

Immigration in the Haggadah and Halachah (Bilingual) (Copy)

Source Sheet by David Seidenberg

1. **משנה פסחים י' ד'-ה'** .א
- (ד) מזגו לו כוס שני. וכאן הבן שואל אביו... ודורש מארמי אובד אבי. עד שיגמור כל הפרשה כולה:
- (ה) רבן גמליאל היה אומר. כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח... בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו. כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים. שנאמר (שמות יג, ח) והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר. בעבור זה עשה יי לי בצאתי ממצרים...

Mishnah Pesachim 10:4-5

After they pour a second cup, the child asks his father... and he explains from "My father was a wandering Aramean" until the end of that passage. Rabban Gamliel used to say: Whoever does not mentioned these three things on Passover does not discharge his duty, and these are they: the Passover-offering, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs... [The] bitter herb is [eaten] because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt.

In every generation a person must regard himself as though he personally had gone out of Egypt, as it is said: "And you shall tell your son in that day, saying: 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt.'"

What impact would it have to regard yourself as having left Egypt?

Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, Festival of Freedom: Essays on Pesach and the Haggadah

The standard text reads, "In each generation, one is duty-bound *lirot et atzmo*, to consider himself, as if he had been delivered from Egyptian bondage." Instead of the reflexive verb *lirot et atzmo*, signifying an inner experience, Maimonides substitutes the verb, *l'harot et atzmo*, to *demonstrate*, to *behave* in a manner manifesting the experience of finding liberty after having been enslaved for a long time.

2. **דברים כ"ו:ה'-ט'** .ב
- (ה) וענית ואמרת לפני | יהנה אלהיך ארמי אבד אבי וירד מצרימה ויגר שם במתי מעט ויהי-שם לגוי גדול עצום ורב: (ו) וירעו אתנו המצרים ויענונו ויתנו עלינו עבדה קשה: (ז) ונצילק אל-יהנה אלהי אבותינו וישמע יהוה את-קולנו וירא את-ענינו ואת-עמלנו ואת-לחצנו: (ח) ויוצאנו יהוה ממצרים ביד חזקה ובזרע נטויה ובמרא גדל ובאותות ובמפתים: (ט) ויבאנו אל-המקום הזה ויתן-לנו את-הארץ הזאת ארץ זבת חלב ודבש:

Deuteronomy 26:5-9

(5) You shall then recite as follows before the LORD your God: "My father was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. (6) The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. (7) We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. (8) The LORD freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents. (9) He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

3. **From the Haggadah:**

Ha lachma anya di achalu avahatana b'ara d'Mitzrayim. Kal dichfin yeitei v'yeichul. Kal ditzrich yeitei v'yifsach. Hashata hacha, l'shanah haba'ah b'ara d'Yisrael. Hashata avdei. L'shana haba'ah b'nei chorin.

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need join in our Passover. This year we are here, next year in Israel. This year we are slaves, next year we will be free.

4.

שמות כ"ב:כ'

(כ) וְגַר לֹא-תוֹנֶה וְלֹא תִלְחָצֶנּוּ כִּי-גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

Exodus 22:20

(20) You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

5.

רש"י על שמות כ"ב:כ':ג'

(ג) כי גרים הייתם. ... כָּל לְשׁוֹן גֵּר אָדָם שֶׁלֹּא נוֹלַד בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְיָנָה, אֲלֵא בְּאֶרֶץ מִמְדִינָה אֲחֵרֶת לְגוֹר שָׁם:

Rashi on Exodus 22:20:3

(20) כי גרים הייתם FOR YOU WERE STRANGERS — ...Wherever גר occurs in Scriptures it signifies a person who has not been born in that land (where he is living) but has come from another country to sojourn there.

6.

רשב"ם על שמות כ"ב:כ':ג'

(ג) כי גרים הייתם - כמו שמפורש לפנינו ואתם ידעתם את נפש הגר. כי גרים הייתם - ולפי שצרתו מרובה עונשו מרובה.

Rashbam on Exodus 22:20:3

(3) כי גרים הייתם (3), due to your personal experience of such a status, you, better than anyone else, know that seeing that the oppression of strangers is a great wrong, the punishment for violating such a commandment is equally harsh. (compare Exodus 23,9)

7.

אבן עזרא על שמות כ"ב:כ':א'

(א) וגר. כאשר יקבל הגר שלא לעבוד עבודת כוכבים לא תונהו בארצך. בעבור שיש לך כח רב ממנו. וזכור כי גרים הייתם כמוהו. וכאשר הזכיר הגר שאין לו כח ככה היתום והאלמנה שהם ישראלים ואין להם כח.

Ibn Ezra on Exodus 22:20:1

(1) And a stranger – once the stranger accepts not to worship idolatry, you cannot oppress him in your country/land, because you are more powerful than him. And remember! You were strangers like him. And the same way that the text reminds you that the stranger does not have power, so too the widow and the orphans, who are Israelites, have no power.

Based on the commentators' explanations, how would you translate ger?

Who today qualifies as a ger ("stranger")?

Thinking about legal immigrants, illegal immigrants, and refugees, which of them would be considered "strangers"?

8. **שמות כ"ג:ט'** ח.
 (ט) וגר לא תלחץ ואמם ידעתם את-נפש הגר כייגרים הייתם בארץ מצרים:

Exodus 23:9

(9) You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

9. **דברים י"י:ט** ט.
 (יט) ואהבתם את-הגר כייגרים הייתם בארץ מצרים:

Deuteronomy 10:19

(19) You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

10. **ויקרא י"ט:ל"ג-ל"ד** י.
 (לג) וכייגור אתה גר בארצכם לא תוננו אתו: (לד) באזרח מכם יהיה לכם הגר | הגר אתכם ואהבת לו כמון כייגרים הייתם בארץ מצרים אני יי אלהיכם:

Leviticus 19:33-34

When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I the Eternal am your God.

11. **דברים כ"ג:ט"ז-י"ז** יא.
 (יז) לא-תסגיר עבד אל-אדניו אשר-ינצל אליה מעם אדניו: (יז) עמך ישב בקרבך במקום אשר-יבחר באתד שערך בטוב לו לא תוננו: (ס)

Deuteronomy 23:16-17

You shall not turn over to his master a slave who seeks refuge with you from his master. He shall live with you in any place he may choose among the settlements in your midst, wherever he pleases; you must not ill-treat him.

12. **יחזקאל מ"ז:כ"א-כ"ג** יב.

(כא) וְחִלְקֶתְם אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לָכֶם לְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: (כב) וְהָיָה תְּפִלּוֹ אוֹתָהּ בְּנִחְלָה לָכֶם וְלִהְגָּרִים הַגָּרִים בְּתוֹכְכֶם אֲשֶׁר-הוֹלְדוּ בְּנִים בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם כְּאֶזְרָח בְּבִנְיָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אִתְּכֶם יִפְּלוּ בְּנִחְלָה בְּתוֹךְ שְׁבִיטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: (כג) וְהָיָה בְּשִׁבְטֵי אֲשֶׁר-גָּר הַגָּר אִתּוֹ שָׁם תִּתְּנוּ נַחֲלָתוֹ גַּם אֲדוּשָׁם יי (ס)

Ezekiel 47:21-23

(21) This land you shall divide for yourselves among the tribes of Israel. You shall allot it as a heritage for yourselves and for the strangers who reside among you, who have begotten children among you. You shall treat them as Israelite citizens; they shall receive allotments along with you among the tribes of Israel. You shall give the stranger an allotment within the tribe where he resides—declares the Lord GOD.

13. **דברים כ"ג:ד'-ה'** יג.
- (ד) לְאִי־יִבְיָא עֲמוּנֵי וּמוֹאָבִי בְּקִנְיָ לִי גַם דְּוֹר עֲשִׂי־יִי לְאִי־יִבְיָא לְהֵם בְּקִנְיָ לִי יי עַד-עוֹלָם:
 (ה) עַל-דִּבְרֵי אֲשֶׁר לְאִי־קִדְּמוֹ אִתְּכֶם בְּלֶחֶם וּבַמַּיִם בְּדַרְדָּרָה בְּצִאֲתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם וְאֲשֶׁר שָׂכַר עֲלֵיךָ אֶת-בְּלַעַם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר מִפְּתוֹר אַרְם נְהָרִים לְקַלְלֶךָ:

Deuteronomy 23:4-5

No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of the LORD; none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation, shall ever be admitted into the congregation of the LORD, because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey after you left Egypt, and because they hired Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Aram-naharaim, to curse you.

14. **סוטה ל"ח ב** יד.
- וּא"ר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לׁוֹי אֵין עַגְלָה עַרְוֹפָה בֵּאָה אֵלָא בְּשִׁבִיל צְרִי הַעֵין שְׁנֵאֵמַר (דְּבָרִים כ"א, ז) וְעָנּוּ וְאָמְרוּ יִדְּיָנוּ לֹא שָׁפְכוּ אֶת הַדָּם הַזֶּה וְכִי עַל לִבְנוּ עֲלֵתָה שְׁזַקְנֵי ב"ד שׁוֹפְכֵי דְמַיִם הֵם אֵלָא לֹא בֵּא לִידְּיָנוּ וּפְטַרְנוּהוּ וְלֹא רֵאִינוּהוּ וְהִנַּחְנוּהוּ לֹא בֵּא לִידְּיָנוּ וּפְטַרְנוּהוּ בְּלֹא מְזוֹנוֹת לֹא רֵאִינוּהוּ וְהִנַּחְנוּהוּ בְּלֹא לׁוֹיָהּ

Sotah 38b

R. Joshua b. Levi also said: [The necessity for] the heifer whose neck is to be broken only arises only arises on account of the miserly of spirit, as it is said: 'Our hands have not shed this blood.' But can it enter our minds that the elders of a Court of Justice are murderers?! The meaning is, 'the man found dead] did not come to us for help and we dismissed him, we did not see him and let him go (--- i.e. he did not come to us for help and we dismissed him without supplying him with food, we did not see him and let him go without escort.)

Based on the above sources, what specific obligations do we have as Jews toward gerim today?

15. **בבא בתרא כ"א ב** טו.
- אָמַר רַב הוֹנָא בְּרִיהַ דְּרַב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ פְּשִׁיטָא לִי בַר מֵתָא אַבְרָם מֵתָא אַחֲרִיתִי מְצִי מַעֲכָב וְאִי שִׁיךְ בְּכַרְגָּא דְּהַכָּא לֹא מְצִי מַעֲכָב בַּר מְבוֹאָה אַבְרָם מְבוֹאָה דְּנַפְשִׁיהָ לֹא מְצִי מַעֲכָב בְּעֵי

Bava Batra 21b

Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua said: It is quite clear to me that the residents of one town can prevent the resident of another town [from setting up in competition in this town], but not, however, if he pays taxes to that town; and that the resident of an alley cannot prevent another resident of the same alley [from setting up in competition in his alley].

16. **טור, חושן משפט קנ"ו** .טז
- (טו) שאלה לא"א הרא"ש ז"ל יהודי שרוצה ללכת לכפר לדור שם להרויח וא"ל אנשי אותו כפר קמפסדת לחיותינו ורוצים להרחיקו מעל גבולם. תשובה אין יכולין למנעו דלא קאמר תלמודא אלא אדם הדר בעיר הזאת ובא להעמיד רחיים או חנות במקום אחר ואינו שייך במס שלהם יכולין בני אותה העיר לעכב עליו אבל דבר פשוט הוא שאדם יכול לגור בכל מקום שירצה ואין בני העיר יכולין לעכב עליו וכי קנו אותו הראשונים בחזקה:

Tur, Choshen Mishpat 156

15. **A question to my lord and father the Rosh:** A Jew who wants to go to a town to live there to earn money. And the people of the town say, "You are decreasing our livelihood," and wish to distance him from their border.

Answer: They cannot prevent them for the Talmud only talks about a person who lives in a different town and is coming to set up a mill or a store in a different place and they are not included in their tax, the citizens of that town can prevent them, but it is an obvious thing that a person can live wherever they want and the citizens of the town cannot prevent them. Did the original settlers acquire the land through legal purchase?

17. **מהרי"ק בשורש (קצ"ד) [קצ"א] האריך מאד בדינים אלו וכתב שזה שכתב הרא"ש** .יז
- בתשובה שאדם יכול לדור בכל מקום ואין בני העיר יכולים לעכב עליו שירצה פשיטא שרוצה לומר שאין בני העיר יכולים לעכב עליו על פי בית דין אבל אם תגבר יד בני העיר לסגור דשא באפיה הן על ידי השר הן על ידי שום מונע פשיטא שהרשות בידם ולא יחלוק על זה כי אם העיקש והפתלתול אשר לא ידע ולא יבין ולא הגיע עד כאן לשונו.

Bet Yosef, ad loc

The Mahari"k, ch. 191, extensively discusses these rulings and writes answers like the Rosh, that a person can live wherever he wants and the citizens of the town cannot prevent him. It is obvious that he meant to say that the citizens cannot prevent them by way of Beit Din, but if they are able to close the door in their face whether by way of the secular authorities or by way of any block, it is obvious that they have that option. And the only person who would disagree with this must be stubborn and twisted, uncomprehending and unfit to rule.

Based on these sources, there is a disagreement over whether it is permissible to prevent immigrants who are coming peacefully. If you follow the opinion of the Rosh, what would the contemporary policy implications be?

18. **On the Refugee Crisis by Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks** .יח
- You would have to be less than human not to be moved by images of the refugee crisis threatening to overwhelm Europe: the scenes in Budapest, the 71 bodies found in the abandoned lorry in Austria, the 200 people drowned when their boat capsized off the coast in Libya and, most

heartbreaking of all, the body of three-year-old Aylan Kurdi, lifeless on a Turkish shore: an image that will linger long in the mind as a symbol of a world gone mad.

This is the greatest humanitarian challenge faced by Europe in decades. Angela Merkel was not wrong when she said: "If Europe fails on the question of refugees, its close connection with universal civil rights will be destroyed."...

...I used to think that the most important line in the Bible was "Love your neighbour as yourself". Then I realised that it is easy to love your neighbour because he or she is usually quite like yourself. What is hard is to love the stranger, one whose colour, culture or creed is different from yours. That is why the command, "Love the stranger because you were once strangers", resonates so often throughout the Bible. It is summoning us now... Wars that cannot be won by weapons can sometimes be won by the sheer power of acts of humanitarian generosity to inspire the young to choose the way of peace instead of holy war.

Who are the strangers we find it challenging to love? What do you think of Sack's challenge to us?

19. **Abraham, Sarah and the Arizona immigration law
The Oregonian, May 3, 2010
By Maurice Harris**

In the Bible's Book of Genesis, we read about Abraham and Sarah's journey to the Promised Land. Shortly after they arrive, they encounter famine and head to Egypt in search of food. Foreigners without family or clan to protect them, they are afraid. Abraham asks Sarah to pretend to be his sister in the hope that this will help them avoid trouble -- an act of deceit that made sense in the context of their times. The gamble works out badly. Pharaoh's courtiers notice Sarah's beauty, and the king summons her to his harem. Only divine intervention lets Sarah escape without having to sleep with the king.

It's a pitiable story. Abraham and Sarah lie and humiliate themselves to try to survive in a foreign nation they have not received permission to enter. It must have been agonizing. It's a story of strangers in a strange land, without protection, without connections and without a right to go about their business unmolested. It's an illegal immigrant's story...

It's also a story that Jews have known well many times over in many lands. Jews desperately did whatever necessary to seek a safe haven in different countries after the Spanish Expulsion of 1492. During the great Jewish immigration waves to the U.S., in order to escape poverty and anti-Semitism, some Jews faked their documents or "married" American citizens to gain entry to the country. During the Nazi era, most European Jews couldn't legally emigrate to other countries. Some weighed their options and chose to try to escape Hitler by making their way to British-run Palestine -- but even in attempting to emigrate to their ancient homeland, they had to enter Palestine as illegal immigrants. They used many forms of disguise and deceit to get there.

Abraham and Sarah's deception is pathetic. As uninvited immigrants, these unwanted Hebrews have no social or governmental structure to protect them -- no way to seek recourse against anyone harming them or taking advantage of them financially or, as the sister/bride deception points to, sexually. Years pass, they return to Canaan, and still their marginal status as immigrants continues. They face suspicion from the native citizens and do their best to try to gain a foothold in their adopted country. When Sarah dies, despite the many years Abraham has lived and worked in Canaan, he still has not so much as even a claim to a grave site where he can bury her. He ends up having to go to the country's citizens, hat in hand, and ask if he can purchase a small cave for her grave. He ends up overpaying for it.

Abraham and Sarah came to Canaan without permission, but they brought blessings to the people of the region. Mexican and Latino farmworkers, legal or not, bring Americans the blessing and bounty of cheap and abundant produce, and poverty drives most of them across our borders.

...In the Jewish community, we know from our experience that when people are desperate and seeking a better life, and when they are in precarious circumstances, sometimes they lie or break the law in order to get by. It's humiliating. It's not what people would prefer to do. We can judge them for it, or we can try to empathize and factor in their circumstances and difficult choices as we try to find better national policy.

20. **The Facts on Immigration Today: 2017 Edition
By the Center for American Progress Immigration Team and Michael D.
Nicholson**

- **In recent years, the unauthorized population has declined slightly after continued growth for decades.** In 2014, there were an estimated 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants residing in the United States. This population reached a high of 12.2 million in 2007 but saw a gradual decline during the Great Recession
- **The majority of unauthorized immigrants are long-term residents of the United States.** In 2014, the median length of residence for unauthorized immigrants in the United States was 13.6 years
- **Many unauthorized immigrants are eligible for a green card but cannot adjust their status from within the country and face lengthy bars to re-entry if they leave.** 3 million unauthorized immigrants could qualify for a green card by virtue of having a close relative who is a U.S. citizen, but they are unable to adjust their status to lawful permanent resident from within the country because they have never been admitted or paroled into the country.
- **Unauthorized immigrants are often part of the same family as authorized immigrants and native-born Americans.** There are 7 million people living in mixed-status families—those with at least one unauthorized immigrant—including 9.6 million adults and 5.9 million children who are U.S. citizens.⁴⁰
- **Unauthorized immigrants are overrepresented in the labor force relative to the size of the overall population.** In 2015, 7 million unauthorized immigrants worked in the United States. They represented 4.9 percent of the U.S. labor force, although they comprised only 3.5 percent of the U.S. population.⁴¹

Refugee resettlement

- **Across the globe, a record number of people are being forced from their homes.** The number of forcibly displaced individuals worldwide has increased from 33.9 million in 2010 to 65.3 million in 2015. Of these, 21.3 million are United Nations-recognized refugees; 37.5 million are internally displaced within their home countries; and 3.7 million are stateless.¹⁶⁹
- **Refugees come from all over the world.** In 2015, 4.9 million Syrian refugees resided in 120 countries, making Syria the largest source country of refugees worldwide. Afghanistan was second at 2.7 million, Somalia third at 1.1 million, South Sudan fourth at 779,000, and Sudan fifth at 629,000. Large numbers of refugees also originated from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Myanmar, Eritrea, and Colombia.¹⁷⁰
- **Muslim refugee admissions have been trending upward, but non-Muslims still make up the bulk of refugees.** In FY 2016, the United States admitted 38,901 Muslim refugees, the majority of whom were from Syria and Somalia. These refugees constituted 46 percent of all those admitted. Over the past 15 years, Muslims made up 32 percent of all refugees admitted while Christians made up 46 percent.¹⁷⁶
- **Syrian immigrants are excelling socially and economically in the United States and are well-positioned to help Syrian refugees get on their feet.** Resettlement agencies are placing Syrian refugees in communities with established Syrian communities to facilitate their integration. The median annual wage of Syrian immigrants who arrived prior to 2014 is \$52,000—\$7,000 higher than that of U.S.-born individuals. Twenty-seven percent of Syrian immigrant men possess an advanced degree, compared with 11 percent of U.S.-born men. Further, 11 percent of Syrian immigrants are business owners, compared with 3 percent of the U.S.-born population.¹⁸³

Women and children are fleeing violence in Central America

- **Tens of thousands of children and families from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador have fled violence in their countries and come to the United States.** In FY 2016, nearly 60,000 unaccompanied children and nearly 78,000 people who crossed as families—generally, mothers with young children—were apprehended at the U.S. southern border, mostly from Central America.¹⁸⁴ A
- **Central America's Northern Triangle—comprised of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—is racked by organized crime, gang violence, and poverty.** At 108.5 murders per 100,000 people in 2015, El Salvador's homicide rate was 24 times higher than that of the United States. Its murder rate has nearly doubled since 2012, when a truce between two of the country's main gangs dissolved. Honduras' homicide rate is almost 14 times that of the United States, and Guatemala's is more than six times higher. Residents of these three countries pay an estimated \$651 million annually to criminal groups, who threaten them with violence should they fail to pay.¹⁸⁸
- **Homicide rates against women are high, and perpetrators are seldom convicted.** The 2015 female homicide rate reached 14.4 per 100,000 residents in El Salvador, 10.9 per 100,000 residents in Honduras, and 9.1 per 100,000 residents in Guatemala.¹⁸⁹ By comparison, the U.S. female homicide rate was only 1.9 per 100,000 residents. Perpetrators seldom face charges: In Guatemala, the conviction rate is 1 percent to 2 percent.¹⁹⁰
- **Women and children face violence if they return to their home countries.** In 2015, the UNHCR interviewed more than 160 women who had recently arrived in the United States from Central America. Sixty-four percent of women interviewed reported that they fled their homelands due to direct threats or experiences of violence. These women recounted that criminal groups could track them anywhere in their homelands, necessitating that they seek refuge abroad and collusion between armed groups and law enforcement. These findings

were similar to those of a 2014 study of Central American children in the United States, in which 58 percent of respondents interviewed claimed that they could face danger if their asylum claims were denied.¹⁹²

You can find the English-only version of this sheet [here](#).

You can also find a pdf on "Loving the Neighbor/Loving the Stranger: all the texts about the stranger from the Torah with commentaries"

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