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March - April 2021 | Nissan - Iyar 5781

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**Your Pesach Guide
March 25 - April 4
Page 8-11**

The Rabbi's Message



I got COVID and experienced Exodus

Egypt, the hebrew word "Mitzrayim" connotes a reality that is relevant to every one of us, at all times and at all places even if we never visit Egypt in our lifetime.

"Mitzrayim" means boundaries and limitations. We all have our unique limitations. What is easy for another can be difficult for me and what comes easy to me can be excruciatingly difficult for another. But often these limitations are in our own minds and every day we have the opportunity to break out of those limitations and set a higher standard for ourselves.

Yesterday's freedom is today's limitations we are obligated to break out of.

Several weeks ago when Chana and I participated in my father-in-law's funeral and Shiva in Brooklyn we both became ill with COVID. With proper treatment, thanks to G-d A-mighty, we both came out of

it in good health but for a while we needed to be in quarantine far away from home.

It so happened to be that our daughter Moussia who lives in Philadelphia leading the Chabad Center at Drexel University also contracted COVID during the same week (in completely unrelated circumstances) so she invited us to quarantine with her family. It was a pleasure to spend time with them but we certainly felt the weight of the new limitations quite starkly.

Being far away from the community for so long, and especially during Purim was extra difficult. Unable to be active due to quarantine regulations as well as the physical exhaustion of the disease was a strange feeling for both of us, and we waited anxiously to break out of this "Mitzrayim." Once it was safe for us to travel we were extra relieved and so happy to come home

to El Paso. This was a "Mitzrayim" experience we had not anticipated and did not wish upon ourselves, but there are times when we willingly place ourselves in a "Mitzrayim" reality and refuse to leave our self made limitations.

The essential message of Passover is that we have the obligation to leave Mitzrayim in every way it may manifest itself and experience Exodus every day.

Challenge yourself to devote a few extra minutes to Torah study. Take upon yourself a Mitzvah you feel is difficult and dare yourself to do it consistently. Push your own limits every day and enjoy the sweet taste of the freedom you earn with every new step you take.

Best wishes for a Kosher and joyous Pesach!

Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg

The Hebrew words used to describe the Exodus we celebrate on Pesach are "Yetziat Mitzrayim" - Leaving Egypt. Our sages tell us that "In every generation, and every day, one is obligated to view themselves as having left Egypt - today."

How is that even possible if most of us have never been to the land of Egypt?

While the Egypt our ancestors were enslaved in and were redeemed from is in the same geographical location as today's

From Our Mail Box

I feel that my spirituality and religious observances have increased in significant ways these past four months while studying with you. There has been an acceleration and definite change in depth... Much of what we have been learning with you has been practical for me to apply to situations that come up...

The current class topics are intense, sometimes new, other times familiar. There is much to think about, appreciate, and occasionally wrestle with.

Oh, another topic I have been wanting to share with you... I heard many mentions of the Rebbe. Pictures of him are everywhere. I have heard about people having dollar bills they received from him, etc. I have read a biography about the Rebbe and his book about those he encouraged to go forth to new communities to set up Chabads. Well, this was all interesting but also alienating in some ways. I will never see him gaze deep into my eyes

with his remarkable attention. I will never receive a dollar from him or a letter or advice.

But taking classes with you week after week where you help us step by step through different topics and issues, with the use of the Farbrengen and his letters has helped me to "know" him a bit and more easily understand what kind of person he was. He is beginning to feel more accessible to me because of the format of some of your classes.

.....

Dear Shainy, I want to thank you again for the lovely Purim box you brought to me yesterday. I so enjoyed your visit and being with two of your darling children. The baby is so beautiful as is your nine year old daughter.

T. told me that he received a Purim box that the rabbi brought to his office and how much he also appreciates it. Thank you again for your kindness. You and your family are so special.

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In This Issue

Table listing contents: Celebration 119, Online Model Seder, Pre-Passover Experience, Rabbi's Message, From Our Mailbox, Raffle Winner, Message from the Rebbe, Camp Gan Israel, Chabad Tomorrow, Rabbi's Blog, Ongoing Programs at Chabad, Tributes to Rabbi Garelik obm, Community Calendar, Chabad in Photos, Open Letter to Zaidy, Pesach Guide, Holiday Times, Sale of Chametz Form, JLI: This Can Happen.

A Message from the Lubavitcher Rebbe



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 the L-rd your 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.

True Freedom

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 worshipped. 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 societal 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 worshipped 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!

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From the Rabbis' Blog

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Dedicated by Northeast Feed



Rabbi Levi Greenberg

Miracles Are Not Enough

“Rabbi, if G-d would split the sea in front of my eyes I’ll wrap Tefillin every day.”

That’s a real quote from a conversation I had several years ago. On the surface the argument seems sound. If the point of miraculous Bible stories is to prove that G-d is the Creator and still in control of the universe, why can’t I experience this today? Wouldn’t religious observance be more popular if we witnessed nature altering miracles everyday?

While I’m not in the business of winning arguments I found it worthwhile exploring the details of that story to gain perspective on living life Jewishly.

On the seventh day of Passover we will read in the Torah how G-d caused Pharaoh to regret driving the Israelites out of Egypt after suffering ten devastating plagues. Surprisingly Pharaoh managed to convince his traumatized nation to saddle up and chase after their former slaves who had caused them so much grief for ten months.

Barely a week after tasting freedom the Israelites were trapped between their sadistic oppressors and the raging sea with no escape route available. In one of the most amazing divine revelations to ever happen, G-d instructed Moshe to lift his staff over the sea causing the water to split, allowing the Israelites a dry and safe passage, while simultaneously crashing down on their enemies.

The event was so spectacular that in the special song of praise the Israelites sang that morning they declared “This is my G-d and I will exalt

Him!” Every Jew literally saw G-d and rejoiced.

But then something strange happened. After journeying for 3 days without finding water they started complaining bitterly. Is it possible that after witnessing such divine miracles they were still capable of allowing their thirst to get in the way of their faith?

While every story in the Torah happened in a physical sense, there are multiple levels of commentary that make every word in Torah relevant at all times. The Talmud comments that a metaphorical reading of the verse teaches us that since the Israelites journeyed for 3 days without hearing Torah they became “weary in their faith” and therefore succumbed to complaining to G-d.

For this reason Jewish tradition mandates that we read the Torah publicly on Shabbat, Monday and Thursday so that 3 days do not pass without

learning Torah.

This idea explains a lot about Jewish observance and why my friend’s challenge is a non-starter. True, miracles are important and impactful, but they are not transformative. Experiencing the Splitting of the Sea did not stop the Jews from complaining 3 days later, and if G-d would split the sea in front of us today I’m not convinced everyone would be observing all 613 commandments flawlessly. Because faith must be constantly nurtured day in and day out.

While celebrating Passover is crucial with a Seder, eating Matzah, drinking four cups of wine and all it comes along with, we must carry that inspiration far beyond the Seder table. Studying Torah every day and doing Mitzvot with consistency is the only way to achieve a meaningful and lasting relationship with G-d.

Ongoing Programs at Chabad

Synagogue Services - In Person

Shabbat

Friday Night: Mincha & Maariv: 7:00pm

Shabbat Day: Shacharit: 10:00am

Followed by outdoor Kiddush & Mincha

Weekdays

Shacharit:

Sun. 9:00am | Mon. & Thurs. 7:00am

Mincha & Maariv:

Sun. Mon. Wed. Thurs. 7:00pm | Tues. 6:45pm

Torah Classes - All on Zoom

Sunday:

Tanya - 7:30am | Rebbe’s Teachings - 3:30pm

Tuesday:

Talmud - 12:00pm | Parsha - 7:30pm

Wednesday: Women’s Class - 7:00pm

Tributes to Rabbi Garelik o.b.m.

I was fortunate to meet him 10+ years ago and be in his presence on many Shabbats, Festivals and Simchas. I always looked forward to visiting with him even though our conversations were brief but meaningful.

His life’s work is very inspiring and inspires me to want to do more to help others. He will be missed but not forgotten and I will always cherish my picture with him. Zichrono Livracha.

Ed Solomon



.....
We were so very fortunate to have had the honor of knowing him. I believe the first time I met him was at the old Escondido location at Shmulik’s Bris. I was with Asher and his eyes just focused on Asher... totally ignored me. He knew the future is what was important (and we all agree on that).

I remember how happy he was coming to El Paso - he loved the peacefulness.

I know he will be missed by so many but all the memories he left will be with all of us always.

Sidney and Meralee Schlusberg

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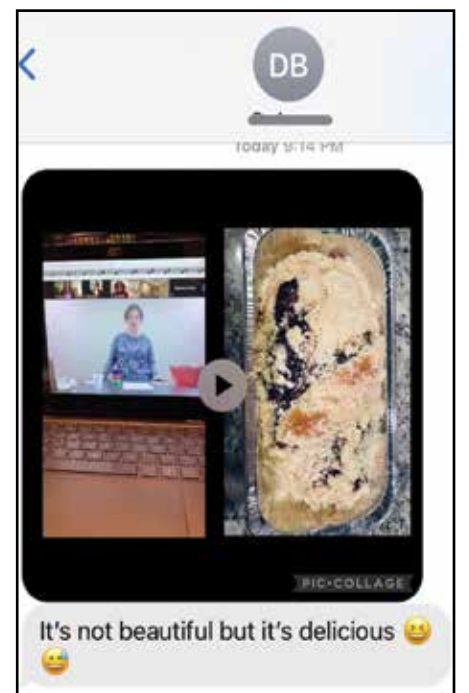
Preparing for Pesach at Chabad



Purim with Chabad



The Great Virtual Babka Bake



An open letter to my grandfather Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik o.b.m.

On Shabbat morning, Adar 1 - February 13, Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik, longtime emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe to Italy and the father of Mrs. Chana Greenberg, passed away. He was 88 years old.

Dear Zaidy,

I never wrote you letters, nor did I ever express to you what our relationship means to me, but as we mourn your passing I feel it appropriate to write you a public letter so others can learn from you as well.

From the moment I learned of your passing, a veritable ocean of information has been flooding my WhatsApp feed around the clock. You meant so much to the global Chabad community and the anecdotes, photos and videos being shared tell the story of a man who merited to not only be enshrined in the annals of recent Chabad history, but of someone who managed to inspire thousands just by being around.

It was your joyful Chassidic vigor and your unbridled love for the Rebbe - the Rebbe's teachings and the Rebbe's work - which you constantly projected, that made your very presence a source of inspiration to so many. But I'll leave the official obituaries and tributes to others and I will try to express what you meant to me as a grandfather.

Living in El Paso meant we were geographically distant, but you made a point to visit us fairly regularly and we often saw you in New York on our trips there as well. Growing up you were a familiar presence in our lives although we barely communicated in a meaningful way. There was a real language barrier between us, but that didn't matter. Your bright smile, cheerful vibe and the candies you ceremoniously gave us kids made us feel your warmth and love in ways that transcended words and activities.

One summer night in Brooklyn when I was fifteen years old I had an experience I am still processing today. It was the Third of Tammuz, the Rebbe's Yahrzeit, and there were many events happening in the Crown Heights neighborhood that evening. On my way to one of the main gatherings I was hungry and decided to make a detour to my uncle and aunt's home for a quick supper.

I found an empty home but a full refrigerator and as I fixed myself something to eat, you walked into the kitchen and greeted me with your bright smile. As I sat down to eat, after offering you a glass of tea which you so graciously accepted, we had our first real conversation. I was fluent in Yiddish by then and for the next two hours you shared stories and anecdotes of what meant everything in your life: the Rebbe.

The conversation was casual and flowed

from story to story. I asked you questions about the glorious years you spent in 770 basking in the Rebbe's presence and you shared more and more. Sometimes you responded to my probing questions with one of your signature smiles and refused to pursue the topic, but never did I feel shut out of anything.

Most of the stories you shared that night I heard from you again on multiple occasions later on, but the significance of that conversation for me was much more than the information you shared. It was the fact that as an elder Chossid you conversed with me as if I was an equal. You spoke of the Rebbe as if I had been there with you and devoted the past 60 years of my life dedicated to his mission.

I did not realize it then, but the two hours you spent with me that night illustrated a fundamental truth I am still processing today. Without saying it you basically told me that night "Levi, you are a Chossid. Whatever it meant to be a Chossid since the dawn of the Chassidic movement over 250 years ago, applies to you, one hundred percent."

You didn't preach to me what it means to be a Chossid; you treated me like a full fledged Chossid. And for that I am forever grateful.

Whenever family came together for an occasion or even at a random dinner you had the custom of reading one of the hundreds of letters you merited to receive from the Rebbe over the span of 35 years. You always read the letters with such awe and reverence and often they were letters that were connected to that time period.

Recently you started reading the same letter every time. One you received on the 11th of Nissan 1972 - the Rebbe's birthday. The content of the letter is similar to the pre Passover blessings the Rebbe would send to thousands each year, but you read it every time as if you were the only one to receive such a beautiful blessing and as if it came in the mail that morning.

I admit that in my youthful impatience and immaturity I would inwardly groan, but thinking about it now I realize what you taught us by sharing the same letter again and again: New discoveries might be exciting, but a serious human being must aspire to appreciate even one empowering lesson and shape their life around its message.

Most of our conversations revolved around stories and I find it providential that the first

Shabbat after your passing is connected to one of the stories you told me.

This Shabbat during synagogue services we will read the short Torah portion "Zachor" (lit. remember) reminding us of the diabolical Amalekite nation who attacked the Israelites after their exodus, for no good reason other than senseless hatred. G-d commanded us to remember the despicable act and to cleanse the world of this evil. In the Haftara we read the story of King Shaul, who was commanded by G-d to wage war on the Amalekites and eradicate their memory.

Reb Zalman Zezmer was a disciple of the Alter Rebbe - the founder of the Chabad movement. As a brilliant young scholar he was unaware of the Chassidic movement until one year on Shabbat Zachor a visiting scholar named Reb Binyamin Kletzker, already a legendary Chossid at the time, was honored with reciting the Haftara. Listening to Reb Binyomin recite the chapter about Amalek, the young Zalmen sensed that he truly hated Amalek with a passion, unlike anything he had heard before. Reb Binyomin was not raging against an ancient enemy of the distant past, but rather fighting against something current, real and relatable.

He asked Reb Binyomin where he learned to hate Amalek with such a passion and after a series of events Reb Binyomin brought him to the Alter Rebbe where he discovered the life changing teachings of Chassidus and learned about the Amalek within each one of us here and now. The force that seeks to dampen our Jewish enthusiasm and distract us from what's really important. Something you can truly hate when you realize that it's present and relevant here and now.

Zaidy, you embodied the idea that Judaism is not an academic or religious pursuit, but rather life itself. And you joyfully projected this truth to everyone around you, especially family.

As I continue to hear more of your life and your accomplishments I hope to not be distracted by the fascinating history it all represents but rather seek to apply these lessons in a real way so that I can live up to your treating me as a full fledged Chossid. As I continue to do my part in the corner of planet earth we call El Paso to prepare the world for redemption, please storm the heavens and entreat G-d to finally send us Moshiach, who will usher in an era of global peace and tranquility for all.

Love,
Levi



Zaidy celebrating at my Bar Mitzvah in El Paso



Zaidy officiating at my wedding in Brooklyn.

Your PASSOVER Guide - 12 - 22 Nissan

What Is Chametz?

Chametz is leavened products containing wheat, barley, oats, rye or spelt. Consumption and ownership of Chametz is forbidden for eight and a half days, starting at noontime of the Seder day (Wednesday, April 8) through the eighth day of Pesach (Thursday, April 16). Clear your home of all chametz: Remember to empty pockets, vacuum cleaner bags, and to replace pet foods for the week. You will need to use a separate set of dishes for Pesach.

The supermarket aisles are loaded with “Kosher for Passover” products. Fruits, vegetables and most raw and unprocessed foods are kosher for Pesach. (Consult with your Rabbi about using beans or legumes). For a complete guide to preparing your house for Pesach, along with a storehouse of knockout recipes, get your hands on “The Spice and Spirit of Kosher for Passover Cooking” (LWO, 2003), available at most Jewish bookstores. For other recipe ideas visit www.chabadelpaso.com/passover. Feel free to call us at 584-8218 with any questions.

Chametz for Sale

As we are not allowed own Chametz throughout the festival, it is sold to a non-Jew with a legally binding sale (according to both Jewish and civil law). Fill out and mail in the sale form (See page 11). This is a legal document authorizing the Rabbi to transfer the ownership of your chametz to a non-Jew for the duration of Pesach. The Rabbi will buy back your chametz at the conclusion of Pesach.

Thursday, March 25 Fast of the Firstborn

It is an ancient tradition for the firstborns to fast on the day before Passover. Since we (generally) do not fast on Shabbat, which is a day of feasting, or on Friday which may interfere with our Shabbat joy, this fast is observed on Thursday, 12 Nissan. The widespread custom is for firstborns to participate in a siyum or another celebratory event that overrides the fast and allows them to eat for the remainder of the day. You are invited to participate in a Siyum on Thursday, March 25 after Shacharit services at Chabad at 7:00am.

The Formal Chametz Search

On the night before Passover we search for chametz (which we are forbidden to own or eat on Passover) by candlelight. Since this cannot be done on Friday night, which is Shabbat, we do it after nightfall on Thursday.

Tightly roll ten pieces of chametz in paper wrappings and hide them around the house. It is recommended to keep a list of your hiding places in case you can't find one of the ten pieces. Traditionally, a lit candle is used to help with the search. A spoon (shovel) and feather (broom)

are used to help scoop the ten hidden pieces of chametz into a paper bag. Before beginning the search, recite this blessing:

Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheh Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Veti-vo-nu Al Bee-ur Cho-metz.

“Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us concerning the removal of chametz.”

Place the ten pieces of chametz in a conspicuous spot until morning.

Friday, March 26 Burning the Chametz

The last bits of chametz must be burned the day before Passover, before the fifth halachic hour of the day. Since this cannot be done on Shabbat, the burning of the chametz takes place at the same time on Friday, even though we keep just enough chametz to eat at the Friday night and Shabbat morning meals.

It is customary to burn the Chametz we will not eat on Shabbat by 12:09 pm.

Eating Chametz on Shabbat

Since the house cannot be cleaned on Shabbat, all the cleaning must be finished on Friday. Yet it is a mitzvah to eat bread at the Friday night and Shabbat morning meals.

It is also forbidden to eat matzah at this time, in order that we enjoy it on Passover eve with relish. In practice, we retain a small quantity of chametz, carefully kept away from our food and utensils, all of which are strictly kosher for Passover by this time.

On Shabbat morning, services are held early so that the Shabbat meal, which requires two challah loaves (which are chametz), can be concluded before the deadline.

On a practical note, it is advisable to prepare small rolls, one per meal for each participant, which can be distributed and eaten without the use of a knife.

Make sure that you eat all the chametz that has been left for Shabbat before the deadline at 11:06am, as chametz cannot be sold, burned, or taken out to the street on Shabbat. Any remaining challah pieces and crumbs should be flushed down the toilet.

Before 12:09pm it is important to nullify all remaining Chametz in our possession by saying: “All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.”

Sunday Night, March 28

Sefirat Haomer - Counting of the Omer

Tonight we begin the counting of the Omer, named for the Omer offering of new crops brought in the Temple on the second day of Passover. We count 49 days from Passover until Shavuot in anticipation for the day when we received the holy Torah at Mount Sinai. During the Omer count, we work on self growth in preparation for this monumental event. A person has 49 combined emotional and spiritual traits. Each day of the Omer is a propitious time to work on a particular aspect, until our soul is fully primed to receive a spark of G-dliness on the 50th day, Shavuot.

Tuesday, March 30 - Friday, April 2 Chol HaMoed

The four days between the first two and last two days of Passover are called Chol Hamoed. The laws prohibiting Chametz consumption and ownership still apply. It is customary to drink a glass of wine every day of Pesach.

Friday Evening, April 2 - Sunday, April 4 Final Days of Pesach

The last two days of Pesach are observed as a festival. Women and girls light holiday candles, Kiddush is recited over a glass of wine and it is a Mitzvah to enjoy a lavish dinner and lunch on both days. These two days celebrate the salvation of the Israelites at the Red Sea and the imminent arrival of Moshiach.

Shevii Shel Pesach

A week after the redemption, Pharaoh and the Egyptian army pursued the Israelites to bring them back to slavery. The Splitting of the Sea and the destruction of the Egyptian army marked the complete salvation and irreversible freedom of the Jews. It is customary to spend the night learning Torah. During Synagogue services the story of the Splitting of the Sea is read together with the song of praise entitled “Az Yashir.”

Acharon Shel Pesach

Without our forebears, we not only wouldn't have Passover, we wouldn't be here. That's why we remember our departed parents on the eighth day of Passover with the special Yizkor prayer - synagogue memorial service.

Seudat Moshiach - Meal of Moshiach

The Baal Shem Tov, founder of Chassidism, would conclude Pesach with a “Feast of Moshiach.” This festive meal complete with matzah and four cups of wine begins before sunset. It is the perfect way to spiritually take leave of Pesach and open our consciousness to the imminent redemption.

Shmurah Matzah

Shmurah means watched. Shmurah is an apt description of this matzah. The flour and water ingredients are watched from the moment of harvesting and drawing.

The day chosen for the harvesting of the wheat is a clear, dry day. The moment it is harvested the wheat is inspected to ensure that there is

absolutely no moisture. From then, careful watch is kept on the grains as they are transported to the mill. The mill is meticulously inspected to ensure that each piece of equipment that will be used in the making of the matzah is absolutely clean and dry. The flour is then transported to the bakery under strict supervision.

The water, too, is carefully secluded to prevent any contact with wheat or other grains. The water is drawn the night before the baking, and is kept pure until the moment it is mixed with the flour to bake the shmurah matzah.

In the bakery itself shmurah matzot are made under strict supervision to avoid any possibility of leavening

during the baking process. Shmurah matzot are round and kneaded and shaped by hand. In these two ways they are similar to the matzot that were baked by the Israelites as they left Egypt. It is thus fitting to use shmurah matzah on each of the two Seder nights for the matzot of the Seder plate.

5781 - March 25-April 4, 2021

This year, many will need to celebrate the Seder on their own once again. We are here to help you do it! Chabad is offering a FREE Seder plate with all the necessary ingredients as well as a Haggadah and guide to help you run your own Seder at home.

First Seder - March, 27 | Second Seder - March 28

Please contact us by phone at 915-584-8218 or by email at chabad@chabadelpaso.com to reserve your Seder plate.

Available for pickup on Friday, March 26.

The Passover Seder Plate

The Seder Plate (Ka'arah) includes most of the ingredients that go into the making of the Seder. Its three matzahs and the six other items are arranged in a formation dictated by their mystical significance and relationship vis-a-vis each other.

Here's how to set up your Ka'arah:

On a large plate, tray or cloth, place three whole matzahs, each one piled on top of the other. It's best to use round, hand-baked shmurah matzah.

Cover the matzahs with a cloth or tray. Above the covering, position the following six items as pictured above right:

1) "Zeroa" - a roasted chicken bone with most of its meat removed. This represents the Passover offering. It is not eaten during the Seder.

2) "Beitzah" - a hard-boiled egg. It represents the festival offering.

3) "Maror" - grated horseradish (just the horseradish -- not the red stuff that has vinegar and beets added) and/or romaine lettuce. This is the bitter herbs.

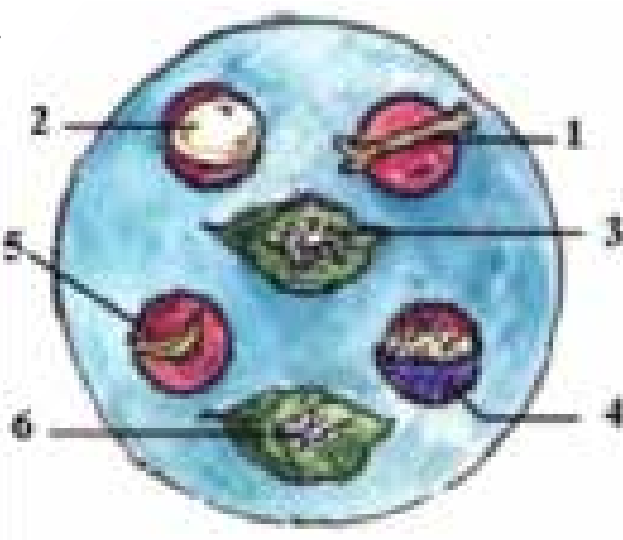
4) "Charoset" - a paste made of apples, pears, nuts and wine. You will dip the bitter herbs into the Charoset.

5) "Karpas" - a piece of an onion or potato.

6) "Chazeret" -- more bitter herbs. This is used in the matzah-maror sandwich

You will also need a wine cup or goblet for each participant at the Seder. And, of course, plenty of wine: enough to fill four cups per person.

Prepare a dish of salt water in which to dip the Karpas.



In order to free ourselves from our personal Egypt, we taste harshness again. This harshness gives us the humility necessary for freedom.

Any other night, we would be getting to the meal now. But tonight we do things differently to spark the interest of children and to provoke them to ask questions. If they ask, "Hey! Aren't we supposed to eat real food now?"—you know you're doing things right.

The child is the most important participant at the Seder. In fact, the entire Seder with all its customs revolves around children. The essential mitzvah of the Seder is to "tell the story to your child."

But more than children learn from us, we learn from children. Tonight, we enter the mind and heart of a child. We awaken our child within, the place that is innocent and able to grow, to be amazed, to sense awe. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch once said, "If you want to know what it is like to see with the eyes of a prophet, look at the world the way you did as a child."

Step 4 YACHATZ (Breaking the matzah)

Take the middle matzah from your Seder Plate and break it into two. Put the smaller piece back between the two complete matzahs.

This piece is the "poor man's bread" over which we will recount the story of our Exodus.

Break the larger piece into five and wrap the pieces in a cloth. Hide the package until the end of the Seder when it will be eaten as the Afikoman. Some have the tradition that children hide the Afikoman and the adults have to find it at the end of the meal. In other traditions, the adults hide it and the children must find it. Either way, it keeps the kids in suspense.

Why is there so much broken in this world? Why did the Creator make a world where hearts break, lives shatter, beauty crumbles? A whole vessel can only contain its measure, while a broken one can hold the Infinite. The broken matzah is called the "poor man's bread." His brokenness allows him to open his soul and escape his Egypt. When we realize that we are just a fragment—that we need the others around us, that so much of ourselves is missing—then miracles can begin.

Step 5 MAGGID (Retelling)

The Seder Plate is moved aside and the second cup of wine is filled. The story of our Exodus is now retold. Children ask the Four Questions, found in your Haggadah. (Of course, they can always ask more.) No children at your Seder? Have an adult ask. There's just you? You be the child and G-d, the Father. Say the blessing and drink the second cup at the end of this step.

The experience of leaving Egypt left such an indelible mark on our soul that we never stop doing it. The Exodus is not simply an event that happened to us. It is found in the life of each one

Your 15-Step "Soulful Seder" Companion

Step 1 KADESH (A toast to freedom)

It's been a busy week and a busy year. The first step of the Seder is to forget the noise and leave it behind. Tonight we enter a timeless space, where we experience the Exodus together with Moses and all our ancestors—with generations of rejoicing and tears, of celebration and wisdom—by doing just what we will do tonight.

Fill your cup with wine (or grape juice). That's the first of four cups you'll enjoy at tonight's Seder. Make sure your cup holds at least 3-1/2 ounces. Everyone stands and recites Kiddush together. It's all there in your Haggadah. Now get ready for some serious relaxing—recline on a cushion to your left side while you drink. (Remember the good old days, when kings would recline on couches while sampling wines? That's what we emulate by reclining. We are not just free; we are our own masters.)

Every journey begins with a separation. You've got to leave somewhere to get somewhere else. The Hebrew word "kadesh" means "separation," which is the first step towards freedom. It also means to "sanctify." Once you've separated yourself from those things that inhibit your soul, you can achieve the second meaning of "kadesh"—to "sanctify" our world. The first two steps of the Seder, Kadesh (separate/sanctify) and Urchatz (purify) describe what we set out to accomplish this night: to pass over the limitations of our world in order to elevate it.



Step 2 URCHATZ (Washing hands)

For this step, you could bring a basin and towel to the table or you can head to the kitchen sink. Fill a cup with water. Pour the water over your right hand three times, then over your left hand three times. That's how the Kohanim (priests) washed when they entered the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

(When we wash our hands again before eating matzah, we'll recite a blessing. But not now.)

Our hands are the instruments that allow the mind to interact with our environment. They reflect our mental state, and act according to our emotions: love, fear, compassion, the urge to win, to be appreciated, to express ourselves. Too often, our psyche is fragmented and compartmentalized—the mind sees one way, the heart feels another—and our interaction with the world is disoriented.

Water symbolizes wisdom. Flowing downward from on high, everything in its stream is affected by its pure and simple essence. We pour water over our hands so that our heart and emotions may be touched by wisdom, and from there, shape our interaction with the world.

Step 3 KARPAS (The appetizer)

After washing our hands in the previous step, we now dip a vegetable (for example, potato, onion or parsley) into saltwater. Say the blessing for eating vegetables, and munch good; you're not going to eat for a while. The saltwater represents the tears of our people, beginning with our slavery in Egypt.



... *Passover Guide* continued from page 9



of us, occurring again and again in our wrestling match with the world and in our struggle with our own selves. To retell the story is to express our essential self; to come face to face with who we really are.

Step 6 RACHTZAH (Washing hands)

We now prepare ourselves to eat matzah by again washing our hands. Pour some water over your right hand three times, then over your left hand three times. Say the appropriate blessing and dry your hands.

In Judaism, eating can be a spiritual experience. Since the destruction of the Holy Temple, the table upon which we eat is likened to the Altar. We wash our hands before eating to prepare ourselves for an experience in which we can encounter G-dliness. Spiritual freedom is not achieved by ignoring or suppressing our human needs and desires, but rather by acknowledging and fulfilling them in a holy way.



Step 7 MOTZIE (Thanking G-d for bread)

Raise the three matzahs together—the top one, the broken middle one and the bottom one—and say the blessing found in your Haggadah:

“... Who brings forth bread out of the earth.” Then return the bottom matzah to the Seder Plate.

We feel an affinity with the bread we eat: We too are a miracle “out of the earth” and we share a common journey. Bread begins as a seed buried beneath the ground. And then,

a miracle occurs—the seed decomposes and loses its original form, then it comes alive, and begins to sprout and grow. As Spring arrives, it pushes its way above the earth to find the sun, and bears its fruit for the world.

We, too, began buried in Egypt, our identity all but lost. But that furnace of oppression became for us a firing kiln, the ground from which we grew to become a nation. In our liberation, we bring our fruits of freedom to the world.

Step 8 MATZAH (Bless the matzah)

Recite the blessing on the top and (broken) middle matzah: “... Who commanded us concerning eating matzah.”

Break off a piece from each of these two matzahs for yourself and for each of those sitting at your table. Everyone eats at least two ounces (about two thirds of a matzah). To do this, you may need an auxiliary reserve of matzah. Lean to the left while you munch.

The Zohar calls matzah “food of mehemnuta.” “Mehemnuta” is Aramaic for “faith” but it means a lot more than “I believe.” Faith often is something people claim when they don’t care to think too much. “Mehemnuta” means reaching the place where your soul and the Infinite are One. It’s a place that nothing can describe. There are no words. No doubts, no uncertainty, no confusion. Nothing but a magnificent Oneness before which nothing else exists and within which the challenges of life withdraw.

By eating matzah, we digest and internalize “mehemnuta” and become one with the One.

Step 9 MAROR (Bitter herbs)



Maror is the bitter taste of our slavery in Egypt. Dip at least one ounce of bitter herbs (horseradish, romaine lettuce or both) in charoset, which recalls the mortar of our enslavement, then shake off the charoset. It’s a delicate

balance: You want bitter herbs, but you want to sweeten the bitterness. Say the blessing: “... Who commanded us concerning eating bitter herbs.”

We can never get used to Egypt, thinking, “They are our masters, we are their slaves, and that’s the way it is.” Being stopped from true self-expression must remain something we feel bitter about, something that is not right and needs to change.

If we get used to Egypt, it’s very hard to escape. In fact, many Jews said, “Egypt is our home. How can we leave?” and they died there. When Moses announced the time had come, it was only those who felt bitterness that had the faith to leave. This is the sweetness that is connected with the bitter herbs: Bitterness without faith is self-destructive, but mixed together, it can become the springboard to freedom.

Step 10 KORECH (Sandwich)



Take two pieces of matzah, totalling at least an ounce (using the bottom matzah). Take an ounce of maror, dip it in charoset, then shake off the charoset.

Place the maror between the matzah pieces and say: “So did Hillel in the time of the Holy Temple...” Lean to the left while eating.

Hillel understood the words of the Torah about the Pesach lamb, “with matzah and bitter herbs you shall eat it,” in their literal sense. So he invented the sandwich.

The world, when viewed from within Egypt, looks to be a mess of fragments. It’s a “Passoverly Challenged” perspective—plain materialism. Mitzvahs appear to be a mishmash of dos and don’ts; the Jewish people are a collection of irreconcilable individuals; daily life is a cacophony of hassles.

But once we escape materialism’s gravitational pull, we can look back and see a new perspective. Mitzvahs are multiple expressions of a single spiritual path; Jews are multiple faces of a single soul; the elements of tonight’s journey harmonize together as a symphony playing a delicate melody. The bitter and sweet fragments of life wrap together in a single package.

Step 11 SHULCHAN ORECH (Festive meal)

It is the custom of some to begin the meal with eating the egg on the Seder Plate, dipped in saltwater. The egg symbolizes the cycle of life and is also a sign of mourning. At every festive occasion, we mourn the destruction of Jerusalem. Dinner is served.

Step 12 TZAFUN (Out of hiding)

At the conclusion of the Passover meal, the Afikoman (which had been in hiding) is returned. Everyone eats two-thirds of a matzah, after which nothing else is consumed tonight, except for the two remaining cups of wine.



There is the soul, and then there is the essence of the soul. If the soul is energy, then that essence is its generator. The Kabbalah teaches that this essence remains elusive. It is called “tzafun,” meaning hidden, locked away and out of reach. We can be inspired, we can meditate, we can pray. But to touch this essence—to access our essential self—takes a power from Beyond.

Tonight, we have that ability. But only after journeying through the steps of the Seder. Then, when we have connected every facet of ourselves with the Divine, that’s when that ability comes to us. Whether we sense it or not, the matzah we eat now—the matzah of tzafun—reaches deep into our essence, empowering us to transform our very being.

Step 13 BAIRACH (Grace after meal)

The third cup is now filled. Once you’ve said grace after the meal and the appropriate blessing for wine, drink this cup while leaning to your left.

Now fill a special cup of wine, the Cup of Elijah, and set it in the middle of the table. You won’t drink this one—it’s for Elijah the Prophet, who comes to announce the imminent arrival of Moshiach. Then fill your fourth (and final) cup, from which you will drink a little later.

Open the front door of your home to welcome Elijah and recite the prayer, “Pour out Your wrath... from the Haggadah. Watch Elijah enter. (Can’t see him? Maybe you had too much wine.)

Our Sages taught: Whatever G-d asks of us, He also does Himself. Of course, there’s a difference. We do it in our little human world, while He does it on a grand cosmic plane.

He asks us to open our doors, and tonight, He opens every spiritual door and gateway. Regardless of our past, tonight is our opportunity to enter the highest of spiritual levels.

Step 14 HALLEL (Praise)

“Songs of Praise” are now offered. It’s all there in your Haggadah. Sing them to your heart’s content. At the end, say a blessing and drink the fourth and final cup while leaning to the left.

Does G-d need us to praise Him? It is we who need to. When we praise G-d, we become more conscious of His presence. We open the channels through which we can perceive His kindness. This is also mirrored in the human sphere: When you compliment someone as “kind” or “fair,” you are revealing those qualities.

Step 15 NIRTZAH (Acceptance)

The steps of the Seder have been integrated into our consciousness and accepted. Now we pause, take a deep breath, and reflect on our experience: We examined our personal challenges through the slavery of our ancestors, and we achieved a personal freedom by reliving the Exodus. We completed our part in good faith; the rest is up to you-know-Who.

The last song of the Seder echoes our hope and that of our ancestors that G-d complete our broken world, and that His promise for a world of peace and wisdom become a reality. “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor study war anymore,” and the entire world will dwell “in a city built where all are united as one.”

Candle Lighting Blessings

1) BO-RUCH A-TOH ADO-NOI E-LO-HEI-NU ME-LECH HO-LOM, A-SHER KI-DE-SHA-NU, BE-MITZ-VO-SOV VE-TZI-VO-NU LE-HAD-LIK NER SHEL YOM-TOV.

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Yom Tov light.

2) BO-RUCH A-TOH ADO-NOI E-LO-HEI-NU ME-LECH HO-LOM, SHE-HEH-CHE-YOH-NU, VI-KIYE-MO-NU VE-HE-GE-O-NU LEZ-MAN HA-ZEH.

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

3) BO-RUCH A-TOH ADO-NOI E-LO-HEI-NU ME-LECH HO-LOM, A-SHER KI-DE-SHA-NU, BE-MITZ-VO-SOV VE-TZI-VO-NU LE-HAD-LIK NER SHEL SHABBOS VESHEL YOM TOV.

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Shabbos and Yom Tov light.

Important Holiday Times | Pesach 5781-2021 | March 25 - April 4

Thursday, March 25 - 12 Nissan

Shacharit: 7:00am - Followed by a Siyum
Bedikat Chametz - Official Search for the Chametz: 7:46pm

Friday, March 26 - 13 Nissan

All Chametz not being eaten during the
Shabbat meals should be burned by: 12:09pm

Candle Lighting: 7:04pm
Mincha & Maariv: 7:00pm

Shabbat, March 27 - 14 Nissan - Shabbat Hagadol

Shacharit: 7:00am
Stop eating Chametz at: 11:06am
Nullify the Chametz by: 12:09pm
Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm
Candle Lighting from a pre-existent flame after: 7:59pm
Recite Blessings 1 & 2
First Seder | Start Seder after: 7:59pm

Sunday, March 28 - 15 Nissan - First Day of Pesach

Shacharit: 10:00am
Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm
Candle Lighting from a pre-existent flame after: 8:00pm
Recite Blessings 1 & 2
Second Seder | Start Seder after 8:00pm
First night of counting the Omer

Monday, March 29 - 16 Nissan - Second Day of Pesach

Shacharit: 10:00am
Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm
Holiday Ends: 8:00pm

Tuesday, March 30 - Thursday, April 1 - Chol Hamoed

Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm

Friday, April 2 - 20 Nissan - Erev Shvi'i Shel Pesach

Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm
Candle Lighting: 7:09pm - Recite Blessing 3

Shabbat, April 3 - 21 Nissan - Shvi'i Shel Pesach

Shacharit: 10:00am
Mincha and Maariv: 7:00pm
Candle Lighting from a pre-existent flame after: 8:04pm
Recite Blessing 1

Sunday, April 4 - 22 Nissan - Acharon Shel Pesach

Shacharit: 10:00am
Mincha: 6:30pm
Seudat Moshiah: 7:00pm
Holiday Ends: 8:05pm

Sale of Chametz Form

I the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg to act in my place and stead and on my behalf to sell all the chametz possessed by me, knowingly or unknowingly as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law (e.g., possible chametz and all kinds of chametz mixtures). Also chametz that tends to harden and adhere to inside surfaces of pans, pots, or cooking utensils, the utensils themselves, and all kinds of live animals and pets that have been eating chametz and mixtures thereof. Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg is also empowered to lease all places wherein the chametz owned by me may be found, particularly at the address/es listed below and elsewhere. Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg has full right to appoint an agent or any substitute in his stead and said substitute shall have full right to sell and lease and provided herein.

Rabbi Yisrael Greenberg also has the full power and right to act as he deems fit and proper in accordance with all the details of the Bill of Sale used in the transaction to sell all my chametz, chametz mixtures, etc., as provided herein. This power is in conformity with all Torah and Rabbinic laws, and also in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and of the United States of America.

And to this I hereby affix my signature on the _____ day of _____ in the year 5781/2021.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Signatures: _____

(Husband and wife please specify names)

To avoid having Chametz in your possession during Passover, please fill out the above form. Sign and mail to: Chabad Lubavitch, 6516 Escondido Dr. El Paso, TX 79912. Please call (915) 584-8218 with any questions and we will take care of it as a public service.



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