

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol - שבת הגדול

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)



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# I. Introduction

The [Sabbath](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html) ([Passover](passover.html)) is called “[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol” (Lit. *The Great* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)) when we read the haftorah which tells us of the “Great (Gadol) and [Awesome](awesome.html) day”, before the [redemption](redemption.html) when Elijah the Prophet will come with his unique message found in Malachi 3:4-24. [One](one.html) of the reasons this haftorah is chosen is because on [Pesach](passover.html) the [world](worlds.html) is judged for its crops. Our Sages relate that for not observing the [laws](law.html) of the tithes, [famine](famine.html) (remember [Ruth](ruth.html)!) comes. This haftorah admonishes Bne Israel[[1]](#footnote-1) regarding tithes and it is therefore the appropriate [time](time.html) to recite it.

What [connection](connection.html) does [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol have to this great and [awesome](awesome.html) day? [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol is the last [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of both the Egyptian [exile](galuyot.html) and our current [exile](galuyot.html), as we all await the [redemption from Egypt](redemption.html). We understand this from the Prophet Micah:

*Micah 7:15 As in the days of thy* [*coming*](coming.html) *forth out* [*of the land of Egypt*](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cthebirth.html) *will I show unto them marvellous things.*

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol, is the final [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of the Egyptian [exile](galuyot.html), where the whole [nation](nations.html) awaited [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html). This is the same situation which we will see when [Mashiach](mashiach.html) comes to [redeem](redemption.html) us from this long and difficult [exile](galuyot.html).

The “Great and [Awesome](awesome.html) day”[[2]](#footnote-2) is the transition from [exile](galuyot.html) to [redemption](redemption.html). This penultimate verse, of the book of Malachi, the last prophet, the [one](one.html) who bridges the period of clearly perceived Divine revelation and the period of the [exile](galuyot.html). The last verse of the last prophet announces the onset of the [first](one.html) rays of light of [redemption](redemption.html). This great day is, in essence, the transition between the [two](two.html) periods, a kind of twilight.

The Maharshal,[[3]](#footnote-3) explains that the [name](name.html) of the “Great [Sabbath](sabbath.html)” is derived from a verse (v.23) of the special haftorah reading from the Prophets: “For behold I will send you the Prophet Elijah before the arrival of the great (gadol) and [awesome](awesome.html) day of [HaShem](hashem.html)”. What [connection](connection.html) does [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol have to this great and [awesome](awesome.html) day?

[**Shabbat**](sabbath.html) **Hagadol is the last** [**Shabbat**](sabbath.html) **of the** [**exile**](galuyot.html)**, as we await the final** [**redemption**](redemption.html)[**from Edom / Egypt**](edom.html)**.**

In our times, we too are living in a “Great Day” - the “[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol” before the final [redemption](redemption.html). We [know](daat.html) this as we have [three](three.html) faithful witnesses:

a) The [Midrash](orallaw.html): “[Three](three.html) days before the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) is to come, Elijah will come and stand upon the mountains of Israel and [cry](mashal.html) and [mourn](mourning.html) over them, saying, ‘Mountains of [Eretz Israel](city.html), how long will you remain dry and desolate?’ And his [voice](voice.html) will be heard from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to the other. Then he will say to them, ‘Peace has come forever’”.[[4]](#footnote-4) Happy is the [generation](toldot.html) who harkened to the [voice](voice.html) of Elijah and came to make the deserts and mountains bloom and thus to bring peace, as Rabbi Kook z”l wrote about the “awakening of the national [desire](needs.html) to return to its land, to its own self...”,[[5]](#footnote-5) referring to the awakening of teshuva which is part of our [redemption](redemption.html).

b) A second faithful witness is the great Rabbi, the Ra'avad, who wrote that Elijah the Prophet comes “to give Israel peace from the [nations](nations.html) of the [world](worlds.html), and to announce the [coming](coming.html) of the [Mashiach](mashiach.html). This happens [one](one.html) day before the actual [coming](coming.html) of the [Mashiach](mashiach.html), as is written, ‘For behold I send you the Prophet Elijah before the arrival of the Great (Gadol) and [Awesome](awesome.html) [Day of HaShem](hashem.html), and he shall return the [hearts](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cbody.html) of [fathers](fathers.html) to their sons and the hearts of sons to their [fathers](fathers.html).’ This means that the hearts of the [fathers](fathers.html) and sons had been overcome with [fear](fear.html) and each had run in a different direction in their troubles. On that day, they will return to their former state of valor, they will turn to each other and be comforted by each other, may it happen in our [generation](toldot.html)”.[[6]](#footnote-6) Thus we see that before the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) arrives, valor returns to our [nation](nations.html) and this actually brings us peace with the other [nations](nations.html).

c) Likewise, Rabbi Zadok HaCohen of Lublin writes: “The fact that Elijah ... comes before the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) means that his strength will make itself felt in the hearts of all the People of Israel ... to use their anger and revenge against the idolaters, with a strong arm as a result of the awakening in their hearts, and this is termed the [coming](coming.html) of Elijah...”.[[7]](#footnote-7)

According to the chronology of the year of the [Exodus](exodus.html), the day that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were commanded to take the [Passover](passover.html) lamb into their homes was [Shabbat](sabbath.html), the 10th of [Nisan](feasts.html). Hence our reference to the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html) as a great day. The fact that the Egyptians accepted the idea that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) would be [offering](korbanot) sacrifices to [HaShem](hashem.html), of lambs, the animal deified by Egypt, is considered [one](one.html) of the miracles of this great day.

[***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:1-3***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, “This month is to be for you the* [*first*](one.html) *month, the* [*first*](one.html) *month of your year. Tell the whole* [*community*](community.html) *of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family,* [*one*](one.html) *for each* [*household*](househld.html)*.”*

[Nisan](feasts.html) is the month, and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol is the day for all of us to accept [HaShem](hashem.html) as the true [redeemer](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Credemption.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, so that this year we will all come to see the miraculous fulfillment of the words, “L’Shannah HaBah B’Yerushalyim”, Next Year in [Jerusalem](city.html).

## List of Dates

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol begins at sundown in the Diaspora on:

* April 1, 2023 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 10, 5783)
* April 20, 2024 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 12, 5784)
* April 12, 2025 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 14, 5785)
* March 28, 2026 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 10, 5786)
* April 17, 2027 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 10, 5787)
* April 8, 2028 ([Nisan](feasts.html) 12, 5788)

## Customs

Eliyahu Kitov gives us a tells of some of the customs of this [Shabbat](sabbath.html):

There are also many special customs associated with this [Shabbat](sabbath.html). It was in Egypt that Israel celebrated the very [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol on the tenth of [Nisan](feasts.html), [five](five.html) days before their [redemption](redemption.html). On that day, the Children of Israel were given their [first](one.html) [commandment](cmds613.html) which applied only to that [Shabbat](sabbath.html), but not to [future](future.html) [generations](toldot.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 12:3***[*Speak*](mashal.html) *ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month (*[*Nisan*](feasts.html)*) they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, a lamb for an house:*

This [mitzva](cmds613.html) of preparing a lamb for the [Passover](passover.html) [offering](korbanot) [four](four.html) days before it was to be brought, applied only to that [first](one.html) [Passover](passover.html) in Egypt, and the Torah does not tell us that we must continue to do so before every [future](future.html) [Passover](passover.html). Never the less, the people continued to do this to make sure that their lambs had no blemishes which would preclude their being sacrificed.

* Many [communities](community.html) recite special hymns during the morning services on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol. The main theme of these hymns is the [laws](law.html) of [Passover](passover.html), which are presented in verse form in order to make it easy for people to become acquainted with the [laws](law.html) of the [Festival](festival.html).
* On the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) preceding [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol, [Psalm](psalms1.html) 104 and [Psalms](psalms1.html) 120-134 [the [fifteen](fifteen.html) [psalms](psalms1.html) that begin with Shir haMa'alot, which are recited every [Shabbat](sabbath.html) throughout the winter] are said for the last [time](time.html) of the year.
* We read part of the [Passover](passover.html) [Haggada](haggada.html) on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol, beginning from the paragraph that begins with the words: Avadim hayinu, “We were slaves” until the words "to atone for all of our [sins](sin.html)." [One](one.html) reason for this is that the [redemption](redemption.html) began on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol. Another reason is to familiarize the children with the contents of the [Haggada](haggada.html), in fulfillment of the [mitzvah](cmds613.html) of You shall tell your children on that day. Yet another reason is that the reading from the [Haggada](haggada.html) on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol is like a [rehearsal](rehearse.html) for the [Seder](haggada.html) night, and helps us to become more familiar with the text.
* In some Sephardic [communities](community.html), it is customary, when greeting [one](one.html) another on this [Shabbat](sabbath.html), to add the title of the day: [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol mevorach, a blessed [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol.
* From as long ago as the days of the Tannaim and Amoraim, it has been customary in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [communities](community.html) throughout the [world](worlds.html) for the outstanding Torah scholar of the congregation to address all the people on this [Shabbat](sabbath.html). The purpose of this address is to [teach](teacher.html) the people the ways of G-d and instruct them in the [laws](law.html) of [Passover](passover.html). The Rabbi explains how utensils must be prepared for use on [Passover](passover.html), how to remove the [chametz](chametz.html), and the [laws](law.html) concerning the baking of [matzot](chametz.html). His purpose is to ensure that the people not err in the slightest degree in their observance of the [Festival](festival.html). It is also customary for the rabbi to add other material that speaks to the [heart](body.html), as well as subjects of topical interest.
* When [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol falls on the day before [Passover](passover.html) [and all of the preparations have already been made], it is customary to move this special sermon to the previous [Shabbat](sabbath.html), so that the congregation can learn all of the applicable [laws](law.html) in [time](time.html) to prepare for the [Festival](festival.html).
* It is an ancient custom in some [communities](community.html), on the day before [Shabbat](sabbath.html) haGadol, to bake a small quantity of bread from the flour which has been reserved for making the [matzot](chametz.html). This bread is referred to as the "challah of the poor" or the "[synagogue](synagog.html) challah," and is distributed to the poor in the [community](community.html). Each person would fulfill this custom in accordance with his means. The wealthy would prepare a large quantity of this special challah, and those less well-off would prepare a smaller quantity.

## In The [Talmud](orallaw.html)

***Pesachim 96a*** *WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE* [*PASSOVER*](passover.html)*-*[*OFFERING*](korbanot) *OF EGYPT AND THE* [*PASSOVER*](passover.html)*-*[*OFFERING*](korbanot) *OF [SUBSEQUENT]* [*GENERATIONS*](toldot.html)*? THE* [*PASSOVER*](passover.html)*-*[*OFFERING*](korbanot) *IN EGYPT WAS TAKEN ON THE TENTH [OF* [*NISAN*](feasts.html)*], [ITS* [*BLOOD*](body.html)*] REQUIRED SPRINKLING WITH A BUNCH OF HYSSOP ON THE LINTEL AND ON THE* [*TWO*](two.html) *DOOR-POSTS, AND IT WAS* [*EATEN*](eating.html) *IN HASTE ON* [*ONE*](one.html) *NIGHT; WHEREAS THE PASS OVER-* [*OFFERING*](korbanot) *OF [SUBSEQUENT]* [*GENERATIONS*](toldot.html) *IS KEPT THE WHOLE* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *[DAYS].*

*AND THE* [*ANNUAL*](annual.html)[*PASSOVER*](passover.html)*-*[*OFFERING*](korbanot) *IS KEPT THE WHOLE* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *[DAYS] etc. To what does this refer? If we say, to the* [*Passover*](passover.html)*-*[*offering*](korbanot)*, — is there then a* [*Passover*](passover.html)*-*[*offering*](korbanot) *all the* [*seven*](seven.html) *[days]? — Rather [it must refer] to* [*leaven*](chametz.html)*. Hence it follows that at the* [*Passover*](passover.html) *of Egypt [*[*leaven*](chametz.html) *was forbidden]* [*one*](one.html) *night and no more; but surely it was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*, R. Jose the Galilean said: How do we* [*know*](daat.html) *that at the* [*Passover*](passover.html) *of Egypt the [prohibition of]* [*leaven*](chametz.html) *was in force* [*one*](one.html) *day only? Because it is said, There shall no* [*leavened*](chametz.html) *bread be* [*eaten*](eating.html) *and in proximity [thereto] is written, This day ye go forth! -Rather this is its meaning: [The* [*Passover*](passover.html)*-*[*offering*](korbanot) *is kept]* [*one*](one.html) *night, and the same* [*law*](law.html) *applies to the* [*annual*](annual.html)[*Passover*](passover.html)*-*[*offering*](korbanot)*; while [the prohibition of]* [*leaven*](chametz.html) *[was in force] the whole day, whereas at the* [*Passover*](passover.html)*-*[*offering*](korbanot) *of [subsequent]* [*generations*](toldot.html) *[the interdict of* [*leaven*](chametz.html)*] holds good for the entire* [*seven*](seven.html) *[days].*

## In The [Midrash](orallaw.html)

The [Midrash](orallaw.html): “[Three](three.html) days before the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) is to come, Elijah will come and stand upon the mountains of Israel and [cry](mashal.html) and [mourn](mourning.html) over them, saying, ‘Mountains of [Eretz Israel](city.html), how long will you remain dry and desolate?’ And his [voice](voice.html) will be heard from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to the other. Then he will say to them, ‘Peace has come forever’”.[[8]](#footnote-8) Happy is the [generation](toldot.html) who harkened to the [voice](voice.html) of Elijah and came to make the deserts and mountains bloom and thus to bring peace, as Rabbi Kook z"l wrote about the “awakening of the national [desire](needs.html) to return to its land, to its own self...”,[[9]](#footnote-9) referring to the awakening of teshuva which is part of our [redemption](redemption.html).

# II. [Nisan](feasts.html) 10 [Events](feasts.html)

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cnoachide.html). Day 100. ***Genesis 7:24***

[Abraham](avraham.html) [circumcises](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Ccircumcz.html) himself, Ishmael, and his entire [household](househld.html). ***Genesis 17:22 - 18:2***

Yocheved hides Moses after a 6 month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 33. Artscroll Mesorah on [Shavuot](shavuot.html), page 61.

The [Pesach](passover.html) lamb, without blemish, is chosen. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:3***

On the tenth day Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, the leader of the people of Dan, brought his altar dedication [offering](korbanot). [***Numbers***](nchart.html) ***7:66***

Joshua's [secret](sod.html) spies return from [Jericho](stages.html). **Day 3** in hiding in the hills of [Jericho](stages.html). ***Joshua 2:1-23***

Israelites cross the [Jordan](stages.html) River and enter the promised land, camping at Gilgal. ***Joshua 4:19-22***

Miriam dies on the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html). [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 10*

The mobile well, which supplied water to the [Exodus](exodus.html) [Jews](gen-jew.html), dries up. [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 10*

Israelites cross the [Jordan](stages.html) and erect [twelve](twelve.html) monuments at Gilgal. ***Joshua 4:20***

Levites still consecrating the [Temple](temple.html) in Hezekiah's day, day 10. ***II Chronicles 29:17***

Ezekiel gets [Temple](temple.html) measurements. ***Ezekiel 40, 41, 42, 43***

Ezra assemble [Jews](gen-jew.html) at the Ahava canal prior to departing [Babylon](bavel.html) for Israel. **Day 2** ***Ezra 8:15***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) feeds the multitude. ***John 6:4-15***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) enters [Jerusalem](city.html), on the foal of a [donkey](chamor.html), as [Mashiach](mashiach.html) King, on [Shabbat](sabbath.html). ***John 12:12-15, Zechariah 9:9***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) heals the blind and lame. ***Matthew 21:14***

**\* \* \***

The [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html) is called "The Great [Shabbat](sabbath.html)" because of the miracle which happened on the 10th of [Nisan](feasts.html) (see above).

But what was it about this miracle that we connect it to [Shabbat](sabbath.html)? We commemorate [Shavuot](shavuot.html) on whichever day of the week the 6th of [Sivan](feasts.html) occurs. Similarly, [Chanukah](chanukah.html) always starts on the 25th of [Kislev](feasts.html), whichever day of the week that happens to be.

What was it about this miracle that we link it to [Shabbat](sabbath.html) rather than its actual [calendar](calendar.html) date?

It is [known](daat.html) that during [Shabbat](sabbath.html), all the [plagues](plagues.html) of Egypt were temporarily suspended: The bloody rivers changed back to water; the frogs stopped swarming. In honor of the greatness of [Shabbat](sabbath.html), even the [plagues](plagues.html) "took a rest."

The tenth of [Nisan](feasts.html), when the [Jews](gen-jew.html) led the lambs through the streets of Egypt, occurred during the [plague](plagues.html) of darkness. If this [event](feasts.html) had taken place on a weekday, the Egyptians would not have been able to see the what the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were doing and there would have been no miracle, for the entire land was engulfed in darkness.

Now we can understand why we celebrate this miracle on the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html) and not on the 10th of [Nisan](feasts.html). For without [Shabbat](sabbath.html) there would have been no miracle. That's why it's the "Great [Shabbat](sabbath.html)".

**\* \* \***

On [Nisan](feasts.html) 10, [four](four.html) days before the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People were to leave Mitzrayim, Egypt, [HaShem](hashem.html) commanded them to take a lamb, which the Egyptians worshipped as a god, and lead it through the streets to their homes.

They tied the lamb to their bedposts, and [three](three.html) days later, it was this lamb which served as the [Pesach](passover.html) [sacrifice](korbanot.html). Its [blood](body.html) was used to mark the doors and lintels so that [HaShem](hashem.html) would 'pass over' the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) homes, and it was [eaten](eating.html) at the [first](one.html) [seder](haggada.html) on the very night that the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People left Egypt.

The Egyptians saw the [Jews](gen-jew.html) leading lambs through the street and asked "What is this lamb for?" The [Jews](gen-jew.html) replied "We're going to slaughter it as a [Pesach](passover.html) [sacrifice](korbanot.html), as [HaShem](hashem.html) has commanded us." You can imagine how the Egyptians felt, seeing their god led through the street and then tied to a bedpost! Miraculously, however, they were prevented from harming the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. They ground their [teeth](body.html) in fury, but did not utter a word.

We commemorate this miracle on the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) immediately preceding [Pesach](passover.html), on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol, ‘The Great [Shabbat](sabbath.html).’

# III. [Shabbat](sabbath.html) [Shuva](shuvah.html) and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol

**[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba and** [**Shabbat**](sabbath.html) **HaGadol**

When you think of the really significant shabbatot[[10]](#footnote-10) throughout the [Jewish calendar](gen-jew.html), you think of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) [Hagadol](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Chagadol.html) and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba.

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol is similar to [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba, the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) of Repentance before [Yom Kippur](kippur.html). Before [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) we are afraid of what [HaShem](hashem.html) will decree. Most repent out of [fear](fear.html). But on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol, we remember the great miracles [HaShem](hashem.html) performed in bringing about our [exodus from Egypt](thebirth.html), and in appreciation our [hearts](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cbody.html) want [forgiveness](forgive.html) out of love of [HaShem](hashem.html). This is significant because what happened in Egypt, in the days of Moshe, will happen in the [future](future.html) in the days of [Mashiach](mashiach.html):

[***Rosh HaShana***](teruah.html) ***11a*** *Rabbi Yehoshua says: "In* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *the* [*world*](worlds.html) *was created ... the bondage of our ancestors ceased in Egypt; and in* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *they will be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *in* [*time*](time.html) *to come.”*

Further, our [future](future.html) [redemption](redemption.html) is just like our [redemption](redemption.html) in the days of Moshe:

***Micah 7:15*** *As in the days of thy* [*coming*](coming.html) *forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things.*

Thus the [secrets](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Csod.html) of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol are important to our own [redemption](redemption.html). The relationship of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol to [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba will only bring us greater illumination and understanding into this very significant [Shabbat](sabbath.html).

**In Our** [**Synagogues**](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Csynagog.html)

[One](one.html) of the distinctions of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol, among Ashkenazi [Jews](gen-jew.html), is that it was [one](one.html) of [two](two.html) times during the year that, in an earlier age,[[11]](#footnote-11) the Hakham would address the congregation.[[12]](#footnote-12) The other occasion was [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba. The [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Pesach](passover.html) expresses the motif of drawing down G-dliness, and the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba, relates to man’s ascent. On [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba our Hakhamim expound **at length** on the [laws](law.html) of *teshuva* and on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol he should expound at length on cleaning for [*chametz*](chametz.html).

In our [halachic](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cwalking.html) literature, we find the following remarks by the "Mateh Moshe," "It is customary (that the Rav) deliver a talk on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) shuba and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol … in order to awaken the people to repentance; and I have found support for this custom in ‘[Midrash](orallaw.html) Mishlei,’ where it is written, ‘The Holy [One](one.html), Blessed Be He, said: When the “Hakham,” or “Sage,” sits and [teaches](teacher.html), **I cancel and** [**forgive**](forgive.html) **the trespasses of Israel**.”’ Hence it is proper to deliver a talk on this [Shabbat](sabbath.html), in order that He pardon their [sins](sin.html); and you may find another support for this in the [Zohar](orallaw.html) on Parshat Vayikra."

What is the [connection](connection.html) between teshuva and [chametz](chametz.html)? Well, for [one](one.html), we must do careful searching in both cases. When we search for [chametz](chametz.html) we should also be searching for our own Yetzer HaRa.[[13]](#footnote-13) When we search for our [sins](sin.html) in order to do teshuva it is an equally daunting task.

On [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol we prepare for [redemption](redemption.html). This [redemption](redemption.html) involves attaching ourselves to [HaShem](hashem.html) and returning to the promised land, to [Gan Eden](eden.html). It means that we become His people.

On [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba we prepare to stand before The Judge by returning to the sinless state we had in [Gan Eden](eden.html).

Thus we see that these [two](two.html) Shabbatot[[14]](#footnote-14) have much in common.

**Just** [**Two**](two.html) **Shabbatot**

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html) ***118b*** *Rav Yochanan said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai: “If Israel were to keep* [*two*](two.html) *Shabbatot according to the* [*laws*](law.html) *thereof, they would be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *immediately.”*

In the Sifrei HaPardes, Rav Yeshiel Epstein writes that the [two](two.html) Shabbatot which must be observed are [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba. Each of these Shabbatot have a special power to them:

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba falls between [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) and [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), it is a [Shabbat](sabbath.html) which [teaches](teacher.html) man how to return to [HaShem](hashem.html). [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba is typically the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of the year.

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol contains within it the [secret](sod.html) of [redemption](redemption.html). The other [Shabbat](sabbath.html), [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol, is the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) observed in Egypt and the second [Shabbat](sabbath.html) in [Nisan](feasts.html).

If man could master these [two](two.html) Shabbatot, the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) would quickly arrive.

The Sefat Emet explains that the term “[Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol” results from the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) taking on [new](new.html) significance. Only with the [Jews](gen-jew.html) [redemption](redemption.html) [from Egypt](thebirth.html) did [Shabbat](sabbath.html) acquire the historical identity which intertwined with the theology. The Sefat Emet explains that [Shabbat](sabbath.html) had now become “greater”: Now the second aspect of [Shabbat](sabbath.html), articulated in the repetition of the [ten](ten.html) [commandments](cmds613.html), would be realized.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The Sefat Emet states[[16]](#footnote-16) that by taking the lamb the [Jews](gen-jew.html) observed [Shabbat](sabbath.html) in Egypt. This was their [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) as a people, a moment of passage in the national sense: They had reached the age of majority, by becaming an Ish (a royal man), with responsibilities. This was [Shabbat](sabbath.html) “HaGadol”.[[17]](#footnote-17)

The most basic [teaching](teacher.html) of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) is the acknowledgement that [HaShem](hashem.html) created the [world](worlds.html) in [six](six.html) days. By taking the lamb the [Jews](gen-jew.html) rejected [idolatry](idolatry.html) and accepted [HaShem](hashem.html). This was not merely an action which took place on the tenth of [Nisan](feasts.html). This was a watershed of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history. Now the [Jews](gen-jew.html) joined [HaShem](hashem.html) in a [Shabbat](sabbath.html).

**In Our Customs**

Most [Jews](gen-jew.html) have a custom to wear their kittels[[18]](#footnote-18) (קיטל) at [two](two.html) times during the year: At the [Pesach](passover.html) [seder](haggada.html) we wear a kittel and on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) we wear a kittel.[[19]](#footnote-19) Curiously, [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol are the [two](two.html) shabbatot which immediately precede these [two](two.html) occasions.

\* \* \*

Usually, the haftorah always follows the theme of the Maftir. On [Yom Tov](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cfestival.html) and [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html), we read a special maftir which is followed by the Haftorah ‎ as found in the theme of the Maftir. Yet on [two](two.html) Shabbatot there is no special Maftir, and yet we read a special Haftorah ‎. These are:

1) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba, and

2) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol.

The question that was raised is why are these [two](two.html) Haftarot different from the others?

Here is the answer as I see it. If you analyze the pattern you find that the special maftir only applies to an actual [holiday](festival.html). The pilgrimage [festivals](festivals.html) and [Chanukah](chanukah.html) are holidays; hence, there is a special maftir when it coincides with [Shabbat](sabbath.html). [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba, and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol are secondary to something else. [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba is secondary to the [Days of Awe](fear.html) and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol is secondary to [Pesach](passover.html). Hence, since they are still important, they have their own Haftarot. Nevertheless, since they are still secondary, there is no special Maftir.

From this question and its answer we see another [connection](connection.html) between [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba.

Finally, [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html) *HaGadol* is [time](time.html) for learning how to [clean](purity.html) on the outside (to remove [chametz](chametz.html)), while [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html) *Shuba* is [time](time.html) for cleaning the inside (returning to [HaShem](hashem.html) by cleaning out [sin](sin.html)). Yes, I [know](daat.html) that the point of cleaning the outside is to demonstrate the work that must be exerted to [clean](purity.html) the inside. And yes, I [know](daat.html) that internal soul searching must be manifested in [good deeds](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Ccmds613.html) on the outside.

**On The** [**Calendar**](calendar.html)

[Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol is the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) closest to the Tekufah of [Nisan](feasts.html) (Vernal Equinox) and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba is the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) closest to the Tekufah of Tishre (Autumnal Equinox). On these [two](two.html) days the days and nights of equal length.

**In the** [**Triennial**](shmita.html) **Torah Reading** [**Cycle**](cycles.html)

On the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) after [Simchat Torah](simchat.html), we read the [first](one.html) pasuk of Bereshit, in the [annual](annual.html) Torah reading [cycle](cycles.html). In the [Triennial](shmita.html), or [Septennial](shmita.html), [cycle](cycles.html), we read the [first](one.html) verse on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba, the [first](one.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html) after [Yom Teruah](teruah.html), and we also read it on [Shabbat Hagadol](sabbath.html) in [Nisan](feasts.html). This [bi-modality of the Torah](http://www.betemunah.org/rains.html) goes well with the Baraita of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h 10b, where we have Rabbi Eliezer telling us the [world](worlds.html) was [created](http://www.betemunah.org/bara.html) in [Tishri](feasts.html), and Rabbi Joshua telling us that the [world](worlds.html) was created in [Nisan](feasts.html).

The [annual Torah readings](annual.html) on this [Shabbat](sabbath.html) HaGadol are:

***Malachi 3:4-24*** *Then shall the* [*offering*](korbanot) *of Judah and* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *be pleasant unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, as in the days of old, and as in former years. 5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and* [*fear*](fear.html) *not me, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts. 6 For I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, I change not; therefore ye sons of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *are not consumed. 7 Even from the days of your* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 8 Will a man rob G-d? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole* [*nation*](nations.html)*. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the* [*time*](time.html) *in the* [*field*](field.html)*, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts. 12 And all* [*nations*](nations.html) *shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts.13 Your words have been stout against me, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? 14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve G-d: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts? 15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *are set up; yea, they that tempt G-d are even delivered. 16 Then they that feared* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *spake often* [*one*](one.html) *to another: and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and that thought upon his* [*name*](name.html)*. 17 And they shall be mine, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. 18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*, between him that serveth G-d and him that serveth him not. 19 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do* [*wickedly*](file:///D%3A%5CWord%5CPesach%5Cwicked.html)*, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. 20 But unto you that* [*fear*](fear.html) *my* [*name*](name.html) *shall the* [*Sun*](hachama.html) *of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. 21 And ye shall tread down the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*; for they shall be ashes under the* [*soles of your feet*](heel.html) *in the day that I shall do this, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts. 22 Remember ye the* [*law*](law.html) *of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. 23 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the* [*coming*](coming.html) *of the great and dreadful* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html)*: 24 And he shall turn the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *to the children, and the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the children to their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

[Triennial torah readings](shmita.html) for [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Shuba and [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Hagadol:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [**Shabbat**](sabbath.html) **Hagadol** | [**Shabbat**](sabbath.html)[**Shuva**](shuvah.html) |
| Malachi 3:4-24 | Hosea 14:2-10 (Sephardim) |
| Gen 1:1 – 2:3 | Micah 7:18-20 |
| Gen. 2:4 – 3:21 | Joel 2:15-17 (Ashkenazim) |
| Gen. 27:1-27 | Gen 1:1 – 2:3 |
| Gen. 27:28 – 28:9 | Gen. 30:22 – 31:2 |
| Ex 6:2 – 7:7 | Gen. 31:3 – 32:3 |
| Ex 7:8 -8:15 | Ex 1:1-22 |
| Ex 27:20 – 28:43 | Ex. 2:1-25 |
| Lev. 15:1-24 | Ex 32:15 – 33:23 |
| Lev. 19:23 – 20:27 | Ex 34:1-26 |
| Num. 8:1 – 9:23 | Lev. 15:1-24 |
| Num. 10:1 – 11:15 | Num. 10:1 – 11:15 |
| Num. 10:1 – 11:15 | Num. 14:11-45 |
| Deut. 2:2-30 | Deut. 4:41 – 6:3 |
| Deut. 2:31 – 3:22 |  |

**\* \* \***

This [study](study.html) was written by

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

(Greg Killian).

Comments may be submitted to:

Rabbi Dr. Greg Killian

12210 Luckey Summit

San Antonio, TX 78252

Internet address: gkilli@aol.com

Web page: <http://www.betemunah.org/>

(360) 918-2905

Return to [The WATCHMAN](http://www.betemunah.org) home page

Send comments to Greg Killian at his email address: gkilli@aol.com

1. The Children of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Malachi 3:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Solomon Luria (1510 – November 7, 1573) was one of the great Ashkenazic decisor of Jewish law and teachers of his time. He is known for his work of Halakha, Yam Shel Shlomo, and his Talmudic commentary Chochmat Shlomo. Luria is also referred to as “Maharshal” מהרש"ל‎ (Hebrew abbreviation: Our Teacher, Rabbi Solomon Luria), or “Rashal” רש"ל‎ (Hebrew abbreviation: Rabbi Solomon Luria). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Pesiqta Rabbati 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Orot HaT'shuva 17:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Commentary of Ra’avad at the end of Eduyoth [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Zidkat HaTzadik 218 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Pesiqta Rabbati 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Orot HaT'shuva 17:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Plural of Shabbat (Sabbaths) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This was the custom, from Talmudic times, in eastern Europe through the nineteenth century. Meir Berlin, *Me Volozin Ad Yerushalaim* (Tel Aviv, 1939), p.227, asserts that R. Epstein fulfills this law and relates that although very involved in study and community issues, he was careful to deliver his sermons every Shabbat Hagadol and Shabbat Shuba.. (See also Saperstein, *Jewish Preaching*, p.13, where the categories of sermons are discussed.) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The Aruch HaShulchan, by Rabbi Epstein, tells us about this custom in Orach Chaim 429:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Our evil inclination [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Plural of Shabbat (Sabbaths) [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Sfat Emet Shabbat Hagadol 5637 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Sfat Emet Shabbat Hagadol 5646 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Sfat Emet Shabbat Hagadol 5674 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. A long white robe, as pictured. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The kittel is also worn as shrouds for a Niftar (one who died).  [↑](#footnote-ref-19)