

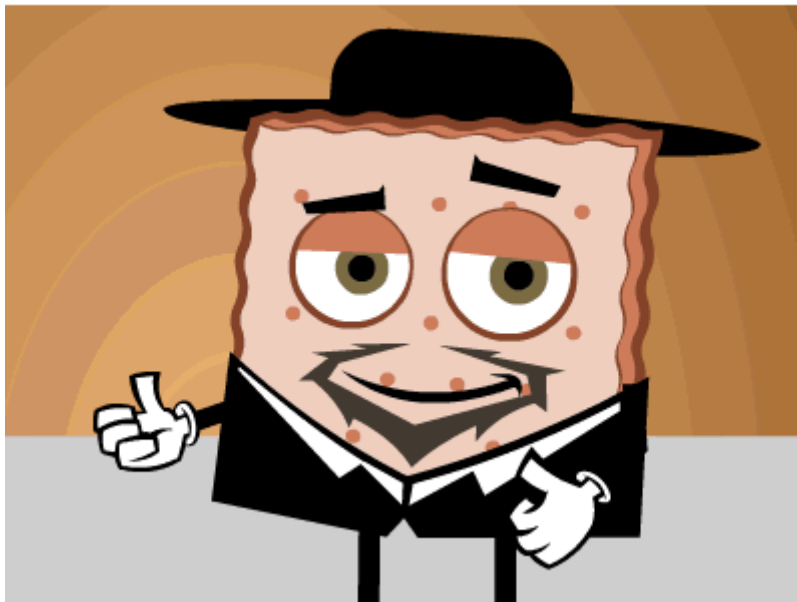
Hadracha Choveret



תנועת בני עקיבא
BNEI AKIVA
UNITED KINGDOM

BNEI AKIVA'S WEEKLY EDUCATIONAL HANDBOOK FOR MADRICHIM

Matzah: The Pesach Edition



Dear Roshim, Sganim and Madrichim,

Welcome to the final Choveret of the term! And what a term it's been! A HUGE well done to all of you for running such fantastic Shabbato Ha'irgun. They really were incredible – from the organisation to the ruach and everything in between. So give yourselves a pat on the pack, and after this week, enjoy your pesach break!

Of course, it doesn't stop there! Shabbat Ha'irgun can be the peak of the year, but it's certainly not the end! Next term is also going to be amazing, and your chanichim will be eager to come back to Sviva! It's your job to ensure that they learn something AND have a great time! Simple 😊

Chag Kasher V'Sameach! (Have a happy and kosher pesach)

Bhatzlacha!

Bevirkat Chaverim l'Torah v'Avodah

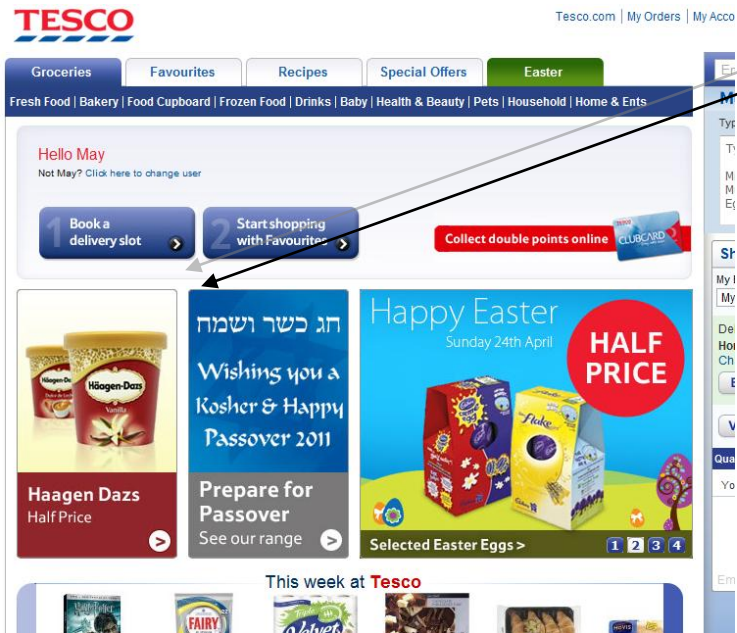
Eve Minsky

Ovedet Chinuch 5773 (Chinuch@bauk.org)

Aims:

- To learn about the source for eating Matza on pesach
- To look at the deeper meaning behind eating Matza
- To understand from the concept of Matza to seize the moment of redemption and hear Hashem's messages.

The Supermarkets have been wishing you a 'Happy Passover for about 2 months now, and your parents have been nagging you to clean your room since Purim (no? Just me), so you've come to the realisation that Pesach is well and truly here! Cue some cheering for those going on holiday to Israel, Spain, Bournemouth (do people still do that?) Cue groans for those staying in London and are dreading the thought of no pasta for over a week.



Advertising half price Haagen Daaz just before Pesach – not cool, Tesco, not cool!

On that note, it's a good time to introduce the theme of this week's Choveret which is.....Matzah! I'm sure we can all rise to the challenge!

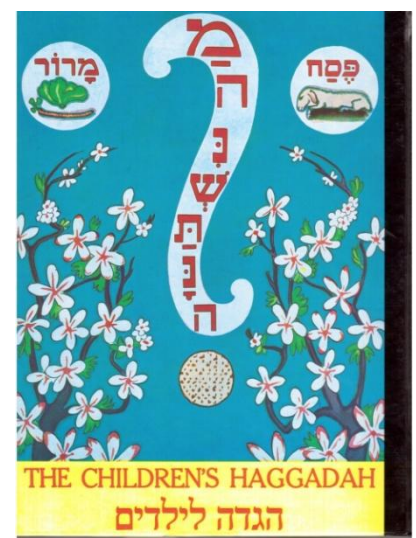
So what is this whole Matza thing about? I'm flat out trying to understand it. Enough of the Matza-related puns? OK, I'll stop. Let's get cracking....!



If you ask anyone, ok well not anyone, but a person with a fairly basic knowledge of Jewish History – why we eat Matza, they'll probably tell you that we eat Matza because we left Egypt in a hurry and so the bread did not have time to fully rise. This is of course true, and is the reason given in the Haggadah, in the 'Pesach, matza, Maror' section where we do a bit of pointing.

*"This Matzah that we eat - for what reason? Because the dough of our fathers **did not have time to become leavened** before the King of Kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them. Thus it is said: "They baked Matzah-cakes from the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, because it was not leavened; for they had been driven out of Egypt and **could not delay**, and they had also not prepared any [other]"*

However, we actually encounter Matzah before this incident in the leining for Shabbat Hachodesh (the start of Chapter 12 in Shemot).





And they shall eat the meat (the Korban Pesach) on that night roasted over fire with matzot; it should be eaten with Maror.

Shemot 12:8

And again...

Seven days you should eat Matzah...and you shall guard the Matzot because on this very day I have taken your legions out of the land of Egypt.

Shemot 12:8

It seems that Matzah has two functions. On the one hand it was intended to be the basis of a festival for seven days each year, whilst on the other, we eat it to remember the fact that ‘by accident’, we left Egypt quicker than we had planned.



Based on these two sources in the Torah, I would like to suggest that we can learn two big lessons from Matzah. One is regarding the food itself and the other is about the precise process used to make it, i.e. that it cannot be left more than 18 minutes otherwise it is Chametz.

NB: How do you pronounce Rakusens? In my old university house, we had big discussions about this. Turns out people from Leeds say it very differently!



1. Matzah ‘the food’: Returning to our essence

Earlier we quoted the Haggadah which states that the reason why we eat Matzah is because we remember the rushed state in which we left Egypt. However this doesn’t explain why we can’t own Chametz – or even see any in our houses! Why do we have to go to such lengths to swap over our entire kitchens for Pesach?



Won't find any Chametz in here!

It is important to realise that the law to not own any Chametz is actually not unique to Pesach. In Sefer Vayikra we learn that there is a Chametz-free zone the whole year round in the Mizbaiach (the altar in the Mishkan). Furthermore, we learn from Chazal (our Sages) that Chametz represents ‘bad things’ such as Avodah Zara (idol worship), the Yetzer Hara (our evil inclination) and Ga’avah (haughtiness).

This comes from the fact that Chametz takes basic ingredients of flour and water, like Matzah, yet rises to become much bigger whilst Matzah stays ‘true to its ingredients’.

To bring it all together, when Hashem originally commanded the mitzvah of eating Matzah for a seven day festival and not to have Chametz, he was creating an eternal reminder that for one week each year, we need to go back to basics. Ignore the drives of our evil inclinations, thoughts of how much better we are than others and arguments to not follow the Torah – Pesach reminds us of who we really are. Eating Matzah for a week helps us return to serving Hashem, the G-d that took us as a nation out of Egypt. For this, it is not enough to just eat Matzah – we need to get rid of all Chametz. *(Have a look back at the quotes before and see how this idea fits in with the pesukim).*

Also, this explains why we were told to eat the Korban Pesach with Matzah on the night before we left Egypt. That night (the beginning of 15th Nisan) was when we put blood on our doorposts and Hashem ‘passed over’ Jewish houses with Sedarim. It was a night in which we rejected Egyptian idol-worshipping culture so we ate roast lamb

(sheep was holy for Egyptians) with Matzah, reminding us again not to worship idols or follow our evil desires.

1. Matzah ‘the process’: More Haste Less Speed

Now we have explained why we were commanded to eat Matzah before we were rushed out of Egypt, we must ask the obvious question: Why are we told that we eat Matzah because we rushed out?!

The clue is back in Shemot Chapter 12, which we have referred to many times. We have seen how it tells us to eat Matzah with Korban Pesach, guard Matzah and make it into a seven-day Chag – but look at this rather curious command we see in Shemot 12:11:

Why were they told to eat it quickly? Is it because Hashem wanted them to get an early night before midnight, when

- ...And you should eat it (*Korban Pesach, Matzah & Maror*) in haste; it is a Pesach offering to Hashem.

the tenth plague happened?! Did He want to teach them how to eat quickly as a practice for the next morning?!

Surely there is a lesson here. Matzah teaches us not to delay – to be decisive. The next day, they did have to leave

in hurry and had to make the decision to take their bread before it was ready. Some things can't wait. Hashem's message was: you have to leave now before it's too late.

I sleep, but my heart wakes; Heark! The voice of my beloved is knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfection...I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had turned away, and was gone. *Shir HaShirim 5:2-6 (abridged)*.

The famous source is of Shir HaShirim, the Megilla we read on Pesach. It is talking about a wife who has been anxiously waiting for her husband for a long time but when he arrives, she delays in opening the door to him...and she misses her chance because he leaves. This is a metaphor for the relationship between Am Yisrael (the wife) and Hashem (her husband).

Rav Soloveitchik wrote a book called 'Kol Dodi Dofek', *the voice of my beloved is knocking*, which encapsulates this idea. The book is his views on Zionism and how we should seize the moment and listen to Hashem's modern day messages. See this extract:

Judaism has always been very strict regarding the prohibition against missing the moment. It possesses a highly developed and sensitive time-consciousness and views the slightest delay as a sin... The land of Israel did not betray the people of Israel; she remained faithful to then and during all those years awaited her redeemer. It stands to reason, then, that when the possibility arose for the Jewish people to return to its land, the land which had withheld its treasures from

strangers and guarded them for us, Orthodox Jews would eagerly bestir themselves to perform this great and important commandment and would plunge, with joy and enthusiasm, into the midst of this holy task – the building and settling of the land.

Alas, we did not act thus, when the “desolate wife” who had awaited us with such yearning and for so long, invited us with such yearning and for so long, invited us, her sons, to come and redeem her from her desolate condition, and when the Beloved, Who had watched over the desolation for almost nineteen hundred years, and Who had decreed that not a tree would flourish there, that no springs would fructify its ground, knocked on the doors of His love, the maiden – we religious Jews – did not rush to descend from her couch and let in her Beloved.

The message of Matzah is not to delay! 18 minutes and it is Matzah; one more second and you are transgressing serious commandments. When we left Egypt, Hashem was telling us to seize the moment. We learn that we could not have survived one more minute in Egypt due to the low spiritual level we were on. When the redemption comes, especially when you’ve been waiting for it for so long, don’t miss the opportunity. This message was relevant then and is so relevant now – the redemption is coming in Israel, don’t miss the boat!

To finish...there is a famous story of the Arizal, who once announced to his talmidim (students), ‘Let’s go to Jerusalem now!’ Instead of going, the talmidim said they would just ask their wives before they left. At this point, the Ari said that the moment passed – had they gone immediately, Mashiach would have come then. Pesach and Matzah teach us to seize the moment! Carpe Diem!

Peula Ideas

- Any games to show haste! Speed dating, speed charades, speed Waa etc.
- The 18 second game – like the minute game but surprisingly enough, you only have 18 seconds to guess when the time finishes. Anyone who misses the boat becomes chametz – not good. (You could make it the 18 minute game if you're really stuck for ideas...!)
- Using the Torah's description of the first ever Seder Night in Parashat Bo, get the chanichim to make a play of that momentous day, night and very early morning when they left Egypt. Points should be awarded for every detail mentioned by the Torah that they put into their play.
- **Get out of Egypt and bring breakfast with you:** This new game, with its catchy title, is a re-work of the famous game 'Get off my land', except that the chaser is Pharaoh (dress him or her up for effect) and the person being chased has some matzah in their hand. Pharaoh has to stop the proverbial Hebrew from leaving Egypt with their matzah, which they can do once they shout 'Get out of Egypt and bring breakfast with you' to another Hebrew on their chairs. See how many people Pharaoh manages to prevent leaving.
- 1001 things you could do with matzah – ask around the circle and see who runs out of ideas...
- Check that no-one has the minhag not to eat matzah from Purim but otherwise eat some matzah at seudah to get in the mood!

-KVUTSAH PLANNING SHEET-

THEME		
<u>Aim 1:</u>	<u>Aim 2:</u>	<u>Aim 3:</u>
<u>Related Activities</u>	<u>Related Activities</u>	<u>Related Activities</u>
Points to discuss:	Points to discuss:	Points to discuss:
Conclusion:		
Tziud needed:		