

LampLighter

18 Nissan
Passover
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

While the first night of Passover commemorates the redemption from exile in Egypt, the final day celebrates the future Redemption, which G-d will bring about through *Moshiach*.

The connection between the first and the last redemption is also gleaned from the verse: "As in the days when you left Egypt, I shall show you wonders [during the final Redemption]."

Our Rabbis ask: Why does the verse say "As in the **days** when you left Egypt," when the Exodus took place on one day, as the verse states: "Remember this day on which you left Egypt."

On the day the Jewish slaves left Egypt they achieved the status of free people. This transition, however, is an ongoing experience that requires constant meditation on the concepts of slavery and freedom. A person's ruminations must have a salutary effect on his daily conduct.

This is why spiritual redemption from all straits and limitations that constitute spiritual Egyptian exile is an ongoing process, notwithstanding the fact that the Jews' physical Exodus took only one day.

This is expressed by our Sages when they state: "In each and every generation and on each and every day, every man is obligated to see himself as if he had gone out from Egypt on that very day."

Man's viewing the Exodus from Egypt as a continuous process will lead to daily improvement in conduct as well - as befits a free man.

Both the first and the final redemption involve the liberation of all the Jewish people. Just as the Exodus encompassed the entire nation and resulted from the Jews' collective service, so will the future Redemption liberate all Jews from exile, and it too will result from our collective efforts.

This collective liberation and effort came about during the Exodus as a result of the effort of each Jew, who first liberated himself from his own spiritual exile.

And so with the final liberation: the efforts of each and every Jew in redeeming himself from spiritual exile will result in the collective redemption of all Jews from the final exile.

In practical terms, the lesson from the above is that each and every Jew is entrusted by G-d with a unique mission that he, and only he, is capable of accomplishing.

He cannot rely on someone else to fulfil that mission for him, for the other individual is entrusted with his own mission.

On the other hand, each person must also realize that he is part of a collective - the Jewish nation. His mission is thus of vital importance not only to himself but to all the Jewish people.

Fulfilling his mission as an individual thus helps the Jewish people fulfil their mission as a collective whole. Ultimately, each Jew's personal redemption from spiritual exile leads to the collective redemption of all Jews from the final exile.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

It's Only Natural

By Yanki Tauber

Pundits love generalizations. Half the world is this, the other half is that, and that explains just about everything.

Here, then, is our own generalization: the world consists of pagans and transcendentalists. Pagans eat, drink and sleep; transcendentalists work for world peace. Pagans believe that the way things are is the way things should be; transcendentalists believe that we were placed on this earth to change the way things are. Pagans worship nature; transcendentalists worship G-d.

The Egyptians were pagans, the Hebrews were transcendentalists. The Hebrews were slaves to the Egyptians; then G-d intervened, humiliated the Egyptians, freed the Hebrews and set them loose upon the world. This, in 30 words (more or less), is the story of the birth of the Jewish people.

Thus we read of ten plagues visited upon the Egyptians. These are usually understood as punishments for their cruel treatment of the Jews. But a closer reading of the Torah's account reveals that they also served a more basic function: to discredit the gods of Egypt so that "you shall know that I am G-d."

The Nile — Egypt's source of sustenance and most revered deity — turns to blood; the soil turns to vermin, the skies rain a lethal deluge of fire and ice, the light of day turns to inky blackness. Nature is transformed from a nurturing mother into a capricious witch.

Taking the Jews out of Egypt would not have achieved anything if the Jews had taken Egypt along with them when they went. So first the Jews had to witness the destruction of Egypt's gods: they had to hear their masters renounce the natural order they had deified; they had to see the "goodness" of nature exposed for the sham that it is.

Only when the paganism of Egypt had been uprooted from their hearts, could the Children of Israel proceed to Mount Sinai to receive their mandate as "A light unto the nations." Only then could they teach the world that nature is not to be worshipped, but improved upon; that the way things are is to be supplanted with the way things ought to be.



Pesach in a Siberian Labour Camp

Rabbi Eliezer Naness (1897-1997) was imprisoned in a Russian labour camp for over two decades. The following excerpt describes his first Passover there.

Just before Passover in 1938, I was summoned to the camp office. The commandant's aide informed me that my wife had sent a package containing warm clothing, a hundred roubles and a packet of *matzot*. He gave me everything except the *matzot*. "Because you do not work on Saturday, you will be having enough troubles. I advise you, for your own welfare, not to take the *matzot*. Ask the commandant to return them to your wife. Then there can be the possibility of discussing transferring you, and maybe your friend too, to some lighter work."

I thanked him for his advice and good intentions, and asked him to give me the *matzot* because I would not eat *chametz* (leaven) on Passover. The representative apologized and added, "I can only warn you that you are doing yourself, and especially your young friend [Shmuel], a grave disservice. There is talk in camp already that you are demoralizing the other prisoners of your brigade. You know that there are plenty of ways of eliminating undesirable elements here. They'll send you off some place. On the way 'something' will happen. Your bones will never be found."

He gave me the *matzot* and said no more. I walked off delighted that we had *matzot* for Passover. The day prior to Passover, we went out to work as usual. In the evening, when all the prisoners went to eat, Shmuel and I prayed the Passover evening service. Then we spread out a sack on the shelf where we slept at night and set the seder on it. We put out three *matzot* for both of us. We didn't have maror (bitter herbs) but we didn't lack bitter experiences. We had no wine either, but we had it in our thoughts,

and we began the seder. First we recited *Kiddush*. Then Shmuel asked me the four questions.

Shmuel and I spoke of our relatives. I thought of how my wife and my mother were now sitting in their houses alone, and that they were surely shedding tears over my condition in this brutal camp. Shmuel's thoughts were of his parents, also sitting at the seder without him. We decided then, that whatever awaited us the next day, on the holiday of Passover, we would not work. Just as the nation of Israel believed that G-d would redeem them from Egypt, so we believed that G-d would save us from this camp and that He would take all the Jews from Russia and bring them to Israel; just as the Jews could not escape from Egypt, so the Jews could not escape from Russia. Only G-d could take them from Russia and bring them to the Land of Israel.

Late that night we presented our brigadier with some *matzot*. He was very grateful and promised to help me. "You'll have to go out with the rest of the brigade. Otherwise I'll have to report you. Out there we'll find a way to keep you from working on the holiday."

On the first day of Passover, Shmuel and I evaded the brigade. The brigadier pretended not to notice our disappearance as we went wandering around the area.

We found a tiny abandoned, unheated room, where we huddled in the intolerable cold. In the evening, when the brigade finished its work, we came out. Our reception was unfriendly. After roll-call, everyone went to the mess hall while we prayed, conducted the second seder, and lay down to sleep. The following morning, the brigadier had a paternal conversation with us.

"You know that there are no secrets in camp. The commander has already been informed that you did not appear for work yesterday because of your holiday. The rumour is that you will be tried for 'collective refusal to work.' You are well aware that your reward for this can be a rope. I won't force you to work on your holy days, but I will not suffer along with you. Do as you wish without involving me. I want nothing to do with the whole thing."

Avoiding work that day was much more difficult than the first day, but we

managed. Frozen and famished, we wandered around the work area. When night finally fell, we prayed and then returned to our brigade and started working. Returning to the zone, we found our supervisor waiting for us. "Look here," he said to me. "If you want to destroy your life, that's your affair. I don't wish you any evil, G-d forbid. The commandant isn't the least interested in your trial, because this can cast a shadow on his whole career. He can send you to the other world without any trial, and he has done exactly that more than once to others. Consider very carefully how to get out of this danger."

In the commandant's office we found an NKVD colonel. The colonel spoke calmly and patiently, as though he counted his words. "What is the nature of your refusal to work on Saturdays and Jewish holidays?"

"Only religious."

"We have had a particular interest in this matter. We are informed that, according to Jewish law, work is permitted on Saturday if danger to life is involved. Hence, it is clear to us that your refusal to work, especially in a collective manner, is of an absolutely political nature. Crimes of this sort may be punished by execution. We shall grant you one more chance. If you assure us that henceforth you will work honestly and diligently every day of the week, as do the others, we will give you your proper sentence. In addition, if your conduct is good, we might transfer you to lighter work." He paused for our answer. "Well, what do you say?"

"I will not work on the Shabbat and Jewish holidays under any condition," I answered categorically. Shmuel said the same.

"I believe you will reconsider this," the colonel answered in a mixture of anger and exasperation. "In the meantime, go to sleep."

Despite threats, beatings, and torture throughout the 20 years, R. Eliezer Naness never "reconsidered" when it came to the observance of mitzvot. In prison, Nanas earned the nickname of Subbota, the Russian word for the Sabbath, because of his scrupulous observance of Shabbat under the most brutal of circumstances. The entire time behind bars, he also refused to eat cooked food and adhered strictly to the kosher dietary laws.

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ISSUE 979

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The eighth day of Passover is traditionally associated with our hope for Moshiach. For this reason, the Haftarah read on that day - from the prophet Isaiah - contains many prophecies which refer to the Era of the Redemption. Among the best-known of these: "The wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with a young goat." About 250 years ago, as the time for Moshiach drew closer, the Baal Shem Tov instituted a custom which underlines the connection between the Redemption and the eighth day of Passover: on that day he would partake of Moshiach's Seuda, the festive meal of Moshiach. (*Likutei Sichot, vol 7*)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



The Story of Divine Providence

The festival of Passover calls for early and elaborate preparations to make the Jewish home fitting for the great festival. It is not physical preparedness alone that is required of us, but also spiritual preparedness—for in the life of the Jew the physical and spiritual are closely linked together, especially in the celebration of our Sabbath and festivals.

On Passover we celebrate the liberation of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery and, together with it, the liberation from, and negation of the ancient Egyptian system and way of life, the “abominations of Egypt.” Thus we celebrate our physical liberation together with our spiritual freedom. Indeed, there cannot be one without the other; there can be no real freedom without accepting the precepts of our Torah guiding our daily life; pure and holy life eventually leads to real freedom.

It is said: “In every generation each Jew should see himself as though he personally had been liberated from Egypt.” This is to say, that the lesson of Passover has *always* a timely message for the individual Jew. The story of Passover is the story of the special Divine Providence which alone determines the fate of our people. What is happening in the outside world need not affect us; we might be singled out for suffering, G-d forbid, amid general prosperity, and likewise singled out for safety amid a general plague or catastrophe. The story of our enslavement and liberation of which Passover tells us, give ample illustration of this. For the fate of our people is determined by its adherence to G-d and His Prophets.

This lesson is emphasized by the three principal symbols of the Seder, concerning which our Sages said that unless the Jew explains their significance he has not observed the Seder fittingly: *Pesach* [the Paschal Offering], *Matzoh* and *Moror* [bitter herbs]. Using these symbols in their chronological order and in accordance with the Haggadah explanation, we may say: the Jews avoid *Moror* (bitterness of life) only through *Pesach* (G-d’s special care ‘passing over’ and saving the Jewish homes even in the midst of the greatest plague), and *Matzoh*—then the very catastrophe and the enemies of the Jews will work for the benefit of the Jews, driving them in great haste out of “Mitzraim” [Egypt], the place of perversion and darkness, and placing them under the beam of light and holiness.

One other important thing we must remember. The celebration of the festival of freedom must be connected with the commandment “You shall relate it to your son.” The formation and existence of the Jewish home, as of the Jewish people as a whole, is dependent upon the upbringing of the young generation, both boys and girls: the *wise* and the *wicked* (temporarily), the *simple* and the one *who knows not what to ask*. Just as we cannot shirk our responsibility towards our child by the excuse that “my child is a wise one; he will find his own way in life therefore no education is necessary for him”; so we must not despair by thinking “the child is a wicked one; no education will help him.” For, all Jewish children, boys and girls, are “G-d’s children” and it is our sacred duty to see to it that they all live up to their above mentioned title; and this we can achieve only through a kosher Jewish education, in full adherence to G-d’s Torah. Then we all will merit the realization of our ardent hopes: “In the next year may we be free; in the next year may we be in Jerusalem!”

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

A WORD from the Director

Connecting Passover and the Holiday of Shavuot is the period known as sefira. We count the days of the Omer which we began on the second day of Passover - our day of liberation from slavery. We continue counting for 49 days until the day on which we commemorate the receiving of the Torah - the culmination of our liberation.

What, we might ask, is the point of counting days, measuring time? Time just marches on. We can all march to the beat of a different drummer, but we can’t actually change time, can we?

Quantitatively, time cannot be changed. But, we learn from sefira, that qualitatively, time can be changed. Time is like a container. We can fill it with nothingness by wasting it away, or, we can fill it with meaningful activities.

In the days between Passover and Shavuot, we should be preparing for the receiving of the Torah. During this preparation period, we must make sure to fill our time “container” with meaningful accomplishments in matters of Torah study and mitzvah performance.

In this way, we will actually be able to “stretch” time. By instilling our actions in the here and now with Jewish content, we fill our limited time with infinite and eternal acts. We transfer and elevate our own time beyond and above time.

J.I. Gutnick

Of the eight days of Passover, the first two and the last two are “yom tov” (festival days). The middle four days are called chol hamoed—“weekdays of the festival,” also called “the intermediate days.” (*In Israel, where Passover is observed for seven days, the first and last days are yom tov, and the middle five days are chol hamoed.*)

The yom tov days are days of rest, during which all creative work is forbidden, as it is on the Shabbat, with the exception of certain types of work associated with food preparation (e.g., cooking and “carrying”). On chol hamoed the prohibition of work is less stringent—work whose

avoidance would result in “significant loss” is permitted (except when chol hamoed is also Shabbat, when all work is forbidden).

The “Yaale V’yavo” prayer is included in all prayers and Grace After Meals. Hallel (partial) and Musaf are recited following the Shacharit (morning) prayers. It is the Chabad custom not to put on tefillin during the “intermediate days”.

CUSTOMS CORNER

It Happened Once...



Five years ago a young rabbi was invited to a town in the former Soviet Union to arrange and conduct a Passover Seder for the area residents.

The recently ordained Rabbi arrived several weeks before the holiday to prepare. Trying to make the event as big as possible, he went to the town's mayor to find a suitable place to hold the festive ceremony.

After exploring several options, the Mayor decided that the best place in town to serve their purpose was the Communist meeting hall. When the Communists were in power, their party hall was usually the biggest building. The Rabbi and the Mayor went to look at the place, and sure enough, it was perfect.

Publicity and posters went up, people were invited, and food was brought and prepared. New vessels were bought, the Passover cooking was supervised, and the whole building was cleaned and decorated with Passover themes.

All the hard work paid off. Three hundred people arrived for the Seder! Young and old, men and women came, all dressed in their nicest clothes with shining faces. Some came from nostalgia, some out of curiosity, and some to enjoy a good meal. But everyone, whether they knew it or not, came because they were Jews and tonight was Passover.

It took a while to get everyone seated and settled. The Rabbi made a short welcoming speech telling them what to expect. For some of them it was their first "Seder" in fifty years, and for many the first in their lives. Haggadahs translated into Russian were handed out, cups were filled with wine, Matzot were distributed, and the evening began.

Everyone followed the Rabbi's instructions, and listened to his explanations with great interest. They read aloud from their books how G-d performed great miracles thousands of years ago, and how He took the Jews out of Egypt. They ate the Matza, drank four cups of wine, finished their holiday meal, sang, and even danced at certain times.

All went smoothly until the cup of Elijah. The rabbi explained that this fifth cup represents the future Redemption, when Moshiach will gather all Jews and make a beautiful new world with the revelation of G-d everywhere.

Suddenly one of the older men stood up, banged on the table and said in a booming voice, "Young man! Excuse me please, young Rabbi!" The place fell silent. As they listened earlier to the Rabbi, they now turned to the impromptu speaker.

"We are very grateful to you for this beautiful evening with the wonderful food and wine you brought us. Everything is very nice, very beautiful and very tasty."

Everyone in the room shook their heads in agreement and wondered what he was getting at.

"Everything you said is also very interesting and nice." The man continued. "Beautiful stories; about miracles... nice Bible stories. We all love stories. But what you said about Messiah coming and making a utopia, building a Holy Temple and all this. Please Rabbi, we are grown up people. We are not little children to believe such nonsense! You are a very nice man and we are very grateful, but please save such foolish superstitions for your children, not for intelligent grown-ups. Please understand, dear Rabbi, this is nothing personal but you are naive. You are locked up in Yeshiva and we live out here in the real world."

Everyone shook their heads in agreement. They looked pitifully at the Rabbi as though to say, "We are sorry, but he's right."

The young rabbi however did not lose his composure. He waited a minute and replied.

"My friend," he said with a warm smile, "My friends!" he opened his arms and looked around the room.

"Do you realize where we are? Do you realize what we are doing? Do you realize what you are saying!? If someone would have told you fifteen years ago that you would celebrate a PASSOVER SEDER in the COMMUNIST MEETING HALL, would you ever have believe him? Fifteen years ago there was nothing more powerful than Communism, and nothing weaker than Judaism! Communism was the chief antagonist and enemy of G-d, everyone in Russia was sure that Communism was right, and would win in the end. Yet here we are! The impossible has happened! Communism has not only fallen, its hall now serves Judaism! Is it really so far-fetched that Moshiach can change the world?"

The man looked at the crowd then back at the young rabbi, straightened up, smiled broadly and said..."BRAVO!!" And the crowd broke into applause.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

The Seder

The Hebrew word "seder" means order or arrangement, alluding to the fact that everything that has ever happened to the Jewish people, from the Exodus until today, has unfolded according to Divine plan. Nothing occurs by accident, even if we don't always understand why an event must take place. (The Maharal)

The seder plate: the roasted egg

In addition to being a reminder of the Passover offering, the roasted egg is a symbol of the Jewish people. The longer other foods are cooked, the softer and more tender they become, but the longer an egg is boiled, the harder it gets. Similarly, the more painful and severe the hardships of the exile, the stronger and more resilient the Jewish people emerges.

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

SHABBAT CHOL HAMOED

19, 21, 22 NISSAN • 23, 25, 26 APRIL

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:27 PM
	MINCHA:	5:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS-MAARIV:	6:10 PM
SHABBOS DAY:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:24 PM
SUNDAY • 24 APRIL:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:25PM
	MINCHA:	5:35 PM
	MAARIV:	6:20 PM
MONDAY • 25 APRIL • SHVI'I SHEL PESACH:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	MAARIV:	6:20PM
	LIGHT CANDLES AFTER:	6:21 PM
TUESDAY • 26 APRIL • ACHARON SHEL PESACH:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	YIZKOR:	11:00 PM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	YOM TOV ENDS:	6:20 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	MAARIV:	6:15 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 22, 24, 25 APRIL 2011



BEGINS	24 th	25 th	ENDS
22 nd			23 rd 26 th
5:27	5:25	6:21	MELBOURNE 6:24 6:20
5:26	5:24	6:19	ADELAIDE 6:22 6:18
5:07	5:05	5:58	BRISBANE 6:00 5:57
6:20	6:19	7:09	DARWIN 7:10 7:08
5:05	5:03	5:56	GOLD COAST 5:58 5:55
5:31	5:29	6:23	PERTH 6:25 6:22
5:07	5:05	6:00	SYDNEY 6:02 5:59
5:14	5:12	6:07	CANBERRA 6:09 6:06
5:14	5:11	6:09	LAUNCESTON 6:12 6:08
5:30	5:27	6:23	AUCKLAND 6:26 6:22
5:23	5:21	6:19	WELLINGTON 6:22 6:18

For the 25th one should light after the given time from a pre-existing flame only.

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.