Laws of Chanukah Chapter 3 (Megillah 6) (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of the Learning Session: Rambam Hilchos Megillah V'Chanukah, Chapter 3

Introduction and Context

The chavrusa is learning on Erev Sukkos, but they are learning Hilchos Chanukah. Chanukah is a completion of Sukkos — as it says in Sefer Maccabees that they didn't make Sukkos that year, and Chanukah is eight days like Sukkos. The Baruch She'amar says this is the answer to the Beis Yosef's question (why eight days). It's also mentioned that they're planning a siyum on Sefer Zemanim for Sukkos, which fits with the order of mo'adim in the Torah which ends with Sukkos/Shemini Atzeres.

Halacha 1 — The Story of Chanukah

A) Why the Rambam Begins with the Story

The Rambam begins Chapter 3 with the story of Chanukah — "Baveis Sheini Keshemalchu Yavan..." — just as the Gemara (Shabbos 21b) asks "Mai Chanukah" and brings the story from a Braisa.

Simple explanation: Purim has a Megillah that tells the story, but Chanukah doesn't have a Megillah. In earlier Tannaitic sources, Chanukah is only mentioned in passing. Therefore the Rambam (following the Gemara) brings the story itself.

Novel points:

1. **The Rambam's approach that one need not know anything except Chumash and this sefer:** Since the story of Chanukah isn't in the Chumash (only in the Gemara), the Rambam must bring it in his sefer — unlike Pesach, where the story is already in the Chumash. Chanukah makes no sense without an explanation, therefore the Rambam gives the explanation.

2. **This fits with the Rambam's emphasis that rabbinic laws come in response to an event:** The Rambam always wants to show that the Chachamim don't just add to the Torah arbitrarily, rather there was an event that called forth the takanah. This is similar to the Ramban's principle, but the Rambam's own way: we don't say it's d'Oraisa, therefore there's no problem of "lo sosif."

B) "Gazru Gezeiros Al Yisrael U'vitlu Dasam V'lo Hinichu Osam La'asok B'Torah U'vamitzvos"

Simple explanation: The Greeks decreed decrees upon the Jews, nullified their religion, and didn't let them learn Torah and fulfill mitzvos.

Novel points:

1. **"Bitlu dasam" vs. "lo hinichu osam la'asok b'Torah u'vamitzvos" — two separate things:** "Bitlu dasam" is the Rambam's own conceptual language — he means that they wanted to nullify the very essence of Judaism as a distinct religion. "Lo hinichu osam la'asok b'Torah u'vamitzvos" is the more traditional way of saying it — the details of what that meant.

2. **The concept of "das" by the Rambam:** In Arabic (which the Rambam thought in) one says "din" — which means religion (like "din Muhammad"). The Rambam thinks of Judaism as a "das" — a systematic religion. In the Torah (V'zos Haberachah — "eish das") "das" means a law, a broader thing. But the Rambam's usage is more in the sense of religion.

3. **Parallel to Haman:** Haman also said "v'daseihem shonos mikol am" — he wanted all peoples in the empire to behave the same, without a distinct people with their own religion. "Bitlu dasam" also means this — not just specific mitzvos, but the very concept that Jews have their own religion.

C) "U'fashtu Yadam B'mamonam U'vivnoseihem"

Simple explanation: The Greeks also caused physical/material harm — took money and violated daughters.

Novel point: In Sefer Yosifon it says "besulah hogenes techilah" — jus primae noctis.

D) "V'nichnesu L'heichal U'farzu Bo Pirtzos V'tim'u Hataharos"

Simple explanation: They entered the Heichal, broke through walls, and defiled the pure things.

Novel points:

1. **"Farzu bo pirtzos" — not just breaking, but nullifying the protected place:** The Beis Hamikdash is a place of holiness where only certain people may enter (not gentiles, not those who are tamei). By breaking the walls they nullified the entire concept of a bounded holy place. They made thirteen breaches (as stated in Mishnah Middos).

2. **"V'tim'u hataharos" — how did gentiles know about tumah and taharah?** Three approaches:

- They specifically knew about the laws of tumah and taharah and intentionally defiled.

- They didn't need to know the laws — they simply knew that only Jews may touch their holy things, and they deliberately touched everything.

- Automatically — through their entry they inevitably defiled.

The parallel: Just as today a gentile knows that Shabbos candles are important to Jews and extinguishes them — he doesn't need to know the precise halacha, he destroys your thing. In those times even a gentile knew about tumah and taharah, because Jews lived with it.

3. **"V'tim'u hataharos" as preparation for the story of the oil:** The Rambam mentions this deliberately because it's preparation for the later part of the story — that they needed pure oil and only found one flask. Tosafos asks what tumah was on the oil.

E) "V'tzar Lahem L'Yisrael Me'od Mipneihem U'lachatzu Lachatz Gadol"

Simple explanation: It was very difficult and hard for the Jews, great oppression.

Novel points:

1. **Reference to Hilchos Ta'aniyos — "k'tzar hatzorer eschem":** The Rambam deliberately references the situation of "tzar" — as he writes in Hilchos Ta'aniyos that when Jews have a tzarah, they cry out to Hashem. The Rambam writes in his introduction to Hilchos Megillah that the purpose is to show that Hashem is "karov l'shavoseinu" — as it says "ki mi goy gadol asher lo Elokim kerovim eilav."

2. **Why "u'lachatzu lachatz gadol" after "v'tzar lahem"?** After the Rambam already described in three-four lines all the troubles (nullification of religion, money, daughters, Beis Hamikdash), what does "u'lachatzu lachatz gadol" add? The Rambam's three lines are a summary of hundreds of years of history. "U'lachatzu lachatz gadol" means there were even more troubles that he didn't enumerate — it was a very difficult time.

F) "Ad Shericham Aleihem Elokei Avoseinu V'hoshi'am Miyadam... V'gavru Bnei Chashmonai Hakohanim Hagedolim V'haragum V'hoshi'u Yisrael Miyadam"

Simple explanation: Hashem had mercy, the Chashmonaim prevailed, killed the enemies, and saved Klal Yisrael.

Novel points:

1. **"V'hoshi'am miyadam" vs. "v'hoshi'u Yisrael miyadam" — two levels of salvation:** The Rambam deliberately uses two expressions: first "v'hoshi'am" (Hashem saved them) — this is the heavenly part. Then "v'hoshi'u Yisrael miyadam" — this is the human part, how it was expressed in the world. Hashem's mercy was expressed through giving the Chashmonaim courage and strength. They actually carried it out, but the source was from Above.

2. **"V'haragum" — whom?** Not all of Greece, but the wicked who came to oppress the Jews.

G) "V'he'emidu Melech Min Hakohanim V'chazrah Malchus L'Yisrael Yeser Al Ma'asayim Shanah Ad Hachorban Hasheini"

Simple explanation: The Chashmonaim established a king from the Kohanim, and the Jewish kingdom lasted more than two hundred years until the destruction of the Second Temple.

Novel points:

1. **"Min hakohanim" — not just a family, but a matter of kehunah:** The Rambam's language "min hakohanim" shows that the point wasn't just to keep the kingdom in the family, but it was a matter of kavod hakehunah. The Rambam in Hilchos Melachim says a king must be from Beis David — perhaps there's a hint here to the problem that they didn't take someone from Beis David. But the Rambam doesn't present this as a question here, he simply tells the story.

2. **Proof that the Chashmonai king was a true king:** In Hilchos Ta'anis the Rambam mentions the story of Bar Kochva, where he says "v'hayah lo melech gadol" — they imagined he was Mashiach, "v'nafal b'yad goyim" — he fell. The difference: the king from the Kohanim was indeed a true king, because he actually established a kingdom that lasted. The first law of a king is that he can make a kingdom — whether he's from Beis David or from Kohanim. Bar Kochva, who died, turned out not to be a king.

3. **The Rambam's approach that a kingdom need not last forever:** Two hundred years is a tremendous success. The Rambam says about Malchus HaMashiach (in Peirush HaMishnayos, Sanhedrin Perek Chelek) that one can believe that Malchus HaMashiach will be a thousand years or tens of thousands of years — because a good kingdom can last very long, but even about Mashiach we don't say "forever."

4. **Question on the "yeser al ma'asayim shanah":** It's not clear how the Rambam counts two hundred years, because the actual Chashmonai kingdom (the independent Chashmonai dynasty) lasted less than 80 years. Afterward came Beis Hordos. Hordos officially killed all the Chashmonaim and made himself king. Hordos's Judaism is itself a question — he was barely a Jew, perhaps an Edomite. He married Miriam, a granddaughter of the Chashmonaim, but the Gemara (Bava Basra 3b) says "kol d'amar mibeis Chashmonai ka'asina avda hu." The Rambam looked at the entire period until the Churban as one continuation — that until the Churban is approximately two hundred years. The Rambam doesn't have to hold that Hordos was from the Chashmonaim — he's just saying that Jews had a kingdom. But it's difficult to call this "malchus Yisrael" because Hordos himself was subjugated under the Romans.

5. **The impact of the Chashmonai victory on the Romans:** It could be that the Romans, who saw what happened with the Greeks, reckoned more with the Jews. They knew they couldn't go completely kill the Jews, so they had to work through other means like installing their own governor.

6. **"Yeser al ma'asayim shanah" — the salvation lasted long:** Unlike Purim, where the salvation was a brief episode (from Ta'anis Esther to Purim), the Chanukah salvation was long-term — more than two hundred years of Jewish sovereignty.

H) "U'cheshe'gavru Yisrael Al Oyveihem V'ibdum B'chamishah V'esrim B'chodesh Kislev Hayah, V'nichnesu L'heichal V'lo Matzu Shemen Tahor Ela Pach Echad..."

The Rambam's words: "U'cheshe'gavru Yisrael al oyveihem v'ibdum b'chamishah v'esrim b'chodesh Kislev hayah, v'nichnesu l'heichal v'lo matzu shemen tahor ela pach echad, v'lo hayah bo l'hadlik ela yom echad bilvad, v'hidliku mimenu neros hama'arachah shemonah yamim, ad shechatshu zeisim v'hotzi'u shemen tahor."

Simple explanation: On the 25th of Kislev the Jews defeated their enemies, entered the Heichal, found only one flask of pure oil that was enough for one day, and from it they lit the neros hama'arachah for eight days, until they made new pure oil.

Novel points:

1. **The Rambam doesn't say "v'na'aseh bo nes":** In the precise edition of the Rambam (Rav Sheilat's edition) the word "nes" doesn't appear in this context. The printer felt something was missing, and inserted "v'na'aseh bo nes" — but this is an addition by the printer, not the Rambam's original words. The

printer inserted the word "nes" twice in these halachos, which shows it bothered someone that it was missing. Rav Sheilat, who is the authority on this topic, established that it's not the Rambam's original version. (This is already known from Chaim Zelig Slonimsky's article "Nes Pach HaShemen.")

2. **The Rambam's approach to miracles — salvation is primary, not the miracle:** The Rambam believes that hashgachah is what helped the Jews. But he doesn't place the accent on a specific miracle shelo k'derech hateva (that the oil burned extra). He elaborates the entire story to show why we light candles — because that's how the story was, this is the commemoration. He doesn't emphasize that we light candles because there was a miracle in the candles; we light candles because at the victory there was this event with the candles, and this is the commemoration of it.

3. **Analogy of miracles in the Beis Hamikdash:** In the Mishnayos (Avos 5) it says that in the Beis Hamikdash there were various miracles, but we don't make a Yom Tov because there was some miracle. We make a Yom Tov because there was a great salvation — Jews were in a time of trouble and they had a salvation. If there hadn't been the miracle but there was the salvation — there would also be a Yom Tov. If there hadn't been any salvation but only a miracle — there wouldn't be a Yom Tov. **According to the Rambam's approach, the Yom Tov is about the salvation, not about the miracle.**

4. **Chanukah is a nes b'derech hateva — more than Purim:** People know that Purim is a nes b'derech hateva, but Chanukah is even more b'derech hateva — they made a war, they fought, they won. Purim is in a certain sense more of a miracle, because it was through shtadlanus — just that the crazy king fell in love with Esther.

5. **The Rambam also didn't say "rabim b'yad me'atim" and the like:** He didn't insert the language of "Al HaNisim" (rabim b'yad me'atim, temei'im b'yad tehorim, etc.). The main word by the Rambam is that there was a salvation. That the salvation came unexpectedly makes it an even greater salvation, but the Rambam doesn't want to see specifically things shelo k'derech hateva — he wants to see salvations.

6. **The Rambam doesn't say "chosamo shel Kohen Gadol":** The Gemara (Shabbos 21b) says the flask had a seal of the Kohen Gadol. The Rambam is brief and doesn't mention this.

7. **"Ad shechatshu zeisim v'hotzi'u shemen tahor" — the explanation for why eight days:** The Rambam explains that the eight days were because that's how long it took until they could make new pure oil.

8. **[Digression: Sources from Eretz Yisrael about the miracle:]** In all sources from Eretz Yisrael, the story of the miracle with the candles isn't even mentioned — only in the Bavli (Shabbos 21b).

9. **Date of the 25th of Kislev — battle or lighting?** It's not so clear whether the 25th of Kislev is the day of the battle-victory or the day of entering the Beis Hamikdash. It could be that the Rambam means that the first salvation (battle) was on the 25th of Kislev, but the entry into the Heichal was later. A second approach holds that the 25th of Kislev is specifically the day of hadlakas haneros (the lighting in the Beis Hamikdash), not just the battle day, as also stated in the Braisa in the Gemara.

I) "U'mipnei Zeh Hitkinu Chachamim Sheba'oso Hador Sheyihyu Shemonas Hayamim Ha'eilu Shetechilasan Mileilei Chamishah V'esrim B'Kislev Yemei Simchah V'Hallel"

Simple explanation: Because of the entire story, the Chachamim of that generation established that these eight days, beginning from the night of the 25th of Kislev, should be days of joy and Hallel.

Novel points:

1. **"U'mipnei zeh" — refers to the entire story:** The Rambam says "u'mipnei zeh" — because of the entire long story he told (the decrees, the victory, the kingdom, the flask of oil). This means that the takanah of Chanukah is based on the entire salvation, not just on the miracle of the flask of oil.

2. **The 25th of Kislev — the day of salvation:** The hadlakas neros was the finale — the moment when all Jews participated in the success of the salvation. From that small bit of oil they lit for eight days, and everyone talked about it. Therefore they established this way of commemorating the miracle through lights — because this was the symbolic end of the salvation.

3. **What does "simchah" mean and what does "Hallel" mean?** One approach: "Simchah" means a state of mind — rejoicing, and "Hallel" means an action — thanking Hashem (saying Hallel). A second approach: "Simchah" can be the expression of joy through the candles — lighting candles is the expression of simchah (a "celebration").

[Digression: A suggestion to make a distinction that earlier there were two types of suffering — physical suffering (daughters, money) and spiritual suffering (Torah suffering) — and therefore there's simchah (against physical suffering) and Hallel (against spiritual suffering) — is sharply rejected: "I don't like these kinds of Torah thoughts... the whole distinction of soul and body doesn't exist. Nonsense with noodles. The Jews are happy, Hashem saved them."]

J) "U'madlikin Bahen Haneros Ba'erev Al Pischei Habatim B'chol Laylah V'laylah Mishemonas Haleilos"

Simple explanation: We light candles at night at the doorways of houses, each night of the eight nights.

Novel points:

1. **"Ba'erev" — at night — fits with what we learned in Hilchos Bedikas Chametz, that at night is a time for candles (candles are noticed at night).**

2. **"B'chol laylah v'laylah" — the Beis Yosef's question:** Here also lies the Beis Yosef's question (why eight days if the flask of oil could burn one day). The Rambam's language "kol laylah v'laylah" means that each night they lit fresh — not one long candle like a Yom Kippur candle, but each night separately a new lighting.

Halacha 2 — "V'yamim Eilu Hein Hanikra'in Chanukah"

The Rambam's words: "V'yamim eilu hein hanikra'in Chanukah."

Simple explanation: These days are called "Chanukah."

Novel points:

1. **Why is it called "Chanukah"?** The Tzanzer Rebbe's explanation: The Rambam doesn't say it's called Chanukah because they dedicated (chinuch) the Beis Hamikdash anew. It

wasn't a complete destruction — the building wasn't destroyed, only a "breach" — they stopped the service. Yet it's called "Chanukah" — because when a person resumes something after an interruption, it's also called "beginning" (chanukah = beginning/chinuch).

2. **Novel point about the Churban:** Even with the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, what burned is not the main problem. "Shiv'ah asar b'Tammuz batal haTamid" — the main destruction is when the institution stops functioning, not the physical burning. A fire in a beis medrash — we rebuild. But when the institution is nullified, that's churban. The same with Chanukah: the building existed, but the institution was destroyed — they didn't allow service, they installed idols. Therefore the return of the service is a "chanukah" — a renewed dedication of the institution.

3. **The Rambam's style of defining words:** The Rambam has a custom to define terms — as for example in Hilchos Kiddush HaChodesh (shanah sederah, sheleimah, chaserah), in Hilchos Ishus, etc. Here he defines "Chanukah." He already used the word "Chanukah" earlier (in Hilchos Ta'anis Tzibbur), but here he gives the formal definition.

Halacha 3 — Asur B'hesped U'v'ta'anis

The Rambam's words: "Asurin b'hesped u'v'ta'anis k'yemei haPurim."

Simple explanation: The days of Chanukah are forbidden in hesped (eulogies) and fasting, like Purim.

Novel points:

1. **The comparison to Purim:** Here lies the similarity between Chanukah and Purim — both rabbinic holidays have the same law of prohibition of hesped and fasting. By Torah holidays there's shevisa mimelachah and the mitzvah of simchas Yom Tov. By rabbinic holidays the definition of Yom Tov is — asur b'hesped u'v'ta'anis.

2. **Does "asur b'hesped" mean one must rejoice?** "Asur b'hesped" doesn't mean only a prohibition (not to mourn), but it implies a positive command (one must rejoice). It can't be that a day is forbidden in hesped but otherwise is a flat weekday.

3. **A nuanced explanation:** Usually, when there's a hesped, there's a "heter" to be sad. On Chanukah even the heter doesn't work — even when there's a reason to mourn, one may not, because one must be joyful.

Halacha 4 — Hadlakas Neros Is a Mitzvah MiDivrei Sofrim Like Krias HaMegillah

A) "V'hadlakas Haneros Bahen Mitzvah MiDivrei Sofrim K'krias HaMegillah"

Simple explanation: Lighting Chanukah candles is a mitzvah miDivrei Sofrim (rabbinic), like reading the Megillah.

Novel points:

1. **What does "mitzvah miDivrei Sofrim" mean?** There are takanos Chachamim that aren't a "mitzvah miDivrei Sofrim" — here the Rambam says that ner Chanukah has the status of a full mitzvah. Or conversely: "miDivrei Sofrim" comes to exclude d'Oraisa.

2. **The comparison to Yamim Tovim from the Torah:** Just as every Yom Tov d'Oraisa has a specific mitzvah (Pesach — matzah, Sukkos — lulav/sukkah, Rosh Hashanah — shofar), so too the rabbinic holidays have their specific mitzvos: Purim — Megillah, Chanukah — ner Chanukah. The prohibition of hesped and fasting is similar to the essence of shevisa of Yom Tov (which is by all Yamim Tovim), but the specific mitzvah is unique to each Yom Tov. [Note: The Rambam himself doesn't organize things so neatly — even sukkah and lulav he completely separated.]

B) "Kol Shechayav B'krias HaMegillah Chayav B'hadlakas Ner Chanukah"

Simple explanation: Everyone who is obligated in reading the Megillah is also obligated in lighting ner Chanukah — including women.

Novel points:

1. **The foundation: "Af hein hayu b'oso hanes":** The Rambam already clearly said in Hilchos Megillah that women are also obligated. The reason is "af hein hayu b'oso hanes." By Purim it's through Esther, by Chanukah through Yehudis.

2. **Dispute among Rishonim in explaining "af hein hayu b'oso hanes":** (a) It means that the women were also in danger (they were part of the trouble and were saved). (b) Rashi's approach — that they had an extra role in the miracle (like Esther, like Yehudis). The simple meaning in the Gemara is clearly like (a): the Gemara says "v'lav Yisrael ninhu" — meaning, they're also Jews who were in the trouble.

C) Berachos of Ner Chanukah

The Rambam's words: "V'hamadlik osah balaylah harishon mevarech shalosh berachos: (a) Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech ha'olam asher kideshanu b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah, (b) she'asah nisim la'avoseinu bayamim haheim bazman hazeh, (c) shehecheyanu."

Simple explanation: The one who lights on the first night makes three berachos: the berachah of the mitzvah (l'hadlik ner), she'asah nisim, and shehecheyanu.

Novel points:

1. **The connection between mitzvah and berachah:** That the Rambam speaks about berachos is a continuation of what he said that it's a "mitzvah miDivrei Sofrim" — because on a mitzvah d'Rabbanan we make a berachah, as we already learned in Hilchos Berachos.

2. **"Ner shel Chanukah" — the Rambam's precision with "shel":** The Rambam writes "ner shel Chanukah" (not "ner Chanukah"). According to the Rambam's precision, the word "shel" connects to the next word.

3. **Why isn't there "she'asah nisim" on Pesach?** Two answers:

- (a) By Pesach there's already a berachah — "asher ge'alanu" — which is a special berachah for the miracles, a more elaborate version of the same idea.

- (b) Perhaps it has to do with the fact that Chanukah/Purim are rabbinic, and therefore we specifically say "she'asah nisim." The berachah "she'asah nisim la'avoseinu" is a general berachah — similar to the berachah that the Rambam lists in Hilchos Berachos for "haro'eh makom shena'aseh bo nes" (one who sees a place where a miracle happened). By Chanukah/Purim this was established for all generations,

unlike usually where it's only when a person sees the place and remembers.

D) "V'chol Haro'eh Osah" — Berachos for the One Who Sees

The Rambam's words: "V'chol haro'eh osah... mevarech shtayim: she'asah nisim v'shehecheyanu."

Simple explanation: One who sees ner Chanukah (but doesn't light himself) makes two berachos: she'asah nisim and shehecheyanu (the first night), but not "l'hadlik" because he didn't light.

Novel points:

1. **Why can't the "ro'eh" make "l'hadlik"?** The "ro'eh" didn't fulfill the action of lighting, therefore he can't make the berachas hamitzvah "l'hadlik." But he can make "she'asah nisim" because when he sees the Chanukah candles he remembers the miracles.

2. **"Haro'eh" is the parallel to "hashome'a" by other mitzvos:** By shofar and Megillah there's a mitzvah of hearing — the shome'a is yotzei through hearing. But by Chanukah lights there's no "hearing" — one can't "hear" Chanukah lights. The ro'eh is the equivalent of the shome'a. Just as by shofar the shome'a makes a berachah when he hears himself (without the ba'al tokei'a's berachah), so too the ro'eh makes berachos when he sees Chanukah lights. But because the mitzvah is hadlakah (not re'iyah), the ro'eh can't make "l'hadlik" — he only makes the two berachos. If he hears from the ba'al madlik's berachah, he's yotzei with it. But one doesn't have to be specifically at the lighting ceremony — a woman who comes home later and sees that her husband already lit, makes two berachos.

3. **Is the "seeing" itself a mitzvah?** The seeing is itself a fulfillment — one experiences something and makes a berachah, similar to "shehecheyanu."

4. **The great "worker" in the commentators:** The Rambam doesn't explain clearly whom we're talking about by "v'haro'eh" — what kind of person is this? In the commentators this is a major topic.

[Digression: This gives another perspective on Yom Tov: Just as the Rambam said that people used to go around with the four species all day (Sukkos), so too Chanukah's atmosphere is a whole time to see lights. People confuse between the minimal halachah (hadlakah oseh mitzvah, half an hour) and the reality of how one celebrates a Yom Tov. Chanukah doesn't mean you light for a minute and leave.]

E) Distinction Between First Night and Other Nights

The Rambam: First night — the madlik makes three berachos, the ro'eh makes three. Other nights — the madlik makes two, the ro'eh makes one (she'asah nisim), because shehecheyanu is only said on the first night.

Halacha 4

Halacha 4 — Hallel on Chanukah

A) "Kol Yom V'yom Mishemonas Hayamim Ha'eilu Gomrin Es HaHallel" — Complete Hallel All Eight Days

The Rambam: "Kol yom v'yom mishemonas hayamim ha'eilu gomrin es haHallel" — we say complete Hallel all eight days. The berachah is "asher kideshanu b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu ligmor es haHallel". Both an individual and a congregation.

Simple explanation: All eight days of Chanukah we say complete Hallel with a berachah, whether an individual or a congregation.

Novel points:

1. **The text "ligmor" vs. "likro":** The Rambam's text is "ligmor es haHallel", but Ashkenazim say "likro es haHallel". Everyone agrees that the original text is "ligmor". Sephardim indeed say "ligmor".

2. **The Maharam of Rothenburg's stringency:** The Maharam changed the text to "likro" because he was afraid of saying a falsehood — if he forgets one word or letter, he didn't actually "finish" (gomer) the Hallel, and he would have said a lie in the berachah. He was fearfully meticulous about not saying falsehood.

3. **The Rosh disagrees with his teacher (Maharam):** The Rosh, who was a student of the Maharam, disagrees and says that "ligmor" doesn't mean "to finish" at all — it means "to say", like "Gemara gemor" (to learn/say Gemara), "gomer" = "omer". Therefore there's no concern of falsehood. The Rosh was very independent and could disagree with his teacher — in those times it was still normal to say that the teacher isn't right.

4. **Perhaps "ligmor" is a nice expression because it excludes days when we only say half Hallel (custom).** Also, perhaps the Maharam wanted all Yamim Tovim to have the same berachah, to avoid errors.

5. **Another explanation for the Maharam:** Because Hallel's manner is that the ba'al tefillah says most and the congregation only sings along — if so, "ligmor" is lacking because the individual doesn't actually say the entire Hallel himself.

6. **"Bein yachid bein tzibbur":** Although Hallel essentially comes with a congregation, even an individual alone can say Hallel with a berachah.

B) Berachah on Rabbinic Mitzvos: "V'tzivanu"

The Rambam: "Af al pi shekrias haHallel mitzvah miDivrei Sofrim" — how do we say "asher kideshanu b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu"? He answers: "K'derech shemevarech al haMegillah v'al ha'eiruv" — just as we make berachos on Megillah, eiruv, and ner Chanukah. "Shekol davar shehu vadai midivrehem mevarchi alav."

Simple explanation: On every definite rabbinic mitzvah we make a berachah with "v'tzivanu".

Novel points:

1. **"Vadai" doesn't mean to exclude a rabbinic doubt in the usual sense:** "Vadai" means that the Chachamim established a positive mitzvah (a new takanah), not merely a stringency about a doubt.

2. **Demai — the example of a rabbinic doubt:** "Davar shehu midivrehem v'ikar asiyasam lo mipnei hasafek, k'gon ma'aser demai, ein mevarchi alav." Demai is a case where biblically one doesn't need to tithe, but the Chachamim required tithing because they were concerned — this is more a

fence/doubt, not a new mitzvah, and on this we don't make a berachah.

3. **The Rambam's question on himself — Yom Tov Sheini:** If on a rabbinic doubt we don't make a berachah, how do we make berachos on Yom Tov Sheini, which the Rambam himself explained (in Hilchos Kiddush HaChodesh) is a matter of doubt? The Rambam answers: "Kedei shelo yezalzelu bo" — by Yom Tov Sheini the Chachamim specifically made that we should make berachos so that we won't be disrespectful. The distinction: By demai everyone knows it's only rabbinic, we won't be disrespectful. But by Yom Tov — the simple understanding is that it's Yom Tov, and without berachos we would be disrespectful.

4. **Note:** The Rambam didn't ask the same question (how do we say "v'tzivanu" on rabbinic laws) earlier by hadlakas ner Chanukah, although he says there also "v'tzivanu" — because by Chanukah candles the Gemara already speaks of it.

5. **The distinction between "leshon haberachah" (Hilchos Berachos) and "ta'am hatakanah" (here):** In Hilchos Berachos Chapter 11 the Rambam explained how the *text* "asher kideshanu b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu" fits on rabbinic mitzvos (through the command to follow the Chachamim). **Here** the Rambam isn't speaking about the text, but about the **reason** why the Chachamim established a berachah on Yom Tov Sheini at all — a separate question.

6. **The Ra'avad's dispute — safek d'Oraisa with or without a berachah:** The Rambam's approach: By safek d'Oraisa we do the action (safek d'Oraisa l'chumra), but we **don't** make a berachah, because safek berachos l'hakel — the berachah itself is rabbinic, and on a rabbinic doubt we go l'kula. The **Ra'avad** disagrees: When we do a safek d'Oraisa, we **do** make a berachah, because we're doing a biblical mitzvah. Why don't we make a berachah on demai? Because demai isn't even a real doubt — "rov amei ha'aretz me'asrin hein" — it's a rabbinic takanah because of a concern, two levels down (doubt + rabbinic), and on such things we don't make a berachah.

7. **"Shelo yezalzelu" — especially when there's no longer any doubt:** A suggestion that the main novelty of "shelo yezalzelu" is specifically **today**, when we're mekadesh according to the calendar and there's no longer any doubt at all — it's only "minhag avoseinu b'yadeinu". Then there's a greater danger of disrespect. **This is rejected:** (a) The Rambam doesn't say it explicitly. (b) On the contrary — we've already learned in the Rambam that today, when it's a custom, it's **more stringent**, not less. Because now it's definitely not a doubt, it's a clear rabbinic takanah, and on rabbinic laws we make a berachah.

8. **The nature of Yom Tov Sheini — it must be a real Yom Tov:** "There's no such thing as Yom Tov from doubt." One can't say that someone should rejoice "on the side" — "a doubtful eating meat doesn't work." Yom Tov Sheini must be **a real Yom Tov** — this is "the secret of Yom Tov Sheini." Therefore we make a berachah, and even shehecheyanu — because it's a new Yom Tov. A proof from other halachos: By Shemini Atzeres we don't take a lulav, also because of "shelo yezalzelu" — because people will think it's not a real Yom Tov. This shows that Yom Tov Sheini has a different nature than a regular takanah.

C) "V'lo Hallel Shel Chanukah Bilvad... Ela Krias HaHallel L'olam MiDivrei Sofrim"

The Rambam's words: "V'lo Hallel shel Chanukah bilvad hu shemiDivrei Sofrim, ela krias haHallel l'olam miDivrei Sofrim b'chol hayamim shegomrin bahen es haHallel."

Simple explanation: Not only Hallel of Chanukah is rabbinic, but Hallel is always rabbinic — on all days when we say complete Hallel.

Novel points:

1. **Why Hilchos Hallel is here in Hilchos Chanukah:** One might have thought that only Chanukah-Hallel is rabbinic (because Chanukah itself is rabbinic), but Hallel of Pesach/Sukkos is biblical (as the Behag holds). The Rambam says: No, **even** Hallel of biblical holidays is rabbinic. Therefore it fits in Hilchos Chanukah — the Rambam organized Sefer Zemanim according to biblical/rabbinic, and Hallel is a rabbinic mitzvah, so it belongs here.

2. **Hallel is a separate takanah, not part of prayer or Yom Tov:** The Rambam didn't place Hallel in Hilchos Tefillah or Hilchos Shevisas Yom Tov, because Hallel is not part of prayer and not part of Yom Tov. "They made Hallel when they made Hallel" — it's a separate takanah in itself, which the Chachamim established on certain days.

3. **The connection between Chanukah and Hallel — perhaps the source of Hallel:** The connection between Hallel and Chanukah is already from the Gemara — "Bameh madlikin" appears together with Hilchos Hallel. "Kavu'um b'Hallel v'hoda'ah" shows that Hallel has a special connection to Chanukah. Perhaps the Chachamim established Hallel at the miracle of Chanukah, and then spread it to all Yamim Tovim — "the source of it is on Chanukah." A proof: The second half of Hallel (Hodu etc.) speaks exactly about the story of Chanukah — "kol goyim s'vavuni," war with the nations, and "even ma'asu habonim haysah l'rosh pinah" — this refers to the Beis Hamikdash.

D) Which Days We Say Hallel

The Rambam's words: "Shemonah asar yom bashanah mitzvah ligmor bahen es haHallel, v'eilu hein: shemonas yemei hachag (Sukkos), u'shemonas yemei Chanukah, v'rishon shel Pesach, v'yom Atzeres."

Simple explanation: 18 days a year we say complete Hallel: 8 days of Sukkos, 8 days of Chanukah, the first day of Pesach, and Shavuos.

E) When We Don't Say Hallel — Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

The Rambam: "Rosh Hashanah v'Yom HaKippurim ein bahen Hallel, l'fi shehein yemei teshuvah v'yir'ah vafachad, lo yemei simchah yeseirah."

Simple explanation: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur — we don't say Hallel because they are days of repentance, awe, and fear, not days of excessive joy.

Novel points:

1. **"Yir'ah vafachad" applies more to Yom Kippur, "teshuvah" more to Rosh Hashanah — but all three qualities belong to both days.** The key expression is **"lo**

yemei simchah yeseirah" — there is some simchah (it's a mitzvah of simchah on Rosh Hashanah), but not **excessive simchah**, and Hallel requires excessive simchah.

2. **Hallel — is it about miracles or about simchah?** One might say that Hallel is about miracles that happened. But this doesn't fit well with Shavuos (Atzeres) — is Matan Torah a "miracle"? The Rambam's language shows that Hallel is about **excessive simchah**, not just about miracles. One could also say that Yom Kippur has a simchah (Hashem forgives), but the Rambam holds it's not excessive simchah.

3. **The Gemara's foundation — Hallel comes with Yom Tov, not with a miracle:** The Gemara's assumption (Arachin 10b) is that every day that's called a mo'ed requires Hallel. This is different from the "common sense" one would say — that Hallel comes because there was a miracle. According to the Gemara the foundation is: When it's a Yom Tov, we say Hallel. Therefore the Gemara asks about Rosh Hashanah — it's a mo'ed, why not Hallel?

4. **Why would we have thought Hallel on Rosh Hashanah:** All Yamim Tovim are a commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt. That Jews can come to the Beis Hamikdash and have Yamim Tovim — this itself is a commemoration that we are free, bnei chorin. When Jews have a good day, they praise Hashem — it's all connected to the Exodus from Egypt. Hallel is always said "on the Exodus from Egypt, on the miracles that Hashem did throughout all generations" — when it's a good day, when we go to the Beis Hamikdash, then is the time of celebration. Therefore one would have thought that also Rosh Hashanah, as a Yom Tov, requires Hallel. The Gemara says: No, Rosh Hashanah is not such a day.

5. **The aggadah of "bik'shu malachei hashares":** The Gemara (Arachin 10b) tells: "Amru malachei hashares lifnei HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Ribono shel Olam, mipnei mah ein Yisrael omrim shirah l'fanecha b'Rosh Hashanah u'v'Yom HaKippurim?" Hashem answers: "Efshar melech yoshev al kisei din, v'sifrei chayim v'sifrei meisim pesuchim l'fanav, v'Yisrael omrim shirah?" There's a parallel aggadah by the seventh day of Pesach / Splitting of the Sea: "Bik'shu malachei hashares lomar shirah" — and the answer is "Ma'asei yadai tov'im bayam v'atem omrim shirah?" In both cases the angels ask why not song, and in both cases the answer is that there's a certain fear or tragedy that prevents song.

6. **The Rambam's approach — turning from Heaven to earth:** The Rambam has, as he does by shofar and in many other places (see Hilchos Ta'anis), turned what appears in the Gemara "in Heaven" — to earth. The Gemara speaks of "melech yoshev al kisei din, sifrei chayim v'sifrei meisim pesuchim l'fanav" — this is what Hashem does Above. The Rambam translated this to: "yemei teshuvah v'yir'ah vafachad" — this is what's with us, on earth, it's days of repentance. As is known, in Peirush HaMishnayos the Rambam says a language that Rosh Hashanah is "yemei berachah mimenu eilav." This is compared with the language of Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol's Keter Malchus, and it's also found in the Ramban, Chovos HaLevavos.

[Digression: Angels are the ones who say song — that's their "job." By Jews the matter is that they say song, and the angels wait for them. A contemporary person doesn't live with the things of angels, and one must appreciate it.]

F) Purim — Krias HaMegillah Hi HaHallel

The Rambam: "V'lo tiknu Hallel b'Purim, shekrias haMegillah hi haHallel."

Simple explanation: We don't say Hallel on Purim because reading the Megillah itself takes the place of Hallel.

Novel points:

1. **The distinction between Chanukah and Purim:** Chanukah doesn't tell us the miracle — we do an action of lights. Whereas Purim tells us the miracle at length. The matter of Hallel is to say the miracles and thank for the miracles verbally with speech. Purim has the speech through telling the miracle at length. Although there's a distinction — Hallel speaks praises of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, whereas in the Megillah Hashem's name doesn't appear even once — but it tells the miracle. It's not entirely clear, but it's reflected — it's the same idea of publicizing the miracle.

G) Eighteen Days of Hallel, or Twenty-One

The Rambam: "Mekamos she'osin yamim tovim shnei yamim — gomrin es haHallel b'echad v'esrim yom."

Simple explanation: In Eretz Yisrael we say complete Hallel eighteen days a year. In the Diaspora, where we make two days of Yom Tov of the Diaspora, three more days are added — together twenty-one.

Novel points:

1. **The three extra days:** Another day of safek of Shemini Atzeres (another day of Sukkos), another day of Pesach (two days of Pesach), and another day of Shavuos — together three extra days.

2. **Why can't Chanukah have safek yoma?** Because Chanukah already happened after we were still mekadesh by sighting. Perhaps in that month of Kislev they didn't bless by sighting, because the Beis Hamikdash wasn't yet in place. [Note: Perhaps here we have an answer to the Beis Yosef's question.]

3. **The Gemara's answer why not complete Hallel all days of Pesach:** By Sukkos we say eight Hallels because "shechalukim b'korbnoseihem" — each day has different sacrifices. By Pesach it's the same, it's just a continuation. Essentially, Hallel comes only once. By Chanukah also "nes kol yom v'yom" — each day he lit the neros hama'arachah again.

H) Hallel on Rosh Chodesh: Custom, Not Mitzvah

The Rambam: "B'rashei chadashim — krias Hallel minhag v'einah mitzvah. L'fichach korin b'dilugin, v'ein mevarchi alav, she'ein mevarchi al haminhag. V'yachid lo yikra klal."

Simple explanation: Hallel on Rosh Chodesh is only a custom, not a mitzvah. Therefore: (1) we say it with skipping (not complete), (2) we don't make a berachah, because on a custom we don't make a berachah, (3) an individual shouldn't say Hallel on Rosh Chodesh at all.

Novel points:

1. **Three levels of Hallel:** (a) Even all Yamim Tovim — Hallel is only rabbinic (not biblical). (b) Rosh Chodesh — is not even rabbinic, only a custom. (c) The custom — we don't

make a berachah, we say with skipping, and an individual doesn't say at all.

2. **"She'ein mevarchi al haminhag" — the Rambam's principle:** This fits with the Rambam's rule that we don't make a berachah on a custom.

3. **Practical difference — individual on Rosh Chodesh:** Women or people who don't pray in shul — on Rosh Chodesh they don't need to say Hallel (according to the Rambam). But on Chol HaMo'ed Sukkos they do need to say Hallel, because that's a mitzvah, not just a custom.

4. **Our custom — different from the Rambam in two ways:**

(a) Berachah on custom: We do make a berachah on Hallel of Rosh Chodesh, because we hold like Tosafos that we make a berachah even on a custom (unlike the Rambam).

(b) Individual: In Shulchan Aruch there's a dispute between the Mechaber and the Rema. The Mechaber brings the Rambam's approach that an individual doesn't say Hallel / doesn't make a berachah. The Rema says that yesh omrim that an individual does say. He also brings that one needs to have a bit of a congregation — like three people — because "Hodu laHashem ki tov" is said with two others. But even for many the Rambam says we don't make a berachah.

5. **The Shulchan Aruch HaRav's approach:** Only the **chazzan** should say the berachah and the congregation should be yotzei through him. The reason: When each individual in shul says a berachah himself, this is also a "berachah b'yachid" — because "tzibbur" means that one is yotzei through the shaliach tzibbur. In Chabad we conduct ourselves that only the ba'al tefillah says the berachah, and if one prays alone one says Hallel without a berachah.

6. **The Rambam's "v'im hischil yashlim b'dilugin":** This doesn't speak **about a berachah** — he's speaking about saying Tehillim/Hallel without a berachah. The novelty: One shouldn't think that because he already started, he can say the entire Hallel — no, he must continue doing the skipping.

Halacha 2 (of Hilchos Hallel) — How We Skip

The Rambam: "Keitzad medalgim? — We say from the beginning 'Halleluyah hallelu avdei Hashem'... u'medaleg 'Lo lanu'... v'omer 'Hashem zecharanu yevarech' until 'Halleluyah'... u'medaleg 'Ahavti'... v'omer 'Mah ashiv laHashem' until 'Halleluyah'... u'medaleg [Hallelu es Hashem kol goyim, Hodu]... v'omer 'Min hameitzar karasi Kah' until the end of Hallel. Zeh haminhag hapashut, v'yeish medalgim dilugin acher."

Simple explanation: The Rambam lists three skips: (1) we skip "Lo lanu" and say "Hashem zecharanu yevarech"; (2) we skip "Ahavti" and say "Mah ashiv"; (3) we skip "Hallelu es Hashem kol goyim" and "Hodu" and say "Min hameitzar".

Novel points:

1. **Our custom vs. the Rambam:** We (Ashkenazim) skip only **two** pieces, but the Rambam skips **three** — he also leaves out "Hallelu es Hashem kol goyim" and "Hodu laHashem ki tov". The Rambam himself notes "v'yeish medalgim dilugin acher" — there are other customs.

2. **Pattern of the skips:** All skips have a system — we always skip the **beginning** of a chapter and jump to the **end**. "Lo lanu" is the beginning of a chapter, "Hashem zecharanu" is the end; "Ahavti" is the beginning, "Mah ashiv" is the end. But **why specifically these pieces** — this hasn't become clear.

3. **Purpose of skipping:** We want to **differentiate** between the days when Hallel is a complete obligation (complete Hallel) and the days when it's only a custom.

Halacha 3 (of Hilchos Hallel) — Time of Krias HaHallel, Backwards, Interruptions

A) Time of Krias HaHallel

The Rambam: "Kol hayom kasher likrias haHallel."

Simple explanation: We can say Hallel the entire day — it's not limited to a specific time. Hallel is not specifically connected to Shacharis, although we usually say it after Shacharis.

B) Hallel Backwards

The Rambam: "V'hakorei Hallel l'mafrei'a lo yatza."

Simple explanation: Whoever says Hallel out of order, is not yotzei.

Novel point: By Megillah we understand well why — there's a story that must be said in order. But by Hallel — why? Hallel also has a **certain order** — first the trouble, then the salvation. Even one verse backwards is a problem.

C) Read and Paused and Returned and Read

The Rambam: "Kara v'shahah v'chazar v'kara, afilu shahah kedei ligmor es kulo — yatza."

Simple explanation: If one began Hallel, made an interruption (even as long as it takes to finish the entire Hallel), and then continued — one is yotzei.

Novel point: [Humorous note:] Otherwise the Rebbes couldn't make long melodies in the middle of Hallel — half an hour of melodies would seemingly be "kedei ligmor es kulo."

D) Interruption Between Chapters — Days We Complete vs. Days We Skip

The Rambam: "Yamim shegomrin bahen es haHallel — yesh lo l'hafsik bein perek l'ferek, aval b'emtza haperek lo yafsik. V'yamim shekorin bahen b'dilugin — afilu b'emtza haperek posek."

Simple explanation: By complete Hallel one may only interrupt between chapters, not in the middle. By half Hallel (with skipping) one may even interrupt in the middle of a chapter.

Novel points:

1. **"Bein perek l'ferek"** means between complete chapters, not between the pieces that are left out by skipping.

2. **Reasoning why one may interrupt in the middle of a chapter by skipping:** Because the skipping itself is already an interruption in the middle of a chapter — we skip the beginning of a chapter. Therefore, if it's already "anyway a major interruption," one may also interrupt otherwise.

3. **Question regarding berachah:** For those who conduct themselves differently from the Rambam and **do say a berachah** on half Hallel, perhaps the halachah regarding interruption will be different? The reasoning: Because we say a

berachah, it needs to be a "chetivah achas" (one piece). **No** — the berachah is made on the custom, but on a custom it's not so important that one shouldn't interrupt. On a **takanas d'Rabbanan** one shouldn't interrupt, but a custom is a lower level.

[Digression: In Hilchos Krias Shema we learn: Between chapters one may interrupt out of respect (for an important person), and in the middle of a chapter out of fear. But people don't conduct themselves this way.]

E) Berachah Before and After

The Rambam: "Kol yom shegomrin bo es haHallel mevarech l'fanav, u'makom shenohagu l'varech acharav mevarech."

Simple explanation: On complete Hallel we make a berachah before. A berachah after depends on the local custom.

Novel points:

1. A **berachah before** is certain — like a berachas hamitzvos on the takanah.

2. A **berachah after** is only a custom, not an obligation. This is parallel to Megillah, where the berachah afterward is also a custom. Also in the Haggadah we have such a berachah at the end.

F) Text of the Berachah After — "Yehalelucha"

The Rambam: "Keitzad mevarech? 'Yehalelucha Hashem Elokeinu kol ma'asecha... ki lecha tov l'hodos u'lshimcha na'eh l'zameir, u'mei'olam v'ad olam atah Kel, baruch atah Hashem Kel haMelech hameshubbach v'hamefuar, chai v'kayam, tamid yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed.'"

Novel points:

1. **The text is similar to Baruch She'amar.** Rabbi Yechiel Goldhaber dealt with this point in his article on Yom Kippur.

2. **"Kol ma'asecha" vs. "al kol ma'asecha":** The version "al kol ma'asecha" is **too concerned** that the person is the one praising, not the creations themselves. "Kol ma'asecha" means that all creations praise Hashem — like "hashamayim mesaprim kevod Kel" — the heavens themselves tell the glory of Hashem.

3. **"Kol ma'asecha... vachasidecha v'tzadikim osei retzonecha... v'chol amcha beis Yisrael b'rinah yodu lishimcha" — a three-tiered structure:** (1) **"Kol ma'asecha"** — everyone in general, even gentiles, every person; (2) **"Chasidecha v'tzadikim"** — righteous among the nations, pious of the nations of the world; (3) **"V'chol amcha beis Yisrael"** — specifically Klal Yisrael. It gets smaller and smaller.

4. **"Osei retzonecha" — does it apply to both "chasidecha" and "tzadikim"?** Chasidim do more than "retzonecha" (beyond the letter of the law), so it doesn't fit smoothly.

5. **"Kol ma'asecha" doesn't mean that creations themselves give thanks,** but that the person — who has consciousness — is aroused to thank when he sees creation (like Perek Shirah — the person sees a spring and is aroused).

Halacha 3 (of Hilchos Hallel) — Doubling Verses in Hallel

The Rambam: "Yeish mekamos shenohagu lichpol 'odecha ki anisani' ad sof haHallel, koflin kol davar v'davar shnei fe'amim... u'makom shenohagu lichpol yichpol, u'makom shenohagu shelo lichpol ein koflin."

Simple explanation: From "odecha ki

Halacha 3 (of Hilchos Hallel) — Doubling Verses in Hallel (continued)

Simple explanation: From "odecha ki anisani" until the end of Hallel, we say each verse twice — but only where the custom is so.

Novel points:

1. This doesn't mean that a shul that doesn't do it "doesn't know about this custom" — everyone has accepted the custom, it's a legitimate dispute of customs.

2. **The background:** In biblical poetry generally the structure doubles — a verse has two parts (for example "see and guard" or "answer me Hashem"). But the last verses of Hallel are single lines without parallelism, therefore we add by repeating.

Halacha 3 (Continuation) — Order of Krias HaHallel in the Days of the Early Sages

The Rambam: "Minhag krias haHallel biyemei chachamim harishonim kach hayah: Achar shemevarech gadol shemikra es haHallel..."

Simple explanation: Only the gadol (ba'al tefillah) makes the berachah and reads aloud, the congregation responds.

Novel points:

1. **That the congregation says the berachah on Hallel themselves is "absolutely am ha'aratzus" (ignorance).** We're yotzei from the ba'al tefillah's berachah, there's no reason whatsoever to say it ourselves. Compare to tekias shofar: There the ba'al tokei'a is motzi the congregation with "lishmo'a kol shofar," and no one repeats — why should Hallel be different? By shofar there were also amei ha'aretz who used to repeat, until it was nullified.

2. **A counter-answer:** Perhaps the congregation repeats because the Rambam writes "gadol" — we need a gadol whom we can be yotzei from. In practice they used to send community heads or chazzanim whom they considered fools or amei ha'aretz, and the congregation is concerned about "concern of a fool" — therefore they say it themselves. But this isn't a good enough answer.

[Digression: A parallel from Shabbos: The ba'al tefillah says "gadlu laHashem iti u'neromemah shemo yachdav" — the congregation should respond "lecha Hashem hagedulah". In every Lithuanian shul they do so. But in certain "heimish" shuls the congregation shouts along with "gadlu" — which is backwards, because "gadlu" is a call to the congregation, not a response.]

Order of Responding Halleluyah — 123 Times

The Rambam: The reader says "Halleluyah", the congregation responds "Halleluyah". He says "Hallelu avdei Hashem", the congregation responds

"Halleluyah". "Yehi shem Hashem mevorach" — "Halleluyah". "V'chein al kol davar v'davar ad shenimtze'u onin b'chol haHallel Halleluyah me'ah v'shalosh v'esrim pe'amim. Siman lahen shenoseiv shel Aharon."

Simple explanation: On each verse the congregation responds "Halleluyah" — it comes out 123 times, corresponding to the years of Aharon.

Novel points:

1. **The sign of Aharon HaKohen:** Here is a proof that Chanukah was when Hallel was first established — because the sign is Aharon HaKohen, and also by Chanukah they established a kohen king (Chashmonaim), which is unusual (usually a king is not a kohen). The Rambam doesn't say it's a "secret", but a "sign" to remember.

Responding at the Beginning of a Chapter — Repeating the First Verse

The Rambam: "V'chein keshehakorei magi'a l'rosh kol perek uferek heim chozrin v'omrin mah she'amar."

Simple explanation: At the beginning of each chapter the congregation repeats the first verse itself (not "Halleluyah").

Novel points:

1. Example: When the reader says "B'tzeis Yisrael miMitzrayim", the congregation responds "B'tzeis Yisrael miMitzrayim". But when he says "Beis Ya'akov mei'am lo'eiz" they respond "Halleluyah".

2. **Important point about chapter division:** The Rambam says "ad sheyomar Ahavti ki yishma Hashem es koli" — this shows that "Ahavti" is the beginning of a new chapter, **not** at "Lo lanu" and not at "Mah ashiv". This confirms that the correct breaks in Hallel are three divisions.

3. Also "Hallelu es Hashem kol goyim" is a beginning of a chapter — the congregation responds "Hallelu es Hashem kol goyim".

Responding at "Ana" and "Baruch Haba"

The Rambam: The reader says "Ana Hashem hoshi'ah na" — the congregation responds "Ana Hashem hoshi'ah na". The reader says "Ana Hashem hatzlichah na" — the congregation responds "Ana Hashem hatzlichah na". The reader says "Baruch haba" — the congregation responds "b'shem Hashem".

Novel points:

1. "Ana" is a special case: we repeat it even though it's not the beginning of a chapter.

2. **By "Baruch haba" it's different:** The reader says only "Baruch haba" and the congregation completes "b'shem Hashem" — a beautiful responsive structure. This is different from "Hodu" where the congregation repeats the same language that the reader said.

If the Reader Was a Minor or Slave or Woman

The Rambam: If the ba'al mikra is a minor, slave, or woman — one cannot be yotzei with their reading through the regular order of responding. In such a case one must say oneh achareihein mah shehein omrin milah b'milah b'chol haHallel — one repeats every word they say, throughout the entire Hallel.

Novel point: The reason is because a minor, slave, or woman have a limited obligation, and therefore one cannot be yotzei through their reading in the usual way.

"Zeh Hu HaMinhag HaRishon U'vo Ra'ui Leilech... Aval Bizmanim Eilu Minhagos Meshunos"

The Rambam: The order he described is "haminhag harishon" — the original custom of the early sages — "u'vo ra'ui leilech" — and so it is proper to conduct oneself. "Aval bizmanim eilu... minhagos meshunos bikri'aso u'va'aniyyas ha'am v'ein echad meihem domeh l'echad."

Novel points:

1. **One approach:** The Rambam gives legitimacy to the other customs — he says "u'vo ra'ui leilech" but he doesn't invalidate the other customs.

2. **A second approach:** The Rambam must write in his sefer halachos about **the customs of all Israel**. Since the original custom isn't clear that even one place conducts itself so, the Rambam must mention that other customs exist. But the main reason for this addition is an **apology** from the Rambam for why he doesn't write all the customs — he says: "I'm writing the correct custom from the Gemara, my book is complete. You have a different custom? I hold by the Gemara." He would have had to write twenty-five thousand customs if he wanted to include everything — therefore he writes only the original custom.

Practical Plans — Hallel According to the Rambam's Way

It's planned to make a shiur/gathering on Chol HaMo'ed where they'll say Hallel according to the Rambam's order. In the back of the Rambam there's the **order of reading** that needs to be distributed in advance so people can rehearse. One needs to find a melody or text that works for it. **The Teimanim** still do Hallel in such a manner. With Hallel one may make music — even rabbis who don't allow it by Selichos because "it's not serious," by Hallel certainly music comes. The **Mishnah** speaks of a **chalil** (a type of musical instrument / flute) by Hallel.

Question at the End

Why specifically by Hallel have so many different customs developed that the Rambam had to mention the matter? The answer: "There's a reason for this" — but it's not further elaborated.

[Digression: "Shalom aleichem" by Kiddush Levanah — after we say "tipol aleihem eimah vafachad", we say "shalom aleichem" to the person next to us in order to make clear that we don't mean him with the curses — not that we need to go around looking for someone. It's compared to simanim of Rosh Hashanah when we say "yikarsu son'einu" — we mean terrorists, not the little brother.]

[Digression: In piyutim of Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur the order is often scrambled — for example "Kel erech din",

"l'vochen levavos b'din" — it's obvious that pieces belong differently, but people continue anyway.]

Summary of the Entire Learning

Hilchos Chanukah Chapter 3 we learned the main mitzvah of Chanukah — **hadlakas ner Chanukah** (the story, the foundation, the berachos, the ro'eh), and the order of krias haHallel (which days, berachos, skipping, the order of reading in the days of the early sages). **Chapter 4** will be all the details of hadlakas ner Chanukah.

Full Transcript

Rambam, Laws of Megillah and Chanukah, Chapter 3 – Law 1: The Story of Chanukah

Introduction: Why Are We Learning Chanukah on Erev Sukkos?

R' Yoel Asher: Good day.

R' Yitzchak: Good day.

R' Yoel Asher: A good erev Chanukah. It's actually erev Sukkos, let's go learn the laws of Chanukah here.

R' Yitzchak: As is known that Sukkos...

R' Yoel Asher: Lemkom shemachshavto shel adam (to the place where one's thoughts are).

R' Yitzchak: Excuse me. As is also known that Chanukah is essentially a completion of Sukkos, whoever knows the secrets of the Torah.

R' Yoel Asher: There's a Greek in the sukkah.

R' Yitzchak: In any case, it's known that it says in Sefer Maccabim that they didn't make Sukkos that year, so they made it in honor of Chanukah. And this is what the Baruch She'amar says is the answer to the Beis Yosef's question, because Chanukah is eight days just like Sukkos.

Anyway, now actually erev Sukkos, we hope on Sukkos these days to make a great siyum (completion) on Sefer Zemanim. It fits very well, because there's an order of the holidays in the Torah, yes? It begins with Pesach, and ends with Sukkos. Sukkos is the Shemini Atzeres, Simchas Torah. We make a siyum on the Torah, it's also a siyum on the entire order of the year, essentially. So, im yirtzeh Hashem (God willing), we'll make a great siyum. Everyone is invited? What?

R' Yoel Asher: We should already let the world know.

R' Yitzchak: Already let them know? Okay. And now we're learning the laws of Chanukah. There are two chapters in it, and we'll learn more or less what the holy Rambam says. Yes?

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, says the Rambam. Okay.

Law 1: The Story of Chanukah

Why the Rambam Begins with the Story

R' Yoel Asher: So. This is the third chapter of the combined, the laws of Megillah and Chanukah. In the first law of Chanukah. And interestingly, the Rambam begins with the story, just as the Gemara "Mai Chanukah" (what is Chanukah) the Gemara tells the story of Chanukah, because Purim everyone knows the story, there's a Megillah about it. Chanukah, everyone knows that there's a holiday of Chanukah, it's mentioned in other places in the Mishnah that there's such a thing as a holiday of Chanukah, in passing, but in earlier Tannaitic sources there wasn't any clearly written down like a Megillah. The Gemara brings the story from a Baraisa. The Rambam goes bekivaso (in his footsteps), eh, that's the reason. Or I don't know, but the Rambam begins with the story.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, there's a point that we always say in this context, as I already mentioned a bit at the beginning of the laws of Purim, that the Rambam says about well-known matters. But it's known that the Rambam is a book where one doesn't need to know anything from it, except for the Chumash and the book. So a story that's in the Chumash, one doesn't need to repeat it – Pesach etc. But this story isn't in the Chumash, it's only in the Gemara. It's important, one should know why we make Chanukah, Chanukah doesn't make sense without an explanation. So the Rambam says the explanation.

It could also be that it fits with the Rambam's emphasis that he always wants to show that the Rabbinic laws come in reaction to something that happened, it's not that they're adding to the Torah, rather there was an event. So it fits.

R' Yoel Asher: Because the Torah already showed that on events one makes a holiday, this is so similar to the way the Ramban says, but in any case why isn't it lo tosef (do not add)?

R' Yitzchak: No, it's not lo tosef because we don't say, this is the Rambam's...

R' Yoel Asher: Right.

R' Yitzchak: We don't say that it's truly from the Torah.

The Decrees of the Greeks

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says thus: **Baveis sheni kshemalchu Yavan**. When the Greeks... Interesting, kshemalchu Yavan, plural language, singular language.

R' Yitzchak: Not Yevanim (Greeks plural).

R' Yoel Asher: Or kshemalcha. Okay, when the Greeks reigned, they were rulers over the Land of Israel, they were upon the Land of Israel.

R' Yitzchak: It means that they reigned over the Jews.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes. **Gazru gezeiros al Yisrael, uvitlu dasam**, they decreed decrees upon the Jews, and nullified the Jewish religion. **Velo hinichu osam la'asok baTorah uvamitzvos**. What is the Jewish religion? To be occupied with Torah and mitzvos, they didn't let them.

Discussion: What Does "Bitlu Dasam" Mean?

R' Yitzchak: Yes, we need to know if it means the same thing.

R' Yoel Asher: Or dasam means the very thing that they have an external religion.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, I would say, not letting them be occupied with Torah and mitzvos, that's like a traditional way of saying things. Bitul dasam is the Rambam's way of saying things, the concept of das (religion).

R' Yoel Asher: But Haman, this fits very well, Haman wanted that there shouldn't be "vedaseihem shonos mikol am" (and their laws are different from every people). Bitul dasam means that they wanted all the people in the empire to conduct themselves the same, to be one nation with one religion.

R' Yitzchak: That's what was said. But let's remember, when the Rambam says bitul dasam, he means that they destroyed their religion in English. Das, in Arabic, and in Arabic one technically says din. In any case, the word din in Arabic is what we call religion, din Muhammad, the religion of Muhammad.

And the concept of das that we say, there are dasos, yes, there's a Ministry of Religions in the Land of Israel. This isn't in the Torah when it says das, it actually says there in Vezos Haberachah "eish das". It means a law, it doesn't mean a religion, it's a broader thing. Certainly, a religion is also a law, a Torah tells us what to do, but it's a bit more of a different angle, a different meaning.

In Chazal there isn't the word das. But the Rambam thinks of a das, therefore he thinks that he's saying leha'avir al hadas, leha'avir not leha'avir al hamitzvos, but leha'avir al hadas. The Greeks didn't just make some decree that one shouldn't learn Torah, they wanted to nullify Judaism, for whatever reason.

The Physical and Material Damage

R' Yoel Asher: Yes. Very good. **Ufashtu yadam bemamonam**, and also physically, also materialistically they grabbed the Jews. They stole their money, they stole money, **uvivnoseihem**. It says there in Yosifon, "besula hugnesa techila" (a virgin was first defiled), if I remember.

And not only that, but they did more, and they also tried to break the Beis Hamikdash. **Venichnesu laheichal**, they entered into the Heichal, into the Beis Hamikdash, **ufartzu vo peratzos**, they broke things, **vetimeu hateharos**. Breaking means, they broke the walls.

Discussion: What Does "Fartzu Vo Peratzos" and "Timeu Hateharos" Mean?

R' Yitzchak: It says thirteen breaches they made. As it says, so as if the meaning is that they wanted to make out that the Beis Hamikdash is a protected place. There's a place, one can even speak about kedushah (holiness), here is the kedushah, and outside no non-Jews may enter, no impure people may enter. And they nullified it, they broke through. They didn't just break through, I'm telling you. They broke through the Beis Hamikdash.

R' Yoel Asher: Basically. Vatzer lahem leYisrael me'od mipneihem, **vetimeu hateharos**. They turned around there, they made things impure.

R' Yitzchak: I don't know if they knew about the laws of tumah and taharah (ritual impurity and purity). No, it's specifically. This came because afterwards one goes on to tell the story that...

R' Yoel Asher: They had to have pure oil. This is a preparation for the story. But vetimeu hateharos means that they knew that Jews have laws of tumah and taharah, and they made themselves impure.

R' Yitzchak: Or they turned around there and they automatically made things impure. The Tosafos famously wants to know which tumah it was on the oil. But the meaning is, whatever the technical halachic details are, when you would as the Rambam lays it down, it fits better. They wanted to destroy the Beis Hamikdash, or make an idol in the Heichal, whatever, make it so it shouldn't be the Jewish Beis Hamikdash. They know that the Jews need it to be specifically a Jew, for example, or specifically a Kohen. So they specifically trampled there.

R' Yoel Asher: They didn't have to know the laws of tumah and taharah, they knew that only Jews touch their things, so I'll go specifically touch everything.

R' Yitzchak: They knew. Tumah and taharah, we look at tumah and taharah as some kind of chok (decree), we don't understand it because we don't live with it. But in those times, even a non-Jew knew. Just like today a non-Jew goes and pours out your Shabbos candles. Which law exactly is it? I don't know, he destroys your thing.

R' Yoel Asher: He makes it impure.

R' Yitzchak: Perhaps he brought specifically some baal keri (one who had a seminal emission) to touch? I don't know.

The Great Distress

R' Yoel Asher: Vatzer lahem leYisrael me'od mipneihem. The Jews became very constricted.

R' Yitzchak: Ah.

R' Yoel Asher: The distresses we learned in the laws of Ta'anis, yes. "Kitzar hatzorer eschem" (when the enemy distresses you). It was a situation of "kitzar hatzorer eschem". **Velachatzum lachatz gadol**. The Jews were very oppressed by them. There's just a bit here, one needs to understand the Rambam's lengthy language.

Discussion: Why Does the Rambam Say "Velachatzum Lachatz Gadol"?

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam certainly means to reference the laws of Ta'anis, because the Rambam writes in the introduction, and he brought the introduction, the Rambam writes in the introduction that why al kach ani omrim, why do we make, he's speaking about the Megillah, but the same thing would be Chanukah, that to show that the Almighty was karov leshoaseinu (close to our salvation), as it says "ki mi goy gadol asher lo Elokim kerovim eilav" (for what great nation has God so close to it), which is essentially the law from the laws of Ta'anis, that when Jews have a distress, they cry out to the Almighty, and he doesn't say here, they cried out, but the Almighty has mercy.

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam describes... You're right, because it's referencing the "kitzar hatzorer eschem".

R' Yitzchak: Yes. The Rambam describes that there was a distress, and the Almighty helped us. That's the story. That's the main point. We can't just have a distress, but a great distress.

R' Yoel Asher: And I'm saying the language, the expression velachatzum lachatz gadol, did he mean something with this too? One should know.

R' Yitzchak: He wants to bring out that it's not some small... The Rambam...

R' Yoel Asher: He already told us that it was a great distress. He already told us in three-four lines. Very much so, you need this. The three-four lines. All these things he already said. Velachatzum lachatz gadol wants something more, but is it still a language?

R' Yitzchak: You remember that the Rambam's three lines is a summary of five hundred history books that one needs to write about this. In the Gemara there isn't much, but the Rambam brings here things that aren't in that Baraisa and in Madelikin. The Rambam read somewhere, I don't know exactly where, and the Rambam tries to make a story. In short,

there were more distresses, he means, to say. It was a very difficult time.

The Salvation

R' Yoel Asher: Ad shericham aleihen Elokei avoseinu, the Almighty who took care of our forefathers when they were in times of distress, when it was "kitzar hatzorer eschem", also helped them, **vehoshi'am miyadam, vegavru bnei Chashmonai hakohanim hagedolim veharugum**. About how he says it too, it wasn't in a natural way that the Bnei Chashmonai were simply stronger warriors. The Almighty made it so that the Bnei Chashmonai would defeat them.

R' Yitzchak: He says the opposite, the Almighty had mercy, with what was it expressed?

R' Yoel Asher: How was the mission, how did it come about? Through the fact that the Bnei Chashmonai overpowered them veharugum, and they killed those who...

R' Yitzchak: Grabbed the Jews.

R' Yoel Asher: Veharugum means simply those who came to the Jews, because they didn't kill all of Greece, because they killed the wicked ones who came to grab. **Vehoshi'u Yisrael miyadam**, and the Bnei Chashmonai helped the Jews from their hand. Saved them. How was the vehoshi'am miyadam? What did the Almighty do? The Almighty doesn't do a part alone, but vehoshi'u Yisrael miyadam. The Chashmonaim did it. It's very beautiful. Vehoshi'am miyadam, and afterwards he says vehoshi'u Yisrael miyadam. The Almighty had mercy, and he did it through the fact that he gave the Chashmonaim. That they should have mercy and they should have courage, and they stood up.

The Hasmonean Kingdom

R' Yoel Asher: And the Chashmonaim went further, **veha'emidu melech min hakohanim**. They established a king from them, they themselves were Kohanim, from their family.

R' Yitzchak: "Min hakohanim" means from their family, exactly to the next one, whoever.

R' Yoel Asher: No, it appears from the Rambam that their point wasn't simply to keep the kingdom in their family, but it was a matter of kehunah (priesthood), honor of the kehunah. Perhaps there's a hint to the matter that they didn't take one from the House of David.

R' Yitzchak: But from the Kohanim? It's not presented to the Rambam this way, he's telling the story.

R' Yoel Asher: That the Rambam in the laws of kings says that a king must be from the House of David. True. Perhaps there was a matter of they established a king from the Kohanim? **Vechazrah malchus leYisrael yeser al masayim shanah ad hachorban hasheni**. The salvation wasn't a salvation that lasted from Ta'anis Esther until Purim. It lasted for two hundred years, the salvation worked, that the Jews had a kingdom for another two hundred years, until the second destruction.

R' Yitzchak: On this line, as is known, we've been arguing for a hundred years already, perhaps "yeser al masayim shanah". The more Zionistic Jews with the...

Rambam, Laws of Megillah and Chanukah, Chapter 3, Law 1 (Continued) — The Hasmonean Kingdom, the Miracle of the Flask of Oil, and the Foundation of Chanukah

"Vechazrah Malchus LeYisrael Yeser Al Masayim Shanah Ad Hachorban Hasheni" — The Kingdom of the Kohanim

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, yes. Interesting, no, it appears like...

R' Yitzchak: When kohanim means from their family, exactly to the next one, whoever.

R' Yoel Asher: No, it appears from the Rambam that their point wasn't simply to keep the kingdom in their family, but it was a matter of kehunah, honor of the kehunah. Perhaps there's a hint to the matter that they didn't take one from the House of David,

R' Yitzchak: But from the Kohanim. He's telling the story.

The Distinction Between the Hasmonean Kingdom and Bar Kochba — Proof That the Hasmonean King Was a True King

R' Yoel Asher: That the Rambam in the laws of kings says that a king must be from the House of David. True. Perhaps there was some matter of they established a king from the Kohanim? **Vechazrah malchus leYisrael... yeser al masayim shanah ad hachorban hasheni.** The salvation wasn't a salvation that lasted from Ta'anis Esther until Purim, it lasted for two hundred years, the salvation worked, that the Jews had a kingdom for another two hundred years.

R' Yitzchak: On this line, as is known, we've been arguing for a hundred years already, perhaps yeser al masayim shanah. The more Zionistic Jews with the more Chareidi Jews are fighting over this line because one sees clearly that in the Gemara one doesn't see the story of chozrin malchus leYisrael, in the Gemara in Shabbos, in other places one sees it yes, but one only sees that there was a miracle with the oil which the Rambam will only bring in law 2 in the next piece. But the Rambam, when he lays down the story, strongly lays down that a part of the salvation is that the kingdom of Beis Chashmonai of the Jews returned. It appears that this is part of the miracle. The Rambam is certainly right that this is simply the plain meaning, the Rambam does here a bit more than the blessing. He gives the entire context that he collected, from where he found sources, whether history, whether in Chazal, whatever. Many people are angry about this, because they think it comes out that one must celebrate a return of kingdom to Israel, not just the Beis Hamikdash. Do you understand?

R' Yoel Asher: It's an extra thing. I think that in the laws of Ta'anis the Rambam said, he mentioned the event that happened in the year 132, one of the things was the story with Bar Kochba. There he says, vehayah lo melech gadol. There was a king, people convinced themselves that he was a messianic king. But venafal beyad goyim, it turned out that he wasn't. This appears as if the melech min hakohanim was indeed a true king, he wasn't just a ruler who didn't have the law of a king. He had the law of a king why? Because **vechazrah malchus leYisrael yeser al masayim shanah**. A king is one who makes a kingdom. The first law of a prayer leader is that he can pray well. The first law of a king is that he can make a kingdom, whether he's from the House of David, whether he's from the Kohanim. The other great king died, it turned out that he wasn't a king.

The Rambam's Position That a Kingdom Doesn't Have to Last Forever

R' Yitzchak: Okay, one hundred percent. Not only that, as you say, it has to be able to last, and the

Rambam didn't expect that a kingdom should last forever. You could ask, after two hundred years it was destroyed, so two hundred years is a tremendous success. The Rambam says about Malchus HaMashiach, in Masechta Sanhedrin in Perek Chelek, that one can believe that Malchus HaMashiach will be a thousand years or tens of thousands of years. Why? Because a good kingdom can last very long. It doesn't say forever. Even about Mashiach it doesn't say forever.

R' Yoel Asher: Because forever lasts longer than people think, forever is a very long time.

Question on the "More Than Two Hundred Years" — How Does the Rambam Calculate Two Hundred Years?

R' Yitzchak: So, the number of 200 years, by the way, is also a question, because it's not clear how the Rambam calculated the 200 years, because the actual Malchus Chashmonai lasted approximately, I remember when it was less than 80 years. It then became Beis Hordus. Hordus was a usurper according to the calculation. The Rambam officially killed all the Chashmonaim and made himself the intermediary. And they were barely Jews, and they hold that perhaps they were Edomites. The Rambam looked at it all as one continuation, that until the Churban is approximately two hundred years.

R' Yoel Asher: There's a big controversy how you place him, because he wasn't really a continuation, he usurped somehow. On one hand he was, yes, mother and father, on one side he had

R' Yitzchak: some Chashmonai blood in him.

R' Yoel Asher: a slave of the Chashmonaim, but he was from that side a bit.

R' Yitzchak: The Gemara says that there are no Chashmonaim. Anyone who says he's from Beis Chashmonai is a slave. But in short, there's about this what is complicated. He married a Miriam who was a granddaughter of the Chashmonaim. There's a whole politics about this. Anyway, okay.

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam doesn't have to hold that he was from the Chashmonaim, but the Rambam says yes, that thanks to the Chashmonaim, the kingdom remained with Judaism, with Jews. A kingdom for two hundred years. He was a king among Jews.

R' Yitzchak: He built the Beis HaMikdash.

R' Yoel Asher: He doesn't say that the kingdom remained in the family. He says in total that Jews had a kingdom in his honor.

R' Yitzchak: It's also hard to call this Malchus Yisrael, one must know...

R' Yoel Asher: Okay, true, because he himself was subjugated under the Romans.

R' Yitzchak: The Romans took it over already then.

R' Yoel Asher: But it could also be that the Romans saw what happened with the Greeks, so they reckoned a bit more with the Jews. They knew they couldn't go completely kill the Jews and do what they want. So they had to do it through such ways as appointing their own governor. Yes, okay.

"And When Israel Prevailed Over Their Enemies and Destroyed Them on the Twenty-Fifth of Kislev" — The Miracle of the Jug of Oil

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says further, **"And when Israel prevailed over their enemies and destroyed them"**, when the event happened, when there was the drama, when the Jews prevailed, when the Chashmonaim prevailed, **"and destroyed them"**, they made them lost,

R' Yitzchak: They killed them, in short,

R' Yoel Asher: They won. When was this? **"On the twenty-fifth of the month of Kislev it was"**.

R' Yitzchak: It was exactly the twenty-fifth day of Kislev.

R' Yoel Asher: "And they entered the Heichal". Yes, first the gentiles went into the Heichal, now the Jews returned to the Heichal. **"And they did not find pure oil except one jug"**. They didn't find any pure oil, only one jug.

R' Yitzchak: Because the Greeks had signs,

R' Yoel Asher: They saw that it was touched or... right,

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam doesn't say how, that's not relevant.

R' Yoel Asher: They found only **"except one jug"**. Yes, by us it says it had a seal.

R' Yitzchak: The Gemara says, the Rambam also had this,

R' Yoel Asher: But the Rambam is brief. **"And there was in it to light only one day alone"**, and in the jug there was only a bit for one day. **"And they lit from it the lights of the arrangement eight days"**. But in practice they succeeded, through a miracle or through... The Rambam doesn't say it very clearly.

Discussion: Does the Rambam Say "And a Miracle Was Done"? — The Version of "Miracle" in the Edition

R' Yitzchak: Here there's another big politics. In our version of the Rambam that we have here, in the print it says that the printer felt that something was wrong, so he wrote in here the words "and a miracle was done in it". But we go with the precise edition that we have, it doesn't say the words "a miracle was done in it", it says that they lit from it. How? The Rambam doesn't say. The word "miracle" doesn't appear at all in the edition of the Rambam, which is apparently the correct edition.

R' Yoel Asher: But one sees that something happened here, there was only for one day. In practice, let's understand that it happened.

R' Yitzchak: Yes yes, true. But the Rambam, let me say what I understand, because it's very controversial. It's known that the Rav, I don't know if one should say the Rav, Chaim Zelig Slonimsky, wrote an article about this called "The Miracle of the Jug of Oil", where he argued that in the Rambam the miracle doesn't appear, and he's right. I must say that in my humble opinion he's right, the miracle doesn't appear in the Rambam.

R' Yoel Asher: It's clear that this is the correct version, the other is only an addition from a printer.

R' Yitzchak: Rav Shilat is not biased, I go with Rav Shilat. He's accepted, he's not a maskil, he's a very honest Jew, a very serious person, and he's exceptional, everyone is... great precision. He's the authority on this topic, he recently published a precise Rambam, and he reckons with everything that exists. It's hard to say, he's certainly not the one who took this out. On the contrary, I say that one sees that the printer wrote in twice I think in these laws the word "miracle", seeing

that it seemed to someone that it's missing. It seems that it's not there.

The Rambam's Approach to Miracles — Salvation is the Main Thing, Not the Miracle

Let's say the truth, you see that the Rambam elaborated on the story, precisely because of this, because the Rambam should come, certainly this is a miracle, that is to say that Hashem helped the Jews. The Rambam believes that the Hashgacha is this, it's not something a... It was exactly a miracle, the oil burned extra, maybe it's not the main thing. On the contrary, the Rambam elaborates on the story, because he wants to show why one lights the lights. Because this was the story. This is the Rambam's reason for what he explains. He doesn't emphasize that one lights candles because there was a miracle in the candles. One lit the candles because when there was the victory, that was the story, that was the commemoration of this,

R' Yoel Asher: It was a commemoration for the miracles. I would perhaps say it like this, it says in the Mishnayos that in the Beis HaMikdash there were various miracles, but one doesn't make a Yom Tov because there was some miracle. A Yom Tov is made because there was a great salvation. Jews were in a time of trouble and they had a salvation. If there wouldn't have been the miracle, but there would have been the great salvation, there would also have been a Yom Tov. If there wouldn't have been any salvation but only a miracle, there wouldn't have been a Yom Tov. The Yom Tov is about the salvation and not about the miracle, apparently according to the Rambam's approach.

R' Yitzchak: This can be seen here. One doesn't make a Yom Tov just on something, because everyone essentially agrees on this.

R' Yoel Asher: And the Rambam also didn't say the words "many against few" and so forth. The main word is that there was a salvation. That the salvation came unexpectedly, makes it an even greater, more obvious salvation. But the Rambam doesn't want to see specifically things that are supernatural, he wants to see salvations.

R' Yitzchak: That's what he mainly wants to see. That Chanukah is a miracle through natural means. The world knows it by Purim, but Chanukah is actually even more through natural means, in a certain sense they made a war. Purim was with diplomacy, you can call it more a miracle in a certain sense even, because exactly that the crazy king went with Esther for one day. But Chanukah is literally, they fought, they won.

The Lighting of the Candles Was the Finale of the Salvation

R' Yoel Asher: And according to the Rambam it's also very clear that the lighting of the Chanukah candle, that the lighting of candles by the Chashmonaim was the finale, was the end of... On this they made that the way how one should mark the miracle should be through lights, because that was the end, when all Jews participated that we finally succeeded with the salvation, it was from the small bit of lights that were lit eight days, and everyone talked about it.

R' Yitzchak: As is known also in all the hidden things and in all the sources from Eretz Yisrael it doesn't even say the story of the candles of the miracle, only in Bavli.

R' Yoel Asher: And they lit from it the lights of the arrangement eight days. Until they crushed, why eight days? Because it lasted **"until they crushed olives and extracted pure oil"**, and they could make new.

"And Because of This the Sages of That Generation Established" — The Foundation of Chanukah

R' Yitzchak: "And because of this", says the Rambam, because of the story,

R' Yoel Asher: "And because of this" is **"the Sages of that generation established"**, because of the whole long story, yes. Because of the story that happened on the twenty-fifth, the Sages established, **"the Sages of that generation that these eight days should be"**, the eight days, which were the first eight days that were lit still with the surviving lights, with the candles that survived, the eight days were established, **"that their beginning is from the night of the twenty-fifth of Kislev"**, which then was the salvation. The twenty-fifth of Kislev was when the lights were lit.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, so says the Rambam.

Discussion: When Was the Salvation and When Were the Lights Lit?

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says... ah, yes. Again. Ah, **"And when Israel prevailed over their enemies and destroyed them on the twenty-fifth of the month of Kislev it was"**. Aha. It's clear. It could be that the Rambam says that the salvation, the first salvation was on the twenty-fifth of Kislev, and because of this afterward they entered the Beis HaMikdash. But it was the same day.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam says that they lit then. No, that's the story. On the contrary, the 25th of Kislev story is the story of the candles, that's the commemoration. Yes, certainly.

R' Yoel Asher: Then we'll do it differently

R' Yitzchak: The verse there.

Rambam Hilchos Megillah V'Chanukah, Chapter 3 – Continuation of Halacha 1: Date of 25th of Kislev, Halachos 2-4: Enactment of the Sages, Blessings, and Obligation of Women

Halacha 1 (Continuation) – Date of 25th of Kislev: War or Lighting?

R' Yitzchak: Yes, so says the Rambam.

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says... ah, yes, again. Ah, **"And when Israel prevailed over their enemies and destroyed them on the twenty-fifth of the month of Kislev it was"**. Aha. It's not so clear. It could be the Rambam says that the salvation, the first salvation was on the twenty-fifth of Kislev, and afterward they entered the Beis HaMikdash. It could be it wasn't the same day.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam says that they lit then. No, that's the story. On the contrary, the 25th of Kislev story is the story of the candles. That's certain.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, certainly. Then one should do the verse there differently.

R' Yitzchak: No, it's good. As you see.

R' Yoel Asher: No, I'm saying, **"And they entered the Heichal"** you make like a new line, because how you read here, it could be it lasted a few days later they came to the Heichal, yes? They were busy with war, they went to do stitches beforehand. But it could be, I don't mean that it was on the day that **"And they entered the Heichal"**.

R' Yitzchak: No, by another, because that's the story. Okay.

R' Yoel Asher: It fits. The Baraisa is so.

R' Yitzchak: It says in the Gemara in the Baraisa. You don't need to be so precise with my paragraph, I made it simple.

R' Yoel Asher: Okay, you're saying that the paragraph is not so significant with you, you can make it opposite. No. The twenty-fifth of Kislev also goes on the **"And they entered the Heichal"**.

R' Yitzchak: I make my paragraph like this, but you shouldn't read it like this. I didn't have so much intention.

Reading and Explanation of the Rambam's Language

R' Yoel Asher: I want to continue. **And because of this the Sages of that generation established**, that the eight days which were the first lights of the arrangement, beginning **from the night of the twenty-fifth of Kislev** should be **days of joy and Hallel**, days of rejoicing and thanking Hashem.

R' Yitzchak: And saying Hallel means it.

R' Yoel Asher: Saying Hallel. Yes, but also more like joy means rejoicing, it means being a certain state of mind, and Hallel means an action of thanking Hashem.

R' Yitzchak: Not sure. I think that perhaps the candles are the joy. Perhaps that's the usage.

R' Yoel Asher: I don't know, I think like this, because earlier it said like there was pain from their daughters and money, there was bodily pain, and there was spiritual pain, a matter of Klal Yisrael pain, a Torah pain.

R' Yitzchak: That one can't...

R' Yoel Asher: There's no joy because... Okay.

R' Yitzchak: I don't like these kinds of Torah thoughts. Whoever is happy with this. The whole distinction of soul and body and this doesn't exist. Nonsense with noodles. The Jews are happy, Hashem was saved, and Hashem was saved.

R' Yoel Asher: Saved already everything. **And they light in them the candles in the evening**.

R' Yitzchak: But I thought that if Hallel means it, perhaps joy is the... One expresses the joy with the candles. Yes. How do you know?

R' Yoel Asher: Does it say somewhere that the Rambam says by peace that candles are peace?

R' Yitzchak: That's the peace, candles of his house. One would see him. Chanukah candles are a celebration.

Continuation of Reading: Lighting the Candles

R' Yoel Asher: They made **days of joy and Hallel**. And what else does one do on these days? **And they light in them the candles in the evening at the entrances of the houses**. One lights at night, and then one sees lights. As was learned in the laws of checking for chametz, at night is a time for lights. One lights candles **at the entrances of the houses, on each and every night of the eight nights**, all eight nights. And here is also the source of Beis Yosef's question. He says, **each and every night**, don't make now any calculation...

R' Yitzchak: Which night is the night.

R' Yoel Asher: He means to say not once from the nights, but each night fresh from the lights, not one big Yom Kippur-like long candle, but each night a candle. Very good.

Halacha 2 – "And These Days Are Called Chanukah"

Says the Rambam, because **And these days are called Chanukah**. The days are called Chanukah. The Rambam doesn't say the word because they re-dedicated the Beis HaMikdash. It was only a breach, it wasn't destroyed, it wasn't thrown down. There was no service. No, it's interesting that this is also called Chanukah. When a person starts again something, it's also called beginning. When a person goes back to learning after a few days break, he calls it beginning to learn.

Discussion: The Main Destruction – Physical Destruction or Nullification of the Institution?

R' Yitzchak: It was more than that. This doesn't appear in the Rambam. The Rambam doesn't go into the topic so strongly, but it was more than that, because it was properly nullified. By the way, by the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, that it burned, that's not the main problem. They learned, on the seventeenth of Tammuz the Tamid was nullified, the many destructions of Tisha B'Av are not because it burned. A fire, it gets damaged in the Beis HaMidrash, one rebuilds, one fixes. That's not the problem. The problem is that the institution was nullified. The institution was destroyed. The same thing, before Chanukah, the institution was destroyed, they didn't allow, they made there for an idol, or whatever, there was no way, there was a proper dedication. And that the building lived is not what is the proof?

R' Yoel Asher: It says there that mainly it burned on the ninth day. Okay, whatever.

R' Yitzchak: The main word is the destruction. I tell you, burned means nothing. It burned. So? One can't rebuild. The Rambam said so in Hilchos Taanis, that then when they finally broke is also a fast day. I say even the Beis HaMikdash itself, that it burned. The world is, we take it as a symbol certainly. But the main destruction is that the Beis HaMikdash stopped functioning. One doesn't say any lessons, one doesn't say any other, in short, there's nothing there.

R' Yoel Asher: Says the Rambam further, **"And these days are called Chanukah"**.

R' Yitzchak: He means to say, where will you hear, one will hear Chanukah, this is it.

R' Yoel Asher: From here and further he goes to call it Chanukah.

R' Yitzchak: Also maybe because he already said Chanukah, if the public fast is Chanukah. No, he already used the word Chanukah. The Rambam has such a custom to define words that you don't know what they are.

R' Yoel Asher: In Hilchos Ishus he starts very strongly.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, but this always, in order, we learned earlier, I remember for example in Hilchos Kiddush HaChodesh, there is a shanah sederah, a shanah sheleimah, a shanah chaserah.

Halacha 3 – Forbidden in Eulogizing and Fasting

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says further, what is the first law of Chanukah? They are **"forbidden in eulogizing and fasting like the days of Purim"**. And here is how Chanukah and Purim have their similarity, they are forbidden in eulogizing and fasting.

R' Yitzchak: That is like the joy.

R' Yoel Asher: I mean, forbidden in eulogizing and fasting means that when the holidays in the Torah, there is much

more, there is cessation from work and the mitzvah of rejoicing on the holiday. The rabbinic holidays are... forbidden in eulogizing and fasting, that is the definition of a holiday.

R' Yitzchak: In my opinion this means that one must rejoice. It can't be that a day is forbidden in eulogizing, but aside from that it should be a weekday.

R' Yoel Asher: On the contrary, the eulogy is like even when there is a eulogy, one may not be sad. If one should be sad, one may never.

R' Yitzchak: No, not never. On that day.

R' Yoel Asher: When there is a eulogy, usually there is permission to be sad. Today even the permission doesn't work, because one must be joyful.

Halacha 4 – Lighting Candles is a Mitzvah from the Words of the Scribes Like Reading the Megillah

The Rambam says further, **"and lighting the candles on them"**, the custom that he just mentioned that one lights candles in the evening, **"is a mitzvah from the words of the scribes like reading the Megillah"**.

R' Yitzchak: What does it mean to exclude? Maybe it means it is a mitzvah? It's an official mitzvah? Not like I know, other things but just a minute.

R' Yoel Asher: Maybe he means like this, just as we said that the holiday is with the fact that it is forbidden in eulogizing and fasting. But just as holidays also have a certain mitzvah, like matzah, because the certain holiday has a mitzvah of matzah, the certain holiday has a mitzvah of esrog, the certain holiday of Purim has megillah, and the certain holiday of Chanukah has the Chanukah candle.

R' Yitzchak: I mean that maybe... maybe he wants to say that there are things, there are enactments of the Sages that are not a mitzvah from the words of the scribes. One doesn't say about tzitzis, it's more...

R' Yoel Asher: That is more a mitzvah.

R' Yitzchak: Okay. Maybe on the contrary, that it's from the words of the scribes is not from the Torah, but this is maybe simple. I don't know.

Obligation of Women: "Whoever is Obligated in Reading the Megillah is Obligated in Lighting the Chanukah Candle"

R' Yoel Asher: Okay, the next piece he also puts them together. He says, therefore **"whoever is obligated in reading the Megillah is obligated in lighting the Chanukah candle"**.

R' Yitzchak: Okay, with the same reasoning.

R' Yoel Asher: From "af hen hayu be'oso ha'nes" (they too were in that miracle). I mean that my explanation is not a bad explanation, that the prohibition of eulogizing and fasting is similar to the essence of cessation on the holiday, which is all holidays. Just as there is chametz, matzah and lulav in sukkah, there is megillah.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam doesn't say that even sukkah and lulav he completely divided. There is cessation and there is the same...

R' Yoel Asher: There is no reason, the shofar today...

R' Yitzchak: Yes, the Rambam doesn't connect the things like that. Yes.

R' Yoel Asher: Very good.

Blessings of the Chanukah Candle

The Rambam says, **whoever is obligated in reading the Megillah is obligated in lighting the Chanukah candle**. He told us clearly in Hilchos Megillah that also women are... yes, everyone is obligated. Also, one the women and women who were part of the miracle because it was through Esther. By Chanukah, what was it? Still in Yehudis or what? There is a dispute among the Rishonim about "af hen" in the miracle, it means because the women were also in danger, or because they had an extra... Rashi says this.

R' Yitzchak: It doesn't work out.

R' Yoel Asher: I don't know why Rashi says it.

R' Yitzchak: Thank you. It doesn't work out, the language "af hen" means like the Gemara says...

R' Yoel Asher: Apparently the language "af hen na'asah nes" means that they were a part of the miracle, because they were also in trouble and they were helped.

R' Yitzchak: The Gemara says "ve'lo Yisrael ninhu", the Gemara you see clearly that it means that.

The Three Blessings of the First Night

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says further, **"and the one who lights it on the first night"**. Now he's going to talk about the blessings of lighting the Chanukah candle.

R' Yitzchak: That means, this is connecting to the fact that it's a mitzvah, because for a rabbinic mitzvah one makes a blessing, as we already learned in Hilchos Berachos.

R' Yoel Asher: He begins with how many blessings? The first night there are more blessings, because there is also Shehecheyanu, he counts out the three blessings. The blessing of the mitzvah, **"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to light the candle of Chanukah"**. Ah, we have here a blessing.

R' Yitzchak: I didn't read it. "Lehadlik ner shel Chanukah". Because the Rambam is the same word, because the Rambam has a custom that "shel" is...

R' Yoel Asher: Shel Chanukah. No, shel Chanukah.

R' Yitzchak: Not shel Chanukah. Shel Chanukah. Okay. The word "shel" according to the Rambam's grammar, it joins to the next word, as it explicitly states in certain places in Tanach like that.

R' Yoel Asher: The second blessing is **"she'asah nisim la'avoseinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh"** (who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time). We had this regarding the time, just like on reading the Megillah, yes, Purim. And the third blessing is **Shehecheyanu**.

Discussion: Why Isn't There "She'asah Nisim" on Pesach?

Why didn't the Sages make a "she'asah nisim la'avoseinu" on Pesach?

R' Yitzchak: Because one already makes...

R' Yoel Asher: One says "asher ge'alanu", there is a special blessing for the miracles. I thought, maybe it has to do with the fact that it's rabbinic, therefore one says the "she'asah nisim".

R' Yitzchak: No, on Pesach there is a blessing. It's more a shorter version of the same idea that one says in other places. Yes. So this is the lighter, he makes three blessings. What about the one who doesn't light? But what does he do?

R' Yoel Asher: I think yes that on Pesach there is a special blessing, a blessing of redemption. Here, the blessing "she'asah nisim" I think is a general blessing, because the Rambam counted out "ha'ro'eh makom she'na'asah nes" (one who sees a place where a miracle was performed).

R' Yitzchak: Let's take. But this is a blessing, it's a blessing, it's like...

R' Yoel Asher: The blessing "she'asah nisim la'avoseinu" is a similar blessing to just like a person sees a place where a miracle was performed, the Rambam counted it out in Berachos.

R' Yitzchak: And true, true.

R' Yoel Asher: This was made for all generations, unlike usually which is only when a person remembers it.

R' Yitzchak: Okay, but what is the problem?

Blessings for the "Ro'eh" – The One Who Sees the Chanukah Candle

R' Yoel Asher: No problem. The Rambam says further: **"and whoever sees it"** – not only the one who lights also makes the blessing of "lehadlik", the blessing of the mitzvah, but someone who only sees it cannot make "lehadlik", but he can indeed make the other two mitzvos, because he merits "she'asah nisim", because when he sees the Chanukah candles he remembers the miracles. Shehecheyanu that he has... Shehecheyanu isn't... but Shehecheyanu isn't that he experiences the mitzvah?

R' Yitzchak: No, yes.

R' Yoel Asher: That he experiences the holiday or he experiences the mitzvah? Both. The mitzvah, no. What did he experience the holiday? No. Because if not the mitzvah he didn't do the mitzvah.

R' Yitzchak: He did yes, he saw.

R' Yoel Asher: The seeing is the mitzvah? No.

R' Yitzchak: Certainly. I mean that...

R' Yoel Asher: Not a blessing is the mitzvah.

R' Yitzchak: What comes in, one sees and lights and fulfills a mitzvah. One says Shehecheyanu, yes. One should not be exempt from making Shehecheyanu. But it's very funny what is the "veha'ro'eh". I think, the Rambam doesn't explain what we're talking about. In the commentators there is a huge discussion. What is the discussion? About whom are we talking? Someone who didn't light? What's going on here?

I mean that it's simple, and they learned - this is my chiddush - they learned for example by shofar, by megillah. There is a mitzvah of hearing and of blowing, or of saying. That means, usually one person says and the public hears, and one is also fulfilled with his blessings. Right? If one hears alone, if one hears and the other didn't make a blessing, for example, one makes a blessing, one makes the blessing oneself, "lishmo'a kol shofar" or "al mikra megillah". Yes?

Now, if one heard from the other's blessing, certainly one doesn't make it oneself, one is fulfilled. But the same thing, which is not so by Chanukah there is a novelty, that if there is no hearing, there is nothing to hear Chanukah lights, yes? You make Chanukah lights, you bring along the public of your family, and you make Chanukah lights. When they stand there, they don't do anything. They hear the blessing, but they see the Chanukah lights.

So, instead of the "shome'im" (hearers) there are the "ro'im" (seers). Now, the ro'im, just like every time, he must also be fulfilled, also a Jew, he makes a blessing. But he can't make the blessing "lehadlik". So, one only makes the two blessings, unlike because there is no hearing. Unlike for example by shofar, where the listener makes exactly the same blessing as the reader, because the mitzvah is hearing. But here, the mitzvah is lighting. But you are also fulfilled as if, part of the mitzvah, when you only see, you make the two blessings.

And certainly, if you hear from the one lighting, you are fulfilled. But it doesn't seem that it wasn't always the ceremony of lighting, one doesn't have to be fulfilled in these ways. One can come home and see what a Jew does. A woman comes home later, she sees the husband lit candles, she makes two blessings.

R' Yoel Asher: Right, as the Gemara says, it's pirsumei nisa (publicizing the miracle). It's interesting, because it gives us a bit of a different perspective, just as the Rambam said that one used to walk around with the four species all day, or one saw candles the whole time. The holiday doesn't last one minute. The whole time there is something of an atmosphere of the holiday. The atmosphere of Sukkos is to walk around with the four species, and the atmosphere of Chanukah is to see lights the whole time, to see lights.

R' Yitzchak: It's clearly so, because people mix up between the halacha, like the minimal halacha, and the reality of how one celebrates a holiday. Hadlakah oseh mitzvah (lighting makes the mitzvah). This doesn't mean that Chanukah means that one lights for a

R' Yoel Asher: minute and goes back to the Gemara. One is busy with the candles.

R' Yitzchak: One goes to the Gemara I don't know, but one goes and sees lights. That is the idea. Okay, what is the minimum measure? You know what? A half hour you were fulfilled, go further. But certainly, essentially it comes that one should light candles. For how long? I don't know. Therefore there is what to see. Simple.

Distinction Between First Night and Other Nights

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, these are the blessings of the first night when there is also a Shehecheyanu. The other nights **"the one who lights blesses two and the one who sees blesses one"**. Why? Because the ro'eh makes "she'asah nisim", because Shehecheyanu one only says on the first night.

R' Yitzchak: Simple already. Until here the laws. The main thing we would

R' Yoel Asher: see next part the laws of the Chanukah candle,

R' Yitzchak: and we're going to learn about the Hallel.

Halacha 4 – The Blessing of Hallel

R' Yoel Asher: By Purim there wasn't any Hallel. So let's see what there is. Yes, Purim the reading of the Megillah is the Hallel. Here we're going to say Hallel.

The Rambam says, **"each and every day of these eight days one completes the Hallel"**, one says complete Hallel. And before this one says the blessing, **"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to complete the Hallel"**. We say "likro es haHallel" (to read the Hallel), but the Rambam says "ligmor es

haHallel" (to complete the Hallel). Ligmor means to finish, or like Gemara that we learn?

Discussion: The Text "Ligmor" vs. "Likro"

R' Yitzchak: Ligmor means to finish. And truthfully, everyone agrees that the original text is "ligmor es haHallel". What we say something else, because we say it

R' Yoel Asher: also on days when one doesn't complete, we also say "likro", then one can't say "ligmor".

R' Yitzchak: True, but why on the days when one does complete, why shouldn't one say "ligmor"? The answer is that the Maharam of Rothenburg was very pious, and he was concerned. He said, "ligmor es haHallel", what will be if he forgot one word? He isn't completing. Therefore he said that one should always say "likro". So it states in the custom.

R' Yoel Asher: There's also a simple thing, what one does when one says Hallel is a reading. The fact that happens to us that one says the whole thing, "ligmor" is a bit of an interesting thing, because we're not seeking to finish, we're seeking to say, yes? We're seeking to say Hallel, we're not seeking to be at the end of it.

R' Yitzchak: Therefore you ask just as well. Maybe one says "ligmor"

R' Yoel Asher: because we want to exclude from days when it's only a custom, when then one doesn't say the whole thing.

R' Yitzchak: I don't know. Maybe you can indeed say that "ligmor" is nice, because one says complete Hallel. It's a part of the...

R' Yoel Asher: Like "gomrin alav es haHallel", as if the expression is like one says, I say, the whole Hallel one says upon you.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, but I don't know, it's agreed. The fact is that it's agreed that the original text is "ligmor" is a fact. And the Maharam of Rothenburg changed it.

R' Yoel Asher: Does it only state Ashkenaz says "likro"? The Sephardim indeed say "ligmor"?

R' Yitzchak: Yes, exactly. I need to look into the concern, I don't understand it.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, the language "likro" is a very nice language. And it's also, maybe he also wanted that all holidays should have the same blessing, it shouldn't make a distinction, making different blessings, it will bring errors, which was.

R' Yitzchak: The Rosh,

R' Yoel Asher: and not only that, but imagine how long it would have been. If one said "ligmor" on a day when it's only "likro". Listen,

R' Yitzchak: listen, the holy Rosh however, the Rosh was a student of Maharam, but he says like us, that it's not true, one is certainly fulfilled like this, and not only that. One says that "ligmor" doesn't mean at all to finish,

R' Yoel Asher: "ligmor" means to say. Like "gemara gemor", saying Gemara, it's a concept of saying.

R' Yitzchak: "Gomer" is "omer", we will see. Therefore he's actually arguing. On his teacher? Rosh was very independent, he could say differently from his teacher. In those times it wasn't yet the thing that if the Tzanzer Rebbe said a mistake about "makom yesh berosho lehani'ach tefillin", all Tzanzer chassidim must convince themselves that the Tzanzer Rebbe was still right. Then it was still a normal person, and the student said that the teacher isn't right, it's a stringency only. In short, it's a dispute of authors sometimes, everyone should do what he wants, what is pleasant to him.

R' Yoel Asher: Okay, the Rambam says further.

R' Yitzchak: No, I understand that the person, he forgot to say a word, he can't be engaged.

R' Yoel Asher: But I only know that the Maharam of Rothenburg justified the custom. I don't know if he introduced that one should say. He introduced?

R' Yitzchak: No. I'm telling you that's how it states.

R' Yoel Asher: I said that he saw that he is a teacher and he explains it with this reason.

R' Yitzchak: No, no, no. Maharam of Rothenburg... he always used to say "likro". Why? Because of this concern. It states you're justifying, you're seeking... he can't the word is more,

R' Yoel Asher: because we learned that the Hallel there is a way how one says it that the prayer leader says most,

R' Yitzchak: and the public only sings along.

R' Yoel Asher: He held that it's lacking in the "ligmor", because "ligmor" means you say the whole thing. And if most only the prayer leader says, you say... Okay, although...

R' Yitzchak: He doesn't say all these things, he says something else. He says that if he forgot one letter, he didn't want to. And he doesn't want to say a lie. He had tremendous fear of the punishment for saying a lie. Today people aren't careful about this, they say "vidui", I don't know what they say, various lies that people say during davening, but the Maharam of Rothenburg was tremendously careful not to say a lie. He changed a nusach (liturgical text), there's no mesorah (tradition) for his... I mean, there's "likro" that one says, days when one doesn't finish, seemingly one should say "likro". Even this the Rosh doesn't agree with, the Rosh argues that one can then also say a lie. But the Maharam of Rothenburg changed the nusach, because he felt that he couldn't say it truthfully. This is what one must learn.

R' Yoel Asher: If one sees a piece of a siddur where it says... I don't know, one needs to check if there are other sources. He doesn't say whether it was the Maharam's own custom, or whether it was such a nusach.

R' Yitzchak: Tzaddik, all others... You don't see clearly, all other people say differently. The Maharam was before the Maharam was before the Maharam. He brings the mesorah. So it's clear that he did this. I don't understand,

R' Yoel Asher: Why do you want to make it different?

"Bein Yachid Bein Tzibbur" (Whether Individual or Community)

So, the Rambam says further, who says the blessing? **"Bein yachid bein tzibbur"** (whether individual or community). Even an individual says Hallel alone.

R' Yitzchak: Even though essentially Hallel comes with a community,

R' Yoel Asher: If someone says it alone, he can also say "ligmor et haHallel" (to complete the Hallel).

R' Yitzchak: A blessing means it doesn't.

Blessing on Rabbinic Commandments: "Vetzivanu" (And Commanded Us)

R' Yoel Asher: The blessing, makes up the blessing, yes. The Rambam says further. The Rambam has a question here: if reading the Hallel is a mitzvah, as he said earlier that the Sages instituted joy and Hallel, then it's a mitzvah. Why shouldn't there be

R' Yitzchak: A birkat hamitzvah (blessing over the commandment) on it?

R' Yoel Asher: Just as there is a blessing "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu" (who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us), why isn't there a birkat hamitzvah?

R' Yitzchak: He asks a question. He asks a question.

R' Yoel Asher: Why does one make... Excuse me, excuse me. The Rambam is only a mitzvah from the words of the Sages. If so, how do we say "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu ligmor et haHallel"?

The Rambam says, **"Af shekri'at haHallel mitzvah midivrei sofrim"** (even though reading Hallel is a commandment from the words of the Sages). Why didn't he ask the same question earlier about lighting Chanukah candles?

R' Yitzchak: Because the Gemara talks about that.

R' Yoel Asher: Actually, I don't know why?

R' Yitzchak: No, the Gemara talks about Chanukah candles. I don't know why the Rambam remembered here to talk about it.

R' Yoel Asher: And he already said also, in Hilchot Berachot he also said something, we talked about blessings over mitzvot. Let's see.

The Rambam says, even though it's only a mitzvah from the words of the Sages, if so one could think a question, how does one say "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu"? And sanctified, that is, the Torah already said the mitzvot. He says, but yes, one says "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu", **"Kederech shemevarech al hamegillah ve'al ha'eiruv"** (just as one blesses on the Megillah and on the eruv), just as one says on Megillah, eruv, and on Chanukah candles. Interesting that he forgets that he just said a line earlier "lehadlik ner Chanukah".

The Rambam says, **"Shekol vadai shel divreihem mevarkhim alav"** (for everything that is certainly from their words, one blesses on it). Every thing that is a definite rabbinic mitzvah... vadai doesn't mean to exclude a rabbinic doubt.

R' Yitzchak: No, that the Sages said that one should do it. Not that the Sages said that it's a doubt. And with a takanah (enactment), there are doubts where one doesn't need to be stringent, and there are doubts

R' Yoel Asher: Where the Sages enacted that one must be stringent about them, like demai. This is the practical difference, it says in the Gemara, that on demai one doesn't make a blessing, even though the Rabbis enacted it.

"Aval davar shehu midivreihem ve'ikar asiyatam lo mipnei hasafek" (but something that is from their words and the essence of doing it is because of doubt), but a thing that is rabbinic, and the reason why the Rabbis enacted it is because they were concerned, it's more a matter of a fence, of a doubt, **"kegon ma'aser demai"** (like the tithe of demai), which from Torah law one doesn't need to tithe, but the Sages required tithing, then **"ein mevarkhim alav"** (one doesn't bless on it). But when it's a definite rabbinic law, when the Rabbis made a new mitzvah, then one makes the blessing "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu".

The Rambam asks further, on what I'm saying now that when a mitzvah is from doubt there's no blessing, if so it's difficult on me myself, **"velama mevarkhim al yom tov sheni?"** (and why do we bless on the second day of Yom Tov?) The Rambam explained in Hilchot Kiddush HaChodesh that the second day of Yom Tov is a matter of doubt, **"vehem lo tikenuhu ela mipnei hasafek"** (and they only enacted it because of doubt). The Rambam says, here they made it specially so **"kedei shelo yezalzelu bo"** (so that they shouldn't treat it lightly), so that one shouldn't treat the second day of Yom Tov lightly.

R' Yitzchak: Why when one doesn't make a blessing on demai isn't one treating it lightly? Because Yom Tov is different from demai. With demai everyone knows that rabbinically one must tithe demai. Yom Tov, the simple understanding is, is there a Yom Tov or isn't there a Yom Tov?

R' Yoel Asher: The Yom Tov is a real thing.

R' Yitzchak: It's not a Yom Tov? Ah, you know what, it is Yom Tov. The Rabbis permitted, you can't say they obligated, they permitted the prohibition of Torah-level work, I don't know exactly. This is also the reason. You can say that there's like an extra enactment on Yom Tov to make a blessing "mipnei shelo yezalzelu beyom tov sheni" (because they shouldn't treat the second day of Yom Tov lightly). It's another "vetzivanu", another level.

The Rambam's Distinction Between "Lashon HaBerachah" (Language of the Blessing) (Hilchot Berachot) and "Ta'am HaTakanah" (Reason for the Enactment) (Here)

R' Yoel Asher: Do you understand? It's interesting, because I think in Hilchot Berachot he didn't talk there about how the Sages established a blessing, but there he focused on the language, how can we say "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu"? There he explained "asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu" to follow the Sages. There he explained the language, how the language of the blessing fits. Here he's not talking about the language of the blessing, here he's talking about why the Rabbis actually enacted such a blessing.

R' Yitzchak: True, true, a bit different. This was Hilchot Berachot chapter 11. The people noticed, I see why the Rambam... You're right that it says, when you say that the Rambam doesn't answer here about the nusach,

R' Yoel Asher: He's not talking here about the nusach.

The Ra'avad's Dispute — Torah-Level Doubt With or Without a Blessing

R' Yitzchak: There's the Ra'avad, here there's a dispute. The Ra'avad argues that it's a dispute between Abaye and Rava in the Gemara, because the Rambam learns as if... One must understand a basic thing. There's a law that every Torah-level doubt one must do, and does one do it with a blessing or without a blessing? According to the Rambam it's implied that one does it without a blessing. Because on the blessing, as the Rambam explains if I remember in other places, because safek berachot lehakel (doubtful blessings are lenient), means that blessings are rabbinic, so on the Torah-level doubt you must do it because safek de'oraita lechumra (Torah-level doubt is

stringent), on the doubtful blessing you don't need to do it because it's a doubt.

The holy Ra'avad disagrees. The Ra'avad says that certainly when one does a Torah-level doubt, like tithing, essentially if it were a true doubt, one would have to make a blessing, because you're doing a Torah-level mitzvah, and on a Torah-level mitzvah comes a blessing, you must do it with doubt.

Why on demai doesn't one make a blessing? The Gemara says in another piece in the Gemara that demai is different, demai isn't even a doubt. That is, one must ask the question, if demai is a real doubt, why doesn't one need an enactment? It's a Torah-level doubt. The answer is, most am ha'aretz (unlearned people) tithe, only so the Rav said. Only the Sages enacted that one should additionally tithe demai. Therefore, this is rabbinic because of doubt. It's already two levels: a doubt, either with rabbinic law, but it's not a Torah-level doubt. Either with rabbinic law that is enacted, because of some concern. Such things we don't make a blessing on.

But certainly, when there's another doubt, either, the Rav says even, either you have a doubt about rabbinic law, that you had a doubt whether you lit Chanukah candles, you will make a blessing, and either if you do a Torah-level mitzvah from doubt, you certainly must make a blessing. And according to this the question already arises on the second day of Yom Tov, because the second day of Yom Tov is a doubt.

"Shelo Yezalzelu" (So They Won't Treat It Lightly) — Especially When There's No Longer a Doubt

R' Yoel Asher: But no, I think the matter of shelo yezalzelu bo yom tov sheni means to say, what happens then when it's also no longer a doubt? Because we already sanctify according to the calendar, when there's no longer a doubt, what then does one do it as minhag avoteinu beyadenu (the custom of our fathers in our hands). There one needs a greater shelo yezalzelu bo. I'm saying, when someone does something because it's a rabbinic doubt, he knows, he does it because it's a rabbinic doubt, he won't treat it lightly. But then when... it's not even a rabbinic doubt, and one must maintain it so because the Sages said so... it's already a custom that it's one and one should maintain it, then it needs an extra strengthening that a blessing was established.

R' Yitzchak: First of all, the Rambam doesn't say it. The Rambam asks a question according to the principles that he said that one doesn't make on a doubt. Secondly, according to what you're saying, it's the opposite. We learned in this Rambam several times after Yom Tov, that today when it's a custom, it's more serious, not more lenient. Because now certainly one can make a blessing. It's not a doubt at all. You're not making it because of doubt, you're just making an enactment with rabbinic law, you make it on holidays. Why? Whatever you must.

R' Yoel Asher: And meanwhile, they still saw rabbinic mitzvot one makes,

R' Yitzchak: But on a custom one should also make a blessing. If the Rabbis explicitly call the second day of Yom Tov divrei sofrim (words of the Sages), call it an enactment. He doesn't say that

R' Yoel Asher: It remains only a custom.

The Nature of the Second Day of Yom Tov — It Must Be a Real Yom Tov

R' Yitzchak: We remember that there are other things, for example regarding the second day of Yom Tov lo yezalzelu bo one doesn't take a lulav. Yes, the Rambam said that. There are certain things that we don't do on the second day of Yom Tov also because of the reasoning of lo yezalzelu, that one doesn't take a lulav on Shemini Atzeret. Why? Because one will think that it will be a zilzul (degradation), I remember I said the Rambam, it's a language.

So, the second day of Yom Tov is some other sort of enactment. It must be a Yom Tov. It can't be that the Rabbis make a... Do you understand what I'm saying? There's no such thing as Yom Tov from doubt. Someone will ask a Litvak that one only needs to rejoice on the side, understand? He goes to eat doubtful meat. It doesn't go like that. It must be a real Yom Tov. This is the secret of the second day of Yom Tov. Therefore one already makes a blessing also. One even makes Shehecheyanu, yes? A new Yom Tov.

Halacha 3 (End) — Hallel on Chanukah, and Transition to Laws of Hallel in General

R' Yoel Asher: A new thing. Entered from Chanukah to Hallel.

R' Yitzchak: Very good. That is, not from the mitzvah of saying, reading... On Chanukah there is the mitzvah of Hallel. That is, on Purim it's not there. On Chanukah there is the mitzvah of Hallel, he talks about Hallel. And when one already talks about Hallel, he goes into more

Why the Laws of Hallel Are Here in the Laws of Chanukah

R' Yoel Asher: General mitzvah of Hallel that exists on other holidays. Let's learn the language, I'll tell you what I think why it's here. The Rambam says, **"Velo Hallel shel Chanukah bilvad hu shedivrei sofrim"** (and not only the Hallel of Chanukah is from the words of the Sages), not only Hallel that one says on Chanukah is a rabbinic mitzvah, **"ela kri'at haHallel le'olam midivrei sofrim bechol hayamim shegomrin bahen et haHallel"** (but reading Hallel is always from the words of the Sages on all the days when one completes the Hallel). All days when one completes Hallel is a rabbinic mitzvah. I think perhaps, the days when one doesn't complete the whole it's not a rabbinic mitzvah, it's something another custom. Right? He says, always when one says Hallel is an extra rabbinic mitzvah.

R' Yitzchak: Right. I think what he means to say is either lechiyuv (as an obligation), that there's a mitzvah. We already learned Hilchot Yom Tov, we know also in Hilchot Tefillah, and they have never yet heard of the mitzvah of us saying Hallel.

R' Yoel Asher: Perhaps the Rambam mentioned Hallel in Hilchot

R' Yitzchak: Tefillah somewhere in the order of prayer? I don't remember.

R' Yoel Asher: In any case, not the mitzvah. And secondly, the Rambam means negatively, that you could have thought that Chanukah is the whole holiday rabbinic, therefore Hallel is also rabbinic. But Pesach is part of Torah law, the mitzvah is from Torah law, and the Behag said that Hallel is from Torah law, famously. The Rambam says, no, even then it's rabbinic.

And I think that this is the simple explanation why it's here. We learned that the Rambam organized his Sefer Zemanim according to Torah law, rabbinic law. Here are the rabbinic

mitzvot. So even the rabbinic mitzvah of all the holidays the Rambam placed here. That is,

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam could have placed it in Hilchot Tefillah, the Rambam could have placed it in Hilchot Shevitat Yom Tov,

Hallel Is a Separate Enactment, Not Part of Prayer or Yom Tov

R' Yoel Asher: But it's not from Torah law. But the Rambam kept it with here, because it's not simple that part of Hilchot Tefillah is that the Sages said that certain days one should say Hallel, or part of Yom Tov is that Yom Tov comes with Hallel. Rather they enacted Hallel, and they established it on certain days. This was an enactment called Hallel.

No, I'm also saying that it's not that the Sages didn't... not when they learned Hilchot Yom Tov did they make Hallel, or when they made Hilchot Tefillah did they make Hallel. They made Hallel when they made Hallel. I don't want to say in time, but...

R' Yitzchak: I don't understand this thing, I don't know. It's an extra mitzvah,

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says in Hallel. And they wanted when one should do it on holidays and on the rabbinic holidays, except when one doesn't say it, Rosh Hashanah, Chanukah, when one doesn't say it, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, when one should on holidays and not. When are the days that the Sages enacted to say Hallel?

The Connection Between Chanukah and Hallel — Perhaps the Source of Hallel

R' Yitzchak: That Hilchot Hallel is in Chanukah, is not the Rambam's innovation, and the chapter is already called Hilchot Hallel and Bameh Madlikin. I think because the Gemara has perhaps a few details, I don't remember why, but the chapter already...

R' Yoel Asher: Also the language "kavu'in beHallel vehoda'ah" (they established with Hallel and thanksgiving) looks like Hallel

R' Yitzchak: Has something special in Chanukah. More homiletically.

R' Yoel Asher: It could be that the Sages enacted at the miracle of Chanukah, and they saw how beautiful it is, and so forth. They said, let's make it for all holidays. As if the source of it is on Chanukah.

R' Yitzchak: And I have a complete proof for this, that whoever says the second half, not the first, but the first half actually talks about the Exodus from Egypt. But afterwards, Hodu talks about the miracle of Chanukah. Do you have it there? "Kol goyim sevavuni beshem Hashem ki amilam" (All nations surrounded me, in the name of God I cut them down). One isn't talking about the splitting of the Sea of Reeds, but the Almighty took out the Exodus from Egypt. The second half talks about the Jews, only one had a time of war with the nations. Literally a verse. Afterwards one tells the story of Chanukah, one came to the Beit HaMikdash, yes? Avot ve'amudah, yes?

R' Yoel Asher: "Even ma'asu habonim haytah lerosh pinah" (The stone the builders rejected became the cornerstone).

R' Yitzchak: Yes, I think it's literally about

R' Yoel Asher: The story of Chanukah. Fine.

Halacha 6 — Which Days Does One Say Hallel

R' Yitzchak: Yes, and when must one say Hallel?

R' Yoel Asher: **"Ushemonah asar yom bashanah"** (and eighteen days in the year), eighteen days in the year there are which **"mitzvah ligmor bahen et haHallel. Ve'eilu hen shemonat yemei hechag"** (it's a mitzvah to complete the Hallel on them. And these are the eight days of the festival), Sukkot, **"ushemonat yemei Chanukah"** (and the eight days of Chanukah), here you also have the connection of Chanukah and Sukkot. **"Verishon shel Pesach"** (and the first of Pesach), the first day of Pesach, or the first two days for us who have two days,

R' Yitzchak: **"Veyom Atzeret"** (and the day of Atzeret/Shavuot).

When One Doesn't Say Hallel — Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Why No Hallel on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Purim — The Gemara's Foundation and the Rambam's Approach

R' Yoel Asher: But when not? Which yamim tovim not? So it's a bit missing here the yamim tovim of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur. The first two. **"But Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur have no Hallel,"** why? **"Because they are days of teshuva, yirah, and fear."** They're days of teshuva, yirah and fear. Yirah and fear we mean that more on Yom Kippur, teshuva more on Rosh Hashanah. No, all three both days have the same. **"Not days of excessive joy,"** some simcha there is, there is indeed a mitzvah of simcha on Rosh Hashanah, but not excessive simcha. And Hallel is excessive simcha.

R' Yitzchak: If one would say Hallel on Rosh Hashanah, the world would feel, woe...

Hallel — Is It About Miracles or About Joy?

R' Yoel Asher: Ah, interesting. The Rambam doesn't say the simple explanation that Hallel... it could have been asked differently, one could say that Hallel is on miracles that happened, therefore it's on the yamim tovim that had a miracle. But Shavuot, I don't know if Shavuot is a miracle. That the Almighty gave us the Torah is a miracle? But it's a day of simcha that we rejoice over a certain thing that happened.

R' Yitzchak: It's a good question. That would have been a simple answer. But it seems that the Gemara already sees and already understands, for example, you're right,

R' Yoel Asher: But Shavuot is perhaps the question. Perhaps it wouldn't have been a good answer, because you can also say that... for example on Yom Kippur, it's a very joyous day, the Almighty forgives us. That it has simcha in it, therefore one should say Hallel is not the right thing, it seems the Rambam. The Rambam held it has to do with excessive simcha.

The Gemara's Foundation — Hallel Comes with Yom Tov, Not with Miracle

R' Yitzchak: The answer says that Hallel comes as a thanksgiving for the miracle, that it says in Hallel more or less explicitly.

R' Yoel Asher: That we should receive the Torah is a miracle?

R' Yitzchak: No, no. I'm saying that we see in the Gemara in practice that the question is built on this. This is indeed a Gemara, right? Let's see, the Magen Mishneh brings the source. But Rosh Hashanah, the Gemara says, says because it's

called a moed, it's called regarding Rosh Chodesh, but also there is, not but on Rosh Chodesh, but on Rosh Hashanah, he doesn't bring the source. I remember, this is a Gemara, and the question of the Gemara is, because the Gemara assumed that when it's a yom tov one must say Hallel, not like the logical reasoning that I would have said, that when there's a miracle one says Hallel, but when it's a yom tov. So it seems.

R' Yoel Asher: The Gemara says a very interesting aggadic way, "the ministering angels sought to say Hallel," no? Isn't that what the Gemara says?

R' Yitzchak: In Arachin 10b.

R' Yoel Asher: And to that He answers as it were, "Is it possible when the books of the dead and books of the living," yes? Or am I confusing it with the seventh day of Pesach at the splitting of the sea.

R' Yitzchak: "The ministering angels sought to say Hallel."

R' Yoel Asher: Both had the "My handiwork is drowning in the sea."

R' Yitzchak: Exactly. The Gemara we see that because "today is holy regarding the performance of work," yes, the Gemara also asked earlier, "Is it possible when the King sits on the throne of judgment, and the books of the living and books of the dead are open before Him." By the way, here is a very beautiful thing also to see what the Rambam changed from what's written in the Gemara. As you say, the Gemara tells a story, yes.

The Aggadah of Rosh Hashanah: "The Ministering Angels Sought"

R' Yoel Asher: Tell the story. It's very interesting, because it's a very similar story here about Hallel at the splitting of the sea. "The ministering angels sought," "The ministering angels said before the Holy One Blessed be He, Master of the Universe, why don't Israel say song before You on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?" And we see here that song means Hallel. "He said to them, is it possible when the King sits on the throne of judgment, and the books of the living and books of the dead are open before Him, and the Almighty judges the Jews, and Israel says song?"

R' Yitzchak: Very interesting.

Why Would One Think Hallel on Rosh Hashanah? — R' Yitzchak's Explanation

The Gemara is built on the assumption that which day that's called a moed one says Hallel. I think so, I'll tell you an explanation, it's difficult, it makes it really difficult. Why does Hallel come in on Rosh Hashanah? It's indeed a yom tov, let it be that it's a yom tov. I mean the answer is like this, Rosh Hashanah is indeed a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, right? What is Rosh Hashanah a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt?

R' Yoel Asher: All yamim tovim are Pesach.

R' Yitzchak: Shavuot, and Sukkot, I understand, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur I don't understand. The answer is, that the fact that Jews can come to the Beit HaMikdash and have the yamim tovim, always it's a remembrance that we are free.

R' Yoel Asher: We have our own Beit HaMikdash, we are free people.

R' Yitzchak: Right? That means, when Jews have a good day, they remember, praise the Almighty, it's all connected with the exodus from Egypt. Therefore, that would be the Gemara's initial assumption, and one would ask, one must say Hallel on Rosh Hashanah, doesn't mean one would say Hallel about the matter of Rosh Hashanah. Hallel one always says about when Israel went out from Egypt, about the miracles that the Almighty did throughout all generations. When does one say it? When it's a good day, and one goes to the Beit HaMikdash, and then is the time of celebration, one says it. The Gemara says, no, Rosh Hashanah is not such a day.

R' Yoel Asher: I mean, it's very good. Look, the greater proof is the days that we recognize by Hallel. Also there's no music these days. The Gemara says, the days when there's Hallel there's also music in the Beit HaMikdash. And to that comes the books of the living, books of the dead, King before Him. It's not such a joyous day.

The Rambam's Approach: Turning from Heaven to Earth

R' Yitzchak: And you see very beautifully that the Rambam, just as he did with the shofar and in very many other places, we learned in Taanit, he turned, turned, I don't know how he says it, he turned over what's written in the Gemara in heaven he placed here on earth. And the Gemara says that the angels ask a question, and the Almighty answers because the books of the dead are open, that means what the Almighty does, the books of the dead are open before Him. The Rambam says, okay, and above what? Because for us it's days of teshuva, yirah and fear. The Rambam changed from...

R' Yoel Asher: But that the King sits in judgment is from the perspective of the world of creation, how we see it.

R' Yitzchak: No, certainly the Rambam understood it that way. I'm saying, but you see clearly that the Rambam translated the text. As is known, in Perush HaMishnah he says a language that it's days of blessing from Him to Him.

R' Yoel Asher: The language of Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol, Keter Malchut that we say at night. The Rambam also says this language? There is this language in the Ramban, in Chovot HaLevavot, and in Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol's.

R' Yitzchak: I think it's an earlier language, already Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol's. Perhaps you know where they took it from. Yes. The Rambam in Perush HaMishnah brings this language here in Arachin, unfortunately I don't remember. Ah... where does he bring it?

Comparison Between Both "The Ministering Angels Sought" Aggadot

R' Yoel Asher: It's very interesting, because the Gemara that the ministering angels sought to say song, on the seventh day of Pesach there's the Gemara the ministering angels sought to say song, therefore one says only the first day of Pesach, because perhaps My handiwork is drowning in the sea. It's also a Gemara, yes?

R' Yitzchak: No, no, in general it's a Midrash that the Beit Yosef brings.

R' Yoel Asher: But it's very similar the language of the Gemara, because there too we're talking about song. Both call it song, the ministering angels sought to say song. And here too, the ministering angels ask why don't Jews say song. Very interesting, and in both the answer is very similar, that here there's a certain fear.

The Other Answer in the Gemara: They Are Different in Their Offerings

R' Yitzchak: In the Gemara there's another answer. In the Gemara it says that the eight days of the festival one says extra

Hallel, because they are different in their offerings, which is not so with Pesach which is the same thing, it's only a continuation of what one says only each day. Essentially.

R' Yoel Asher: It comes... why shouldn't one say it every day?

R' Yitzchak: One doesn't say, one doesn't even say... because each yom tov comes one Hallel. That there are eight Hallels on Sukkot, and the Gemara also says about Chanukah there was a miracle each and every day, because it was indeed a continuation, each day he again lit the menorah. So, as if essentially Hallel comes only once.

The Role of Angels in Song

R' Yoel Asher: It's interesting, one must think what's the connection between the angels, that the angels specifically wait for the song, and both times the answer is somewhat similar.

R' Yitzchak: Angels are the ones who say song, it's simple.

R' Yoel Asher: No? Ah, usually angels say song.

R' Yitzchak: Today it's the job of the Jews to say song.

R' Yoel Asher: They say in all the yotzrot, the angels wait for the Jews to say song, they say with us.

R' Yitzchak: They say with them, whatever. Angels are very important. Whoever doesn't believe that angels should come to shul on Rosh Hashanah, because we talk basically only about angels. Where does he say no.

R' Yoel Asher: Not from the angels, but from the Jews? But when not the angels don't have any piyut.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, okay, further. No, a modern person, he doesn't believe at all, he doesn't live with these things. One tells him, ah, the Almighty doesn't want the angels. Okay, what do I care? I also don't want any angels. One must indeed appreciate it.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, well, it's very far from our comprehension. One has placed it.

R' Yitzchak: So on the side. Yes, yes. Well, go learn Kabbalah then. Okay.

Purim: The Reading of the Megillah Is the Hallel

R' Yoel Asher: Already, further the Rambam says so. We're not talking about any angels, anything. It's talking about Yom Kippur. **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur there's no Hallel. Because they are days of teshuva, yirah and fear, not days of excessive joy. And they didn't institute Hallel on Purim.** Why Purim? The Rambam says, **because the reading of the Megillah is the Hallel**, the reading of the Megillah is itself a Hallel and tells the miracles.

R' Yitzchak: What happened at length.

R' Yoel Asher: It means that Chanukah, I mean the simple explanation here is that Chanukah doesn't tell us the miracle, but we do an act of lights. Which is not so with Purim which tells us. The matter of Hallel is to say the miracles and thank for the miracles orally with speech. On Purim we have the speech through telling the miracle at length. Although it's a different kind of thing than Hallel. Because Hallel speaks all praises of the Holy One Blessed be He, which is not so in the Megillah where the Almighty's name isn't mentioned once, but it tells us the miracle that happened.

R' Yitzchak: It's not clear, but it seems that the distinctions are presumably true distinctions, presumably a huge reason why Purim has a Megillah and not Hallel. But in general, it's reflected, it's the same idea.

R' Yoel Asher: It's publicizing the miracle.

Eighteen Days of Hallel, or Twenty-One

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says further.

R' Yitzchak: We learned that eighteen days a year one says Hallel.

R' Yoel Asher: What is it? The Rambam says, he explains more, he says, it's not so simple that only eighteen days, because **places that observe two days of yom tov**, the Rambam said, one makes a blessing both days, so yes **they complete the Hallel on twenty-one days**. Then there are twenty-one days. Ah. Why? It comes to nine days of the festival, because it adds another doubtful day of the last days of Shemini Atzeret. Eight days of Chanukah, just as Chanukah can.

R' Yitzchak: Not be any doubt about it, you know why?

R' Yoel Asher: Two days of Pesach, it adds another day of Pesach. Why?

R' Yitzchak: I don't know.

R' Yoel Asher: Because it already happened afterward, we still had the Temple with sighting then. Yes, certainly. Yes, seemingly it was still in those times. Perhaps not, because the Beit HaMikdash wasn't in place. The Beit HaMikdash was still destroyed. That month, it could be that month of Kislev they didn't sanctify by sighting. Okay, everything comes from the Torah...

R' Yitzchak: In short, the Rabbis say perhaps from hours.

R' Yoel Asher: I don't know. But perhaps you have here an answer to the Beit Yosef's question.

R' Yitzchak: In short, it adds three days, two days of Shavuot.

R' Yoel Asher: It adds another day of Pesach, and another day of Chanukah, Sukkot, and another day...

R' Yitzchak: Right, that's it. In short.

R' Yoel Asher: The whole difference of...

R' Yitzchak: Three more days. Three more days. Three more days, three more days. Yamim tovim adds more, adds six days. Right, from second days.

R' Yoel Asher: There's Chol HaMoed, there's a blessing the remaining days of Pesach, but yes completing Hallel adds another three days.

Hallel on Rosh Chodesh: Custom, Not Mitzvah

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam says further.

R' Yoel Asher: This is to say Hallel from the Torah, rabbinically saying Hallel.

The Rambam's Approach: Three Levels of Hallel

R' Yitzchak: But on Rosh Chodesh it's not completing Hallel but reading Hallel, one says Hallel, it's a custom, not a mitzvah. The Rambam doesn't say the custom, he doesn't say the whole thing. He already says yes, he already says yes with skipping. Rosh Chodesh, the Rambam goes a whole time as if, you think that when one says Hallel it's from the Torah? First of all, even all yamim tovim it's only rabbinical. And Rosh Chodesh is not even rabbinical, it's only a custom. And this custom.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes? Yes, it's only in public. That means, unlike before when he said that even when an individual says it he also makes the blessing.

R' Yitzchak: Hallel of Rosh Chodesh there's no custom for an individual to say. An individual doesn't need to say Hallel.

R' Yoel Asher: Therefore they read it with skipping.

R' Yitzchak: Because it's not a mitzvah, one makes an abbreviation.

R' Yoel Asher: One skips. **And they don't make a blessing on it**, one doesn't make a blessing, **because one doesn't make a blessing on a custom**.

R' Yitzchak: According to this it fits into my knowledge.

R' Yoel Asher: The Maharam of Rothenburg's wife also didn't bother him, because he could have said that one can't say to complete. Okay. The Rambam says further, **and an individual should not read it at all**. An individual shouldn't say Hallel on Rosh Chodesh at all, unlike all the yamim tovim which is also a mitzvah for an individual.

Practical Difference

It's very good to know, for example women or people who don't pray in shul, that one should know that for Hallel on Rosh Chodesh one doesn't need to say Hallel, and Chol HaMoed Sukkot, whatever, one does need to say Hallel.

Our Custom: Different from the Rambam

R' Yitzchak: We, I mean that one must look in the Shulchan Aruch, we conduct ourselves I think that one does say Hallel as an individual. First of all, we conduct ourselves to make a blessing on Hallel, and not like the Rambam, because we hold like.

R' Yoel Asher: Tosafot in general.

R' Yitzchak: That one makes a blessing also on a custom. The Rambam holds that on a custom one doesn't make a blessing, but we hold that one does. Second, regarding an individual for Rosh Chodesh there's a dispute between the Mechaber and Rama. The Mechaber indeed brings the opinion of the Rambam that one doesn't make a blessing as an individual, or he doesn't read at all the individual. The Rama says that.

R' Yoel Asher: There are those who say that an individual does say.

R' Yitzchak: Therefore, this makes us have a bit of a congregation, like three people, like Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov one says with two others. This also appears in the Rama. But I'm saying that he's talking regarding the blessing, it's still brought in the Shulchan Aruch a doubt whether one says Hallel as an individual, therefore whether an individual can make a blessing. Even for many the Rambam says one doesn't make a blessing, but this we certainly don't follow.

Laws of Chanukah, Chapter 3 - Continuation of Laws of Hallel

Hallel as an Individual on Rosh Chodesh - Blessing as an Individual

R' Yitzchak: But as an individual one must know that even the Rama says that it's a doubt whether one makes a blessing, and it's not clear how the law is. I remember that there were people who don't say a blessing. Therefore, that means Rosh Chodesh one must go to shul. If one wants to say Hallel with a blessing and one wants to fulfill the opinion, one must go to shul.

R' Yoel Asher: Because to make alone a—

R' Yitzchak: A blessing is a davar hamefukpak (doubtful matter). The Shulchan Aruch says that even only the chazzan should say the blessing and one should be yotzei, because this is called a bracha biyachid. If you go to shul and you say a blessing alone, you're making a bracha biyachid. The congregation means that one is yotzei.

R' Yoel Asher: Interesting. That's how the Shulchan Aruch HaRav learns.

R' Yitzchak: Yes? Yes.

R' Yoel Asher: They bring. By them, not everyone says Rosh Chodesh individually, rather the baal tefillah says the blessing.

R' Yitzchak: I also remember that in Chabad, if one davens alone, one doesn't say any blessing, one says Hallel without a blessing.

R' Yoel Asher: Very interesting. **"Veyachid lo yikra klal, ve'im hitchil"** - if he did begin to say Hallel - **"yishlim bedilug kedarkh shekore'im hatzibur"**. If he began—

R' Yitzchak: We're not talking about a blessing, he's talking about saying Tehillim. Right. Ah, according to me it's an aveirah to say Tehillim.

R' Yoel Asher: But according to normal people... I don't know, there's something of an issue here. Okay. But he's not talking about that here. **"Ve'im hitchil"** - if he did begin - **"yishlim bedilug"** - he should complete the whole Hallel, but he should do it bedilug.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam means to say that he shouldn't think that since he already began, he can now say the whole thing. No, you must continue to do the dilugim.

R' Yoel Asher: "Vechen bish'ar yemei haPesach" - the other six days, the remaining days after the first two days - **"kore'in bedilug keRoshei Chadashim"**.

Halacha 8 - How Does One Skip?

R' Yoel Asher: So how does the dilug work? Says the Rambam, **"Keitzad medalgin?"** So one says from the beginning, from **"Halleluyah hallelu avdei Hashem"**. That means, the Rambam is talking here about people who know what Hallel is. Yes, he doesn't say that the verses are "Halleluyah" and so forth. The olam knows, the olam goes to shul. One doesn't begin, first one davens, then before one begins learning Rambam when one is already a bachur, yes? So one has already been in shul for a whole year.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam writes in order, Hallel, I don't know why he wanted—

The Three Dilugim According to the Rambam

R' Yoel Asher: Specifically that the Rambam should write "Halleluyah". I don't know. He began with **"chalamish lema'yeno mayim"**, and he says that one doesn't say the next piece **"lo lanu"**, and one is medaleg, one jumps over, and one says **"Hashem zecharanu yevarech"** until **"Halleluyah"**, until the end. And usually comes here "ahavti"—

R' Yitzchak: But one doesn't say it.

R' Yoel Asher: And one goes to **"mah ashiv laHashem"**, until **"Halleluyah"**. And one is medaleg, what is one medaleg here? A third dilug.

R' Yitzchak: We don't do the third dilug. No, we do say **"hallelu et Hashem kol goyim"** properly, and then one says **"min hameitzar"**. Again—

R' Yoel Asher: After the first, after **"mah ashiv"** stands **"hallelu et Hashem kol goyim"**, stands **"hodu laHashem ki tov"**, and so forth.

R' Yitzchak: The Rambam would leave out the "hallelu" and the "hodu".

R' Yoel Asher: Yes?

R' Yitzchak: That's why I wrote here to clarify. Very good.

R' Yoel Asher: "Umedaleg ve'omer min hameitzar karati Yah ad sof haHallel". Says the Rambam, **"zeh haminhag hapashut"** - this is the custom that is widespread in the places of the Rambam. **"Veyesh medalgin dilug acher"** - there are those who have others who jump around differently.

Discussion: Why Specifically These Sections?

R' Yitzchak: Even we do differently from the Rambam, because the Rambam skips three pieces, we skip only two pieces. Right?

R' Yoel Asher: We don't skip "hallelu" and "hodu".

R' Yitzchak: According to the Rambam one must skip.

R' Yoel Asher: Says the Rambam further—

R' Yitzchak: When must one say the Hallel?

R' Yoel Asher: What is the issue of skipping? With this one shows that it's not like the regular Hallel? Or why specifically these sections? Shorter almost. He sees that one says to do so, not that one shouldn't say the whole thing. Does this show that it's important to differentiate between the days when there's a complete obligation and the days when it's only a custom.

R' Yitzchak: Not clear. And why specifically this section? I've never clearly understood. One always skips half of a chapter. Right, the olam doesn't catch it, because it's printed separately in the siddur about this. But it's essentially, one always skips the beginning of a chapter. That means, one skips the beginning of **"Hashem zecharanu"**, which is **"lo lanu"**, and one skips the beginning of **"mah ashiv"**, which is **"ahavti"**. One jumps to the end. I don't know, one can say sevoros, but I don't have proper reasoning. That means, all these dilugim are with jumping to the end, right? Even the third dilug, also this jumps, he skips **"hodu"**, and one says immediately **"min hameitzar"**.

R' Yoel Asher: I don't know what is the secret of this.

R' Yitzchak: Okay. When must one say Hallel?

Halacha 9 - Laws of Hallel

Time for Reading Hallel

R' Yoel Asher: Where is this the center piece, right? There is a shiur and a way how one says **"ki le'olam chasdo"**. Before that let's leave it specifically, yes? Okay. Already. The grammar further. Dinei Hallel. What, more laws of Hallel? That means the Rambam has said the main thing, when one says what. Now he's going to say laws of the Hallel. **Kol hayom kasher likri'at haHallel**. When does one say Hallel? Anytime, the whole day.

R' Yitzchak: There is no zman tefillah, zman Hallel.

R' Yoel Asher: It's not something specifically connected to Shacharit, or that one should say it—

R' Yitzchak: Early before zman tefillah? Yes.

R' Yoel Asher: It's not limited to zman tefillah, yes.

One Who Reads Hallel Out of Order

R' Yoel Asher: Vehakore Hallel lemafre'a lo yatza, just as we learned regarding Megillah and others.

R' Yitzchak: Kriat Shema. Yes.

R' Yoel Asher: Kara. **Kara veshaha vechazar vekara**. It's a bit interesting, kore Hallel lemafre'a. Ah, he says like by Kriat Shema they say here. No, because by Megillah we understand that there's a story, the story he said backwards.

R' Yitzchak: But al... I agree that the Megillah makes—

R' Yoel Asher: Like we did. Also there, this is the seder Hallel.

R' Yitzchak: Chur karpas utechelet he says after the next verse.

R' Yoel Asher: But kore Hallel lemafre'a wasn't on one specific. Because even if one leaves out one verse one still hasn't...

R' Yitzchak: Certainly on one verse. The Rambam says explicitly—

R' Yoel Asher: Even one verse backwards.

R' Yitzchak: Okay. I don't know. But the same thing Hallel. By the way, Hallel also has a certain story, because we don't understand the story, because we don't understand Hallel. But what you look in Hallel, you'll see that it always had a certain order—

R' Yoel Asher: First the trouble and then the salvation.

R' Yitzchak: No, being medaleg means that one jumps to the end. One could also have been medaleg the Megillah according to certain opinions, one jumps to the end.

R' Yoel Asher: Ah, there's the... It begins with...

R' Yitzchak: One comes already with the beshalach me'orer, I know, ah, I can't always the whole story. Let me already tell, the Almighty has crowned everyone—

R' Yoel Asher: Bachaim uvishlachim. They learned so in Yoma, yes, one learns the good things, or the beginning and end of certain halachot that one learns with the kol. Okay.

Kara Veshaha Vechazar Vekara

R' Yoel Asher: Kara veshaha vechazar vekara, what happens? A person read Hallel, and he can't take so much holiness. He takes a break and he says further, **af al pi sheshaha kedei ligmor et kulo** - even if he made a break in the middle of Hallel long enough, how long it would take to finish the whole Hallel - **yatza**. Otherwise the Rebbes couldn't have made the long melodies in the middle of Hallel. Yes, because... Okay, don't start now your critique on the Rebbes and melodies, but I'm saying that one makes a half hour of melodies with long tunes, would seemingly have been a she'ah ligmor kulah. He is now osek be'oto inyan, yes.

Break Between Chapter and Chapter - Days of Completion vs. Days of Skipping

R' Yoel Asher: Already, says the Rambam further: **"Yamim shegomrin bahen et haHallel"** - the days that the Rambam previously counted, the twenty-one days or eighteen or twenty-one, yes - **"yesh lo lehafisik bein perek leperek"** - one can be mafsik between one chapter and the other—

R' Yitzchak: Between one piece and the next piece. Seemingly not the pieces that are in the "vedaleg", right? Between a whole chapter. Right. It's not between "lo lanu" and "ahavti".

Discussion: What Does "Perek" Mean by Hallel?

R' Yoel Asher: Between perek. He brings that there are those who... But for our purposes, yes. It could be that when Hallel was established they made new chapters, or what? They didn't leave the chapters that the—

R' Yitzchak: Mesadrei Tehillim did. In a chapter one is medaleg, but it didn't become a new chapter.

R' Yoel Asher: I'm saying, you see that the baal tefillah finishes each piece. It could be that when Hallel was established they made the pesukim differently, differently than David HaMelech or the mesadrei Tehillim made it. So when it says here by me "bein perek leperek" could be, one means to say the way how one does it by Hallel.

R' Yitzchak: I don't agree. And the baal tefillah has no relevance, the baal tefillah does it because he remembers that by Rosh Chodesh one does so, perhaps one actually doesn't need to do, as I said.

Break in the Middle of a Chapter by Dilug

R' Yoel Asher: Okay. **"Aval be'emtza haperek lo yafsik"**. But the Rambam says, **"veyamim shekore'in bahen bedilug, demalts afillu be'emtza haperek posek"**. Ah, because the whole dilug is—

R' Yitzchak: Already a hefsek be'emtza haperek.

R' Yoel Asher: No, I'm saying, because there is already a dilug, so there's already itself a hefsek in the chapter, it's a hefsek in the beginning of the chapter.

R' Yitzchak: It's anyway a hefsek gadol from not at all.

Question: Does a Blessing Change the Law?

R' Yoel Asher: I want to know, those who conduct themselves differently from the Rambam and they do say with a blessing, perhaps it will be different the halacha regarding...

R' Yitzchak: I don't know what has me the blessing.

R' Yoel Asher: It could be that because one is gomer, one says a blessing before it, it must be a chatima achat. If one doesn't say any blessing, it's only pirkei Hallel—

R' Yitzchak: Pirkei shira. I think it's a...

R' Yoel Asher: According to those who conduct themselves, one doesn't say the...

R' Yitzchak: No, I don't see. It would have had to stand in Shulchan Aruch, but I have one chiddush, because we conduct ourselves to make a blessing. I think not, it has nothing to do with the blessing. The blessing one makes on the custom, but on a custom it's not so important that one shouldn't be mafsik. On a takanas deRabbanan—

R' Yoel Asher: One must not be mafsik.

Digression: Break for Honor

R' Yoel Asher: It actually says so in Shulchan Aruch, what means mafsik? If an important Jew comes in, one must say to him shalom aleichem. Not show that with a blown face I'm holding now in the middle of davening, and acknowledge that a Jew is an important thing, one may be mafsik for this.

R' Yitzchak: In the middle of Birkot Kriat Shema one spoke, posek mipnei hayir'ah, yes? Even bein haperakim, says the halacha, that means bein haperakim can should be a second, even mipnei hakavod, but a person whom one must honor, as we learned in Hilchot Kriat Shema, one must also speak out. Why the olam doesn't conduct themselves so I don't know.

Halacha 10 - Blessing After It

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, now we're going to learn about the blessing afterwards.

R' Yitzchak: Yes?

Blessing Before and After

R' Yoel Asher: Says the Rambam, **"Kol yom shegomrin bo et haHallel mevarech lefanav"**.

R' Yitzchak: Yes, a blessing before one must certainly make, like a Birkat HaMitzvot on the enactment.

R' Yoel Asher: "Umakom shenohagu levarech acharav mevarech". That means, because the Rambam hasn't yet told us this, that there is a blessing afterwards, and he's going to say. There are places where there is the custom also to finish with a blessing, to make an after-blessing.

R' Yitzchak: It's finishing to... Yes, I just saw it by Megillah, the same thing. There is a custom...

R' Yoel Asher: Ah, from Arvot Ravnai the blessing afterwards.

R' Yitzchak: It's also a custom.

R' Yoel Asher: But it's not an obligation. Also by the Haggadah we have like a blessing, one finishes a blessing.

Text of the Blessing - "Yehalelukha"

R' Yoel Asher: "Keitzad mevarech?" What is the last blessing? One says **"Yehalelukha Hashem Elokeinu kol ma'asekha"**.

R' Yitzchak: That means—

R' Yoel Asher: All who say "al kol ma'asekha", no, it doesn't mean correctly. "Kol ma'asekha" means like **"hashamayim mesaprim kevod Kel"**. What can it mean that when a person sees the heavens, he says kevod Kel? Or... No, I'm saying, the version of "al kol ma'asekha" is too strongly concerned that the person is the one who is mehalel, not the thing.

Halacha 10-14: Order of Reading Hallel in the Days of the Early Sages

Halacha 10 — The Blessing "Yehalelukha" After Hallel

R' Yoel Asher: He added the "al". But when it says "kol ma'asekha" also means that only the person who has consciousness can be the one who thanks. Like when it says Pirkei Shira, what is called Pirkei Shira? Means that the person, when the person sees a spring becomes aroused to thank. Okay, "mevarech lefanav".

"Vachasidekha Vetzadikim Osei Retzonekha" — Understanding the Three Levels

R' Yoel Asher: "Vachasidekha vetzadikim osei retzonekha". The Rambam adds "vetzadikim", because "chasidekha" are surely tzadikim, not "chasidekha vetzadikim". It was later when

R' Yitzchak: It became a separate thing.

R' Yoel Asher: "Chasidekha vetzadikim osei retzonekha". "Osei retzonekha" goes up on both, "chasidekha" and "tzadikim", no? But perhaps not, because what is more than "osei retzonekha"?

R' Yitzchak: "Kol ma'asekha" — it becomes three things. "Kol ma'asekha", everyone in general, also the non-Jews, also everyone. Perhaps it also means people, but non-Jews who are only "ma'asekha". Then there are tzadikim shebagoyim, chasidei umot ha'olam.

R' Yoel Asher: Chasidim who are doing more than "retzonekha".

R' Yitzchak: It can't be. Then he says "vechol amkha beit Yisrael". It becomes smaller and smaller.

R' Yoel Asher: Okay.

R' Yitzchak: This is my understanding. "Vechol amkha beit Yisrael" also.

R' Yoel Asher: "Berina yodu lishemkha", thank the Almighty berina, with Hallel, as Hallel is a matter of song.

Text of the Conclusion — "Ki Ata Hashem Lekha Tov Lehodot"

R' Yoel Asher: "Ki ata Hashem lekha tov lehodot". Interesting, we say **"ki lekha tov lehodot ulshimkha na'eh lezamer, ume'olam ve'ad olam ata Kel, baruch ata Hashem Kel haMelech hameshubach vehamfo'ar, chai vekayam, tamid yimloch aleinu le'olam va'ed"**.

R' Yitzchak: We say a much longer version. "Melech mehulal batishbachot".

R' Yoel Asher: Interesting, **"haMelech hameshubach hamfo'ar chai vekayam tamid yimloch le'olam va'ed"**. A longer version.

R' Yitzchak: This is similar, you know? Know where there's a similar blessing? Baruch She'amar is a similar blessing. Rabbi Yechiel Goldhaber spoke about this in his article on Yom Kippur. Okay. A bit about the text.

Halacha 11 — Doubling Verses in Hallel

R' Yoel Asher: Already, now the Rambam is going to talk about what we all know,

R' Yitzchak: Certain verses that we have over prayers. Until here there is about the blessings. Now one can learn about also,

R' Yoel Asher: How one says it. The Rambam, **"Yesh mekomot shenohagu lichpol me'odkha ki anitani ad sof haHallel koflin kol davar vedavar shnei fe'amim"**. At the end of the chapter, which begins "min hameitzar", or which begins "hodu", one says over twice. Says the Rambam that one should maintain this custom, **"umakom shenohagu lichpol yichpol umakom shenohagu shelo lichpol ein koflin"**. This doesn't mean that if you come to a shul where they don't do it, that they don't know of this custom, they don't know,

R' Yitzchak: Everyone has adopted the custom. Yes, there's a reason in this. The commentators explain that whoever looks in Hallel, generally in all the songs of Scripture that we've learned, it doubles. That means,

R' Yoel Asher: It says for example lema'aseh hakarati, yes, re'eh ushemor, yes,

R' Yitzchak: Or aneni hamachav yes is the continuation, or even Hashem li le'ezrah is the continuation but so forth. The verses are individual, nu? At least, we add ours, make ours. One says the same verse again. Yes, says the Rambam so now, how should one have put in Hallel? Say, sing, say, I don't know. Says the Rambam,

Halacha 12 — Order of Reading Hallel in the Days of the Early Sages

The Leader Blesses and Reads

R' Yoel Asher: "Minhag kri'at haHallel bimei chachamim harishonim kach hayah". When they enacted it, how did they enact it? They said so: **"Achar shemevarech gadol shemikra et haHallel"**, first of all, only the leader, the baal tefillah, he reads the Hallel and he makes the blessing.

Discussion: Must the Congregation Say the Blessing Themselves?

R' Yitzchak: Certainly. That the olam says the blessing is literally an artzot. One is properly yotzei from the baal tefillah, it's not any reason.

R' Yoel Asher: Like the davening that we say over the whole thing, like yesterday is olam Yom Kippur, and everyone says everything,

Laws of Chanukah Chapter 3 — The Order of Reading Hallel (Continued)

Laws 13-14: The Order of Reading Hallel in the Days of the Early Sages (Continued)

The Difference Between "Hodu" and "Baruch Haba" in Responding

R' Yoel Asher: And by **"Baruch haba"** it's different, that he says **"Baruch haba"** and the congregation responds **"B'shem Hashem"**.

R' Yitzchak: Very nice. Imagine if we did it this way: "Baruch haba... B'shem Hashem".

R' Yoel Asher: Very good. So, there's a possibility that R' Yitzchak will give a shiur. With God's help,

Practical Plans — Hallel According to the Rambam's Way

R' Yitzchak: One of the days of Chol HaMoed I'll distribute the Rambam. There is in the back of the Rambam the order of reading. We need to give it to the congregation beforehand, they should review how it will be done, find a melody or some version that works for it. And do it. The Yemenites, I think, still do Hallel.

R' Yoel Asher: Perhaps this will be the siyum of Sefer Zemanim.

R' Yitzchak: A Hallel according to the Rambam's way? And we need to do it with music, with Hallel one may make music. Even the rabbis who don't allow it by Selichot say that it's not serious, but Hallel certainly music is appropriate.

R' Yoel Asher: Yes, the Mishnah says, I learned a chalil makeh,

R' Yitzchak: We need to bring a chalil. If someone knows what a chalil is, someone has a chalil from the time of the Beit HaMikdash, can go to Rav Deutsch's museum and grab one.

Law 14: If the Reader Was a Minor or Slave or Woman

R' Yoel Asher: I mean, a chalil is the shofar that he uses, why are you wondering about the shofar. **If the one reading the Hallel was a minor or slave or woman**. He said earlier that if the adult is the reader, but if the reader is a

R' Yitzchak: minor or slave or woman,

R' Yoel Asher: then one is not yotzei with what he says, then one says **after them word for word throughout the entire Hallel**. It's not really a proof that we don't trust the one reading Hallel, because we're afraid of a shoteh or a slave.

"This Is the Original Custom and It Is Proper to Follow It"

R' Yitzchak: Says the holy Rambam, **this is the original custom**,

R' Yoel Asher: This is the original custom how the early sages did it, **and it is proper to follow it**.

R' Yitzchak: This is correct.

"But in These Times... Strange Customs in Its Reading and the People's Response"

R' Yoel Asher: But now, the Rambam knew that all the criticism that Rabbi Yitzchak has on Klal Yisrael, he concludes that **in these times** Klal Yisrael has developed all kinds of ways, **all kinds of strange customs in its reading and the people's response and none of them is like another**, and it's okay, we're not going now.

R' Yitzchak: And it is proper to follow it, you forgot.

Discussion: What Is the Meaning of the Rambam's Addition?

R' Yoel Asher: But he adds after this, it doesn't mean now that you should forgive all the others, there are other customs, it's okay. Ah,

R' Yitzchak: This is a pluralistic piece.

R' Yoel Asher: The Rambam says, I don't agree. **And it is proper to follow it** is... No, the Rambam says, if we can make one day of Chol HaMoed according to the Rambam, we should do it. And the Rambam recommends that we should come participate in that Hallel. But he also says, don't be angry when you're in a shul and people do Hallel differently. There are other customs, and **none of them is like another**, and it's okay,

R' Yitzchak: Says the Toms River Rav. But I think the simple meaning is actually different. The simple meaning is that the Rambam needs to write in his book of laws about the customs of all Israel, right? The practice, the original custom, it's not clear even one place that follows it. So perhaps after the Rambam said this, he made some shul

R' Yoel Asher: Where he did it this way. He says yes how he allows the custom, like he gives legitimacy to the custom.

R' Yitzchak: Not only that, he would have had to write twenty-five thousand customs. The Rambam says, you know what? I'm writing the correct custom from the Gemara. I fulfilled my obligation, my book is already complete. You have a different custom. I would have held like the Gemara. That is, it could be that it's an apology from the Rambam why

R' Yoel Asher: He doesn't write all the customs.

R' Yitzchak: So, up to here.

Why Specifically by Hallel Have So Many Customs Developed?

R' Yoel Asher: Why specifically by Hallel have so many customs developed that the Rambam...

R' Yitzchak: There's a reason for this. Okay, up to here is Hilchot Chanukah Chapter 3, where we learned the law of the main mitzvah of Chanukah in lighting the Chanukah candles,

R' Yoel Asher: And then Chapter 4

R' Yitzchak: All the details of lighting the Chanukah candles, basically, yes?