

# LAMPLIGHTER

18 Nissan  
Chol Hamoed Pesach  
3rd day of the omer

1080

29 March  
5773/2013

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

Passover is not only the first of the three major Jewish festivals, but the foundation and root of all of them. The Exodus from Egypt prepared the Jewish people for receiving the Torah on Shavuot. Sukkot, too, is connected to Passover, in that it commemorates the booths (sukkot) that the Children of Israel inhabited in the wilderness.

The main significance of Passover is that it is "the season of our freedom," the time when the Jewish people went out of slavery and became an independent nation. The Torah describes what happened as follows: "G-d has ventured to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs and by wonders... according to all that G-d did for you in Egypt before your eyes." The key words are "a nation from the midst of another nation," which express the true uniqueness of the event.

What does it mean that the Jews were "a nation in the midst of another nation"? On the one hand it implies that the Children of Israel were already a "people," in the sense that they spoke their own language, lived in their own land (Goshen), and were careful to wear distinctive Jewish dress. At the same time, they were subservient and dependent upon the Egyptians.

Our Sages likened this situation to a fetus in its mother's womb. The fetus is a separate entity from the mother, with its own head, hands, legs and other limbs. Yet it is not a truly independent being, as it is forced to go wherever the mother goes, derives its sustenance from whatever she eats, etc. In truth, the fetus is completely dependent on the mother.

This accurately describes the Jews' circumstances in Egypt: While recognizable as a separate people, they were completely dependent on the Egyptians - so much so that it appeared as if they, too, were tainted by the Egyptians' idolatry.

The "umbilical cord" was severed when the Jews were commanded to slaughter and eat the Pascal lamb, an animal that the Egyptians worshiped. The courage and self-sacrifice it took to do this was the first step in the Jewish people's liberation from Egypt and its mentality.

This contains an eternal lesson: A person may think that he is free and independent because he has his own thoughts and desires. Upon reflection, however, he may discover that he is connected by an invisible "umbilical cord" to his surroundings and that in reality, he is a slave to whatever non-Jewish mores and conventions happen to be in vogue. Worse still is that he thinks that this is the true meaning of "freedom."

The holiday of Passover endows us with the strength to attain true freedom. The first step is to "slaughter" any "idols" that might be worshiped even subconsciously, and rid oneself of dependency on "what the world thinks." For the Jewish people are servants of G-d and no one else!

*Adapted from the Rebbe's Hagada, 5751 edition*

## The Egg in Exodus

By Yossy Goldman

At Passover Seders around the world, one of the items on the Seder plate will be a simple hard-boiled egg. We can learn from this egg, how it truly encapsulates what Passover is all about. As in regards to everything we see, the messages it conveys have practical application for us today.

One of the reasons we have the egg at the Seder is because it symbolizes the beginning of life, and Passover marks the very beginning of our national existence. But it's more exact than that. The egg reflects the precise position of the Jewish people at the time of the Exodus from Egypt.

Let's look at the journey of our egg. The egg is first inside the hen. It is then laid and thereby freed from the constraints previously imposed upon it. But has the egg been hatched? Has a little chick emerged from the shell yet? No. The egg, you see, is only potential life. It is not yet a living being. One day, please G d, a chick will emerge and the cycle of life will continue.

When the Jewish People left Egypt they were just like that—an unhatched egg. Free from the prison of Egypt and the constraints of slavery—but they weren't quite fully born. It would take seven weeks for them to stand at the foot of Mount Sinai and experience the great revelation of G d and receive the Torah. Only when they were given a way of life did the Jewish people receive purpose. Until Sinai, we were all dressed up with nowhere to go. On Passover we emerged from the confines of Egypt like the egg that drops out of the hen. But only at Sinai were we hatched and born properly.

The message for us? Political freedom without spiritual freedom is an unhatched egg, incomplete. We may have been free and unfettered, but we were still spiritually lost and morally confused.

Where I live, in South Africa, we understand this message very well. We have, thank G d, achieved political freedom in our beloved country. We've had many years of democracy with free and fair national elections. Everyone had a chance to cast their vote. But the fact is that most of our population is still as impoverished as they were before. Yes, many more now have access to water, electricity and housing, but for the majority of the majority, their lives have been unaffected.

Worse still, new freedoms bring new cultures, new lifestyles, and sadly, new decadence. Gone are old tribal values, and in their place is the empty, materialistic Western worship of all that is new and glitzy.

We may be free from the oppression of the past, but we haven't yet been provided with a coherent, wholesome infrastructure to help direct our aspirations.

So, freedom itself is only half the story. 'What we do with our freedom?' is the question. We need a purpose in life, and we need a moral, spiritual infrastructure to help guide us in life. Otherwise we wander aimlessly through the wilderness, and our freedom remains undeveloped potential.

Let's not be unhatched eggs. Let us use our freedom wisely and achieve all our aspirations. Let us realize that Passover is but the beginning. Now we must consult the Torah to discover how to take maximum advantage of that freedom.

# Slice of LIFE

## My Sweet, Alone Passover

By Alan Magill

*"Stay on the West Side... Be with new friends... A whole new life is opening up to you. Be a part of it..."*

These were some of my thoughts as Passover approached several years ago, when I was in the beginning stages of embracing Orthodox Judaism. My embrace of this new lifestyle was reciprocated by the Lincoln Square Synagogue community who welcomed me with open arms as I arrived every Friday, suitcase in hand, wanting to be nurtured by a faith that had been mine from the beginning.

But someone else had been there from the very beginning, my beloved mother (may she rest in peace), and as the months progressed, the treatments for her illness were becoming more difficult. She was also dealing with the loss of her husband of 50 years (my father, may he rest in peace) seven months prior. My mother continued to live in Philadelphia while I had moved to New York to immerse myself in the glittering world of entertainment as a writer and performer. But then I met Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald at the Lincoln Square Synagogue Beginners Service, and something he said there - "I'm not asking you to give up everything you're doing, I'm just asking you to put Judaism first" -- made me want to come back. Again and again and again.

To be sure, I was still writing scripts, but I was writing a different script for my life, and as Passover approached, the conflict I was experiencing was the stuff of drama.

I had to make a choice - stay on the West Side and enjoy the spiritual and social benefits of dynamic seders, or go to Philadelphia and have the seders with my mother. If I went to Philadelphia, it would be the first time I'd lead a seder, and it would have to be done at an early hour as my mother's treatments made it difficult for her to stay up late.

My mother, although not religiously observant, had a religious heart, and she

wanted me to be with my new friends. She encouraged me to stay in New York, adding that it would be hard for her to stay up for the seder anyway. She intimated that we could get together soon after the first two days of Passover.

My mother's encouragement was certainly making it easier for me to stay in New York, to go to seders where I wouldn't have to arrange kosher food as I would need to do at my mother's. To go to seders where I might even meet someone I could eventually marry, something that my mother wanted so dearly for me.

The decision seemed like a no-brainer, but I didn't go with my brain on this one. I went with my gut. If I was truly to "put Judaism first," I needed to be with my mother; I needed to honour her.

For the first time in my life, I made all the seder preparations and drove to Philadelphia, shank bone in tow. Greeting my mother, there was a mixture of sadness and joy. Sadness because of how weak she appeared; joy because no matter what was happening to her, her strength of spirit shone through. In seeing her smile, I knew that my endeavour was worth it.

The first night of Passover was approaching. I needed to attend a 6:30 prayer service, so I told my mother I'd try to get home as early as possible, but I might run a little late. "It's all right if you're sleeping when I get back," I said. But she told me with motherly conviction that she would not go to sleep until I was back in the apartment. I felt badly for every extra minute she'd stay awake.

But I felt glad for the seder we did have. You see, at 5:30pm, way before sunset, with the essentials of the seder - shank bone, horseradish, *charoset*, egg, salt water, grape juice and the rest - I had the privilege of leading us in a retelling of the story of our forefathers in Egypt. Technically, it was too early to hold a seder, but it was the only time that would work for my mother.

Someone, looking at the two of us from a detached viewpoint, might've called it an educational session about Passover. But I knew it was much more than that. It was a son, who had received much of great value from his mother, returning something of great value to her.

It was heartening to see that despite her physical weakness, she remained

interested and involved throughout the retelling. When we reached the end, I kissed her on the forehead and we wished each other a happy Passover.

I walked the seven blocks to synagogue and prayed the afternoon service. About twenty minutes later, a man approached the dais, and I was relieved that the evening service was beginning so I could soon be home with my mother. It looked like I wouldn't be getting back so late after all. Then the man said, "We will now recite *Shir HaShirim*, Song of Songs." Without even realizing it, I spontaneously blurted out, "Oh no."

The man asked me, "What's wrong?"

I said, "My mother is ill at home and she won't go to sleep until I get back, and I didn't know this is part of tonight's service."

Without missing a beat, he smiled and said, "I'll finish very quickly."

I don't know how he did it, but he managed to finish Song of Songs in about two minutes. I felt such gratitude to him. Some 15 minutes later, the prayer service was over. I thanked him and bolted out the door. When I got to my mother's apartment, she was waiting up for me, and soon after went to sleep.

And then it was me, all alone at the dining room table. I couldn't be going to sleep just yet. I still had a seder to run. And run it I did. If it all sounded familiar, it was, because I had gone through the experience only two hours prior with my mother.

The memory of that earlier seder with my mother made this experience, oh, so sweet. I wasn't sitting at that table alone as I read the Haggadah, but felt a strong connection to G d. I felt I was doing what He wanted me to do.

I recited Kiddush, broke the middle matzah, spilled drops from my glass to remember the plagues, sang *Dayenu*, drank four cups of wine, ate matzah, bitter herbs, the sandwich and meal, searched for the *afikomen* (it wasn't hard to find), and once again said, "Next Year in Jerusalem" - all the while gratified that I could be connected to my mother and our tradition.

I wish everyone a happy Passover and the confidence to make decisions that may not be easy, but are the most meaningful.

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ISSUE 1080

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

It was the custom of the Baal Shem Tov to partake of three meals on *Acharon shel Pesach*, the Last Day of Pesach. The third meal, which took place late in the afternoon, was known as "the Festive Meal of *Moshiach*," for on this day the radiance of *Moshiach* is openly revealed.

From the year 5666 (1906) it became customary in Lubavitch for the students of the Tomchei Temimim Yeshivah to eat their Pesach meals together in the study hall. That year the Rebbe Rashab joined the students for the [third] festive meal of the Last Day of Pesach, and directed that each of them be given four cups of wine.



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

In our letter of Rosh Chodesh Nisan we reflected on the subject of Z'man Cheirutainu, the Festival of Our Liberation, in its dual meaning: liberation of the Jewish people and, with it, liberation of the Shechina (Divine Presence), as it were -- a concept already indicated in various texts of the Torah and more explicitly in Rabbinic sources.

It is rooted in the fact that when Jews go into exile, the Shechina goes (into exile) with them. Thus our Sages of blessed memory declared, "As they went into exile in Egypt, the Shechina went with them." Hence, liberation must likewise include both -- "the people and G-d." Consequently, it was pointed out, true freedom must be expressed in terms of continuous striving for liberation and expansiveness (the exact opposite of bondage and restraint) in the everyday life -- both in the area of person's duties to G-d and in the area of the person's duties to another ("Good to heaven and good to the creatures"), so as to achieve redemption of both "the people and G-d."

Pursuing the theme more deeply, at least in one aspect, it ought to be said that true liberation, in addition to being expressed in the two said areas of human endeavor requires, moreover, that every action, whether in the realm of "good to heaven" or "good to the creatures," must embrace elements of both, and also in the same measure of freedom and expansiveness in both.

Parenthetically, yet significantly, this is also a step towards achieving, in a deeper and more inclusive way, unity of the entire created universe -- which is, of course, the purpose of the Jew, as an individual, and as a member of the people which is characterized as one people on earth in the sense (according to a Chasidic interpretation) that "it brings about unity (also) in the realm of earthly things."

By way of illustration:

We see that when a Jew is about to celebrate the seder in the best manner of "good to heaven" -- being inspired with gratitude to G-d for the geula [redemption from Egypt], in which he experiences his personal redemption, as in the text of the Hagada, "... Who redeemed us (in addition to) and Who redeemed our ancestors..." -- we must begin the seder with the announcement, "Whoever is hungry... whoever is needy," immediately inviting to the seder table all those who are unable to celebrate the seder by themselves.

Furthermore, the whole seder is based on the commandment, "You shall tell your child," indicating an obligation to involve others in it, whatever their status, for -- "Your child" includes all the four kinds of children, and, moreover, in light of the Sages' interpretation that "Your children includes your disciples," it really embraces everyone whom you can influence and bring closer to Judaism.

Just as in the realm of "good to heaven," which must embrace also "good to the creatures," so in the realm of the latter true liberation in inter-human relations is achieved when it is also "good to heaven."

For if an action in relation to other people is prompted only by one's own reason, or feeling, it is limited to, and in the measure of, one's intellect and feelings -- as this subject has been discussed at greater length elsewhere.

Inasmuch as the geula from the present galut [exile] is destined to be "as in the days of your going out of Egypt," which, as mentioned above, was in a manner of redeeming "the people and G-d," it is self-evident that the way to hasten its coming is through efforts and deeds in both areas; in that of "good to heaven" -- to help redeem the Shechina from galut and in that of "good to the creatures" -- to ensure that no Jew should, G-d forbid, be lost in the galut:

Efforts and deeds in the service of G-d embracing all three pillars, Torah, Avoda [prayer], and Gemilut Chasadim [acts of kindness], with true freedom in the above-mentioned sense.

May G-d grant that by virtue of the Jews being "all of us like one," we should promptly see the open realization of "bless us, our Father," and the realization of, "In that day G-d will be One and His Name One," through the service of "one people on earth," and the realization that "G-d is my King since the days of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth," with the coming of the true and complete Geula through our righteous Moshiach.

With esteem and blessing for a happy and kosher Pesach,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### The Prayer for Dew

On Passover we stop reciting the prayer for rain [in the Amidah], for rains that fall at the end of Nissan are considered to be a bad sign for the world, the time for the grain harvest has begun and rain will cause the sheaves of grain lying in the field to rot, instead, we pray for dew to fall and moisten the crops without harming drying grain. The first day of Passover was destined from Creation as the time for dew to fall.

Hence, from the first day of Passover until Shemini Atzeret, we substitute the passage Morid haTal, "Who brings down dew", for Mashiv haRuach u'Morid haGeshem, "Who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall", in the second paragraph of the Amidah. Similarly, from the first day of chol hamo'ed in the passage of Barech alenu, the phrase v'Ten Tal u'Matar liVerachah "grant dew and rain for a blessing" is changed to read "grant a blessing."

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*The lesson which we learn from Pesach for the whole year is to fulfill the "commemorating the Exodus from Egypt"; all year you should remember your action of burning the chometz before Pesach -- destroying the evil and then making the day holy with blessings, eating matzah and all the positive actions. This will cause a strengthening of the yetzer tov [good inclination].*

*Matzah is called "food of faith" and it was the faith of the Jewish people which brought them out of Egypt. When this faith is instilled in all actions of a person, all year round -- then the person fulfills the mitzvah of remembering the Exodus.*

*The Torah teaches us "Love your neighbour as yourself." This means that every person should teach this lesson of Passover, males to males and females to females, to do away with the evil and strengthen the good.*

*By fulfilling the mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel, loving your fellow as yourself, you will also find that all mitzvos are easier to perform, for "one mitzvah brings along another"; especially the mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel which, as Rabbi Akiva taught us, is a "Basic Principle of the Torah." Therefore, Ahavas Yisroel enhances all aspects of Torah study and observance of all the mitzvos with great success.*

*During the holiday we should do all this with greater joy -- a double joy: the joy of the Jewish people: "The Jews should rejoice in their Maker" (Tanya ch. 33). This is the joy of the Jew who is involved in Yiddishkeit, Judaism. Second, the joy of the Holy One, Blessed be He, Who is overjoyed with the conduct of those children who have been properly educated in this manner.*

*Since "joy bursts through restrictions," this joy will speed the breaking of the current exile and then we will see the miracles of redemption with the ultimate and true salvation through our righteous Moshiach speedily in our days.*

*J. I. Guterlich*

IT HAPPENED

Once...

The Extra Matzah

By Yisroel Susskind

Our sages tell us that a propensity for acts of loving-kindness is one of the three basic characteristics of the Jewish soul. I would like to share with you a story that moved me deeply, which relates to this characteristic of loving kindness and mutual responsibility.

Rabbi Eliezer Zusha Portugal (1896-1982), the Skulener [pronounced skool-LEH-ner] Rebbe, was the chassidic rebbe from a small town, Sculeni, in what was then northeastern Romania (now Ukraine). Toward the end of World War II, in March of 1945, he found himself, along with other holocaust survivors and displaced persons, in the Russian-governed town of Czernovitz, Bukovina. Although Germany would not officially surrender until May 7, much of Eastern Europe had already been liberated by the Russian army.

Passover was only weeks away. Although some Passover foodstuffs might well be provided by charitable organizations, the Rebbe sought to obtain wheat that he could bake into properly-guarded and traditionally baked *Shmurah Matzah*. Despite the oppressive economic situation of the Jews, he was able to bake a limited number of these matzahs. He sent word to other rebbes in the region, offering each of them three matzahs.

One week before Pesach, Rabbi Moshe Hager, the son of the Seret-Vizhnitzer Rebbe, came for the matzahs that had been offered to his father, Rabbi Boruch Hager. After being handed the allotted three matzahs, he said to the Skulener Rebbe: "I know that you sent word that you could give only three matzahs, but nonetheless my father, the Seret-Vizhnitzer Rebbe, told me to tell you that he must have six matzahs." The Skulener Rebbe felt that he had no choice but to honour the request, albeit reluctantly.

On the day before Pesach, Rabbi Moshe returned to the Skulener Rebbe, saying "I want to return three of the matzahs to you."

"But I don't understand. I thought your father absolutely had to have six matzahs."

"My father said to ask whether you had saved any of the *Shmurah Matzah* for yourself?"

Embarrassed, the Skulener Rebbe replied, "How could I, when so many others needed?"

"My father assumed that is what you would do," explained Rabbi Moshe. "These three matzahs are for you!"

Hugs

By Shimon Posner

The Communists rose to power when Naphtali--"Tolchik" to his friends--was young. His father didn't like the smell of it all and told Tolchik to become a shochet -- to master the intricate, exacting practice of kosher butchering. The training takes years and the pay is lousy. "Become a *shochet*," said Tolchik's father. "If you'll be a shochet, you'll stay a Jew."

Tolchik the shochet and his wife raised their children under the Soviets. By the early 1950's all had escaped, most of them with false passports. Except for their grown son Meir and his growing family.

Their other son Berel had escaped together with Rebbetzin Chana Shneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe's mother, posing as her son. Upon arrival to New York, Berel

became a diamond cutter, and (the grey Soviet's silver-lining) maintained his "filial" status with Rebbetzin Chana (he had the keys to her apartment) and developed a warm relationship with her son, the Rebbe of Lubavitch. Tolchik and his wife, together with their daughter, settled in Montreal, his son Dovid was in Antwerp. Tolchik was happy, but for Meir's being held by the Soviets.

There is a custom to receive matzah from one's Rebbe before Passover. Naturally, Berel would be doing so.

"When you receive matzah from the Rebbe," Tolchik told his son Berel, "mention to him your brother Meir."

"But do not ask for just a *brachah*, a blessing," continued Tolchik. "Ask for *ahavtachah* -- ask for the Rebbe's assurance -- that my Meir will make it out alive."

Berel never pushed anyone into doing something they did not want to do. And a chassid does not demand of his Rebbe. But Berel never refused his father.

The Rebbe handed matzah to Berel. Berel mentioned his brother Meir and the Rebbe gave his *brachah*. "My father requests your *assurance* that Meir will come out."

The Rebbe's face grew dark and his hand shook. "*Shlep mir nisht beim tzung!* (Don't wrench words out of me that I cannot say)" the Rebbe answered with rare sting, and added, "My father-in-law accomplished greater things than this."

Berel saw tears in the Rebbe's eyes begin to fall. The Rebbe gave Berel another piece of matzah. "You will give this to your brother."

"My brother Dovid in Belgium?" Berel asked.

"No. Meir. Not necessarily in America but somewhere close by."

A few years later the family got word that Meir had plans to spirit his family across the border with forged passports. He failed. More years passed. Berel held the matzah for his brother. Eighteen years he held onto that matzah: matzah, the Kabbalah calls it the bread of faith.

Then they heard. Meir is free! With his wife! With his sons! With his daughter! They received visas to Canada (not necessarily America, but close by) and Berel got himself to Montreal just as fast as he could. Berel hadn't seen his brother in over twenty years. He ran towards his brother. His brother ran towards him. He gave his brother the piece of matzah. And then they fell into each other's arms.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Moses stretched his hand over the sea (14:21)

Moses went to divide the sea as G-d had commanded, but the sea refused to comply, exclaiming: "What, before you shall I divide? Am I not greater than you? For I was created in the third day and you on the sixth." When Moses heard this, he went and reported to G-d, "The sea refuses to be divided." What did G-d do? He placed His right hand upon the right hand of Moses. (*Midrash Rabbah*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

CHOL HAMOED

18 NISSAN • 29 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:02 PM
	MINCHA:	7:10 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	7:50 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:28 AM
	MINCHA:	7:00 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	7:57 PM
SUNDAY 31 MARCH, EREV YOM TOV:	SHACHARIS:	9:15 AM
	LIGHT CANDLES AT:	6:59 PM
	MINCHA:	7:05 PM
	MAARIV:	7:50 PM
MONDAY 1 APRIL:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	7:05 PM
	LIGHT CANDLES AFTER:	7:54 PM
	MAARIV:	7:45 PM
TUESDAY 2 APRIL:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	HOLIDAY ENDS:	7:53 PM
WED. - THUR:	SHACHARIS:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:00 PM
	MAARIV:	7:45 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 29 & 31 MARCH, 1 APRIL 2013

BEGINS			ENDS	
29th	31st	1st	30th	2nd
7:02	6:59	7:54	7:57	7:53
6:58	6:55	7:49	7:52	7:48
5:32	5:30	6:22	6:24	6:20
6:35	6:33	7:22	7:23	7:21
5:31	5:28	6:20	6:22	6:19
6:00	5:57	6:50	6:53	6:49
6:38	6:35	7:29	7:32	7:28
6:46	6:43	7:37	7:40	7:36
6:52	6:49	7:46	7:49	7:49
7:03	7:00	7:55	7:58	7:54
7:02	6:58	7:56	7:59	7:54
6:51	6:47	7:46	7:49	7:44
6:30	6:27	7:19	7:22	7:18



Light candles on April 1st only from a pre-existing flame