

Why Is This Night Different From all Other Nights?

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The Mitzva of Sippur and Zechira

Adapted from a shiur by Rav Ari Stauber on *Parshas Bo*

והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמור בעבור זה עשה לי בצאתי

ממצרים (שמות יג:ח)

According to Ben Zoma (*Berachos* 12b), the mitzvah of *Zechiras Yetzias Mitzrayim* applies daily, both by day and by night.

Why do we need a special mitzvah of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* the night of Pesach?

The *Minchas Chinuch* suggests three answers, accepting the third:

- *Zechira* can be fulfilled through thinking, while *Sippur* must be verbal. But he rejects this because some *poskim* (e.g., *Shaagas Aryeh*) say that even for *Zechira*, one must speak.
- *Zechira* is mentioning briefly, while *Sippur* requires elaboration. But he cites the *Pri Chadash* that even reciting Kiddush fulfills the mitzvah of *Sippur*.
- *Sippur* requires telling it to another. But if no one else is present, the mitzvah is equivalent to *Zechira*.

The *Minchas Chinuch* apparently holds that the mitzvah of *Zechira* and *Sippur* have the same basis, but differ technically on some details.

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik holds that *Sippur* is distinct, with three *nafka minos*: It must be: *Derech Sheeilah Uteshuva* (question and answer), even if no one else is there, which makes it a story; *Hishtalshelus Devarim* (relating a chain of events), including Lavan, Yaakov, and the miracles in Egypt; explaining the reasons for the mitzvos at the Seder.

What is the reason for these differences?

- *Zechira* -to internalize the lessons and apply them to our lives: Hashem controls nature, He can perform miracles, and we are dependent upon him (see Ramban, end of *Bo*). This is accomplished by fulfilling twice daily.
- *Sippur* - We transmit this lesson to future generations (as in the context of *vehigadeta*) and inspire them by relating the story and explanation.