

From Story to Memory: Between Exodus and the Haggadah

Rachel Sharansky Danziger * April 12th 2022 * Exodus: The Ins and Outs of Liberty #9

1: Delving in

Exodus 1:1-14

(1) These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each coming with his household: (2) Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah... (6) Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation. (7) But the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly, so that the land was filled with them. (8) A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. (9) And he said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us. (10) Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase; otherwise in the event of war they may join our enemies in fighting against us and rise from the ground."^a (11) So they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor; and they built garrison cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Raamses. (12) But the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and spread out, so that the [Egyptians] came to dread the Israelites. (13) The Egyptians ruthlessly imposed upon the Israelites (14) the various labors that they made them perform. Ruthlessly^c they made life bitter for them with harsh labor at mortar and bricks and with all sorts of tasks in the field.

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Ha Lachma Anya 3

This is the bread of destitution that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Anyone who is famished should come and eat, anyone who is in need should come and partake of the Pesach sacrifice. Now we are here, next year we will be in the land of Israel; this year we are slaves, next year we will be free people.

שמות א'-י"ד

(א) ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים
מצרימה את יעקב איש וביתו באו: (ב)
ראובן שמעון לוי ויהודה... (ו) וימת
יוסף וכל אחיו וכל הדור ההוא: (ז)
ובני ישראל פרו וישרצו וירבו ויעצמו
במאד מאד ותמלא הארץ אתם: {ח} ויקם
מלך חדש על מצרים אשר לא
ידע את יוסף: (ט) ויאמר אל-עמו הנה
עם בני ישראל רב ועצום ממנו: (י)
הבה נתחכמה לו פוֹי־רְבָה וְהָלָה כִּי-
תקראנה מלחמה ונוסף גם-הוא על-
שנאינו ונלחם-בנו ועלה מוֹדֵה־אֶרֶץ:
(יא) וישִׁימוּ עָלָיו שָׂרֵי מִסִּים לַמַּעַצוֹ עֲנֹתוֹ
בְּסִבְלָתָם וַיִּבְנוּ עָרֵי מִסְכָּנוֹת לַפַּרְעֹה אֶת-
פִּתּוֹם וְאֶת-רַעַמְסֵס: (יב) וְכַאֲשֶׁר יַעֲנֶה
אֹתוֹ כֵּן יִרְבֶּה וְכֵן יִפְרֹץ וַיִּקְצֹוּ מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל: (יג) ויעבדו מצרים את-בני
ישראל בַּפֶּרֶה: (יד) וימררו את-חַיֵּיהֶם
בְּעִבְדָה קָשָׁה בַחֲמֹר וּבִלְבָנִים וּבְכָל-
עֲבֹדָה בַשָּׂדֶה אֶת כָּל-עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר-
עֲבָדוּ בְהֶם בַּפֶּרֶה:

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, הא לחמא

עניא

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא
בארעא דמצרים. כל דכפין ייתי
וייכל, כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח.
השתא קא, לשנה הבאה בארעא
דישראל. השתא עבדי, לשנה
הבאה בני חורין.

2: Characters to root for?

Exodus 2:11-17

(11) Some time after that, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his kinsfolk and witnessed their labors. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsmen. (12) He turned this way and that and, seeing no one about, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

(13) When he went out the next day, he found two Hebrews fighting; so he said to the offender, “Why do you strike your fellow?”

(14) He retorted, “Who made you chief and ruler over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Moses was frightened, and thought: Then the matter is known!

(15) When Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses; but Moses fled from Pharaoh. He arrived in the land of Midian, and sat down beside a well. (16) Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came to draw water, and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock; (17) but shepherds came and drove them off. Moses rose to their defense, and he watered their flock.

שמות ב':י"א-י"ז

(יא) וַיְהִי וּבְיָמֵים הָהֵם וַיַּגְדֵּל מֹשֶׁה וַיֵּצֵא אֶל־אֶחָיו וַיֵּרָא בְּסֹבְלֹתָם וַיֵּרָא אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם מַכֶּה אִישׁ־עִבְרִי מֵאֶחָיו: (יב) וַיִּפֹּן כַּה וְכֹה וַיֵּרָא כִּי אֵין אִישׁ וַיִּדְ אֶת־הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּטְמְנֵהוּ בַחֹל:

(יג) וַיֵּצֵא בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁנַי וְהִנֵּה שְׁנַי־אָנָשִׁים עֹבְרִים נֹצְצִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָרֹשָׁע לָמָּה תִּכֶּה רֵעִי: (יד) וַיֹּאמֶר מִי שְׂמִיךְ לְאִישׁ שָׂר וְשִׁפְטֵ עָלֵינוּ הֲלֹהֵרְגֵנִי אַתָּה אֹמֵר כִּי אֲשֶׁר הִרְגַת אֶת־הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּרְא מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אָכֵן נֹדַע הַדָּבָר:

(טו) וַיִּשְׁמַע פַּרְעֹה אֶת־הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּבְקֹשׁ לְהַרְגוֹ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וַיִּבְרַח מִשָּׁה מִפְּנֵי פַרְעֹה וַיָּשָׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־מִדְיָן וַיָּשָׁב עַל־הַבְּאֵר: (טז) וּלְכַהֵן מִדְיָן שָׁבַע בָּנוֹת וַתִּבְאָנָה וַתִּדְלָנָה וַתִּמְלְאָנָה אֶת־הַרְהָטִים לְהַשְׁקוֹת צֹאן אֲבֵיהֶן: (יז) וַיָּבֹאוּ הָרֹעִים וַיִּגְרָשׁוּם וַיִּקָּם מֹשֶׁה וַיּוֹשַׁעַן וַיִּשְׁק אֶת־צֹאנָם:

Sheila Heti on writing *How Should a Person Be?*, in: *The Paris Review*, June 2012:

Writing, for me, when I’m writing in the first-person, is like a form of acting. So as I’m writing, the character or self I’m writing about and my whole self... become entwined. It’s soon hard to tell them apart. The voice I’m trying to explore directs my own perceptions and thoughts. But that voice or character comes out of a part of me that exists already. But writing about it emphasizes those parts, while certain other, balancing parts lie dormant—and the ones I’m exploring become bigger, like in caricature. That sounds really orderly but I never realize it’s happening, because who is “the first person” becomes confused.

3: A different kind of story

Wolfgang Iser, *The act of Reading*, 107-108:

Reading is not a direct 'internalization', because it is not a one-way process, and our concern will be to find means of describing the reading process as a **dynamic interaction** between text and reader... author and reader are to share the game of imagination, and, indeed, the game will not work if the text sets out to be anything more than a set of governing rules. The reader's enjoyment begins when he himself becomes **productive**, i.e., when the text allows him to bring his own **faculties** into play. (107-108)

Whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins. The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves... There is, however, another place in the system where text and reader converge... the various types of negation that arise in the course of the reading... The blanks leave open the connections between perspectives in the text, and so spur the reader into coordinating these perspectives... The various types of negation invoke familiar... elements only to cancel them out. What is canceled, however, remains in view, and thus brings about modifications in the reader's attitude towards what is familiar... (169)

It is clear, then, that throughout the reading process there is a continual interplay between modified expectations and transformed memories. However, the text itself does not formulate expectations or their modification; nor does it specify how the connectability of memories is to be implemented. This is the province of the reader himself... (111-112)

Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 288:

We look forward, we look back, we decide, we change our decisions, we form expectations, we are shocked by their nonfulfillment, we question, we muse, we accept, we reject; this is a dynamic process of recreation.

4. Inserting questions

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Four Questions

What differentiates this night from all [other] nights?
On all [other] nights we eat *chamets* and matsa; this night, only matsa? On all [other] nights we eat other vegetables; tonight (only) *marror*...

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, מה נשתנה

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות? שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין חמץ ומצה, הלילה הזה – כלו מצה. שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלין שאר ירקות – הלילה הזה (כלו) מרור...

5. Frustrating expectations

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, We Were Slaves in Egypt

We were slaves to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt. And the Lord, our God, took us out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched forearm. And if the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our ancestors from Egypt, behold we and our children and our children's children would [all] be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. And even if we were all sages, all discerning, all elders, all knowledgeable about the Torah, it would be a commandment upon us to tell the story of the exodus from Egypt. And anyone who adds [and spends extra time] in telling the story of the exodus from Egypt, behold he is praiseworthy.

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, עבדים היינו

עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים, ויוציאנו ה' אלהינו משם ביד חזקה ובזרע נטויה. ואילו לא הוציא הקדוש ברוך הוא את אבותינו ממצרים, הרי אנו ובנינו ובני בנינו משעבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים. ואפילו כלנו חכמים כלנו נבונים כלנו זקנים כלנו יודעים את התורה מצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים. וכל המרבה לספר ביציאת מצרים הרי זה משבח.

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Story of the Five Rabbis

It happened once [on Pesach] that Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon were reclining in Bnei Brak and were telling the story of the exodus from Egypt that whole night, until their students came and said to them, "The time of [reciting] the morning Shema has arrived."

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, מעשה שהיה

מעשה ברבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי עקיבא ורבי טרפון שהיו מסבין בבני ברק והיו מספרים ביציאת מצרים כל-אותו הלילה, עד שבאו תלמידיהם ואמרו להם רבותינו הגיע זמן קריאת שמע של שחרית.

Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah said, "Behold I am like a man of seventy years and I have not merited [to understand why] the exodus from Egypt should be said at night until Ben Zoma explicated it, as it is stated (Deuteronomy 16:3), 'In order that you remember the day of your going out from the land of Egypt all the days of your life;' 'the days of your life' [indicates that the remembrance be invoked during] the days, 'all the days of your life' [indicates that the remembrance be invoked also during] the nights." But the Sages say, "'the days of your life' [indicates that the remembrance be invoked in] this world, 'all the days of your life' [indicates that the remembrance be invoked also] in the days of the Messiah."

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה הרי אני כבן שבועים שנה ולא זכית שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא, שנאמר, למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך. ימי חייך הימים. כל ימי חייך הלילות. וחכמים אומרים ימי חייך העולם הזה. כל ימי חייך להביא לימות המשיח:

6. Inserting pedagogy

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, The Four Sons 1-5

Blessed be the Place [of all], Blessed be He; Blessed be the One who Gave the Torah to His people Israel, Blessed be He. Corresponding to four sons did the Torah speak; one [who is] wise, one [who is] evil, one who is innocent and one who doesn't know to ask.

What does the wise [son] say? "What are these testimonies, statutes and judgments that the Lord our God commanded you?" (Deuteronomy 6:20)" And accordingly you will say to him, as per the laws of the Pesach sacrifice, "We may not eat an afikoman [a dessert or other foods eaten after the meal] after [we are finished eating] the Pesach sacrifice (Mishnah Pesachim 10:8)."

What does the evil [son] say? "What is this worship to you?" (Exodus 12:26)" 'To you' and not 'to him.' And since he excluded himself from the collective, he denied a principle [of the Jewish faith]. And accordingly, you will blunt his teeth and say to him, "For the sake of this, did the Lord do [this] for *me* in my going out of Egypt' (Exodus 13:8)." 'For me' and not 'for him.' If he had been there, he would not have been saved.

What does the innocent [son] say? "What is this?" (Exodus 13:14)" And you will say to him, "With the strength of [His] hand did the Lord take us out from Egypt, from the house of slaves' (Exodus 13:14)."

And [regarding] the one who doesn't know to ask, you will open [the conversation] for him. As it is stated (Exodus 13:8), "And you will speak to your son on that day saying, for the sake of this, did the Lord do [this] for me in my going out of Egypt."

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, כנגד

ארבעה בנים אי-ה'

בְּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא, בְּרוּךְ שֶׁנָּתַן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. כְּנֶגֶד אַרְבַּעַת בָּנִים דִּבְרָה תּוֹרָה: אֶחָד חָכָם, וְאֶחָד רָשָׁע, וְאֶחָד תָּם, וְאֶחָד שְׂאִינּוֹ יוֹדֵעַ לְשִׂאוֹל.

חָכָם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֲדוּת וְהַחֲקִים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶתְכֶם. וְאֵף אֶתָּה אֲמֹר לוֹ כַּהֲלֹכוֹת הַפֶּסַח: אִין מִפְּטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֲפִיקוֹמָן:

רָשָׁע מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֲבוּדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם. לָכֶם – וְלֹא לוֹ. וְלִפִּי שְׂהוּצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכָּלל כְּפָר בְּעֵקֶר. וְאֵף אֶתָּה הִקְהָה אֶת שְׂנָיו וְאֲמֹר לוֹ: "בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם." לִי וְלֹא-לוֹ. אֵלּוֹ הָיָה שָׁם, לֹא הָיָה נִגָּאֵל:

תָּם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה זֹאת? וְאֲמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו "בְּחֹזֶק יָד הוּצִיאָנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים."

וְשְׂאִינּוֹ יוֹדֵעַ לְשִׂאוֹל – אֶת פֶּתַח לוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה ה' לִי בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם.

7: Alluding to the Exodus narrative

Exodus 13:3-10

And Moses said to the people, “Remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of bondage, **how יהוה freed you from it with a mighty hand**: no leavened bread shall be eaten. You go free on this day, in the month of Abib. So, when יהוה has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which was sworn to your fathers to be given you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall observe in this month the following practice: “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a festival of יהוה. Throughout the seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten; no leavened bread shall be found with you, and no leaven shall be found in all your territory.

And you shall explain to your child on that day, ‘**It is because of what יהוה did for me when I went free from Egypt.**’ “And this shall serve you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead—in order that the Teaching of יהוה may be in your mouth—that with a mighty hand יהוה freed you from Egypt. You shall keep this institution at its set time from year to year.

שמות י"ג:ג-י

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָעָם זְכוֹר אֶת-
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יִצְאֲתֶם
מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים כִּי בַחֹזֶק
יָד הוֹצֵיא יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם
וְלֹא יֵאָכֵל חֻמֶּץ: הַיּוֹם אֲתֶם
יֹצְאִים בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב: וְהָיָה כִּי-
יָבִיֵאֵה יְהוָה אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי
וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר לְךָ
אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ וְעַבְדָּתָּ
אֶת-הָעֲבָדָה הַזֹּאת בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה:
שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצָּת וּבַיּוֹם
הַשְּׁבִיעִי חַג לַיהוָה: מִצּוֹת יֵאָכֵל
אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים וְלֹא-יֵרָאֶה
לְךָ חֻמֶּץ וְלֹא-יֵרָאֶה לְךָ שְׂאֵר
בְּכָל-גִּבְלֶיךָ:

וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר
בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לִי
בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם: וְהָיָה לְךָ
לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וּלְזִכְרוֹן בֵּין
עֵינֶיךָ לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה תּוֹרַת יְהוָה
בְּפִיךָ כִּי בְיַד חֲזָקָה הוֹצֵאָה
יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם: וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת-
הַחֻקָּה הַזֹּאת לְמוֹעֲדָהּ מִיָּמִים
יְמִימָה: {פ}

8: alluding to the Deuteronomy narrative

Deuteronomy 6:10-25

When your God יהוה brings you into the land that was sworn to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to be assigned to you—great and flourishing cities that you did not build, houses full of all good things that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and you eat your fill, take heed that you do not forget יהוה who freed you from the land of Egypt, the house of bondage... Do not follow other gods, any gods of the peoples about you—for your God יהוה in your midst is an impassioned God—lest the anger of your God יהוה blaze forth against you, wiping you off the face of the earth... Be sure to keep the commandments, decrees, and laws that your God יהוה has enjoined upon you. Do what is right and good in the sight of יהוה, that it may go well with you and that you may be able to possess the good land that your God יהוה promised on oath to your fathers..

When, in time to come, **your children ask you, “What mean the decrees, laws, and rules that our God יהוה has enjoined upon you?”** you shall say to your children, **“We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and יהוה freed us from Egypt with a mighty hand.** יהוה wrought before our eyes marvelous and destructive signs and portents in Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household; and us [God] freed from there, in order to take us and give us the land promised on oath to our fathers. Then יהוה commanded us to observe all these laws, to revere our God יהוה, for our lasting good and for our survival, as is now the case. It will be therefore to our merit before our God יהוה to observe faithfully this whole Instruction, as [God] has commanded us.”

דברים ו:י-כ"ה

וְהָיָה כִּי יְבִיאֲכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֶל-הָאָרֶץ
 אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק
 וְלַיַּעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְתֶת לְךָ עָרִים גְּדֹלוֹת וְטֹבֹת אֲשֶׁר
 לֹא-בִנִיתָ וּבָתַיִם מְלֵאִים כָּל-טוֹב אֲשֶׁר
 לֹא-מִלְאָתָּ וּבְרֵת חֲצֹבִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-חָצַבְתָּ
 כְּרָמִים וְזֵיתִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-נִטְעַתָּ וְאָכַלְתָּ
 וְשָׂבַעְתָּ. הַשְׁמֵר לָךְ פֶּן-תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת-יְהוָה
 אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאָה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבְּיַת
 עַבְדִּים... לֹא תִלְכוּן אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים
 מֵאֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבוֹתֵיכֶם. כִּי אֵל
 קָנָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּקִרְבְּךָ פֶּן-יִחַרְהוּ אַחֲרֵי
 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בָּהּ וְהִשְׁמִידָהּ מֵעַל פְּנֵי
 הָאֲדָמָה... שְׁמֹר תִּשְׁמְרוּן אֶת-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְעֻדְתֵיכֶם וְחֻקֵּי אֲשֶׁר צִוְּיָהּ וְעֲשִׂיתָ
 הַיֵּשֶׁר וְהַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ
 וּבֵאתָ וִירִשְׁתָּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר-
 נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם... כִּי-יִשְׁאַלְתָּ בְנֵי
 מִחָר לֵאמֹר מָה הָעֲדוֹת וְהַחֻקִּים
 וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוְּיָהּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 אַתְּכֶם. וְאָמַרְתָּ לְבְנֵי עַבְדֵיכֶם הֵינּוּ
 לְפָרְעָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּצְיָאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם
 בְּיַד חֲזָקָה. וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אוֹתוֹת וּמִפְתֹּתִים
 גְּדֹלוֹת וְרָעִים וּבְמִצְרַיִם בְּפָרְעָה וּבְכָל-
 בֵּיתוֹ לְעֵינֵינוּ. וְאוֹתָנוּ הוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם לְמַעַן
 הָבִיא אֹתָנוּ לְתֶת לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
 נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם. וַיִּצְוֵנוּ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-
 כָּל-הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה לִירְאָה אֶת-יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְטוֹב לָנוּ כָּל-הַיָּמִים לְחֵיתָנוּ
 כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. וְצִדְקָה תִהְיֶה-לָּנוּ כִּי-נִשְׁמֹר
 לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-כָּל-הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוְּנוּ. {ס}

9: Swerving into hermeneutics

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

When you enter the land that your God יהוה is giving you as a heritage, and you possess it and settle in it, you shall take some of every first fruit of the soil, which you harvest from the land that your God יהוה is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place where your God יהוה will choose to establish the divine name. You shall go to the priest in charge at that time and say to him, "I acknowledge this day before your God יהוה that I have entered the land that יהוה swore to our fathers to assign us." The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of your God יהוה. You shall then recite as follows before your God יהוה: "My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to יהוה, the God of our ancestors, and יהוה heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. יהוה freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents, bringing us to this place and giving us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, יהוה, have given me." You shall leave it before your God יהוה and bow low before your God יהוה. And you shall enjoy, together with the [family of the] Levite and the stranger in your midst, all the bounty that your God יהוה has bestowed upon you and your household.

Pesach Haggadah, Magid, First Fruits Declaration 2-3

Go out and learn what Lavan the Aramean sought to do to Ya'akov, our father; since Pharaoh only decreed [the death sentence] on the males but Lavan sought to uproot the whole [people]. As it is stated (Deuteronomy 26:5), "An Aramean was destroying my father and he went down to Egypt, and he resided there with a small number and he became there a nation, great, powerful and numerous." "And he went down to Egypt" - helpless on account of the word [in which God told Avraham that his descendants would have to go into exile]. "

דברים כ"ו:א'-י"א

וְהָיָה כִּי־תָבוֹא אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ נַחֲלָה וַיְרַשְׁתָּהּ וַיִּשְׁבְּתָהּ בְּהֵי
וּלְקַחְתָּ מִרְאשֵׁיתָּהּ כָּל־פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר
תָּבִיא מֵאֲרָצָהּ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ
וּשְׂמַתָּ בַטֶּגֶא וְהִלַּכְתָּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר
יְבַחֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם; וּבָאתָ
אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בַּיָּמִים הַהֵם וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֵלָיו הִגַּדְתִּי הַיּוֹם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי־בָאתִי
אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָשָׁבַע יְהוָה לְאַבְתָּנִינוּ לָתֵת
לָנוּ; וְלָקַח הַכֹּהֵן הַטֶּגֶא מִיָּדְךָ וְהִנִּיחוֹ לִפְנֵי
מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ; וְעָנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אֲבִי וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִם
וַיְגַר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מֵעֶט וַיְהִי־שָׁם לְגוֹי גְדוֹל
עָצוּם וָרֹב; וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ
וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה; וַנִּצְעַק אֶל־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלָנוּ וַיֵּרָא
אֶת־עֲנֻנֵינוּ וְאֶת־עַמְלָנוּ וְאֶת־לַחֲצוֹנוּ; וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ
יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבְמַרְאֵ גְדֹל וּבְאֹתוֹת וּבְמִפְתֵּיִם; וַיְבִאֵנוּ אֶל־
הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן־לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶרֶץ
זָבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ; וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי אֶת־
רְאשֵׁית פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה לִּי יְהוָה
וְהִנַּחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ; וְשִׂמַּחְתָּ בְּכָל־הַטּוֹב
אֲשֶׁר נָתַתְּ לָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּלְבֵיתְךָ אִתָּהּ
וְהָלֹא וְהִגַּר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ; (ס)

הגדה של פסח, מגיד, ארמי אבד

אבי בי-ג'

צא ולמד מה בקש לבן הארמי לעשות
ליעקב אבינו: שפרעה לא גזר אלא
על הזכרים, ולבן בקש לעקר את-
הכל. שנאמר: ארמי אבד אבי, וירד
מצרימה ויגר שם במתי מעט, ויהי
שם לגוי גדול, עצום ורב. וירד
מצרימה - אנוס על פי הדבור.