

*Welcome to Beyond Twelve Gates by Rabbi Ze'ev Smason  
Seventh & Eighth Days of Passover April 10 & 11, 2015*

*"A (bat) Friend in Need, is a Friend, Indeed!"*

During the Cold War, Russian spies used hollow coins to pass messages to each other in America. One spy accidentally used his hollow coin as actual currency, and it ended up in the general population. The coin was found when it was given to a paperboy, who discovered the message in the hollowed out container when he dropped it and it split open. There was a message written in Russian code, so the boy handed it over to the authorities. The government spent years trying to decode the message, with no luck.

Eventually, a Russian spy named Reino Hayhanen defected to America, and in the process of handing over Russian secrets, the spy was asked about the coded message in the hollow coin. The man translated the message, and it turned out to be a "Welcome to America, here's the way our operations work" message from the KGB in Russia -- meant for Reino Hayhanen! According to the book "Negotiator: The Life And Career of James B. Donovan", Reino Hayhanen died in a "mysterious" automobile accident on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in 1961.

Were the 10 Plagues and the splitting of the Red Sea simply 'coincidences'? The basic Jewish understanding of G-d is that He is not only our Creator, but our Sustainer and Supervisor. Albert Einstein once said, "Coincidence is G-d's way of remaining anonymous." Our traditional sources express the idea that each single blade of grass grows with Divine Supervision. Perhaps we should think twice the next time we consider using the words 'luck', 'chance' and 'coincidence'.

*Passover: 7th and 8th Days*

The seventh day of Passover begins on Thursday evening, April 9. On Friday, April 10, the Torah reading is from Exodus 13:17-15:26. This reading contains the description of the splitting of the Red Sea, and the Song of the Sea. On Shabbos, April 11, the eighth day of Passover, the Torah reading is from Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17. In chapter 16, the pilgrimage festivals (including Passover) are discussed.

*Rabbinic Ruminations*

Bats are mammals whose forelimbs form webbed wings, making them the only mammals naturally capable of true and sustained flight. The means by which bats navigate while finding and catching their prey in the dark was unknown until the 1790s, when Lazzaro Spallanzani conducted a series of experiments on a group of blind bats. These bats were placed in a room in total darkness, with silk threads strung across the room. Even then, the bats were able to navigate their way through the room. Spallanzani concluded the bats were not using their eyes to fly through complete darkness, but something else.

Fast forward to the 21st century in Tel Aviv, where new research has added an additional level of understanding of the movement of bats. Even notice how the sound of a bag of potato chips being torn open can be heard throughout a darkened movie theater? The noise, in an otherwise silent space, pinpoints for all moviegoers exactly where the chips are being devoured. According to a new Tel Aviv University study, bats operate in a similar fashion.

Bats, hunting at night in groups, improve their chances of finding the best patches of insects by engaging in reciprocal eavesdropping, says the study's lead investigator Dr. Yossi Yovel of TAU's Department of Zoology. "Bats emit sonar signals to sense their environment. By recording them in real time, we can tell when they're attacking prey or when they encounter another bat and how they respond to it. This reveals new knowledge on the world of these miniature flying mammals. It is an example of how an animal gains from working in a group, and it could even provide insight into operating swarms of drones in a collective search mission, for example."

King Solomon said, "*Two are better than one, since they have good reward for their toil.*" (Ecclesiastes 4:9). The definition of friendship is loyalty. Loyalty means that even though you have different backgrounds and personalities, there is strength in loyalty and unity. You share an identity, a closeness. And you achieve far more together than you do separately. As in bats, as in people: Two are better than one.

### *Quote of the Week*

There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group; there is less competition there. -- **Indira Gandhi**

### **Joke of the Week**

The college student wanted to know where the sun went after it set. He went around asking some of his friends in his dorm, but they didn't know either. Pretty soon he had the entire dorm trying to figure it out. They puzzled over it for a long time but they couldn't come up with an answer. In fact, they sat up all night thinking about it -- until finally it dawned on them