



# The Community

Boruch Hashem

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## From The Rebbe's Teachings -Lik'S Vol 16, Vaeira 5

### *The Ultimate Liberation From Self*

Synopsis: Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva (and Rabbi Yoseph HaGelili) argue about how many plagues G-d smote Egypt with. There are three prohibitions concerning *chametz* on Passover: Eating, Enjoying, and Owning (Rabbi Yoseph HaGelili maintains that *chametz* is permissible to enjoy, but not to eat). Rabbi Yehuda mandates eliminating *chametz* by burning, while the Sages say that it suffices to crumble it into the wind, or throw it into the ocean. The Jerusalem Talmud states an argument whether it is permissible to feed one's *chametz* on Passover to an ownerless animal. The Sages sometimes count the Egyptian Exile (Egypt, Elam (Media), Babylon, and Edom (Rome)) as one of our *Four Exiles* (See Daniel Chapters 2 & 7), and sometimes not (Babylon, Media, Greek, and Edom (Rome)).

However, in essence, all of the above is but one argument, concerning how deep the impurity of the exile effects, whether in the *material of the form*, or in the *original mass* itself, thus, how deep our service must be, and thus, how high the redemption will reach. The outcome being, that we are capable to liberate ourselves even from the rawest definition of *Self*.

In the Haggadah for the Passover Seder we find an argument stated in the Mechilta (-14:31) concerning the plagues that G-d smote Egypt with:

*"(Rabbi Yosi the Gallilean said..., 'Thus you must conclude that in Egypt they were smitten by ten plagues...') Rabbi Eliezer said, 'How do we know that each individual plague which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of four plagues... Thus you must now say that in Egypt they were struck by forty plagues...' Rabbi Akiva said, 'How do we know that each individual plague which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of five plagues... Thus you must now say that in Egypt they were struck by fifty plagues...'"*

Commentaries (-Kolbi, Simon 51, in the name of, "The Wise One, the 'Baal Hamelamed'") explains the argument to be that "Rabbi Eliezer says that there are four plagues..., because there is no plague the 'Simple Element'<sup>2</sup>' (Avudraham calls it: *Yesod HaMeyuchad -The Special (Designated; Extraordinary) Element.*" Ritva calls it also, "Primordial (Primal; Raw; Initial; Amorphous) Plague"), rather, they are all composed of all the Four Elements, and therefore he said that each plague was of four. And Rabbi Akiva who added that each plague was of five, for in his opinion, even the Element of the Orbits (See earlier, "Simple Element"), which is the fifth element, was assembled within them."

Hence, it is clear that (a) according to both opinions, the plague did not just deal with the *object* as seen to the *naked eye*, but rather, to the very essence and *being-ness* of the object, and (b) the opinions of how deep the *Plague* penetrated the *Egyptian Realm (object)*<sup>3</sup> is based upon their opinions of far the *Impurity* penetrated the *Egyptian realm*, for the *Plagues* came to subdue the impurities.

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1. This opinion will be discussed only further on.

2. In a footnote the Rebbe brings different opinions as to what this is. For the sake of simple clarity, I will explain it based on how *The Bible Unauthorized*, by C. H. Mousse, explains Rashi's opinion of *Genesis*, and also based upon Nachmanides comment on the word "Created": Rashi states (-Genesis 1:14), "All the creations of heaven and earth were created on the first day, and each one was fixed in its proper place on the day that was decreed upon it."

Nachmanides writes (-ibid 1:1) "The Holy One, blessed be He, created all things from absolute non-existence. Now we have no expression in the sacred language for bringing forth something from nothing other than the word 'bara' (created). Everything that exists under the sun or above was not made from non-existence at the outset. Instead He brought forth from total and absolute nothing a very thin substance devoid of corporeality but having a power of potency, fit to assume form and to proceed from potentiality into reality. This was the primary matter created by G-d; it is called by the Greeks *hylē* (matter). After the *hylē*, He did not 'create' anything, but He 'formed' and made things with it, and from this *hylē* He brought everything into existence and clothed the forms and put them into a finished condition."

Maimonides (-Yesodei HaTorah 3:10) explains, "He created *four forms* for *this matter*... The first of these forms is the form of fire... The second of these forms is the form of wind... The third of these forms is the form of water... The fourth of these forms is the form of earth..." (-ibid, 2:1), "These four bodies: fire, wind, water, and earth are the fundamental [elements] of all the creations below the sky. Everything that exists - [be it] man, beast, fowl, crawling creature, fish, plant, metal, precious stone, pearl, building stone, mountain, or lump of earth - the body of all these [entities] is a combination of these four fundamental [elements]."

This, "hylē" together with the 'Four Elements' is how C. H. Mousse explains Rashi, that "everything" was *created* on the first day, meaning the *mass of matter*, which then on each day thereafter, it was the *form* of each creation that was fermented via the *Four Elements*. And this is what is meant here with "Simple Element," and, "Special Element."

With this, we can understand that Rabbi Eliezer is speaking of the *Plagues* only dealing with the *Four Elements* of the *Form* of Egyptian Impurity, while Rabbi Akiva includes the *Fifth Element* of *hylē*.

3. Rabbi Joseph Rosen, the *Rogotchover Goan*, explains that there are some prohibitions that only apply to the *form* of the forbidden objects, while others to the *matter* of the object. See further on in the article.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 2024 ★ ב' שבט תשפ"ד

Shabbat Candle Lighting: 5:31 PM Kabbalat Shabbat: 5:45 PM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024 ★ ג' שבט תשפ"ד

TORAH READING: [MVA'eirav](#) (Esodus 6:2-9:35) · HAFTORAH: [Ezekiel](#) (28:25-29:21)

[Shacharit](#): 9:30 AM · [Mincha](#): 12:46 PM · Shabbat Ends: North Miami: 6:26 PM

**This Week...**

This concept of how deep the impurity penetrated the *object* manifests itself in Jewish Law concerning the prohibition of *chametz* on Passover, as well. Concerning the prohibition of *chametz* on Passover, we find three prohibitions:

1. Eating: (-Exodus 13:3), "Leavened bread shall not be eaten."
2. Deriving Pleasure: (-Pesachim 21b), "Chizkiya said, 'From where (is it derived) that it is prohibited to derive benefit from leavened bread on Passover? As it is stated (-Exodus 13:3), 'Leavened bread shall not be eaten.' (Since the verse uses the passive, it should be understood as follows:) There shall be no permitted consumption of it ((-Rashi), "From the verse calling this prohibition (of deriving pleasure), 'shall not be eaten,' which means that he will not have any permission that leads to any eating, and in general pleasures leads to eating, by the person taking the money (he derived from the benefit of the *chametz*), and buying with it food to eat.") The reason is that the Merciful One writes, 'Leavened bread shall not be eaten.' Had it not written: 'Shall not be eaten' (and instead used the active form: You shall not eat), I would have said that the prohibition of eating is implied, but the prohibition of deriving benefit is not implied."
3. Ownership (The prohibition of, "Not Seen and Not Found"): (-Exodus 12:19), "For seven days, leavening shall not be found in your houses," Rashi: "How do we know [that the same ruling applies] to [leavening found within] the borders [outside the house]? Therefore, Scripture states (-ibid 13:7), '(And no leaven shall be seen of yours [in your possession], and no leavening shall be seen of yours) throughout all of your borders.' Why, then, did Scripture state: 'in your houses (which is already included in, "throughout all your borders")?' [To teach us that] just as your house is in your domain, so [the prohibition against possessing leaven in] your borders [means only what is] in your domain. This excludes leaven belonging to a gentile which is in a Jew's possession, and for which he [the Jew] did not accept responsibility."

The difference between the prohibitions is that the prohibition of eating/not-eating is connected to the form of the food, as it is an edible item. Deriving pleasure/not-deriving pleasure is connected with the matter of the item<sup>4</sup>. And nevertheless, even to pleasure derived from the usage of an item is yet connected to the matter only as it is specifically a matter to this form, and hence, used in this way. However, the unique prohibition of *chametz* simply existing in the possession of a Jew, even without any usage, is connected to the very essence matter of the *chametz*, even void of any form at all.

We find an argument concerning how one must eliminate *chametz*, in which Rabbi Yehudah states that the only elimination of *chametz* that will do is to burn it into total non-existence (even possession of its existence does not exist), while the Sages state that crumbling it into the wind, or throwing it into the sea, where, even though the existence of the *chametz* remains, nevertheless, the form (eating and usage) of the *chametz* does not exist anymore. Here too, the difference of opinion concerning the elimination of *chametz* is connected with a difference of opinion in as how deep the prohibition extends into the *chametz*, whether it be into the form, or also into the matter, of the *chametz*.

Thus, we can now, connect the dispute between Rabbi Yehudah and the Sages concerning the elimination of *chametz* with the dispute of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva concerning the number of plagues existing within each plague. In which Rabbi Eliezer aligns with the Sages, that only the Four Elements of Form was effected by the prohibition/impurity, while Rabbi Akiva will align with Rabbi Yehudah that the Essence Matter was also effected by the prohibition/impurity.

Deeper yet, just as there is the dispute concerning the elimination of the *chametz* is based upon two views concerning the reach of the prohibition into the *chametz* --whether the prohibition goes as deep as the Essence Matter, and hence need be burned, or if it is only as deep as the Form, and hence, crumbling into the wind and throwing into the ocean suffices--, so too, we can apply this to the two forms of *chametz's* being befitting of usage of pleasure. (i) Usage of pleasure applies only to, "that leads to any eating," "For in general pleasures leads to eating, by the person taking the money (he derived from the benefit of the *chametz*), and buying with it food to eat.", or (ii) even a usage that offers no personal financial gains, as for example, feeding the *chametz* to an ownerless dog. Upon which (feeding an ownerless dog) we find an argument in the Jerusalem Talmud. Here too, we can say that the argument is based on whether you see the prohibition penetrating only the Form of the *chametz*, which then limits even the usage of pleasure only to, "that leads to any eating," or, if the prohibition penetrates to the very Essence matter of the *chametz*, then the usage of pleasure applies even if it brings the owner no monetary gains (with which he can then buy food to eat).

--With this we can now also understand the first opinion<sup>5</sup> quoted concerning the amount of plagues, "Rabbi Yossi the Gallilean said... 'Thus you must conclude that in Egypt they were smitten by ten plagues...'" Meaning that Rabbi Yossi is of the opinion that the impurity effected only the outer Form, and not even the elements of the form<sup>6</sup>.--

With all of the above, yet another complexity becomes understood. Concerning the Four Exiles Daniel prophesized about (-chapters 2 & 7), sometimes (-Bereishit Rabba 2:4. And more) we find

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4. Which is why you can have an item of which it is forbidden to eat, but not to derive pleasure from, being that the impurity has penetrated only unto the form, but not deeper into its matter.
5. Even though we could say that Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva don't argue with Rabbi Yossi that there were Ten Plagues, but rather, their argument go only to deeper understand what lay within the ten Plagues, nevertheless, according to the General Rule concerning Talmudic wording: "Rabbi Eliezer says," which means that the present sage is arguing on the previous statement, versus, "Says Rabbi Eliezer," which could be a clarification of the previous statement, rather than arguing with in.
6. According to this opinion, (i) Why is there a prohibition of usage (Four Elements), and (ii) of Not Seeing and Not Finding (Essence Matter)? The answer is: (i) Rabbi Yossi is of the opinion that the usage of *chametz* on Passover is not prohibited, and (ii) the prohibition of Not Seeing and Not Finding, is (not because of the Essence matter of the *chametz*, but rather) a Biblical Fence to guard one from mistakenly eating *chametz* on Passover (being of how used to one is to eat *chametz* all year round).

the *Egypt Exile* listed as one of the four, and sometimes (-Megillah 29a -in Ein Yaakov) not. The explanation between the two opinions is that the *Four Exiles* are based upon the *contraire* to the *Four Letters of G-d's Ineffable Tetragrammaton*, while the *Egyptian Exile* is *contraire* to the "*Thorn of the Yud*." It is known (-Eitz Chaim, beginning of Sha'ar Drushei ABY" A) that the *Four Elements* correspond to the *Four Letters* of the *Ineffable Tetragrammaton*, while the "*Thorn of the Yud*," corresponds to the, "*Primordial Matter called Hyly (Amorphous)*." Hence, the *Four Exiles* correspond to the *Four Elements* being effected, while the *Egyptian Exile* corresponds with the *Essence Matter* being effected.

Thus, the places in which our Sages do not count the *Egyptian Exile* as one of the *Four Exiles*, is because the *Egyptian Exile* is being seen as the *Primordial Matter of Exile* --the "*Thorn of the Yud*", as it is above and beyond any of the distinct *element (form)* of the *Four Elements (forms)* of exile. While, there where the Sages do count the *Egyptian Exile* as the first of the *Four Exiles*, is where the *Egyptian Exile* is perceived as the *contraire* to the *first and all-inclusive* of the *Ten Emanations*<sup>8</sup> *Wisdom*, the *Yud*, the first (the *source* and) all-inclusive of the *Four Letters*, the first (the *source* and) all-inclusive of the *Four Elements*.

*In Our Service to G-d*: The two opinions (that of Rabbi Eliezer and that of Rabbi Akiva) manifest themselves in different dimensions within our *Service to G-d*. The Hebrew word for *Egypt* is *Mitzrayim*, which can be connected to the word *Meitzorim: Limits (Constraints) and Boundaries*. The *Mitzrayim Exile* represents one being confined to *limitations and boundaries* in his *Service to G-d*. While the *Exodus from Mitzrayim*, represents a *liberation* of these *limitations and boundaries*<sup>9</sup>.

Rabbi Eliezer demands that our *Service to G-d* must break free and be liberated of, from bottom to top:

- (1) The *Fourth Element*, the *Fourth Letter*, and the *Fourth Dimension of the Soul's Faculties: Kingship - One's Thoughts, Speech, and Actions*, all belong to, and be in service of G-d.
- (2) The *Third Element*, the *Third Letter*, and the *Third Dimension of the Soul's Faculties: Six Male Emotions -One's Feelings of Love, Justice, Compassion, etc.*, all belong to, and be in service of G-d.
- (3) The *Second Element*, the *Second Letter*, and the *Second Dimension of the Soul's Faculties: Intellect - One's Understanding, Paradigm and Intellectual Grasp of Reality*, all belong to, and be in service of G-d.
- (4) The *First Element*, the *First Letter*, and the *First Dimension of the Soul's Faculties: Self Sacrifice -One's Wisdom, Innermost Identity of Self*, belong to, and be in service of G-d.

In other words, Rabbi Eliezer is demanding that: (i) We remove any actual transgressions against the commandments of the Torah. (ii) We remove the, "*What will the others say*," in how we behave in that which is permissible to us. (iii) We transcend beyond our understanding, (a) even where we do not understand why Torah demands or prohibits a specific action, and (b) even where we do understand why, we do it not just with the *cool, calm, and collect*, nature of the mind. (iv) We have self-sacrifice, in sacrificing the *Ego*.

Rabbi Akiva then takes it to the next level. For even in *Self-sacrifice* there can be the *Being-ness* of, "*I am sacrificing myself for G-d*." Thus, Rabbi Akiva demands that one even liberate themselves from this *Essence Matter of Self*. This is the liberation even of the *Limitations, "Definition"* of the *Essence of the Soul!* This is the, "*Love G-d... And with all your might*," (over the, "*With all your soul*,") of the *Returnee*, which surpasses even the love of the *Righteous!*

And, the service of each is connected with who they were: Rabbi *Eliezer* which means (-Exodus 18:4), "*And one who was named Eliezer, because [Moses said,] "The G-d of my father came to my aid*," who was Jewish from birth, and had the "*aid*" of the, "*G-d of my father*," and therefore believed that ultimately nothing can ever negatively effect so deep as to the *Essence of the Soul*, upon which it is ruled (-Tanya, chapter 24), "*remains faithful to Him even while the sin is being committed*." While Rabbi Akiva, who came from converts, and was therefore caring even from those who need to first be brought, "*Under the wings of G-d*<sup>10</sup>," meaning that they need to transform the very *Essence Matter of their Soul!*" And ultimately, as mentioned earlier, it is Rabbi Akiva who liberates us even from the *Limitations, "Definition"* of the *Essence of the Soul!* Which in return brings us to the ultimate *Exodus of Mitzrayim*, the *Final Redemption*, which will be (-Michah 7:15), "*As in the days of your exodus from the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders*."

7. the form of the letter *yud* as written in a *Torah Scroll, Tefilin, and Mezuzah* has a mandatory "*Thorn*" above it to the left side:

8. The *Ten Emanations* also correspond with the *Four Letters of the Ineffable Tetragrammaton: yud: Wisdom, first hai: Understanding, vov: Six Male Emotions, and second hai: Kingship*.

9. Not just the limitations of our *Ego's*, "*I want, must, or can't!*," but even of the *limitations and boundaries* of one's *G-dly Soul*, stuck within only that which, "*Spiritually makes sense, or spiritually feels right*."

10. Terminology used for the act and process of a conversion.

