

Parshat Metzora and Shabbat HaGadol!

written by Refael Kramer
April 3, 2022



The Shabbat before Pesach is referred to by the sages as “Shabbat HaGadol,” the “Great Shabbat,” after the miracles performed on the Shabbat before the Exodus from Israel. This name continues to accompany us to this day, every Shabbat HaGadol the power of miracles is awakened again. Prepare yourself for the miracles of Shabbat HaGadol this year!

Dear Friends,

Pesach is approaching, and with your permission, just before you read this article, I want to share with you information

about the special project that we are involved with during these days, which is also related to Pesach. There is an ancient custom of helping families who find it financially difficult to celebrate the holiday as is fitting. This custom is known by our sages as "*ma'ot chitim*," enabling the poor to buy sufficient matzah. This is the third consecutive year that we at ***Machon Nahalat Tzvi, Breslov Research Institute***, which is run by my father and teacher, **Rabbi Chaim Kramer**, have been involved in this project, and thank G-d, for the last two years, [we have been privileged to bring great joy to hundreds of families](#), allowing them to celebrate the holiday with abundance and joy!

It is impossible to overstate the importance of this mitzvah, which involves many important mitzvos, such as giving charity, kindness, having mercy on others, and bringing holiday joy to the families who are in need of our help. The *gaba'im* of different *kehillot* here in the Holy Land have been calling us daily to ask for our help in supporting the less fortunate families in their communities, and we would really like to be able to help them. The extent to which we are able to help is dependent on all of our generosity and good will to get involved in donating to this cause.

We are currently [running a fundraising campaign](#). Thank G-d, as of this writing we have already raised \$110,000, which is about 60% of our goal. Every contribution that you make, and every effort adds up and enables us to reach out to more families and bring holiday joy to their homes.

I would like to encourage you to get personally involved by offering to make a deal with you—a partnership in this mitzvah. The local currency in the Land of Israel is the shekel. I would like to make you an offer: **I will make a donation, with G-d's help, of 500 shekels, which is a huge amount for me, and I would be absolutely delighted if you will all join me—anyone reading our weekly *parsha* article—and give the same amount in your local currency. If you live in the US**

and can afford to give such a large amount in dollars—it is a simple calculation that even if only a hundred people give \$500 each, we will have already raised \$50,000. This is in no way beyond our ability. We can easily achieve this final goal. I pray you all will help me to gladden the hearts of those who are begging the *gaba'im* for assistance, who are calling us continually concerning those who are waiting for our help.

Therefore, I am making a personal request that everyone should please join our [fundraising campaign now](#) and donate that amount so that together we will reach our goal in order to make many more precious families happy and enable them to be able to celebrate the Pesach Seder Night without worry and with a joyful heart.

I would like to personally thank each and every one of you in advance—those of you who will happily respond wholeheartedly to my request which is not for my benefit, but solely for the benefit of the poor who stand before us all.

I will end with the blessing of HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the Torah Deuteronomy 16:11, as elucidated by Rashi: “If you make mine happy, I make yours happy.” If we are considerate towards other and make an effort to bring happiness into their hearts, then G-d will do the same for us. May we all merit to celebrate the coming Pesach with our families with a happy heart, in security, and with peace and with great joy.

Yours sincerely,

Rafael Kramer

[**PLEASE CLICK HERE TO DONATE**](#)



To give – together and wholeheartedly!

The Torah portion of the week is *parshat Metzora*, and this year it falls on the Shabbat immediately before Pesach. As is well known, the Shabbat before Pesach is called “*Shabbat HaGadol*.” This week our discussion will be focused on the issue of *Shabbat HaGadol*, and why this Shabbat in particular has been given this name.

As usual we will start with a wonderful Torah that Rebbe Nachman revealed:

All manner of suffering and all afflictions are due only to a lack of *daat*, meaning a lack of awareness and faith in Divine Providence, that G-d is running the world. And although there are afflictions that we cannot help but feel, such as the suffering caused by the soul’s departure from the body after they had been so powerfully bound together. Even so, when a person has *daat* and understands that everything is under the providence of the Creator of the World, it is easier for him to cope, even with such difficult afflictions, and all the more so with other sufferings which one doesn’t feel at all once he appreciates that everything is under G-d’s control and that it is all for the best, as it is written “The Lord

giveth, and the Lord taketh away.”

The problem begins with the fact that man falls under the influence of the “natural forces.” He falls from his faith in G-d and believes only in the reality of his circumstances and in destiny. This is the main reason for the suffering of the people of Israel in exile since they are spread among the nations of the world and have learned from them to depend all on the forces of nature and destiny. In truth, the gentiles are indeed under the influence of nature and *mazal* (luck or fortune), but the Nation of Israel is higher than *mazal* and they are influenced by the Providence of the Creator alone. When they fall from their faith and think that everything depends on circumstance, then they have to undergo suffering and anguish from the nations of the world, meaning, when they fall from *daat*, it is inevitable that they will feel pain and suffering.

Rebbe Nachman teaches that when HaKadosh Baruch Hu wants to help the Nation of Israel to be saved from a nation that is causing them suffering, He draws down *daat*, a revelation of faith in Divine Providence from “*sof ha’olam*”—the end of the world, meaning from the Providence which will exist “*l’atid lavo*,” in the world that will be in the future (in the End of Days) when everything will be only according to Divine Providence. Nowadays, it appears that everything is conducted according to natural means—operating only through the laws of nature. But in the future, everyone will know and understand that everything is run solely under the supervision of the Creator, and the forces of nature will all be nullified as it is written: “For the heavens shall vanish like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a garment” (Isaiah 51:6).

When a person has daat and understands that everything is under the providence of the Creator of the World, it is easier for him to cope, even with such difficult afflictions!

Rebbe Nachman continues, explaining the concept that □□Divine Providence will have complete control at the End of Days and reveals how we can draw down this Providence to us even today. He teaches:

Prayer can change the course of nature. There is a natural system in place that is run according to its own rules, but we, the Nation of Israel, with our prayers, can change the course of nature. Each of us can remember a situation when he was in trouble, that according to the laws of nature, there was no possibility of salvation. And then, in a moment of truth, he prayed either a short or long prayer to G-d and the salvation came to him from an unexpected place which was completely beyond logic. This was possible because the fact is that there is a G-d in the world, and He runs the world not according to the laws of nature, but instead, the natural laws are subordinate to the Creator of the World who oversees and directs and leads creation according to His will.

Rebbe Nachman explains that Providence is called “great,” as in the verse: “For which *great* nation has G-d close to it, as G-d our Lord is whenever we call out to Him?” (Deuteronomy 4:7). This is the greatness of the Nation of Israel, that G-d, may his name be blessed, hears our prayers and changes nature for us. So too on the verse: “ Please tell me all the *great* things that Elisha performed” (Kings II 8:4), the “greatness,” the miracles that Elisha performed, were achieved through prayer, as our Sages teach, the only way one can change the laws of nature is through prayer, which is the aspect of miracles and Providence which is the opposite of nature. This is greatness, the aspect of something “great” (*Likutei Moharan I*, 250).

According to this explanation, Rabbi Natan explains why this Shabbat before Pesach is called *Shabbat HaGadol*:

All the miracles that took place in Egypt, where G-d completely changed nature with the ten plagues with which He

afflicted the Egyptians, were the absolute opposite of the laws of nature. It was completely clear that G-d controls creation according to His will, and there are actually no laws of nature at all. For example, during the plague of blood, the water turned into blood, etc. From where did G-d draw down the revelation and the illumination of these miracles into the system of nature? From the Providence that will exist in the End of Days when everything will be run according to Divine Providence alone without any influence from the "laws of nature" at all. Therefore, the true source of the Exodus from Egypt is drawn from Shabbat, because Shabbat is called "a day that is completely good," which is the way that the world will be run in the End of Days when everything will behave only according to Divine Providence. And it is from there that G-d drew down the miracles from the End of Days to our world, to our days.

In other words, every miracle that happens here in this world is drawn from the world of the End of Days when the laws of nature will be abolished, and Divine Providence will be the only and the natural way that the world will run. (Oops, maybe you noticed by the "natural" way we are used to talking about means that everything behaves "naturally.") And from there, HaKadosh Baruch Hu draws down miracles and processes that are not according to the laws of nature, revealing that everything is under His control here in our present world as well.

And because Pesach itself is called "Shabbat," as in the verse: "And you shall count for yourselves from the day after Shabbat" (Leviticus 23:15 and Rashi there) which is referring to Pesach. This is because the main power and might of the holiday of Pesach comes from Shabbat, that is, in the way the world will be run in the End of Days. Therefore, on the Shabbat before Pesach, there is a revelation of the control of Divine Providence, a time of absolute miracles which is referred to as "*gadol*," great, and is called "*Shabbat HaGadol*."

These things, of course, are as relevant to our days and to the period we are living in, as they were during the time of the Exodus from Egypt.

We too are waiting every day for HaKadosh Baruch Hu to redeem us. We are all so looking forward to the coming of the Redeemer soon, but somehow, we have fallen into believing in the forces of nature, and it doesn't appear to us that the Redemption is on the horizon. We now believe in statistics and calculations which go according to logic. Why? Because that's what the media feeds us. They "teach" us how to think and how to explain everything.

But we do not need their explanations to understand the madness that is happening in the world. Only in the last two weeks, ten Jews have been killed in the Holy Land in serious terrorist attacks and a terrible war is going on between Russia and Ukraine that has dragged in the whole world to take sides. We are in a crazy system. From where will our salvation come? How can we escape and transcend this explosive and fragile way of living? We must remember that there is Divine Providence in the world, as it will be in the future, when G-d will reveal His Providence unveiled, without disguising it under the laws of nature. From there we can also draw down upon ourselves, in this difficult time, the rulership of Divine Providence to rescue us from our difficult situation.

Please G-d, that we will merit to see miracles and wonders with the ingathering of the far-flung and distant Jews back to the Land of Israel and in the fulfillment of the verse: "As in the days of your Exodus from the land of Egypt, I will show you wonders" (Micha, 7:15) *amen v'amen*.

(Based on *Likutei Halachot, Natilat Yadayim Shacharit 2:7*)