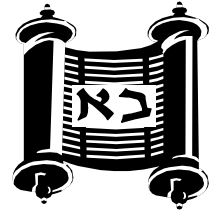




# Kinder Torah®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table  
Parshas Bo

## Our Birthday

**“H**appy birthday Eli.”  
 “Thank you Hillel, but today is not my birthday.”  
 “Today is our birthday Eli.”  
 “I thought today was Pesach.”  
 “It is. That’s what I mean. Pesach is the birthday of the Jewish people.”  
 “In what way, Hillel?”  
 “Hashem did something today that was never done before or since in history. He brought a nation out from within another nation using great miracles. The Jewish people were totally trapped in Mitzraim. Escape was impossible. He brought the plagues on the Mitzrim, and after the last one, Paroh himself declared that the Jews were no longer his slaves.”  
 “I see. Now you have explained how we became free. But how did we become a nation of our own?”

**“T**he Meshech Chochma zt”l explains the verse, “And you shall celebrate it (Pesach) as a festival for Hashem” (Shemos 12:14). We are celebrating that Hashem identified us as His nation. He goes on to explain that the mitzvah of *Korbon Pesach* (Pesach offering) brought national unity. It was eaten together in a group, which brought people together. In the times of the Beis HaMikdash, they all went to the courtyard of the Temple and *shechted* (ritually slaughtered) their *korbonos* at the same time. There is even an opinion in the Gemora (Kiddushin 42a) that one *Korbon Pesach* would suffice for everyone.”

**“F**ascinating. Now that you mention it, I see that *Yitzias Mitzraim* (the exodus from Mitzraim) occupies a central spot in our prayers.”  
 “Right. We mention it twice a day at the end of *Kriyas Shema*, and in the blessing after *Kriyas Shema*. It is a part of the *Kiddush* on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, and the *Bircas HaMazone* after a bread meal. There are also many mitzvos associated with *Yitzias Mitzraim*.”

“Let’s see. The mitzvos of Pesach include eating matzah, not eating chometz, and reciting the Haggadah.”  
 “Correct. The Rambam mentions eight mitzvos for Pesach. There are also sixteen mitzvos concerning the *Korbon Pesach* alone.”

“Amazing.”  
**“E**li, all of these mitzvos bind us to Hashem as His nation. A Jew who has rejected Hashem may not eat from the *Korbon Pesach*.”

“Why?”  
 “The *Sefer HaChinuch* explains that the *Korbon Pesach* is a sign and a remembrance that Hashem covered us with the wings of the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) and brought us into the covenant of the Torah and *Emunah* (Faith). One who denies this cannot eat from this *Korbon*.”  
 “Pesach is truly the birth of our nation.”  
 “As I said in the beginning, Eli, happy birthday.”

*Kinderlach . . .*  
**On Pesach, we celebrate our birth as a nation. Hashem did a tremendous tovah (good thing) for us. He took us out of Mitzraim. If not for Him, we would still be there today. He then did something even better. He made us His chosen nation. That is a privilege and a responsibility. He wants us to remember this when we mention Yitzias Mitzraim in our prayers. Don’t just pass quickly over these words. Try to imagine life as a slave in Mitzraim. Then think of all of the miracles and wonders that took place then. Then think of the beauty of the Torah and the mitzvos that He gave us. Then you will realize how thankful we must be to Hashem for all of the good that He has done for us.**

Maariv prayers.)” What was this everlasting freedom? Rav Dessler zt”l takes a deep look at the slavery in Mitzraim. Besides the well-known physical bondage, there was a slavery of the soul as well. The powers of *tumah* (impurity) were very strong in Mitzraim. The *Yetzer Hara* (Evil inclination) ruled there. The Jews were trapped in this. They had sunken to the lowest level of *tumah* possible before being lost forever. From this, Hashem redeemed them, instantly.

**N**ow they were free. Liberated from the *Yetzer Hara*. He could never rule over them again in the same way. Free to do what? To serve Hashem. To learn His Torah. Rav Dessler explains that the two go hand in hand. As the Mishna states in *Pirkei Avos* (6:2) “A man is never more free than when he occupies himself with learning Torah.”

**T**his became a part of us when we left Mitzraim. Hashem injected into our genes an everlasting freedom from the grip of the *Yetzer Hara*. Nothing could ever prevent a Jew from serving Hashem and learning His Torah.

*Kinderlach . . .*  
**Did you ever feel that it was too difficult to learn? A mitzvah just seems too hard to do. It is all just an illusion. There is nothing that can stop you from learning Torah and doing mitzvos. You are truly free. You became free 3300 years ago when we all left Mitzraim. Take a deep breath and give it another try. You will succeed. It is in the genes. You are forever free.**

## Forever Free

**“H**e killed in His wrath all of the firstborn of Mitzraim and took His people, Israel, from their midst to everlasting freedom (from the

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