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Afikoman – The Hidden Light That Is Stored Away For The Future

When there was a *Beis HaMikdash*, we ate the *korbon pesach* after we were satisfied from the *Seder* meal. Now that we don't have the *Beis HaMikdash*, we eat the *afikoman*, a piece of *matzah*, in memory of the *korbon pesach*, at the end of *Seder* when we are satisfied and full.

One whole piece of *matzah* is broken into two pieces. The smaller piece remains on the *K'earah* (the *Seder* plate), and the larger piece of *matzah* is put away for *Tzafun*, to be eaten as *afikoman*. The *afikoman* is called *Tzafun* because it is like the *ohr hatzafun*, the hidden light, which has been stored away for the *tzaddikim* in the future. On a similar note, the wine of the 4 cups is like the wine that has been squeezed from the grapes of the first days of creation (the *yayin ha-meshumar*), which has been stored away for the *tzaddikim* in the future.

Divided Matzah: The Division of Hashem's Name of Havayah¹

Let us explore the depth behind the division of the *matzah* into two parts.

Matzah is from the word *matzah*, to fight, and this is because the *matzah* is broken up and divided into pieces, just as a fight creates division. But the word *matzah* is also from the word *metzius*, hinting to the One *Metzius*, the One Reality, Who is Hashem, Whom there is none other besides Him. That is the inner implication of the word *matzah*.

The *metzius* of Hashem is represented by Hashem's name of *havayah*, which is divided on some level. *Chazal* explain that the letter *hev* of Hashem's Name is broken up into 2 letters, the letter *daled* and the letter

¹ (lit. "being"); the Tetragrammaton, G d's Divine Name of the four Hebrew letters yud-hei-vav-hei, expressing His transcendence of time and space

vov, and so is the *afikoman* divided into two parts. The letter *daled* of Hashem's name of *havayah* is represented by the smaller half of *matzah*, eaten at the beginning of the *Seder*, and this is because the letter *daled* hints to *dal*, a poor person, who has nothing of his own.

The beginning of the *Seder* focuses on the poor person, on inviting all the poor to the *Seder*, and on how the *matzah* is *lechem oni*, the poor man's food. The smaller half of *matzah* which is placed on the *K'earah* is the *lechem oni* aspect of the *matzah*. In contrast to this, the larger half of *matzah*, represented by the letter *vov* of Hashem's name of *havayah*, is stored away to be eaten for the end of the *Seder*, for it represents the *ohr hatzafun*, the light that is hidden away for the *tzaddikim*.

Matzah Reveals Havayah and Emunah

Going deeper, *matzah* is from the word *metzius*. We recognize the reality of Hashem through recognizing His *havayah*, through His name of *havayah*. There are four letters of Hashem's Name, and in the soul as well, the *havayah* of Hashem filters down into our soul. This is the deepest faculty of our soul, known as *havayah*. It is explained as *nitzotz Borei b'nivra*, "The spark of the Creator, within the created being," the part of our soul that recognizes Hashem Himself, so to speak. Hashem revealed His very *havayah* (His very reality) in Egypt, so to speak, when He said, "I, Hashem, am going out in Egypt." Hashem was revealing His very *havayah*, as it were, amidst depraved Egypt, to herald our redemption from Egypt.

Below the point of *havayah* (reality) is the point of *emunah* (belief), the power to believe in reality – the power to have *emunah* in Hashem. *Matzah* is called "food of faith". Thus, besides for being associated with *havayah*,

the *matzah* is also associated with *emunah*. Thus, *matzah* is a portal to *emunah* since it reveals *emunah*.

Afikoman – The Emunah Revealed By The Matzah

Emunah in Hashem, revealed by the *matzah*, is particularly revealed by the kind of *matzah* that is the *afikoman*. The word *afikoman* is from the words *afi* and *mekoman*, and the word *afi* has the *gematria* of the name of *havayah* and the name of *adnus* together, and the word *mekoman* has the *gematria* of *Yam Suf*, alluding to the splitting of the sea which was on the seventh day of Pesach, where there was a revelation of *emunah*: “*And they believed in Hashem and in Moshe His servant.*” This insight is from the *sefer Bris Kehunas Olam*. But the *emunah* that was shown at the *Yam Suf* is rooted in the *emunah* revealed by the *afikoman*.

The *matzah* is first divided and scattered into pieces, at the *Seder* meal. The word for “scattered” is *pizur*, equal numerically to 287, equal to the word *Pur* (the lots which Haman cast on *Purim*), which had 2 sides to it. Haman, who was Amalek, is the concept of *safek* (doubt), where there are 2 sides, 2 options, the opposite of the concept of *emunah* where there is only 1 option (the reality of Hashem). The Torah says that when Moshe’s hands were raised with *emunah* in Hashem, Amalek lost its power, because *emunah* is the power that counters Amalek.

Chazal state “Who is wise? One who can see what will happen.” A wise person can see the end already at the beginning. At the beginning of the *Hagaddah*, we speak about the questions of the 4 sons and what we answer them. What do we tell the wise son? We tell him about the *afikoman*- that we don’t eat anything after the *afikoman*. We are telling him at the beginning of the *Seder* about the end of the *Seder*, which is the *afikoman*.

Why is this so important? The *afikoman* is not simply about eating the other and bigger half that was put away for the end of the *Seder*. Rather, the *afikoman* is the other half of the whole- it completes the first act of eating at the beginning of the *Seder*. In other words, the *afikoman* shows us that what seemed at the beginning of the night as just a broken piece of *matzah* was actually part of a greater whole. The *afikoman* connects together the two pieces of *matzah* into one act of eating, revealing how both pieces of *matzah* are part of one *havayah*, two halves of the same whole.

Eating the *afikoman* is the part of the *Seder* that is called *Tzafun*, which means hidden. This is not simply because the *afikoman* was hidden for the end of the *Seder*, but because the *afikoman* represents the *ohr hatzafun*, the hidden light that is stored away for the *tzaddikim* in the future. At the end of the night of Pesach, this hidden light is shining. The hidden light is also shining strongly during the End of Days, where “the *tzaddik* shall live by his *emunah*,” as the *navi* Habakkuk said (*Gemara Makkos 24a*). The prophet said that the inner essence behind the *matzah*: is all about revealing *emunah*. For when we are at the end (and when we are in the final generations), that is precisely where we reveal *emunah*.

Hagaddah – Beginning With Division and Ending With Oneness

There are two different words in *Lashon HaKodesh* that mean telling over a story: *Agadah*, and *Hagaddah*.

The word *agadah* is from the word *igud* or *agudah*, to unite. The story told over in an *Agaddah* (such as *Agadta* stories found in the *Gemara*) will unite together many details and parts of a story in order to bring out one point. This is because *Agadah* begins with the letter *aleph*, which is equal to one,

symbolizing unity. Hence, an *agaddah* is when a story is unified in its details.

The story of a *Hagaddah*, however, is a story that begins with the letter *hey*. The letter *hey* implies division. As mentioned earlier, the letter *hey* is really a divided letter, with the letter *daled* and a broken letter *vov*. Thus, the letter *hey* implies division. We can also see this idea of division within a story in the Hagaddah that we recite on Pesach night. We start off the *Hagaddah* with division: The *matzos* are divided into 2 parts, and then we divide the 2 even further by dividing it into 4, with the 4 questions, the 4 sons, the 4 cups, etc. The *Maharal* explains that the number 4 represents the very idea of division, because there are 4 corners of the earth which distances all inhabitants of the world. Four is the idea of division, and the number 4 is the ongoing theme of the beginning of the Seder.

But as we get closer to the end of the Seder, the details of the *Hagaddah's* story begin to combine together more and more, slowly unifying into one unit that expresses our *emunah* in Hashem. The division begins with 2 pieces of broken *matzos*, then 4 questions, 4 sons, etc. and eventually the story emerges as one single theme: *emunah*. The division becomes unified. In the *Hagaddah*, we start with division, and we end with oneness, with unity. With the 5th cup of the *Seder*, we unify all the details together, for the role of the number 5 is to unify everything into one.²

Chazal said that one should speak about the story of the *Hagadah* all night (until he falls asleep). What is the depth of this? It is because *Pesach* is the words *peh sach*, the “mouth shall speak,” it is a night of revealing our true speech, to speak about *emunah*, and therefore it is the root of speech. The

² Editor's Note: For example, the first 4 layers of our soul are divided from each other, but when we reach our 5th and deepest level of the soul, the *Yechidah*, our entire soul is unified under one unit.

Seder night on Pesach is all about talking, and what kind of talking? To talk about that which reveals *emunah* in Hashem. It is the root of our speech.

The Two Levels of Matzah

The *Gemara* says *matzah* is called *lechem oni* for two reasons. Firstly, it is *lechem* that we talk a lot over (*onin alav devarim harbeh*), we say a lot of words over this *matzah* [through reciting the *Hagaddah*]. Secondly, it is called *lechem oni* because it is a poor man's bread, since it was eaten in haste, with no time for the dough to rise. On an inner level, the *matzah* is really both, and we fulfill both of these aspects of *matzah* at the *Seder*, as follows.

The *matzah* we eat at the *Seder* is broken into 2 pieces. We eat the smaller part of the *matzah* at the beginning of the *Seder*, and this *matzah* is the *lechem oni* aspect of the *matzah*. The *Shelah* explains that the larger piece of *matzah* eaten at the end, which is eaten when we are satisfied, is like a wealthy man's bread, which is not eaten out of hunger but precisely after one is satisfied. A wealthy person eats after being satisfied, whereas a poor person eats out of hunger.

Thus, there are two levels of *matzah* we eat at the *Seder*. There is *matzah* of *lechem oni*, which we eat at the beginning of the *Seder*. This is *matzah* eaten out of hunger, a poor man's bread, implying the lower level of *matzah*, where we are eating because something is missing and we need to satiate that hunger. This *matzah* is also eaten together with the *maror*, which is bitter, because the *matzah* eaten at the beginning of the *Seder* is the poor man's bread, which is eaten amidst a state of deficiency and bitterness. The later act of *matzah* - the *afikoman* - is eaten precisely after we are satisfied, when we are no longer hungry. This is the higher level of

matzah, which is not the poor man's bread, but "the bread which we talk a lot over" where we discuss words of *emunah*. This is *afikoman*, the aspect of *matzah* that represents the essence of Pesach, *peh sach*, to talk words of *emunah*. This is the level of *matzah* that is called the "bread of faith."

We eat the *afikoman* precisely before *chatzos* (midnight), before the time when the *Geulah* happened. The depth of this is because when the *Geulah* is about to be revealed, Hashem says "I, Hashem, am going out in Egypt," He reveals Himself at the darkest and lowest point of our exile, before He takes us out. The word *afikoman* contains the word *man*, the manna, because it is like the eating the manna. The words *afiko man* mean, "to eat manna as we are on the way out."

Since the *afikoman* is eaten right before the time when Hashem took us out of Egypt, where Hashem revealed His *havayah* (so to speak), it is the level of *matzah* which reveals *havayah*. When we had the *Beis haMikdash* and we had the *korbon pesach*, we would taste *havayah*. Nowadays, instead of eating the *korbon pesach*, we eat the *matzah* of the *afikoman*. We are tasting the *emunah* of the *havayah*, but we are not tasting *havayah* itself. Therefore, today's *matzah* at the highest level can only be the *emunah* of *havayah*. The *afikoman* is therefore stressing the concept of *havayah* unlike in the times of the *Beis HaMikdash* when we had the *korbon pesach*.

Afikoman Is Like Eating From The Eitz HaChaim

Let us explore the aspect of the *afikoman* being eaten precisely at the end of the Seder, when we are satisfied and no longer hungry. Until we eat the *afikoman*, all of our eating is on the level of eating from the *Eitz HaDaas*, where we are eating like a poor man: "A poor man is only poor in his *daas*." When we eat out of hunger, we are eating to satisfy ourselves, so it is

self-serving. But at the end of the *Seder*, where we eat *afikoman*, we are eating after being satisfied, meaning that we are not lacking anything and we are eating on a higher level, not for our own purposes. Such eating is like eating from the *Eitz haChaim*.

“*The tzaddik shall live by his emunah.*” We reveal the essence of Pesach at the end of the *Seder* of *peh sach* (the mouth that talks), which is equal in *gematria* to the word *chaim*, a hint to the *Eitz HaChaim*. The eating from the *Eitz haDaas* was an act of *taavah*, as the Torah says, “It was desirable to the eyes.” It was eating for self-serving reasons. The eating on the level of the *Eitz HaChaim*, by contrast, is when one does not eat to satisfy their hunger, but to eat from a place of satisfaction of not lacking anything. Thus, eating the *afikoman* when we are full and satisfied resembles eating from the *eitz haChaim*.

The depth of all eating on the night of Pesach is to arrive at this final meal, the *afikoman*, where we are not eating because we are missing something. What is at the depth of this? When we talk about the *matzah* during the *Seder* throughout the *Hagaddah*, we are really speaking about the “word of Hashem” that is in the *matzah*. We are releasing the hidden potential found in this *matzah*! It looks simply like broken pieces of *matzah*, but when we speak about the *matzah* we are increasing our *emunah* and we reveal the word of Hashem contained in this *matzah*.

This is why the *afikomen* (the light of the future) is *tzafun*, it is hidden for the *tzaddikim* in the future. In the future, there are no *mitzvos*, because the world of action will cease. Today we have all the *mitzvos*, because we are living in a world of action, and even our Torah today is on the level of action. In the future, the world of action ceases and we remain with the

level beyond action, which is speech – with the “word of Hashem” that is found in everything. That is what is hidden for the future. Thus we hide the *afikoman* to reveal that there’s a part of the *matzah* which is hidden: the word of Hashem that’s found in the *matzah*. When we reveal it and we eat it, we are eating from the “word of Hashem,” thus it is like eating the *Eitz haChaim*.

The Taste That Remains With Us: The Word of Hashem

There are two abilities in our mouth: the ability of taste, and the ability of speech. Normally, when we are eating, we cannot talk, and vice versa. When we taste food and then chew it and swallow it, the taste is gone a moment later. As is known, we must not eat anything after the *afikomen*, so that its taste will remain with us afterwards. The depth of this is really because the *afikoman* is like eating from the *manna*, where the taste lingered in our mouth long after we ate it.

On a deeper level, we are eating from the “word of Hashem” that is found in the *afikoman* and that is why its taste remains with us. Eating the *afikoman* infuses us with the “word of Hashem” that we absorb into our system. We reveal the root of speech which enables our sense of taste to stay with us, where our speech and taste become fused together. By not eating anything afterwards, we reveal how the word of Hashem remains with us, with nothing else but this “taste” – to show that there is nothing else besides for Hashem’s word.

We can taste a semblance of the *Eitz HaChaim* by tasting the hidden “word of Hashem” that is found in each thing. The taste of the *afikoman* remains with us because it is a taste that continues longer after it is experienced. It is a taste that is continuous and keeps going and doesn’t end. This is also

known as *taamei Torah*, the secrets of Torah, or the “taste” of Torah. This is also the depth of why “The Torah was only given to those who eat the *manna*” – it is because the Torah is revealed to us only when we “taste” the secrets of Torah which have been hidden away for the future.

On a related note, the depth of the *afikoman* is “*afiko man*,” to “bring out” the potential of this food which is compared to the *manna*. What is the potential that lays inside the *afikoman*, which we are bringing out? It is essentially the *emunah* that is found in this *matzah*, the *afikoman* which is compared to the *manna*. In that way, we are tasting the “word of Hashem” that is found in it, and this is the meaning of how *matzah* is the “food of our faith,” מיכליה דמהמנותא .

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