:3-10), and why can't we fulfill this obligation when there is no Bet ha'Mikdash?

Based on your answer, could you suggest any special significance for why the Mishna prefers that we quote from the psukim of "mikra bikurim" to fulfill our annual obligation of "sipur Yetziat Mitzraim"?

9. Compare Devarim 26:5-9 (in its context) with Breishit 15:7-18 (in its context). In your opinion, what is the relationship between these two sources?

In general, how does Breishit chapter 15 relate to "brit Avot"; and how does Devarim chapter 26 relate to "brit Sinai" (see Devarim 26:16-19!).

THE RAMBAM in Hilchot chametz u'matza

10. See Rambam, Sefer Zemanin, Hilchot Chametz u-Matza, chapter 7. Read the first six halachot, noting how Rambam understood the psukim in Chumash and the Mishnayot. Note how he understood Shmot 13:1-8, and whether he follows Rav's opinion or Shmuel's.

11. Note as well how the Rambam records his own 'nusach' (text) for MAGGID at the conclusion of Hilchot Chametz u-Matza (immediately after chapter 8).

If you have time, compare Rambam's nusach to that in your own Haggada, noting the sections that Rambam did not include. Can you suggest a reason why?

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PART THREE - ANALYZING MAGGID - step by step... [THE 'BIGGER PICTURE']

1. Now it's time to see how we tell the story in the Haggada. Our first task is to construct an outline. [Basically, we are going to carefully create a table of contents for MAGGID.]

To do so, open to the MAGGID section of your Haggada, and (if it's not Shabbat or Yom Tov) take a blank sheet of paper and pencil. Give a short title for each paragraph or section in Maggid (i.e. beginning with 'Ha lachma anya' until Hallel). Record each title on the left margin of your paper, i.e. create a vertical list.

[If it is Shabbat, then keep this list in 'memory'.]

This may appear to be rather tedious, but as you continue, you'll see how helpful this will be.

To help your study, you can download a one page Haggada at the following link - www.tanach.org/haggada.pdf .

2. Next, turn your list into an outline by grouping together the paragraphs that carry a common topic. For example, the five paragraphs that describe the 'four sons' could be grouped together, so too Raban Gamliel's statement concerning PESACH, MATZA, & MAROR.

Re-work your outline several times, attempting to organize it into main topics and subtopics. When you are finished, make sure that you can follow the flow from one topic to the next. In essence, you should have created an 'outline' of MAGID.

3. Study your outline once again, and attempt to ascertain how (and where) the story of the Exodus is actually told.

Should you come across any section of MAGGID that does not 'tell the story' of the Exodus, attempt to explain why it is nonetheless included in this section of the Seder.

4. Based on your outline, where in MAGGID do we actually tell the story of the Exodus ['sippur yetziat Mitzrayim'] in its entirety?

Relate your conclusions to the 'framework' for MAGGID, as discussed in the mishnayot of Masechet Pesachim (and in our questions in Part Two, above).

To better understand what we say in MAGGID, we will now review each section (or paragraph), to determine how it relates (or doesn't relate) to how we tell the story of the Exodus.

By doing so, we will better understand how we fulfill (or don't fulfill) the mitzva of "sippur yetziat Mitzrayim" at our Seder.

HA LACHMA ANYA

1. Read the "ha lachma anya" paragraph. - In your opinion, does this section serve as the beginning of the story? If not, what is its purpose and why do we recite it?

[Are you sure that this paragraph should be considered the first part of MAGID, or could it be considered the last part of YACHATZ (when we break the middle matza). Explain!]

In the first line of this paragraph ['This is the bread of affliction...'], the leader of the Seder is clearly speaking to the people who are gathered at the table. However, the second sentence - "kol dichfin..." - appears to be an invitation to anyone in need to join in the offering of a korban pesach, while including some words of hope for a better future next year.

In your opinion, is the leader of the Seder now extending an invitation to outsiders (if so, it's a bit late), or is he quoting words that were spoken in a previous generation?

If so, what generation is he quoting, and why?

[Relate to Shmot 12:3-14, especially 12:14.]

2. From this opening statement, it appears as though the reason for eating MATZA is to remember what our forefathers ate when they were slaves in Egypt. Is that the same reason that the Torah gives? If so, where in the Torah do we find that reason? Are there any other reasons (in Chumash) for why we eat matza? [See Shmot 12:14-20; 12:34-39, 13:3-8 and Devarim 16:1-4.]

For what reason were Bnei Yisrael commanded to eat matza with the original 'korban Pesach' in Egypt (see Shmot 12:8 in its context). Was it because they were in a rush?

[For a more detailed study, see the TSC shiur on Parshat Bo concerning the two reasons for eating matza - www.tanach.org/shmot/bo.txt .]

MA NISHTANA - The Four Questions

1. Clearly, the 'ma nishtana' is not the story, but can you explain why these questions are recited at the beginning of Maggid? Relate your answer to Shmot 13:8.

2. In your opinion, would you consider the "mah nishtana" as four questions or one? If the latter, what is the 'one question' and how does it relate to the 'four questions'?

Use your answer to explain why we never (directly) answer these four questions at the Seder.

How and when do we answer the 'one question'?

To appreciate that 'one question', and how we answer it in the Haggada - see Devarim 6:20-22!

AVADIM HAYINU

1. At first glance, this paragraph certainly sounds like the beginning of a story. But carefully read the **entire** paragraph (that begins with 'avadim hayinu') and ask yourself what is/are its primary point(s)?

Are you sure that the story begins here? If not, can you explain the purpose of this paragraph?

Does the text of "avadim hayinu" come from a pasuk?

If so, where is that pasuk and what is its context?

[When you give up, see Devarim 6:20-25.]

2. As you read those psukim, make sure that you understand the meaning of the 'question' in 6:20, and how 6:21-25 (that begins with avadim hayinu) answers this question.

How does this answer (in 6:21-24) explain why we are obligated to keep ALL of the mitzvot of the Torah?

3. Based on Devarim 6:20-22, can you explain why the Haggada may have chosen specifically this pasuk to explain WHY we are obligated to tell this story every year.

[Note as well how 6:20-21 can explain why the MA NISHTANA comes before AVADIM HAYINU.]

4. There is a popular song sung at the Seder, "avadim hayinu, ata bnei chorin". Are the words for this song in the Haggada? If not, can you find a source for this song?

In your opinion, does this song correctly reflect the main theme of MAGGID?

[Keep this question in mind as you continue your study.]

5. Does the paragraph of "avadim hayinu" also explain WHO is obligated to tell this story? If so, can you explain why?

[Relate to a possible 'misunderstanding' of who would be obligated, based on the opening phrase of Shmot 13:8.]

MA'ASEH R. ELIEZER bi-BNEI BRAK

6. In your opinion, does this section tell the story of yetziat Mitzrayim? If not, what is its purpose?

As you read this paragraph, be sure that you understand how this section directly relates to the primary point of "v'afilu kulanu chachamim..." in the "avadim hayinu" section that preceded it - in relation to WHO is obligated to tell the story (and to what extent).

7. The next paragraph records a conversation among those Rabbis who gathered in Bnei Brak - concerning the daily

commandment to 'remember' the story of the Exodus. Clearly, this is not the story of the Exodus; however, attempt to explain how this discussion of the daily mitzva of "zechira" [to remember] relates to our yearly obligation of "sipur" [to tell the story] .

THE FOUR SONS

1. Clearly, this section doesn't tell the story. However, can you explain its purpose in Maggid?

In your answer, relate once again to Shmot 13:8 as well as to the Mishna's statement of 'lfi da'ato shel ha-ben, aviv melamdo' - based on the level of the child, the father should teach his son.

2. You may have also noticed that the answers to the four sons provided in the Haggada are quite different from those recorded in Chumash. First, verify this. Can you explain why?

The reason for this will be discussed in a separate battery of questions, found at the end of these questions. [See Part Five.]

YACHOL me-ROSH CHODESH

1. This section is short, and easy to understand; but try to explain why it is recited at this point in MAGGID. Does it tell the story?

Does it discuss WHEN our obligation to tell this story begins?

2. As you probably noticed, this section is simply one of many that discuss 'secondary' topics before we actually begin to tell the story of yetziat Mitzrayim? Note which sections that we have discussed thus far answer the following questions:

A. WHY are we **obligated** to tell the story?

B. WHO is **obligated** to tell the story?

C. HOW we are **obligated** to tell the story?

D. WHEN we are **obligated** to tell the story?

Can you identify a pattern?

Did you notice that the 'story' of the Exodus itself has yet to be told? Can you explain why?

MI-TCHILA

1. This paragraph certainly sounds like a story. If so, can you explain why the Haggada prefers to begin the story of Exodus from the time period of Terach? Is it simply to fulfill the opinion in the mishna that we begin the story with a derogatory statement?

2. Read this section once again, and decide whether it is indeed telling a story, or possibly making a **'statement'**.

If the latter, be sure that you can differentiate between the statement and its proof! [With what word does the proof-text begin? If so, what is the primary point made by this paragraph?]

Would you consider this one statement, or two?

3. Review Yehoshua 24:1-4, noting how these psukim form the 'proof-text'. Note as well how the following psukim, i.e. Yehoshua 24:5-7, actually tell the story of yetziat Mitzrayim. Can you explain why the Haggada does not quote them, but instead only the first four psukim of that chapter?

4. Return to the statement of 'mi-tchila', noting that it contains two primary points. Which of these points is proven by the psukim that are quoted, and which is not!

Then, read Yehoshua chapter 24 once again, this time noting 24:14-26! Note how many times the phrase "la'avod et Hashem" is repeated, as well as the main topic of Yehoshua's challenge to the people - if they are willing to 'serve God'! [Rather amazing!]

How do these psukim 'prove' the second half of the opening statement? Would it be logical to assume that when this section of the Haggada was first written, it was assumed that the reader would be aware of the continuation of Yehoshua chapter 24?

5. If the primary point of the paragraph that begins with mi-tchila is to make a 'statement', explain the importance of this statement, and how the reason for why God chose our forefathers relates to our obligation to tell the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim.

Relate this statement as well to the popular song of 'avadim hayinu, ata bnei chorin'! [Be sure you that understand the difference. - i.e. how this is the very opposite point!]

BARUCH SHOMER HAVTACHATO

1. After reading this paragraph, decide if this is part of the story, or yet another 'statement'. If the latter, can you explain how it relates to the statement of the previous paragraph? Explain as well how it relates to the story of yetziat Mitzrayim.

Be sure that you understand why this section quotes from the first covenant between God and Avraham Avinu [better known as 'brit bein ha-btarim' (i.e. Breishit 15:13-18)].

To refresh your memory, it is recommended that you read that entire chapter in Sefer Breishit, noting how this covenant forecasts the framework for the events that later unfold in the Exodus story. [Note especially Breishit 15:13-18.]

2. Note that in MAGGID we are thanking God for keeping His promise to Avraham Avinu to redeem Am Yisrael from slavery. Note, however, that in that same covenant - God had also promised Avraham Avinu to put his offspring **into** slavery!

Can you explain why God found it necessary for this process of becoming God's Nation to include 'affliction & slavery in another land' followed by a miraculous redemption - and only afterward conquest of the land and the establishment of a sovereign nation!

In your answer, relate to the numerous commandments in the Torah in regard to how we must be kind and considerate to the stanger, widow and orphan, etc. - which are consistently followed by the 'reminder' that we were once slaves/strangers in Egypt!

How does this relate to the concept that God chose the Jewish people to serve Him as His 'model nation'?

In what manner can this 'framework' of affliction be considered a 'training process' in order to become God's nation? In your answer relate to the concept of "kur ha'barzel", as discussed in Devarim 4:20.

3. If indeed "brit bein ha-btarim" forecasts our slavery and the ensuing redemption from Egypt - explain why the story of the Exodus must begin with a mention of that covenant.

Based on the above questions, would it make sense to conclude that we must tell the story every year not only to remember what happened, but also **WHY** that story took place?

4. In your opinion, why are we obligated to thank God for yetziat Mitzrayim - even though this event took place over 3500 years ago? How do these last two paragraphs in MAGGID relate to this question?

How many other times during MAGGID do we mention our need to feel as though we ourselves experienced the Exodus. Based on the above questions, can you explain why?

5. Based on this covenant, it appears that God wanted Am Yisrael to be enslaved in Egypt in order to later redeem them from that bondage. If so, does it make sense that we should thank God for saving us from a calamity that he purposely put us in?

In your opinion, is there anything that we say in Maggid that relates to this question?

6. Return once again to the statement: 'mi-tchila ovdei avoda zara hayu avoteinu..' noting the precise meaning of the statement: 've-achshav kirvanu ha-Makom le-AVODATO'!

Explain the thematic importance of this statement, and how it relates to 'brit avot'. [Relate once again to Yehoshua 24:1-23.]

7. Was there a divine purpose for Bnei Yisrael's enslavement in Egypt? If so, how does this relate to our thanking God for yetziat Mitzrayim and the mitzva of MAGGID?

Would you say that we are thanking God for the event of yetziat Mitzrayim, the process, or the purpose of that process? Explain how each possibility relates to the questions above.

8. Review Shmot 13:8 once again, paying careful attention to the translation of the phrase 'ba'avur zeh asa Hashem li be-tzeiti mi-Mitzrayim'.

See the machloket between Ibn Ezra (& Rashi) and Ramban on the meaning of 'ba'avur ZEH'.... Relate Rashi and Ibn Ezra's interpretation to the above questions!

VE-HI SHE-AMDA

9. What does the word 'HI' in the paragraph of 've-HI she-amda..' refer to? How does this paragraph relate to brit bein ha-btarim and to the two previous paragraphs?

Again, would you consider this paragraph part of the story of yetziat Mitzrayim, or yet another 'statement'?

If the latter, explain its thematic importance.

10. Does this paragraph explain **WHY** God saves in every generation (when we may be in trouble)? Is the answer implicit, based on the previous two paragraphs?

Why do you think that we raise the cup of wine when we recite this section?

TZEH U-LEMAD or ARAMI OVED AVI

1. Review the section that begins with "tzeu u'Imad..." noting how it forms a complex "drasha" on the psukim of "arami oved avi" from Devarim 26:5-8.

To appreciate why the Haggada quotes this Midrash, study Devarim 26:1-11, i.e. the mitzva of "mikra bikurim".. Carefully study those psukim, and attempt to understand the reason for this mitzva.

2. In your opinion, would you say that the purpose of "mikra bikurim" is to thank God for our first fruits, or to thank God for the Land (that He gave us as He promised to our forefathers in "brit Avot")?

If the latter (which better be your answer), explain why the first fruits serve as an appropriate 'token of our appreciation'.

[For 'extra credit', relate this to the sin of Cain in Breishit 4:1-5.]

3. Note how the proclamation in 26:5-8 - through which we thank God for the land - begins with the story of yetziat Mitzrayim (i.e. from 'arami oved avi...'), and follows the pattern set by brit bein ha-btarim. Be sure you understand this by comparing Devarim 26:5-8 with Breishit 15:13-18.

Based on this parallel, explain why 'mikra bikurim' could be understood as a yearly proclamation through which we thank God for His fulfillment of brit bein ha-btarim.

[Note the use of the word 'yerusha' in both! Note also God's promise of the Land in Breishit 15:18]

4. If so, explain why Chazal may have included 'arami oved avi' in the Haggada, and use it as the vehicle by which we tell the story. Relate this to Mishnayot Pesachim 10:4 - "ve-doresh me-arami oved avi..." (or Pesachim 116a).

Relate also to the verb 'higadeti' (in Devarim 26:3) and the command 've-higadeta' in the source for Maggid in Shmot 13:8! Note also Rambam in Hilchot Chametz u-Matza 7:4!

5. As you review the 'drasha' of 'arami oved avi' in the Haggada, be sure that you understand how the Haggada quotes each word [or phrase] from Devarim 26:5-8, and elaborates on each quote (usually with psukim from elsewhere in Tanach).

Be sure that you can follow how the Haggada uses this as the mechanism by which we actually tell the story!

Would you agree that the obligation to 'tell the story' [sippur yetziat Mitzrayim] is fulfilled by the recitation of this "drasha"?

If so, would it make sense that this section should be explained in a manner that everyone understands?

[Do most people pay attention to this part of the Haggada? Should they?]

6. Where does this "drasha" of "arami oved avi" end? Explain how it leads into our discussion of the Ten Plagues!

THE TEN PLAGUES

1. Note as well how the Haggada introduces the topic of the Ten Plagues, i.e. how it flows from the drasha of 'arami oved avi'.

Can you explain why this is the last pasuk that the Haggada quotes from arami oved avi (i.e. we only read thru 26:8, but don't read 26:9 - attempt to explain why).

2. In your opinion, are the 'multiplication tables' [i.e. the plagues x5; x4, x5, etc.] an integral part of this story or simply an 'add-on'?

Be sure that you understand how they are based on a mathematical factor of five derived from the comparison between Shmot 8:15 & 14:31. See also Tehillim 78:49, and how that entire Psalm relate to the Plagues in Egypt. How does this explain the second "derasha" that arrives at up to 250 plagues?

3. Note that the Rambam does not include these 'multiplication tables' in his version of MAGGID. Can you explain why?

DAYENU

1. Review the section titled DAYENU. Would you consider this part of the story, or a form of 'shevach' [praise] after the story is complete?

2. If we have completed telling the story of yetziat Mitzrayim, what is the song of DAYENU coming to add?

How does it relate to the recitation of Hallel at the conclusion of MAGGID? [Relate to the phrase "al achat kama v'kama...".]

3. What does the word DAYENU imply? Do we really mean that it would have been enough for Am Yisrael, had we only been taken out of Egypt and not received the Torah or the Land of Israel?!

[In other words, does dayenu imply that it 'would have been enough', or what it 'would have been enough to thank God' for?] In your answer, relate to the meaning of 'al achat kama ve-kama...' (i.e. the kal va-chomer) in the next paragraph.

4. In what manner could the Dayenu section be considered not only 'praise', but also a 'continuation' of the story of the Exodus. If the latter, with what event does the story of the Exodus end?

RABBAN GAMLIEL

1. Review Rabban Gamliel's statement, noting how we are quoting the mishna in Pesachim. Which obligation is not fulfilled unless we mention 'pesach matza u-maror':

the obligation of sippur yetziat Mitzrayim?

the obligation of korban pesach?

the obligation of achilat matza?

the obligation of "v'higadta l'bincha"?

Explain your answer.

2. Would you consider this part of the story, or another 'add on'? If the latter, what is its purpose?

3. In your opinion, how did Rabban Gamliel understand the meaning of "ha'avoda h'azot" in Shmot 13:5, and now did that affect how he understood "baavur ZEH" in 13:8!

BE-CHOL DOR VA-DOR

1. How does the statement of 'be-chol dor va-dor' relate to our question of why we thank God for saving us from a situation that He put us into? How does it relate to brit bein ha-btarim?

2. Finally, note how (and why) we prove this statement with a quote from 've-otanu hotzi mi-sham' which is taken from Devarim 6:22. To appreciate why, review Devarim 6:20-24 once again, and attempt to explain the thematic connection between this paragraph and the 'avadim hayinu' paragraph that we recited at the beginning of Maggid.

Relate this as well to the 'strange' statement made by Moshe Rabeinu to the new generation in Devarim 5:2-3!

3. Note that in our "nusach" of the Haggada we prove this point with two psukim:

V'higadta l'vincha [See Shmot 13:8.], and

V'otanu hotzi mi-sham [Devarim 6:22]

Can you explain why both psukim are necessary?

[Relate to the words "li" and "otanu".]

4. Why is the statement of 'be-chol dor va-dor' so critical towards understanding the theme of Maggid? Why do you think that if forms the conclusion of Maggid, prior to our recitation of the Hallel?

HALLEL

1. Be sure that you understand how the paragraph of 'lefichach' ties between the story and Hallel that we are about to recite.

In your opinion, why do we recite only the first two paragraphs of Hallel now, and save the remaining paragraphs of Hallel for after the meal?

2. Note the opening psukim of Hallel - Tehillim 113, especially - "ha'lelu AVDEI Hashem, ha'lelu et SHEM Hashem..."

Relate this opening pasuk to the theme of MAGID and the purpose of Yetziat Mitzraim. [Relate to the 'statement' of "m'tchila ovdei avada zara hayu avoteinu, discussed above!]

3. The reason why we recite Tehillim 114 should be rather obvious. But make sure that you understand why.

4. Review the final blessing of 'ga'al Yisrael', noting how it relates to the overall theme of Maggid.

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PART FOUR - THE THEME OF MAGGID

1. Based on your outline and your answers to the above questions, what would you say is the primary purpose of the mitzva of MAGGID?

Would you say that we tell the story in order to remember HOW God saved us from Egypt, or WHY He saved us?

Did God provide us with freedom from slavery simply for the sake of 'freedom' itself, or in order that we become free to 'serve God' instead?

2. How does the story in MAGID relate to the connection between God's choice of Avraham Avinu to become the forefather a His special nation, and the historical process through which we became that nation?

How does this answer the basic question concerning why we are obligated to thank God in every generation for a set of events that took place over three thousand years ago?

3. What would you say is the difference between the daily mitzva of 'zechirat yetziat Mitzrayim' (REMEMBERING the Exodus - fulfilled when we read the third parsha of kriyat shma) and the special mitzva on the Seder night of 'sippur yetziat Mitzrayim' (TELLING THE STORY of the Exodus)?

How could the yearly mitzva of 'sippur' be understood as the basis for our daily mitzva of 'zechira'?

4. What is the importance of passing on a tradition from one generation to the next? How does the mitzva of MAGGID help accomplish this goal? How does this explain the involvement of children in the Seder, and special mitzvot such as MATZA and MAROR etc.?

5. Could Korban Pesach and the mitzvot of the Seder night be considered a yearly commemoration not only of yetziat Mitzrayim, but also a yearly reminder of God's promise and our covenantal commitment to brit avot and its purpose? Explain your answer!

Relate this to Devarim 26:1-3, the purpose of bringing our first fruits to Hashem.

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PART FIVE - THE FOUR SONS & SHMOT PEREK 12->13

1. Read the section in the Haggada concerning the four sons: 'kenegged arba banim dibra Torah'. Note how the Haggada is quoting the Midrash [Mechilta]. [Note also how 'baruch ha-Makom...' serves as a 'birkat ha-Torah' in preparation for the study of this drasha!]

2. Try to explain the opening statement: 'kenegged arba...'
What assumption is the Midrash making in regard to why there are four sons (and not three or five)? Be precise!

3. Next, look up the source in Chumash for each of these four questions. Should you need help, see Shmot 12:26-27, 13:8, 13:14-15 & Devarim 6:20-21; but as you review these sources, note the context of these psukim.

Do the answers to these questions in the Haggada match the answers given in the Torah?

Did you ever notice this before? [If not, why?]

Do you have a simple explanation why most of the answers that the Haggada gives are different than the answers found in Chumash?

4. Now, scan the four sources once again, this time paying careful attention to the general topic that Chumash is discussing that leads up to each question.

Did you find four questions concerning the same topic or do you find four different topics? If so, explain what those topics are.

Note how the answers that Chumash provides for each question relate directly to each respective topic; while the answers that the Haggada provides relate to questions concerning the Seder!

Can you explain why? Can you explain why this is a drasha and not pshat of these psukim?

5. What do you think the Midrash is coming to teach us?

Why do you think this message is so important for the Seder night that Chazal decided to include this Midrash in the Haggada?

How does this relate to the statement in the Mishna in the tenth perek of Pesachim - 'lefi da'at ha-ben, aviv melamdo - based on the level of the child, the parent should teach him'?

be-hatzlacha
menachem