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The *shelihut* entrusted to a prophet belongs to the second category of personalistic *shelihut*. Man unites with God, cleaves to God, and loves God with a great passion. He feels the hot breath of eternity upon his cold face. He feels the Almighty; he experiences the great sweetness and exaltedness engendered by the touch of infinity. That is why God says *Bo el Par'oh*. It is not the formal *shelihut* wherein I absent myself and you do whatever I told you to do. It is the personalistic *shelihut*, where there is union between Me and you. My thoughts will become your thoughts, My speech will break through you; therefore, Moses, you are qualified because I am qualified. *Bo el Par'oh*—come with me, I will walk with you, I will be there when you enter the palace, and I will not leave you on your own. You are the *sheli'ah tzibbur*; I am the *tzibbur*. I am united with you; we will walk together arm in arm, so to speak. Man can come so close to the Almighty that he and the Almighty are united—one voice, one feeling, one experience, finitude somehow embraced by infinity and yet not disappearing.

②
Purki Avot

5:6

TEN THINGS WERE CREATED ON THE EVE OF THE [FIRST] SHABBOS AT TWILIGHT: 1) THE MOUTH OF THE EARTH, 2) THE MOUTH OF THE WELL, 3) THE MOUTH OF THE DONKEY 4) THE RAINBOW 5) THE MANNA 6) THE STAFF, 7) THE SHAMIR, 8) THE WRITTEN CHARACTERS, 9) THE WRITING, 10) THE TABLETS OF THE LAW. OTHERS INCLUDE THE DEMONS, THE GRAVE OF MOSHE, THE RAM OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM. OTHERS SAY: ALSO THE TONGS MADE BY TONGS.

עֲשָׂה דְבָרִים וְכִרְאוֹ בְּעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת
בֵּין הַשְּׁמֶשׁוֹת וְאֵלֵי הֵן פִּי הָאָרֶץ פִּי
הַבָּאָר פִּי הָאֶחָד הַקָּשָׁת וְהַמֶּן
וְהַמֶּשֶׁה וְהַשְּׁמִיר הַקֶּתֶב וְהַמִּכְתָּב
וְהַלְחֹת וְיֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים אֵף הַמַּזְיָקִין
וְקִבְרֹתוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה וְאֵילָו שֶׁל
אַבְרָהָם אֵבְרֵינוּ וְיֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים אֵף
צֶנֶת בְּצֶנֶת עֲשׂוּיָהּ:

③

Recounting yetzias Mitzrayim is not merely telling a story. The imperative of *and you shall tell your son* (13:8) has a deeper meaning. It means that the son should be the *sefer* upon which the father writes. The foremost task of a father is to be a *sofer*, to transform his son into a book upon which he writes indelibly, a book that will survive him and be imparted to succeeding generations.

The appellation "the people of the book" does not signify a nation that reads books; it is a nation whose very being is a book. The *mitzvah* of *sippur yetzias Mitzrayim* means inscribing one's entire religious consciousness upon the next generation until that generation is ready to perform the same task of *sippur* at the *Seder* table with their own children. (*Derashot Harav*, pp. 141-148)

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Abraham is called here *Avram ha-Ivri* (Gen. 14:13). He stands "on one side," *me-ever ehad*, and the entire rest of the world on the other (Gen. Rabbah 42:8). "Abram the *Ivri*" means Abram the singular one, the lonely one, Abram from the other side of the river. The story of Lot cast light upon Abraham's destiny. No matter how hard a Jew may try to erase his Jewish identity, no matter how integrated and assimilated he is, no matter how remote he is from the great heritage which Abraham tried to hand down to him, no matter how patriotic he is, and no matter how great his contribution is to the general community or society—he still remains an *Ivri*.

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Time is of critical importance—not years or months, but seconds and split seconds. This time-awareness and appreciation is the singular gift granted to free man, because time belongs to him: it is his time, and he can utilize it to the utmost or waste it. A free man does not want time to pass; he wants time to slow down, because to him time is a treasure. To the slave, however, time is a curse; he waits for the day to pass. The slave's time is the property of his master. No matter how hard he may try to be productive in time, he will not reap the harvest of his work; therefore, he is insensitive to time. His sense of the movement of time, the passing of hours, days, weeks, is very dull. Life, to the slave personality, is motionless.

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The birth of the *hesed* community—of a nation within which people unite, give things away, care for each other, share what they possess—is symbolized by the paschal sacrifice. God did not need the paschal lamb; He had no interest in the sacrifice. He simply wanted the people—slaves who had just come out of the house of bondage—to emerge from their isolation and insane self-centeredness into the *hesed* community, where the little that man has is too much for himself, where whatever he possesses transcends his ability to enjoy.

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