
Sichos in English Classics 10

**In our generation,
there are no longer
any wicked sons**



**MOTZAEI SHABBOS
PARSHAS TZAV,
EVE OF THE 13TH DAY
OF NISSAN, 5743 (1983)**



Sichos In English
788 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, New York 11213
www.sie.org

IN PLACE OF AN INTRODUCTION

At the Shloshim of R' Yonah Avtzon A"H, Director of Sichos in English, a resolution was taken to reprint the original weekly Sichos in English publications.

To fulfill this, a weekly booklet including a translation of a *farbrengen* as it was first published will be distributed. Our intention is to reprint the entire set in the near future.

Following the Sichos we will include an addendum with pictures, notes, and insights into the process of its publication.

These weekly publications can be sponsored to honor a loved one, a Yortzeit or a simcha by contacting us at **sichosinenglish@gmail.com**. If you would like to receive this weekly publication to your email, then please use the above email address as well, or you can sign up to receive it on WhatsApp at 917-868-6509.

To partner with us, so that we can continue to publish original Sichos in English content as well as behind the scenes stories and documents, please make a contribution at: sie.org/partner

INTRO

This week, in honor of Pesach, we bring you a translation of a part of the Farbrengen that the Rebbe held on Motzaei Shabbos Parshas Tzav, Eve of the 13th Day of Nissan, 5743 (1983).

The original translation has five chapters. Here we have the later three.

In this Farbrengen the Rebbe talked about the 4 sons. The Rebbe delves into the order of the sons, explains a fascinating idea from the Arizal about Rabbi Elazar ben Durdaya and talks about our mandate to reach out to our fellow Yidden.

The Rebbe digressed to talk about the lack of knowledge of Orach Chaim in Yeshivos and then discussed the desire of our generation for money.

Later on, the Rebbe discussed 13 Nissan as the Yortzeit of the Tzemach Tzedek and the lessons to be learned.

In the final section, the Rebbe discussed the Jewish emigration to America pre WWII and the charitable character of this country.

MOTZAEI SHABBOS PARSHAS TZAV, EVE OF THE 13TH DAY OF NISSAN, 5743 (1983)

3. There is a well-known explanation of the Tzemach Tzedek on the verse in which Yosef is named; “May Hashem add (*Yosef*) for me another son (*ben acher*).” He explains that Yosef represented the ability to take a person who is in the category of “other” (*acher*) and elevate him to the level of a “son” (*ben*).

This is especially relevant on Pesach, when we have all “4 Sons” — the wise, the wicked, the simple, and the one who doesn’t know how to ask — attending the Seder.

This order is somewhat surprising. It would seem that the wicked son should be listed last, rather than the one who doesn’t know how to ask. However, this comes to convey a clear message; ignorance is even worse than wickedness.

The reason is that the wicked son has at least the ability to change himself. He is knowledgeable in Torah and mitzvos, and therefore can change himself to a Tzaddik in a single moment. This can be illustrated by the AriZal’s explanation of a story in the Gemara. It is related that R. Elazar ben Durdaya was extremely wicked, but did *teshuvah* at the end of his life and “acquired his World in an instant.”

The phrase “his World” indicates that there was something awaiting him even before he did *teshuvah*. This, explains the AriZal, was because R. Elazar was a reincarnation of R. Yochanan Kohen Gadol, who went away from the Torah after serving as Kohen Gadol for 80 years. The mitzvos performed by R. Yochanan were later acquired by R. Elazar. Therefore we see that *teshuvah* alone is insufficient; there must be something to back it up.

So, too, in our case. The wicked son has the knowledge and therefore is only lacking *teshuvah*. The ignorant son, however,

does not yet even have a “World” to acquire. He must start from scratch and learn about Torah and mitzvos.

To apply this practically to our generation, there are no longer any wicked sons. Our generation consists of those who are like “babies kidnapped by heathens,” so to speak — completely lacking proper Jewish education. Many years ago, there were people who actually chose to be wicked. In the last 50-70 years however, particularly in this country, lack of observance is caused by ignorance. Either the person received no Jewish education whatsoever, or one that left him firmly convinced that Judaism is not to be taken seriously. Many are raised to view their Bar or Bas Mitzvah — the speech, the gifts, the blessing over the Torah, or (in the case of the “extremely advanced”) the reading of the Haftorah — as their final exit from Judaism.

In short, today — due to woefully inadequate Jewish education — the streets are filled with children who don’t know how to ask. The truth is that these children do not even fit into such an “advanced” category. Not only do they not know how to ask, they don’t know *anything* at all. They don’t even know that Pesach and the Seder are coming this Monday night. Everything is alien to them. They constitute a sort of Fifth Son, who doesn’t even attend the Seder.

Every generation has its particular problems. When the Bais HaMikdash was in existence, for example, there was a powerful urge to worship idols.

[Parenthetically, the *Gemara* mentions that King Menashe, in whose generation idolatry was widespread, was very knowledgeable in Torah. We learn in particular of his expertise in the first section of the *Shulchan Aruch* — *Orach Chaim*.

In our generation, however, even the most diligent and learned do not study *Orach Chaim*. It is difficult to convince them to change; they are too busy learning the tractates and laws regarding financial matters which, as the *Gemara* says, make you wise.

A great furor must be made to bring study of *Orach Chaim* into the yeshivos. Even should the administration not allow it into

the normal study schedule, they must insure its study outside the regular schedule.

The importance of learning *Orach Chaim* is obvious. A person might go through an entire lifetime without having to rule in a question regarding financial matters. The laws of saying *shema*, the *amidah*, *modeh ani*, constantly remembering Hashem, however, — all discussed in *Orach Chaim* — are of daily importance and contain many details needing close study.]

One of our generation's special problems is an excessive desire for money, which must be subdued by extra donations to charity. So too, our generation faces this tremendous problem of ignorance, which must be directly combated. Ignorance must be erased from the Jewish people, and there is only one way to accomplish this: through insuring that each and every Jewish child is enrolled in a proper Jewish school.

Giving large sums of money, erecting buildings, entreating Hashem's help by reciting Tehillim — all have their place and one receives reward for them all. However, they do not replace direct efforts to enroll the children in schools.

Even in a city like New York, which has many, many yeshivas, tens of thousands of Jewish children are unaware that there will be a Seder this Monday night or that we are celebrating the redemption from Egypt.

To educate them to the extent that they will be "Wise Children" takes some time, but making sure that each of them attends a *Seder* is possible to accomplish even with a few hours of effort.

This "Education Campaign" leads to the other Mitzvah Campaigns, and will culminate in the fulfillment of the statement of our Sages, "in Nissan we were redeemed, and in Nissan we will again be redeemed" — may it be Hashem's will that it come true this Nissan, 5743.

4. The 13th of Nissan is not only the *Yahrzeit* of the Tzemach Tzedek, but the beginning of the reign of his successor, the Rebbe Maharash. On this day, we therefore have the added influence of

the Rebbe Maharash, whose slogan was, “Everyone else says, ‘if you can’t get under [an obstacle], then go over.’ I say, *lechat’chilah ariber* — go straight over to begin with!” This idea parallels the idea of Pesach which, as mentioned above, represents leaping over and beyond all boundaries when serving Hashem. All of this bears special significance this year, which is the 100th anniversary of his passing.

Lechat’chilah ariber is certainly a vital lesson for our generation, which must spread Torah Judaism beyond any limitations. On the other hand, some explanation is necessary to prevent this concept from being misinterpreted.

Chassidus explains the difference between the higher world of *Tohu*, which shattered as a result of the intense G-dly revelation, and that of *Tikkun*, where G-dliness dwells in a constant, settled manner. Sometimes people exhibit a tendency of *Tohu*, such as Nadav and Avihu, whose uncontrolled closeness and love for Hashem led to their demise.

Although their service of Hashem was certainly very lofty, nevertheless, in this world, our behavior (even that of *lechat’chilah ariber*) must conform to the realm of *Tikkun*. Some people, however, have taken *lechat’chilah ariber* to mean that they should behave in a manner befitting the world of *Tohu*! For example, they borrow such huge sums of money (for holy purposes) that, even with miracles, they will never be able to pay them back.

Others go to the other extreme and confine themselves to their own personal affairs; eating, sleeping, doing business, etc. Should they find a tiny stretch of time to spend on Torah and mitzvos, they will then fulfill the idea of *lechat’chilah ariber*!

This is certainly improper. On the other hand, however, *lechat’chilah ariber* must still be “over,” i.e. have some connection to, the world of *Tikkun*. The G-dly revelation of Pesach, for example, is compared to “leaping over mountains.” One must leap over in a way of *lechat’chilah ariber*, not creep along like an old man. However, one must still be “over,” i.e. have some connection to, the mountain; otherwise, after leaping, who knows if he will ever land? Perhaps he will remain suspended in the heavens!

So too, a person involved in communal work must do so *lechat'chilah ariber*. He should not be afraid to borrow money in order to spread Torah and mitzvos. Any claim that for his spiritual and physical well-being, he can never go into debt, is false. True peace, of mind and of body, comes only when one completely fulfills his mission in spreading Torah and mitzvos in accordance with the instructions of the Previous Rebbe.

As we saw, the Previous Rebbe did not limit himself to working only within his budget — he was always in debt. As soon as he paid off his loans, he immediately took out new ones in order to broaden his holy efforts.

On the other hand, one must remain within the confines of the world and not “jump off the mountain” altogether. This is not what the Rebbe Maharash meant, and is not the Torah’s way of serving Hashem.

The one who already put himself in this position — since his intentions were pure — will certainly receive Heavenly assistance enabling him to repay his loans, and with money left over. moreover, *tavo alav berachah*, since as a result of this behavior a large amount of money was spent on holy causes.

That, however, is as far as the past is concerned. From now on, his *lechat'chilah ariber* should still be connected to the world; “over,” but still connected to the “mountains.”

Since all G-dly service must be done with joy, it is proper to sing the *niggun, lechat'chilah ariber*. In addition, the *niggun* of the Tzemach Tzedek should be sung (and it is surprising that everyone ignores the obvious; of all the *niggunim* sung, that of the Tzemach Tzedek was omitted!), along with the *hachono niggun*, the Alter Rebbe’s *niggun*, and the Mittlerer Rebbe’s *niggun*.

[After the *niggunim*, the Rebbe mentioned saying a *berachah acharona*, and then added the following.]

5. Since, as mentioned above, Pesach has a special connection with charity, it is proper to distribute dollars to give to charity through the *tankistim*.

One might say that this is not a proper time for this, since R. Yehudah HaChossid ruled that one should not distribute money on *Motzaei Shabbos*. It is also well-known that the Rebbe Rashab instructed his wife not to ask for money (for the home) on *Motzaei Shabbos*, but rather to do so either before Shabbos or after *Motzaei Shabbos*. So too, the Talmud Yerushalmi writes that any giving charity at night is questionable. Why then are we distributing dollars at this time?

The explanation is that now the situation is different, and we see that the Torah sometimes adjusts to changing circumstances. This is not to say, G-d forbid, that the Torah changes — the Torah is eternal and unchangeable. The Torah is sensitive to changing circumstances and is still eternal. How can both things be true?

We can understand this through analyzing a statement in *Tanya* (*Iggeres Hakodesh* ch. 9), that the Talmudic statement, “Torah study outweighs charity,” applied only in Talmudic times. In our times, the Alter Rebbe continues, since (in the words of our Sages), “only through charity will the redemption come,” charity is now the main thing. Here too, the question arises, how can a statement of the Torah become obsolete?

The answer is that this is not a change in the *Torah*, but rather corresponds to a change in the *world*. Since, in these days immediately preceding Mashiach, the world has fallen so low, the task necessary at this particular time (*she’haz’man grama*) is to elevate the world through charity. And the law of the Torah is that a mitzvah which has a specific time (*she’haz’man grama*) outweighs Torah study.

Therefore, the general law still stands; Torah study stands above charity. In these generations, however, another factor has entered the picture — charity has become a mitzvah of immediate importance (*she’haz’man grama*), and therefore takes precedence.

This also explains why, in this country, the majority of fundraising events take place at a *melaveh malkah*, despite the issues mentioned above.

Originally, it was difficult to understand why Hashem caused the Jewish people to immigrate to America; a land dry of Judaism,

which presented so many challenges, etc. After World War II, however, it became obvious that the purpose of this was to put the Jewish people in the financial position to be able to rescue their brethren in Europe. (This is not, however, the proper forum in which to discuss this.)

Therefore, since the whole existence of American Jewry is due to charity, it was here that *melaveh malkah* fundraisers were developed — since they point out the vital importance of charity in this generation (and charity is therefore given even during questionable time periods, as mentioned above).

The superficial reason is that people do not work on Sunday — Wall St. is closed! — and the fundraisers do not have to worry that people will leave early...in order to get to sleep early...in order to run off to work early the next day. They will therefore be able to patiently sit through all the speeches of the benefactors (who of course, in exchange for their donation, want the right to speak just as long as they please) without running out in the middle.

The inner reason, however, is as mentioned above; that in the end of the exile, charity is a mitzvah *she'haz'man grama*, and cannot be pushed off.

Tonight, there is no question to begin with. The money already went out of my possession on the 11th of Nissan, and therefore, technically it is not being “given,” just being “received.” In addition, the charity is not now actually being given to the poor — rather it is being distributed in order to be given at the proper time. Therefore, in this case there is not even room for discussion.

In any case, anyone who is afraid to give money at night, or on *Motzaei Shabbos*, should know that there is nothing to fear. Better he should increase in his fear of Hashem, which will cause him to increase in Torah and mitzvos, including even more donations to charity.

Therefore, the *tankistim* should now come to receive the dollars. It is proper that those who are listening in other places also do the same.

ADDENDUM

Behind the Scenes of Sichos in English

In the last two issues of SIE Classics, we brought a Public Letter that the Rebbe wrote for Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5745; in Behind the Scenes we brought edits of the Rebbe on the English translation of the letter prepared by SIE. Below we bring more of the Rebbe's comments on that very same letter, once again in the footnote section — which was pretty much a copy-paste from the Yiddish edition of the letter. The Rebbe would insist that the many sources — in Hebrew — be inserted into every version of the letters, even the letter inserted into Israeli newspapers or the English language version. At times these sources could fill a complete page. It is worthy to note that after the Rebbe had already edited the footnotes in the Yiddish edition, the Rebbe then reedited the exact same footnotes in the English version. What is interesting is that although the footnotes had literally been copied and pasted from the original, there was still something to fix!

Some context: In the original Yiddish letter the Rebbe wrote “that everyone, man and woman, “with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters,” should make all necessary preparations to receive the Yom Tov of Our Liberation”...

In the footnote with the heading *בנערינו ובזקנינו ובנינו ובנוותינו* the Rebbe writes

בימי צאתך מארמ"צ - בא' ט

“as it says in the Possuk in [regards to] the days of your Exodus from Egypt, Bo 10:9”.

In the English translation of the letter with the very same footnotes the Rebbe switched around the order of the note and added some words.

בא, י, ט - וכמ"ש כימי צאתך מארמ"צ אראנו נפלאות (מיכה ז, טו)

בנערינו ובזקנינו ובבנותינו ובבנותינו First there is the source to the words which is "Bo 11:9". Then the Rebbe brings the full verse from Micha - "as it says in the Possuk and like in the days of your Exodus from Egypt I will show him miracles (Micha 7:15)".

In other words: In the original letter the words "like in the days..." were being used poetically in reference to preparation for Pesach. In the English version an entire verse is brought.



A possible point that seems to be implied by this change: In the new version of the footnote, there seems to be an implication that the celebration of Pesach in our generation specifically has a special connection with the original Pesach in Egypt. The rational for this is based off the verse brought here in full "כימי צאתך מארץ" מצרים אראנו נפלאות, which teaches us that the mode of conduct by G-d - and by extension by man - in the end of this exile will mirror the conduct at the end of the first exile. Hence, the emphasis today on preparing for Pesach "with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters"...



NEW!



Translation of the
Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch

Volume 7 –

The Laws of Pesach,

The Month of Nissan,

Laws of Searching, Destroying and Purging Chametz

reg. \$45.00 - sale price \$38.25

to order: <https://bit.ly/2HXQKLn>



Sichos In English

788 Eastern Parkway • Brooklyn, NY 11213

sie.org • SichosInEnglish@gmail.com

**Dedicated to the Lubavitcher Rebbe
On his 117th Birthday**

*whose teachings and example are a
never-ending source of life for all mankind.
May we continue in his paths, and complete
the mission with which he has charged us:
to make the world conscious of the imminent
Redemption and to prepare an environment
in which this ideal can be realized.*

by the SIE staff



If you would like to receive this weekly publication sent via email, or to sponsor a publication please contact us at: sichosinenglish@gmail.com.
or you can sign up to receive it on WhatsApp at 917-868-6509