

# THE LINKAGE BETWEEN TRUTH AND THE EXODUS

*by Rabbi Yissocher Frand*

---

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion: Tape #460 Obligation of Checking One's Tefillin. Good Shabbos!

---

## **The Linkage Between Truth and the Exodus**

In this week's parsha, the Torah states: "Do not give him your money for interest, and do not give your food for increase. I am Hashem, your G-d, Who took you out of the land of Egypt..." [Vayikra 25:37-38].

Rashi cites a Gemara that explains the connection between the prohibition to charge interest and the Exodus: "I distinguished between a firstborn and one who was not a firstborn. I also know and exact punishment from one who lends to a Jew with interest and says that it belongs to a non-Jew" [Bava Metzia 61b]. [While the Torah permits Jews to lend and borrow commercially with non-Jews, meaning with interest, the Torah demands that loans between Jews be interest-free.]

In other words, G-d knows the facts. If He could discern which person was a first born and which person was not a first born during the Plague of the Firstborn, He can certainly see through any false claims involving interest transactions.

The Gemara has a similar exposition regarding two other pasukim.

Following the command of Tzizis in Parshas Shlach, the verse says: "I am the L-rd, your G-d, who took you out from the Land of Egypt" [Bamidbar 15:41]. Why is this pasuk located in the chapter of Tzizis? Again, the Talmud states "I am the One who distinguished between the drop that was a first born and the drop that was not a first born. I will be able to distinguish and punish someone who places strands of kaleh ilan (a cheap imitation dye) on his clothing and claims it is (authentic) techeles." [ibid]. In other words, G-d, who knew the authentic first born in Egypt, will know and punish someone trying to sell fake techeles as the real thing.

The Torah makes a similar exposition in a third place, in Parshas Kedoshim: "You shall have correct scales, correct stones, a correct ephah, and a correct hin - I am Hashem, your G-d, Who brought you

forth from the land of Egypt." [Vayikra 19:36]. Again, the Talmud says, the connection is similar: The G-d, who was able to detect the identity of the true first born in Egypt, will be able to detect any attempt to falsify weights and measures and thereby cheat in business transactions.

Rav Shimon Schwab explains that the common denominator between the expositions by the cases of interest, Tzizis, and weights and measures is that all three represent attempts to deviate from the truth. The Exodus from Egypt (Yetzias Mitzrayim) was the ultimate demonstration of Truth in the world. At the moment of Exodus there was no faking and no hiding. The Master of the Universe, who is the epitome and essence of Truth, revealed Himself and at that moment, anything that was not true, paid the price.

This G-d, who is the epitome of Truth, will punish those who try to be deceptive - be it in interest transactions, be it in the sale of false techeles, or be it in the use of false measures.

Rav Schwab added that this explains the universal custom of appending the word "Emes" [Truth] to the end of the third chapter of Krias Shma. We append the word "Emes" immediately after the pasuk that states "I am the L-rd your G-d who took you out of the Land of Egypt, to be for you a G-d; I am the L-rd your G-d".

In reality, the word Emes is not part of the recitation of Krias Shma. It is the first word of the next paragraph (Emes v'Yatziv in the morning or Emes v'Emunah at night). It is peculiar that this word should be appended to the Biblically mandated recitation of Krias Shma, since it is not part of the Biblical pasukim. In contrast, we make a clear demarcation between the Biblically mandated portion of the multi-paragraph Grace After Meals, and the additional Rabbinic paragraphs, by inserting the word "Amen" following "Boneh Berachamav Yerushalayim". Why do we blur the demarcation in Krias Shma by appending the word Emes to the Biblical pasuk regarding the Exodus?

The answer is that the word 'Emes' is the essence of the whole idea of Hashem taking us out of Egypt. During Yetzias Mitzrayim, G-d revealed His Essence to us. His Essence is Truth. Consequently, immediately after mentioning the Exodus, we append the word 'Emes'.

---

This write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah Portion. The halachic topics covered for the current week's portion in this series are:

1. Tape # 011 - Rationing Medical Care
2. Tape # 012 - Can Teachers Strike?
3. Tape # 054 - Life Insurance: The Torah Policy
4. Tape # 055 - Candle Lighting & Havdalah: How Early & How Late?
5. Tape # 097 - "Ribis" Problems of Interest for the Jew in a Mercantile Society

6. Tape # 098 - "Cheremei Tzibur": A Ban on Living in Germany?
7. Tape # 145 - Kidney Donations: Endangering Oneself to Save Another
8. Tape # 192 - Making Shabbos Early
9. Tape # 282 - The Physician's Obligation to Heal
10. Tape # 328 - Sh'mita and the Heter Mechira
11. Tape # 372 - Using Shuls As A Shortcut
12. Tape # 416 - Supporting Jewish Merchants
13. Tape # 460 - The Obligation of Checking One's Tefillin
14. Tape # 504 - Lag B'Omer
15. Tape # 548 - Marrying for Money
16. Tape # 592 - Ribis and the Non-Jew
17. Tape # 636 - The Kedusha of the Ezras Noshim
18. Tape # 680 - Is Ribis Ever Permitted?

Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail [tapes@yadyechiel.org](mailto:tapes@yadyechiel.org) or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information.

---

Text Copyright © 2005 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and **Torah.org**.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington.

Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim.