



THE JEWISH HOLIDAY MAGAZINE

farbrenngen

Volume 15 | Issue 3

Pasover 5773/2013

a little nosh for the soul



We're always connected. 1 G-d

G-d doesn't have a Blackberry or an iPhone, but He is my favorite contact.



He doesn't have broadband, but our connection is strong.

He doesn't have Facebook, but He is my best friend.

Experience the connection

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES*

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

Search for Chometz after nightfall:
Starting at 8:24 pm

MONDAY, MARCH 25

Fire at the Shul: 12:00 pm
(There will be a fire at The Shul
from 12:00 – 12:37 pm)

1ST SEDER NIGHT

Light Candles at: 7:33 pm - Blessings 1 & 2
Evening Services: 7:45

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

1st day of Passover
Morning services: 9:30 am
Followed by Kiddush Nosh

2ND SEDER NIGHT

COMMUNITY SEDER AT THE SHUL: 7:15 pm

(Reservations Required)

\$48 Adults \$25 Children

Light Candles** after: 8:34 pm - Blessings 1 & 2

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

2nd Day of Passover
Morning services: 9:30 am
Followed by Kiddush Nosh
Evening Services 7:45
Yom Tov ends at: 8:35 pm

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Intermediate Day
Light Candles at: 7:37 pm - Blessing 3
Evening Services: 6:15 pm

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Intermediate Day
Morning Services: 9:30 am
Followed by Kiddush Lunch
Shabbat Ends: 8:39 pm

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Intermediate Day
Morning Services: 8:30 am
Light Candles at: 7:40 pm - Blessing 1
Evening Services: 6:15

MONDAY, APRIL 1

7th Day of Passover
Morning Services: 9:30 am

Followed by Kiddush Nosh

Baby Kiddush: 11:30 am

Light Candles** after: 8:41 pm - Say Blessing 1
Evening Services: 6:15

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

Final Day of Passover
Morning Services: 9:30 am
Followed by Kiddush Nosh
Yizkor Memorial Service: approx. 11:00 am
Evening Services and "Moshiach Seudah
(Feast)": 7:15 at the Shertov Residence.
Passover ends: 8:42 pm

CANDLE LIGHTING BLESSINGS:

[1] Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam
Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sav Ve-tzi-vanu
Le-had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.

[2] Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam
She-heh-che-yah-nu Ve-kiye-ma-nu
Ve-he-ge-ah-nu Liz-man Ha-zeh.

[3] Baruch Atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam
Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sav Ve-tzi-vanu
Le-had-lik Ner Shel Shabbos Kodesh.

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"It is a Mitzva to recall the exodus from Egypt every day. When we celebrate Passover properly, its influence extends throughout the year. In such a manner we are liberated from all our inner and outer limitations, and we are free to carry out our G-dly mission."

*The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi M.M. Schneersan, O.B.M.*

SOME PESACH THOUGHTS



Dear Friends,

We are about to leave Egypt behind. Yes, we will be exiting Egypt for the 3,335th time.

Upon leaving Egypt the first time, we were granted our eternal freedom. No one and nothing can stop us from being who we are and who we want to be. But from there on it is dependent on us to take advantage of this freedom, to fully experience it.

The Hebrew word for Egypt is Mitzrayim. Mitzrayim also connotes limitations, straits and confinement. While we were freed from external confinement, we each need to free ourselves from our own limitations, which are often difficult to leave behind.

Bear with me for some Chassidic philosophy. The name of the Egyptian king was Pharaoh. In Hebrew the word Pharaoh coincides with the Hebrew word Oref – neck. I.e: the king, the core of Mitzrayim (limitations) lies in the Oref – neck, which is the narrow place, the strait between the head and the rest of the body.

A common difficulty most of humanity experiences is in transmitting our intelligence and thoughts into feelings, and even more so, translating them into action. While we may understand in our mind the need and value of something spiritual, something G-dly, something Jewish, not always do we get to feel its depth in our hearts; and when we do feel it, we quite often do not act upon it, certainly not enough to cause a drastic change in our lives and modus operandi.

True freedom is the ability to free ourselves from ourselves. To break out of the box, to be able to bypass the straits that separate our brains from our feelings and ultimately our action.

Contemplating on this aspect of freedom takes me back two decades when I basked in the presence of our beloved Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, OBM, whose birthday is on the 11th of Nissan, a mere four days before Passover. The Rebbe's very being personified freedom.

In the Rebbe's world, there was no such thing as an idea that did not find its expression in action. In spite of being the consummate intellectual, he was a practical organizer and epitomized action. In every teaching, philosophical, grammatical, or esoteric, the Rebbe found a lesson in practical day to day life. The Rebbe himself was constantly in action - advising, organizing, guiding, motioning, giving – always being the first and best example of translating ideas into action.

This Pesach, let us, each of us, free ourselves from our own limitations. Let this be the Pesach when we act upon our conscience in all matters of goodness and holiness.

Best wishes for a very happy and joyous Pesach.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Kasriel Shemtov
Spiritual Director

farbrengen

The Jewish Holiday Magazine

» Passover 2013

is a publication of:

The Shul-Chabad Lubavitch
Jack & Miriam Shenkman Building

Published three times a year

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Behind the



PHARAOH -- BOTH AS AN HISTORICAL FIGURE AND AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL ARCHETYPE -- is someone who the Torah must think is worthy of study. In fact, many of his arguments are still fashionable today. We can understand this by first mentioning briefly the Kabbalistic explanation for why G-d made the world.

Kabbalah explains that G-d created a physical world and then asked us to use the very mundane, ordinary materials of life to make a home for G-d on earth -- in our money, in our food, in our clothing, in everything that we do. We do this by taking these everyday, physical things and using them to do G-d's will. And what is the point of this? The point is that G-d wants a dwelling place in the

lowest realm of creation. And He wants us to build that dwelling place. In other words, the Infinite wants a home that is built in the finite, by the finite.

Now, Pharaoh considered himself G-d. And so, just like G-d, Pharaoh chooses a people and then He tells this people, "Take straw and mud, and build Me a home from the lowest materials."

So when Moses told Pharaoh that the Jews were going to stop building cities for him, Pharaoh asked him what he wanted to do instead. Moses told him that it was time for the people to go serve G-d in the wilderness. Pharaoh's response to Moses was, "What? You

want to go out into the desert to find G-d? That is so irresponsible. It's dangerous. Don't you know what happens to people who go out into the desert and build a compound and wait for G-d? If I let you go out into the desert, you're all going to drink the Kool-Aid and you're all going to die. Or you'll come running back. Because leaving your work in order to go hang out and be spiritual in the desert is a crazy thing to do."

Egypt was the most advanced civilization on earth. We still can't figure out how they built those pyramids. They were on the cutting edge of everything. They were the future. And Pharaoh wanted the Jews to be part of this future. The fact that the Jews were going to abandon the plan really bothered him. Particularly Moses, who grew up in the palace, was bothersome to Pharaoh. "You of all people? You could be in the heart of progress making history and you're going to take your people and wander in a desert and become useless? I can't let you do that."

Of course, after a couple of plagues Pharaoh said, "Alright already! Take a minyan and go do your thing." Moses said, "No, not a minyan. We're taking 'our youth, our elders, our sons and our daughters.' Everybody's coming." Pharaoh said, "Okay, you're crazier than I thought... and you're not going."

A couple of more plagues later Pharaoh said again, "Enough! What do you need to have your holiday in the desert?" Moses said, "Well, we need all of our sheep and cattle plus some of yours." Pharaoh said, "That's it. You're out of your mind."

But you can see that Pharaoh sort of had a point. Yes, of course there was a certain cruelty to the whole thing. But his basic argument, his actual objection, was pretty rational. "How can you abandon productivity and go make yourself useless by doing weird things in the middle of nowhere?" His argument makes sense

Of course, it's over 3,300 years later now and we can look back and see the results. Egypt is a mummy. It's a relic. The great ancient Egyptian

civilization is gone. And the Jewish people who went wandering in the desert are still making

G-d. It was that G-d was looking for the Jewish people. He was taking His chosen nation for Himself to bring them to Mt. Sinai and to set His master plan into motion.

Story

waves in every area of life.

But Pharaoh's mistake was this. He thought the Jews and Moses wanted to go out into the desert to look for G-d, to find G-d. And if that were the case, then Pharaoh would be totally right. If that were the case, then the Jews really had no right to abandon civilization in order to go wait for some sort of divine calling in the desert.

But eventually Pharaoh realized that what was happening was not the Jews looking for G-d. It was G-d taking the Jewish people to Him. And once he realized that, that's when he said, "Well, why didn't you say so? If that's the case, you have to go. Go now!" And he threw them out. Of course, a little later he had a change of heart and went chasing after them, but at least for one moment, Pharaoh understood that the Jewish people were not a people looking for

If we don't convey this understanding of Passover, then it really doesn't warrant eight days every year for the past 3324 years. We need to rediscover the powerful, relevant and contemporary significance of "G-d took us out of Egypt." That's a whole lot different than saying, "We left Egypt." If that were all it was, then Pharaoh would have been right. What business did we have leaving civilization and going into the desert? But that's not what happened. We didn't leave. G-d took us. And that's what Passover is about.

If you look at the words of the Torah that are quoted in the Haggadah you'll see that this is really the message. G-d says, "I came down to Egypt to take you to be Mine. Not a messenger, not an angel, but I Myself." What is that saying? What does that mean? It means that you and I left Egypt not because we wanted to, not because it was our idea. In fact, we didn't

really leave so much as we were removed. The Exodus was not our initiative or our plan and it wasn't precipitated by our strength.

The Haggadah tells us another puzzling thing. It says that "if G-d hadn't taken us out of Egypt, we and our children and our children's children would still be slaves." What is that saying? Pharaoh dies eventually. Every evil superpower collapses eventually. If we're here to read the Haggadah and Pharaoh is a mummy, then why would we still be slaves? Even if G-d hadn't ever gotten around to taking us out of Egypt, Pharaoh would be gone by now anyway. But that's just the point. If G-d hadn't taken us out, if let's say, we had just outlasted Pharaoh on our own somehow, then it wouldn't be that G-d took us out of slavery. And that is what the whole Passover story is about. That G-d took us out. It was His initiative, His plan, His strength.

Once we know what to look for, it's all right there in the Haggadah. And this is the story that we need to be telling to our children, to our friends, to the world, and to ourselves. We're not looking for G-d. We're responding to the fact that G-d is looking for us.

Manis Friedman is the Dean of Bais Chana and the author of *Doesn't Anyone Blush Anymore*. Watch Manis Friedman videos at www.11213.org



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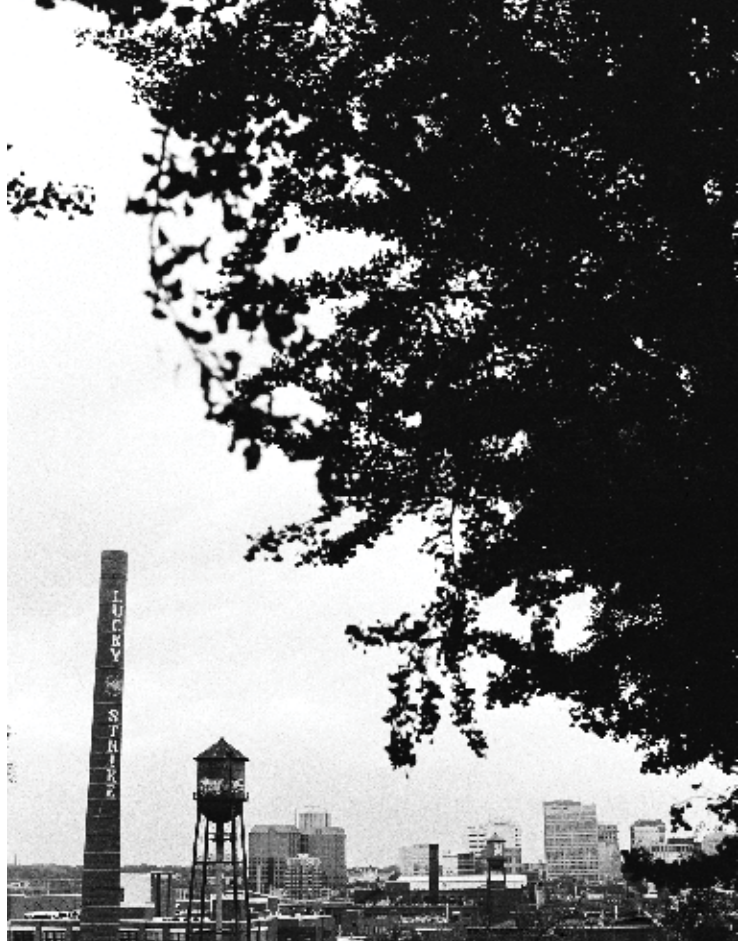
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Passover Cleaning as therapy



Contrary to popular misconception, the Jewish people never left Egypt. I don't mean that metaphorically. It's literally true. They did not leave. They were removed. There's a big difference. Attempts were made to leave Egypt on human power alone but they all failed. We simply could not get out until G-d Himself took us out.

How does this fact translate to our observance of Passover each year?

On Passover, we experience freedom, but we do not extricate ourselves from our own spiritual, mental and emotional slavery. Rather, we get ready for G-d to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We make ourselves ready by being available, that is, by letting go of our attachments and surrendering to G-d's plan.

junk in our lives so that when G-d offers us a chance at freedom, we are ready to pick up and go.

Were you ever cleaning for Passover and you found some old papers or a note you had written to yourself that seemed so important at the time?

Passover cleaning is like visiting the museum of worldly attachments. We have to face all the souvenirs we've piled up over the year. This is my life? Evidence of a year lived? I'm confronted by all the stuff I've accumulated over the year and I have to decide what it's still doing in my life.

When we throw out the old, not only do we make way for the new, we let go of the

In practical terms, this means that we clean house -- literally. In the days leading up to Passover, our job is to get rid of the

attachments that hold us down and would otherwise prevent us from being lifted out of our present situation. Like they say, "Let go and let G-d."

You see, it may seem counter-intuitive but experience shows me that when I'm stuck in my own little Egypt and I try to pull myself out, it's like tugging at a Chinese finger trap. The more effort I put in, the worse things get. But when I lighten my load by getting rid of the excess in my life, it's amazing how little other effort is required for me to be pulled out of my rut.

Wishing you all a happy housecleaning. May you be available when G-d comes to bring you out of bondage.

National Public Radio *dubbed Rabbi Taub "an expert in Jewish mysticism and the Twelve Steps" for his work with the Jewish recovery community in Milwaukee where he lived for six years. He currently directs Jewish.tv.*

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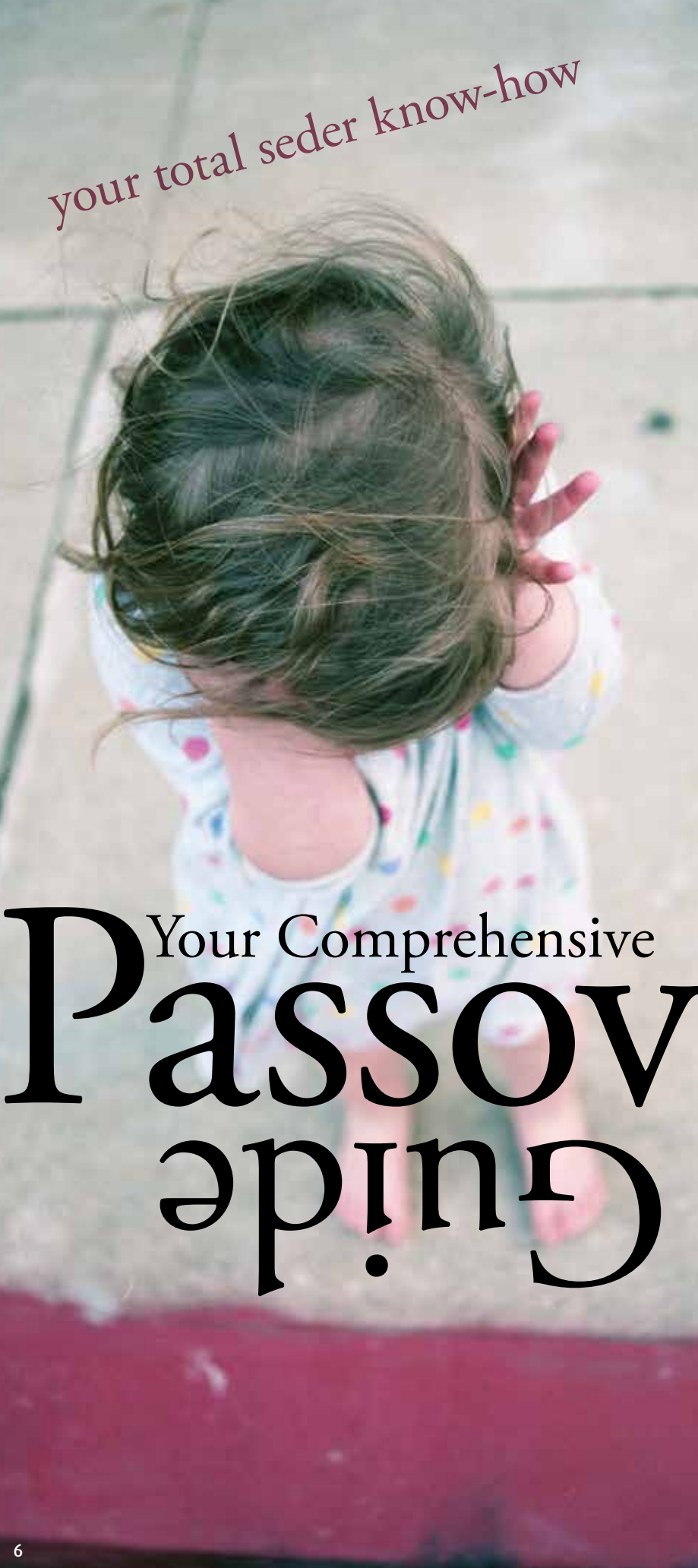
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Things to do Before You Passover

Chametz—all leavened foods that contain wheat, barley, oats, rye or spelt—are forbidden by Torah law on Passover. You'll be surprised at where you can find Chametz. So, look out for possible leavened products and isolate them in a designated "Chametz Closet." Rabbinic law allows one to sell the Chametz (see next step). Then clear the house of any possible remaining Chametz: empty clothes' pockets, vacuum cleaner bags, even the pet food goes into the Closet. Since you'll use a separate set of dishes for Passover, the Chametz dishes get locked up too. Now stock up on Kosher-for-Passover items; for good leads on Passover foods check out www.ok.org.

How To Sell Your Chametz? It is also forbidden to "own" Chametz during Passover, hence, the annual sale of chametz (see enclosed form). Sound complicated? It is, so ask your Rabbi to make the arrangements. Or log on to www.chabad.org to sell your Chametz online.

3/24 Search for the Chametz

At nightfall begin the "formal search" of the house for Chametz. Traditionally, we use a candle to light the way, a spoon (as a shovel), feather (as a broom) and a paper bag to collect any Chametz found. After the search, place everything you found in a conspicuous place to be burned the following morning.

3/25 Preparing For Tonight

When G-d slew the firstborn of Egypt, he spared the firstborn sons of Israel. Out of gratitude all firstborn sons fast on this day.

// Prepare To Celebrate Checklist • Matza,

Wine, Haggadah, Bitter Herbs, Charoset, Hard Boiled Egg, Roasted Chicken Bone, Salt water, and a festive meal menu. Talmudic Tip: To build an appetite for the Seder abstain from eating any Seder plate foods today, especially Matza. So if you're a lover of bitter herbs and raw onions, stay out of the kitchen.

// Burning of The Chametz • In the morning burn all the Chametz found during the previous night's formal search.

// Make it Legal • After cleaning the house, and selling and burning the Chametz, the head of the

continued

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the Passover 15 Steps of the SEDER

a chasidic perspective on the seder



I STEP 1: KADESH (SANCTIFY)

The seder begins with a blessing over the 1st cup of wine. // This is when we declare that this is “The Season of Our Freedom.” To stress this point, we recline to the left when drinking, as only free people did in ancient times.

2 STEP 2: URCHATZ (WASH)

Wash the hands (in the ritual manner but without reciting a blessing). // We will be touching a wet vegetable in the next step and rabbinic law requires washings before washing of the hands. // The Kabbalah teaches that hands represent expressions and attributes, while water epitomizes intellect and purity. Washing refines our attributes with intellect, enabling restrictions to turn into benevolence, hate into love, and personal slavery into freedom. // The observance, one of many during the Seder intended to pique the interest of children, awakens the innocence within each of us.

3 STEP 3: KARPAS (VEGETABLES)

Recite the appropriate blessing for vegetables, then dip the Karpas vegetable in saltwater before eating it. // In the saltwater, we can taste the tears of anguish and despair our ancestors shed as their spirits were crushed in Egypt. // When rearranged, the letters of Karpas alludes to the word Perech, or “crushing labor.” Our people were forced to perform senseless tasks in Egypt, endless drudgery without meaning, purpose or goal. // Why, some 3,000 years later, do mindless routines and habits, or careers driven by the need for status, still dominate our lives so often?

4 STEP 4: YACHATZ (BREAKING)

The middle matza (of the 3) is broken in two pieces. The larger piece, designated as the Afikoman, is wrapped and hidden away for the children to discover. // The smaller broken piece, the “bread of poverty,” takes center stage while retelling the story of the Exodus. It personifies the spiritual and material destitution our people endured in Egypt once they no

longer grasped the meaning of true freedom. By relating to their plight, we feel what is broken in our own humanity. At the same time, when the children hide the Afikoman we sense the larger dimension of our being, the part of our soul never touched by slavery that waits to be discovered.

5 STEP 5: MAGGID (TELLING)

“Tell your children G-d took you out of Egypt.” Fill the second cup of wine, then retell the story of our rise from the depths of bondage to the heights of redemption. // Maggid begins with the children asking, “Why is this night different from all other nights?” The question can put us in touch with the innocence of children as we contemplate the dynamics of liberation. // Are we eating the matzah out of habit, or because we are ready to embrace its significance? Are we observing these rituals to assuage guilt, or to actualize the desire to live a more meaningful life? // When we allow the events in the Maggid to touch us to the core, we reveal the candor that children hold dear. // At the conclusion of Maggid, we savor the second glass.

6 STEP 6: RACHTZAH (WASHING)

Wash the hands and recite the blessing, Al Netilat Yadayim (on the lifting of the hands). // We prepare to internalize the humble nature of matza by uplifting our extremities and expressions. // In its literal sense, the word netila means to move something from one place to another. With this blessing, we remove the physicality and vulgarity that may dwell in and around the hands, raising them up for what is to follow.

7 STEP 7: MOTZI (BLESSING OVER BREAD)

Hold the broken half-matza and two whole ones while reciting the appropriate blessing for bread, Hamotzie Leh-Chem Min Ha-Aretz. // The word lechem (bread) contains the same letters as lochem (war). Food is raw energy that holds the potential for either good or evil. Thus, a spiritual battle ensues every time it is consumed.

If the purpose in eating is solely to gratify physical cravings, evil prevails. However, when eating to gain energy with which to better serve G-d, good prevails.

8 STEP 8: MATZA (BLESSING THE MATZA)

Return the bottom matza to the Seder plate. Holding the remaining one and one-half matzot, recite the blessing for eating matza, Al Ah-Chilat Matza. // Our ancestors fled Egypt with inconceivable haste, leaving no time for the dough that would nourish them to rise. Once free, their first taste was the “bread of poverty,” matza. From a mystical viewpoint, matza exemplifies a selfless ego. It was with this trait, rather than arrogance, that they accepted G-d-given freedom. Humility allowed them to appreciate the gifts of life. After the blessing, recline to the left and eat at least one ounce of matza.

9 STEP 9: MAROR (BITTER HERBS)

Take at least 3/4 ounce of bitter herbs and dip it in the charoset, shake off the excess, and recite the blessing Al Ah-Chilat Maror before eating. // Having meditated on the bitterness of exile during Maggid, we now physically experience its force. The impact further clarifies the significance of our exile. // Before we can experience true freedom we have to internalize the might of our hardship—and accept that when we make the right choices, hardship exists only to make us stronger.

10 STEP 10: KORECH (SANDWICH)

Break off two pieces of the bottom matza (at least one ounce). Take 3/4 ounce of maror, dip it in charoset and shake off the excess. Place the maror between the two pieces of matza and say, “Thus did Hillel do in the time of the Holy Temple...” Recline while eating. // Maror alludes to the wicked, while matza refers to the righteous. Hillel, the great Jewish sage known for his compassion, instructed the righteous to reach out and draw the wicked closer. //



Likewise, now that we have felt what it means to break free of slavery on a personal level, it is our obligation to share the experience with others.

STEP 11: SHULCHAN ORECH (FESTIVE MEAL)

Traditionally, the meal begins by dipping the hard-boiled egg from the Seder plate in saltwater to symbolize our constant mourning for the destruction of the Holy Temple, and to allude to G-d's desire to redeem His people. "Ess, mein khind!" // Across the community and throughout the world, we are together at the Seder table. The wise, the wicked, the simple and the innocent, all equal in the eyes of each other and the eyes of G-d. And we remember the fifth son—he who has not yet experienced the freedom of Passover. We are united as one in the common goal of redemption.

STEP 12: TZAFUN (HIDDEN)

At the conclusion of the Passover meal, children return the Afikoman. Eat at least one ounce of this matzah. Nothing else except the remaining two cups of wine is consumed thereafter. // It was necessary to partake in every step, every ritual, every taste and every thought before the Afikoman is revealed; then, we can become one with its Divine potential. We eat it only when completely satiated because it fulfills a need higher than the hunger for freedom, and we eat nothing afterward so that its taste remains with us. // In the Seder, as with everyday life, there are no shortcuts to the greater dimension. Yet we are always aware that it is present and yearns to reveal itself when we seek with a pure heart.

STEP 13: BEIRACH (GRACE AFTER MEAL)

Recite the blessing over the third cup of wine, then drink while reclining. In anticipation of our Ultimate Redemption, we now fill a special goblet, the Cup of Elijah. We then open the door to the house and, holding a lit candle, recite the passage inviting the Prophet Elijah to appear. // Imagine all of creation in a state of spiritual and material freedom. Think about a world free of pain and suffering, war and struggles. Imagine all of existence at this level. Imagine yourself, the light of a single candle, ushering in the era of our redemption.

STEP 14: HALLEL (SONGS OF PRAISE)

We offer praise to G-d for his mercy and compassion in redeeming our people from Egypt, and in anticipation of our own ultimate redemption. // Why does G-d need us to praise Him? He doesn't; we do. As the Kabbalah explains, when we praise His kindness we reveal His compassion. When praying for our needs, we evoke His desire to give.

STEP 15: NIRTZAH (ACCEPTED)

The Seder concludes with the wish, L'shana Ha-ba-ah Bi-Yerushalayim. We hope for each other that which our forefathers prayed for while enslaved in Egypt, "Next Year in Jerusalem!" // Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi omitted the passage, "The order of Passover is concluded," from his Haggadah because the Seder's message remains timeless. Every day, one leaves Egypt by transcending his limitations, to reach higher levels of holiness.

continued from beginning of section

household says the appropriate prayers (see Haggadah), verbally disowning any Chametz that might have been overlooked.

3/25 Ready To Seder

At sundown candles are lit. At nightfall the Seder begins. Be sure to eat Matza and drink the four cups of wine.

3/26 Seder Round 2

Jews living outside of Israel hold a second seder. Since the festival is already in full swing, the candles are lit after nightfall from a pre-existing flame. On the 2nd night of Passover we begin to count the Omer, which lasts for 49 days. What's the Omer? In the Holy Temple the Omer was an offering of barley taken from the first grain of the new crop.

We count seven weeks, from the bringing of the first Omer offering (Passover) until the day we received the Torah (the Festival of Shavuot). The 49 days between Passover and Shavuot represent the 49 steps of mystical self-purification and preparation our people went through between leaving Egypt (Passover) and receiving the Torah (Shavuot).

Chol Hamoed "Four Intermediate Days"

In between the first two and last two days of Passover, are the 4 days of Chol Hamoed. Considered Passover without the prohibition of work.

3/31 The Seventh Day

At sundown, light candles. It was a seven day journey from Egypt to the Sea of Reeds. On the 7th day of Passover we celebrate the Miracle of the Splitting of the Sea and our total liberation from Egypt. In commemoration, we stay up all night studying Torah.

4/1 The Last day

After nightfall, light candles from a pre-existing flame. This day, the final day of Passover, emphasizes an even higher level of freedom. It is dedicated to our imminent and Final Redemption.

4/2 The Final Hours

The final hours of Passover are about freedom and redemption. And with each passing day these energies increase and intensify. So, it is befitting that on the last day we observe Yizkor memorial prayers during services. Chasidic Jews also have the custom of the Ba'al Shem Tov, to conclude Passover with a "Feast of Moshiach"—a festive meal complete with Matza and, yes, four cups of wine. It begins before sunset as the spiritual light of the future redemption shines brightest. Nightfall marks the official conclusion of Passover. Wait an hour to give the Rabbi enough time to buy back your Chametz and then, eat Chametz to your heart's content.

How to Plate Your Seder Plate

Beitzah

Top Left: A hard-boiled egg to commemorate the chagiga-holiday sacrifice. *Prep:* Boil one egg per Seder plate, and possibly more for use during the meal. *Use:* The egg is dipped into saltwater and eaten right before the meal starts.

Karpas

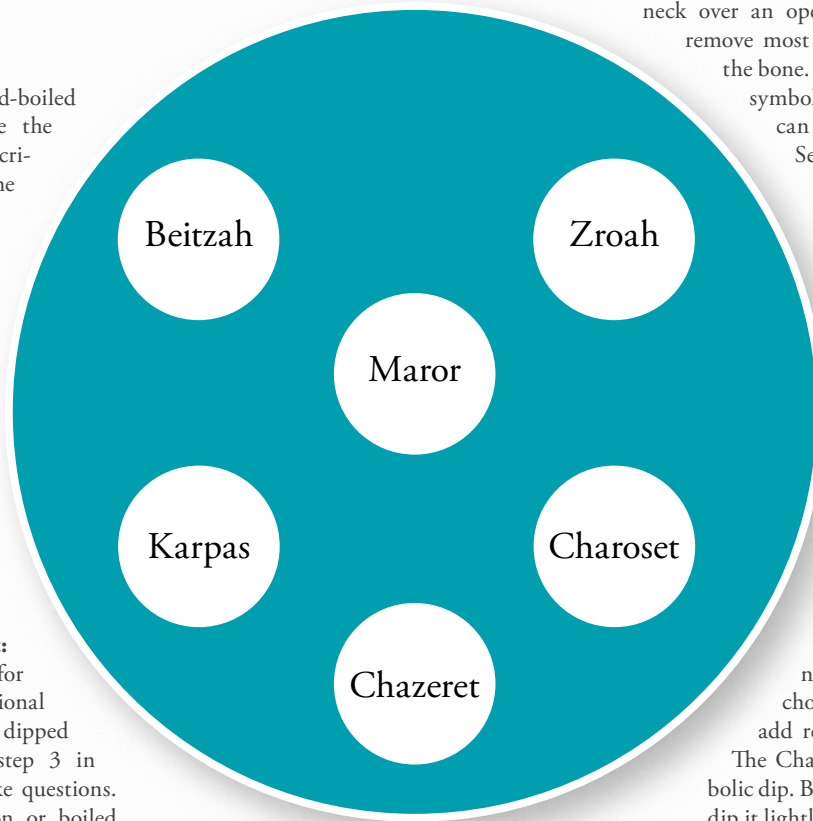
Bottom Left: Karpas vegetable for dipping. The traditional potato or onion is dipped into saltwater at step 3 in the seder to provoke questions. *Prep:* Peel an onion or boiled potato and place slice on seder plate. Also prepare a small bowl of saltwater. *Use:* At Karpas the vegetable is dipped into saltwater, the Borei Peri Ha'adama blessing is recited, before it is eaten.

Maror

Top Center: Maror or bitter herbs to remind us of the slavery. Most use fresh grated horseradish on romaine lettuce. *Prep:* Buy fresh horseradish root and grate it. *Use:* During the blessing over the bitter herbs hold the maror and then dip it lightly into the charoset before eating it.

Zroah

Top Right: Shank Bone to commemorate the Pesach sacrifice. Many use a roasted chicken neck. *Prep:* Roast the neck over an open flame. Afterwards, remove most of the meat to reveal the bone. *Use:* The shank bone is symbolic and not eaten. You can re-use it the following Seder night.



Charoset

Bottom Right: Charoset (the apple, nut, wine puree) to remind us of the mortar and brick made by our ancestors in Egypt. *Prep:* Shell walnuts and peel apples and chop finely, mix well and add red wine for color. *Use:* The Charoset is used as a symbolic dip. Before eating the Maror, dip it lightly into the Charoset.

Chazeret

Bottom Center: Maror or bitter herbs remind us of the slavery. Most use fresh grated horseradish on romaine lettuce. *Prep:* Buy fresh horseradish root and grate it. *Use:* During the Korech sandwich of matza and maror use these bitter herbs. Dip it lightly into the charoset before using it.

The Four Sons

Despite his intelligence, the Wise Son insists on asking the same question year after year. He's also obsessive about the discussion thing, making it rather difficult to get on with the Seder. // A fun guy to have around, the Wicked Son's cynicism is driven by his need to fit things into his down-to-earth world. Sitting next to his wise brother, he injects spice into the evening with his snide and provocative comments. // Out there in a world of silent amazement, the Simple Son is a transparent channel for the Infinite. If only he could tell us about it. // The Son Who Doesn't Know How to Question probably thinks he is the wise son. When you know it all, there's nothing left to ask. // The Fifth Son is not in the photo, because he doesn't even know it's Passover. He's the son who has yet to experience the freedom of Passover.



How To Spot Elijah

The Rebbe of Kotsk once promised his students that Elijah the Prophet would be revealed at his seder. On the first night of Passover, the Rebbe's dining room was crammed with his students. The air was electric with anticipation and excitement. The seder progressed, the cup of Elijah was filled and the door opened. But, there was no one there. The mood was quickly crushed. After all, the Rebbe had promised them a revelation of Elijah. The Kotsker, his face radiating holy joy, perceived their bitter disappointment and he shouted "Fools! "Do you think that Elijah the Prophet comes in through the door? Elijah comes in through the heart."



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

“Knowing the Unknowable”

Bridging the Gap between Faith and Reason

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

At the Janice Charach Gallery,
JCC West Bloomfield \$10

Decisions are tough because they mean we need to give up on alternative options. This lesson introduces a Jewish approach to consumerism teaching us how we can “have it all” -- not by getting more -- but by rethinking our wants, needs, and desires to become more content with our lives.

Going the Extra Mile

Tools for Implementing Lasting Change

Sunday, May 19, 2013

Why are resolutions so difficult? Can a person undergo real, lasting change? The Torah tells us that metamorphosis is not only possible, but essential for personal growth. This lesson using Jewish wisdom, outlines a practical, step-by-step guide explaining how we can implement long-enduring change.

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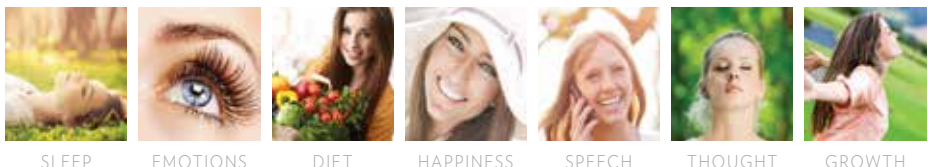
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HOLIDAY RECIPES

With the Holidays here and the many opportunities for celebrating with family and friends, try some of our favorite homemade recipes to go along with any traditional family meal!

*when preparing these dishes for Passover, be sure to use Kosher for Passover products.

VEGETARIAN PATE

This is a lovely treat to enhance any family gathering; Try it at the Seder for your vegetarian guests. Thanks to my dear friend Rise for this one.

- 1 can peas*
- 1 cup toasted walnuts or pecan*
- 2 hard boiled eggs
- 2 large onions, chopped and well browned in oil, salt, pepper and paprika*

Place all ingredients in a food processor starting with the nuts. Process the mixture until smooth. Let it sit overnight in fridge for better flavor.



EASY BREEZY FANCY SALMON

This dish can be served warm or cold to please any salmon eaters.

- 1 inch salmon slices
- 1 lemon
- Salt, pepper and garlic to taste*
- Splash of olive oil*

Place salmon slices on a baking sheet and season with the juice of one lemon, and other seasonings.

Add any variety of these vegetables for a delicious addition!

- Thinly sliced purple onion
- Red and yellow pepper strips
- Mini-bella mushrooms

Bake in the oven on high heat for 7-10 minutes.

Enjoy!

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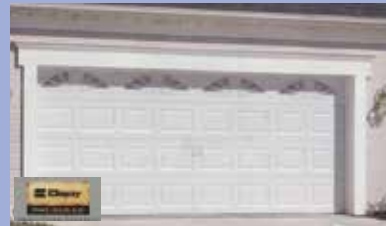
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Exclusive: Kosher Wino's Seder Selection

Wine Tips from *Jon Tabak*, of *Kosher Wino*

A Practical Guide to the Four Cups

Passover is around the corner and the hunt for Seder wines is in full force. Many kosher winos opt for the best-of-the-best. While they have the best intentions, I say, not so fast. Consuming bold wines for all four cups at the Seder can lead to trouble: palate numbing, stomachache, a big dose of levity too early in the evening... you get the picture. Also, breaking the bank for wines that you literally have to gulp down doesn't make a whole lot of sense. A proper strategy is needed. Here's what I recommend:

Cup One

This cup kicks off the evening. It's likely that you haven't eaten a morsel of food in hours, so jumping into a full-bodied, lip smacking wine isn't a safe bet and, more importantly, won't be enjoyable. Go for a varietal that's light by nature such as Pinot Noir. Here are some Pinots that I recommend:

Four Gates Pinot Noir NV \$36 // Galil Mountain Pinot Noir 2007 \$15 // Yarden Pinot Noir 2004 \$27

Cup Two

Now that you're one cup in and have deposited a single piece of potato in your stomach – hey, it's something – you can turn it up a notch. Try some wines that have a fuller body but with some natural sweetness to balance it out:

Abarbanel Chateau de La Salle Beaujolais Villages 2009 \$12 // Cantina Gabriele Chianti 2008 \$15 // Carmel Appellation Petite Sirah 2006 \$22

Cup Three

Having consumed more matzah that your body can handle and, at a minimum, the main course, you're more than ready for some heavier wines. Cabernet Sauvignon is the varietal best fits the bill and here a few that I recommend:

Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon 2007 \$25 // Barkan Altitude Series 624 Cabernet Sauvignon 2007 \$32 // Yatir Cabernet Sauvignon 2006 \$39

Cup Four

In "eat, drink and be merry", you're at the "merry" part now. Singing into the night on a full stomach, you could probably use some port help the digestive process. But no, one more cup of wine is on the menu. This cup is where everyone has his/her own style. I say, try something different: a different varietal, a unique blend, a wine from an obscure region, or even something special. Here are some suggestions:

Carmel Appellation Carignan Old Vines 2006 \$27 // Capcanes Peraj Ha'abib Flor de Primavera 2008 \$52 // Ella Valley Vineyards Vineyard's Cabernet Franc 2007 \$30

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev (1740-1809) spent his life acting as the self-appointed character witness for the Jewish people, engaging in a constant dialogue with G-d, pointing out the unique qualities of every Jew he met. The following is one of the best-known "Berdichever" stories:

Whiskey and the Spiritual Attorney

By *Elisha Greenbaum*

It was the afternoon before Passover, and Rabbi Levi Yitzchak was wandering through the streets of the Jewish quarter seeking out local smugglers. From one he quietly asked for a quote on contraband tobacco, from another he inquired about the availability of smuggled brocades and embroideries. No matter the merchandise he sought, everything was available for the right price.

However, when he started asking his new-found acquaintances to supply him with some bread or whiskey, those very same businessmen who had previously proved so accommodating balked. "Rabbi," said one, "are you trying to insult me? The seder will be starting in just a few hours and no Jew would have even a speck of chametz left in his home or business."

No matter the price offered, not one merchant was willing or able to come up with even a crumb of bread or dram of alcohol. The town had converted into a chametz-free zone.

Thrilled with the results of his failed quest, the rabbi looked up to heaven and declared: "G-d Almighty, look down with pride at Your people! The Czar has border guards and tax-commissioners dedicated to his commands. The police and the courts are devoted to tracking down and punishing smugglers and black-marketers, and yet, anything one could possibly want is available. Contrast this with the faith and fidelity of Your Jews. It has been over 3,000 years since you commanded us to observe Passover. No police, no guards, no courts and jails enforce this edict—and yet every Jew keeps Your laws to the utmost! "Mi k'amcha Yisrael – Who is like Your nation, Israel!?"

You can contact *Jon Tabak* directly via email at jon@kosherwino.com

“Tell your child on that day, that G-d took us out of slavery.” Exodus.

The biblical commandment is to celebrate Passover by telling the story of the Exodus. Hence, the central book used at the annual Passover seder is called a Haggadah, which means “telling,” for it tells of the great slavery and miraculous redemption that followed. Haggadah can also mean “praise” and “thanks” (as in Deut. 26:3), and there is plenty of that in the text.

But, who actually wrote the Haggadah?

History *of the* By Shira Gold Haggadah

The answer isn't as simple as you might like it to be. It was a process. Originally, you didn't need a Haggadah. From when the Jewish people left Egypt they would read at the seder different parts of Torah that talked of the Exodus. At some point the Men of the Great Assembly organized an outline of the verses to be said, and certainly if you knew where to look you could find each and every verse directly in the Torah. It took further form during the days of the Mishnah where additional blessings and passages were included and the format seems to have been complete by Talmudic times (the Talmud was completed in 4235 – 475 C.E.).

The first recorded version of the complete order of the Haggadah is in the Siddur of Rav Amram Gaon (9th century scholar)—manuscripts of which were found in the ancient Cairo genizah archive—and it appears as well in a prayer book compiled by Saadia Gaon (10th century), in Maimonides' works, in Machzor Vitri, who was an important disciple of Rashi, and more.

Considering the richness of tradition and culture surrounding the Passover Seder and the vivid biblical scenes described in the Haggadah, it comes as no surprise that medieval Jewish artists would produce illustrated Haggadahs. Some notable ones are “The Golden Haggadah” (Barcelona c. 1320) and the “Sarajevo Haggadah” (late 14th century).

The oldest and likely the first printed Haggadah was produced in Guadalajara, Spain. Lacking exact evidence, experts speculate the printing to have been done in 1482. It is currently housed in the Jewish National University Library in Jerusalem, Israel. By 1486 the Haggadah was in certainly print, a product of the Italian-Jewish Soncino family's printing press.

With an estimated 7,000 editions of the Passover Haggadah to date, often the choice of which Haggadah to use Seder night is as intrinsic a part of the Passover tradition - and a source of good-natured debate - as the matzo and wine. Yet selecting the perfect Haggadah for one's needs, from slim paper-back editions to scholarly tomes occupying several volumes, can be a daunting experience.

The reading of the Haggadah has always been an experiential activity,” says Rabbi Yosef B. Friedman, director of Chabad's publishing arm, the Kehot Publication Society. “With that in mind, we offer a series of Haggados that will suit the needs of everyone - from the Seder novice to the seasoned scholar.”

Haggadah For Passover—Annotated Edition.
Publisher: Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch
Format: 4.5” x 6.5” Paperback, 112pp
ISBN: 0-8266-010137
Language: Hebrew / English

For those conducting or participating in a Seder for the first time, the elaborate observances of the evening can be daunting. This compact volume, printed in crisp, clear type, with a splash-proof cover, is designed with clarity and simplicity in mind. The perfect solution for family and communal Seders, each part of the Seder is illuminated with clear, step-by-step instructions, guiding the participant through the often-times complicated order of the Seder night.

Also available in compact size and in Hebrew/French.

The Kittsee Haggadah
Publisher: Kehot Publication Society
Format: 8” x 11.5” Hardcover, 50pp
Language: Hebrew

The perfect companion for the collector, artist or historian in everyone, this painstakingly

detailed photographic reproduction of the magnificent 250-year-old Kittsee Haggadah features thirteen evocative illustrations and splendid illuminations.

Selected from the 2000 editions of the Haggadah, spanning 450 years, housed at the Central Lubavitch Library, at Lubavitch Headquarters in New York, the original Kittsee Haggadah was hand-written and illustrated on parchment by famed calligrapher Chaim ben Asher of Kittsee, an Austrian hamlet bordering Bratislava, Slovakia in 1760.

Hardbound and replete with authentic details from cover to cover including facsimiles of the original leather binding, this Haggadah is sure to become a treasured family heirloom.

The Passover Haggadah with Commentary from the Classic Commentators, Midrash, Kabbalah, the Chasidic Masters and the Haggadah of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.
Publisher: Kehot Publication Society
Format: 7” x 10”, 224pp
Fine Leatherette cover, Silver edged
Language: English

With elegant and functional design, this Haggadah is an excellent companion to the Seder. Clever icons draw the reader's eye to the different genres of commentary: Midrashic, Kabbalistic, Chasidic and Classic; while a lucid English commentary also provides step-by-step instructions to the various customs of the Seder.

The work, by Rabbi Yosef Marcus, the Chabad emissary to San Mateo, California gives the reader a comprehensive and fundamental understanding of the Seder and the festival of Passover. This edition of Haggadah has already gained praise in the public eye. Acclaimed author Herman Wouk has called it “deep, complete, and lively with Hasidic lore; a fine volume.” It is “as beautiful in its contents as it is in its appearance,” noted Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, author of Jewish Literacy and A Code of Jewish Ethics.

The Haggadah with a collection of reasons, customs and explanations
Publisher: Kehot Publication Society
Format: 6” x 9” Hardcover, 2 vols. 1112pp
Language: Hebrew

This is the definitive edition of the Haggadah. This two-volume set features the Rebbe's classic commentary on the Haggadah, culled from the Talmud, Midrash, Halachah, Kabbalah and Chasidic works as well as the Rebbe's own insights and analytic comments. Rich with appendices and addenda, this edition boasts a comprehensive collection of the Rebbe's published works on the Haggadah.

My in-depth Study of

Fun

By Rochel Pritsker

Yes, it's true. Several years ago, when I was at a Jewish parent function, someone asked me what I like to do for fun, and without thinking I smiled brightly and answered, "Torah study." Of course I quickly realized by the person's reaction that perhaps "shopping" or "going out to the movies" would have been a more expected and appropriate response. But in all honesty, at the time when I heard the word "fun," I immediately equated it with happiness. And to me, Torah, with all the twists and turns it feeds my mind, and all the "Aha!" moments of life and self-discovery that it offers me, is very much a source for happiness.

When my two young sons grew older and less dependent on me, I realized that between work and managing a home, there was a part of me that craved something additional. Something I knew I possessed but felt was not being cultivated sufficiently. My mind and spirit had a desire to expand, so I made time to do one thing solely for myself—I decided to attend Torah class every Tuesday evening.

The first night I went I felt unusually quiet, and absorbed everything everyone had to say, including the rabbi giving the class. We were supposed to go through several pages of the weekly Torah portion, but instead the class stayed on one paragraph. The amount of life meaning and analysis that was found in one Torah passage was profound. I left the class an hour and half later feeling as though a door to my soul had been opened wide, and this felt exciting and uplifting—and, yes, fun.

Every class after that had a different feel to it, even with the same people attending. Sometimes the class broke out in spontaneous laughter about something humorous that someone offered in connecting a personal life incident to Torah. And at other times, when different individuals held passionately opposing views on a Torah passage, the rabbi would smile widely and respond, "Thank G-d, you are all correct!" going on to explain how different meanings from Torah can be applied to each individual with his own different life experiences and circumstances.

And still there were other times, when the class carried a deeply somber feel that moved the emotions and inspired a deep compassion for life's challenges, as we recalled the hardships of our history as Jews that still exist to this very day. Nevertheless, each connection I experienced with Torah left me feeling fully alive, giving way to a new definition of "fun" that blossomed for me—all from the start of one Torah class . . .



Through it all, I experienced my own ups and downs in life. Only this time, with my deep-rooted bond to Torah, the "downs" were no longer downs. Whereas easy, happy moments in life felt like free gifts offered, the seemingly low times held a much greater depth and reward. Through utilizing the wisdom of Torah in my own life, any challenges I faced no longer felt like "problems." Instead, these challenges became an opportunity for me to live as our patriarchs did—with a passionate drive to take the seemingly imperfect and find the truth of good in it, to give of myself with complete joy and trust that I will become better for it. And I have . . .

So of course, it is no surprise when I say that Shavuot, the holiday commemorating the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai (when we learn Torah all night and then listen in the morning to the reading of the Ten Commandments), has always been a favorite holiday of mine. I remember how much more

significant Passover came to mean for me when I understood the reason G-d freed us. It wasn't just that He finally let us free so that we could do whatever we felt like doing. G-d freed us—with a purpose.

When we left Egypt as slaves, we had yet to leave our slave mentality completely behind us. We might have left physically, but it took time before G-d was able to take Egypt out of us. Yet deep inside, our core being held a spark—a spark of innocence that was what instinctively allowed us to abandon reason and leave Egypt as quickly as possible. The story of Exodus, with the destruction of Egypt and our physical departure, is the first part of the story of our journey towards freedom. Shavuot is the second part—utilizing our inner spark as the source for our freedom, through receiving the Torah from G-d.

On Passover, we try to connect to all the things in life that hold our inner spark captive. We search inside of ourselves to see where we still respond to life with the slave mindset—whether it be slaves to our cell phone, computer, television set, work, or certain self-destructive habits. This awareness prepares us for the second part of our freedom, when we receive the gift of the Torah from G-d. Liberating ourselves from our personal limitations, we are now free and ready to accept living life with purpose. So after Passover, as we anticipate Shavuot, we can now switch from the elimination of the negative in our life to the opportunities for the positive. Now, instead of asking questions about our life, we can focus on living the answers to those questions.

On Shavuot, G-d gave us Torah so that we can experience the kind of freedom that actualizes our every thought, response, behavior and emotion at its highest potential, so that our inner spark shines freely from the inside out, with no limit on who or what it can touch. So that sacred times are not something we need to wait for, like a special occasion. With Torah, sacred moments are constant and never-ending.

The day of Shavuot is said to be the day G-d and the Jewish people united in marriage. When we are blessed to find our own soulmate, the first thing we long to do is to give to one another, the instinct that underlies true love. And this is what G-d did for us. He gave to us. With Torah, He offers us a way to forever refine our character; to bring every moment of our existence a greater purpose, even in the midst of challenge; and in doing so, to find our source for lasting happiness. And for me, somehow . . . a new definition of "fun."

Rochel Pritsker is a freelance writer and motivational speaker on various topics, including inspiring healthy, purpose-driven children. She lives with her two sons in San Diego, CA.

TOP TEN Seder *Faux Pas*

Keep your hosts from choking on their matzoh this Passover with Rabbi Simcha Weinstein's tips on what not to do at a seder.

From slavery to liberation, the story of the Exodus, as told every Passover seder, is a swashbuckling tale of a few individuals who became a family and, in turn, became a people. The Haggadah, the book from which we read during the seder, values questions as much as answers. But if you find yourself making any of the following 10 faux pas, "When do we eat?" could soon become "When do we leave?"

1. Don't ask your host if you can chug the leftover glass of wine in the middle of the table. During the Passover seder, it's customary to drink four cups of wine (or grape juice, if you're under 21 or just a bit more inhibited). According to custom, we also pour a fifth cup, the "Cup of Elijah," and reserve it in honor of the prophet who comes to visit every seder. Control your inner oenophile and refrain from sipping from Elijah's glass. And whatever you do, don't ask what time the prophet is coming down the chimney. (Helpful hint: He actually

comes through the front door.) The good news is that kosher wine is no longer a Passover fad—all the cool kids are drinking it.

2. Don't be a stranger...and don't invite someone strange. The Haggadah notes, "Let all who are hungry, come and eat." The welcoming of guests to the seder table is a central Passover tradition, originating from the biblical story of Abraham and Sarah, who opened their tent to strangers. Translation? It's customary to invite a guest to the Passover seder, so keep your door open, but not so open that a stray Mel Gibson may wander in. Mel's not exactly on this rabbi's Mensch VIP list.

3. Stop continuously asking, "When are the latkes going to be served?" ...Or for that matter, the blintzes, knishes, or even egg rolls. Perhaps the question most often uttered at a seder is, "When do we eat?" Seders can go on for hours, but if you stick it out, you'll enjoy a festive meal that teaches us that true freedom lies not in fleeing from the world (or the seder table, if we get restless) but in enjoying its (culinary) riches. The humble fare on the seder

plate may not merit a Michelin star, but each food is symbolic of the Exodus experience. The plate features a hard-boiled egg, a roasted shank bone, a spring vegetable such as parsley, horseradish, lettuce, and a special paste consisting of a mixture of fruit, wine, and nuts that's known as charoset.

4. No seder status updates, please. You might be able to communicate in 140 characters or less, but at the seder table, we make Hebrew our second language. No texting, tweeting, Friending (or un-Friending), Liking, or, you guessed it, Poking is allowed. In order to return to the Egypt of old, if only for one evening, we must break from some of our modern habits. The core of the seder is retelling the story of the Exodus from Egypt, and Moses led the Jewish people to the Promised Land without using a GPS-enabled smartphone. (Never mind the fact it took him 40 years...)

5. A reference to the "four children" is not a reference to a Reality TV show. The Haggadah speaks of "four children": one who is wise, one who is wicked, one who is simple,



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and one who does not know how to stay married ask. Each of these children asks a question about the seder in his own way, and in each case, the questions must be answered differently, because the form of the question typifies the character and attitude of the inquirer. These four children can also be seen as archetypes, each having one characteristic that we all possess, such as the know-how to make \$17 million off our weddings.

6. Refrain from asking to read the part of Charlton Heston. If you find yourself reading dialogue from a movie, you brought the wrong Haggadah. That said, among many families the mandatory rewatching of the classic 1956 Academy Award-winning film *The Ten Commandments*, starring (the very non-Jewish) Charlton Heston as Moses, is a time-honored Passover tradition. In fact, a great way to spice up the seder is with role-playing, with guests putting themselves in the shoes of our ancestors. So don't be afraid to put on that pharaoh costume and walk like an Egyptian.

7. Don't bring challah as a gift. Challah is kryptonite to a seder, as dietary law calls for the traditional corrugated cardboard known as matzoh on Passover. As the Jewish people escaped slavery so quickly, they had no time to wait for their bread to rise, so they

grabbed what they could: the unleavened dough. According to Jewish mysticism, leavened products symbolize inflated ego and arrogance, while matzoh represents humility and suspension of the self. Now, matzoh has come a long way since its first appearance as the dietary staple of those fleeing Israelites. In an age where carbs are the enemy, matzoh has become the new bagel and can often be very tasty. Modern varieties include Israeli matzoh, whole wheat matzoh, spelt matzoh, organic matzoh, pizza matzoh, and yes, even the "everything" matzoh studded with poppy seeds, onion, garlic, and salt.

8. Don't assume that a request to "lean to the left" has anything to do with politics. No, this isn't about Occupy demonstrations. An important part of the seder that many people aren't aware of is the "leaning." The act of reclining evokes a person of leisure, one who has time to dine without worrying about getting up. Leaning at the seder symbolizes the fact that we were once slaves in Egypt and are now free, and so our posture should mirror our liberated status. However, if you're still leaning by the fourth cup of wine, you might have to start thinking about the dry cleaner.

9. Your rabbi does not know the secret formula for Coca-Cola. Have you ever noticed the Coca-Cola bottles with yellow caps

that seem to materialize with almost biblical precision every March and April? Well, it's not a marketing shtick, but rather a "kosher for Passover" version of the popular beverage. Jews cannot consume leavened foods during Passover, and this includes foods containing fermented grain, such as the high-fructose corn syrup used to sweeten sodas. Enter the Coca-Cola Company, which created a real-sugar alternative to the iconic beverage. Pepsi and Sprite are also now available in kosher varieties, but have no fear if you're not a soda fan; coconut water is also kosher (phew).

10. You can't DVR Passover. I once heard the story told of a conversation between a college student and his rabbi. The student says, "I know tomorrow is the seder, but there's also a college football game, and it's going to be a great game. Rabbi, I've got to watch my team's game on TV." The rabbi responds, "That's what DVRs are for." The delighted student replies, "You mean I can TiVo the seder?"

Rabbi Simcha Weinstein is a best-selling author who recently was voted "New York's Hipest Rabbi" by PBS Channel 13. He chairs the Religious Affairs Committee at Pratt Institute and recently published his latest book, The Case For Children: Why Parenthood Makes Your World Better.



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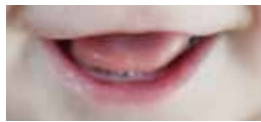
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Ten things you should know about Moses' speech impediment



By Rabbi Shmuel Marcus

IF IT WERE A PART OF A NOVEL it would introduce a great twist of irony to the plot: the main character, whose job it is to confront evil and verbally communicate eternal and universal truths to all of mankind, is speech deficient. Problem is, it's not fiction—it's factual history.

Moses, who by self-admission “stammers and speaks with difficulty” (Exodus 4:10), is the one chosen by G-d to address Pharaoh, to lead the Jewish people out of slavery, and to eventually teach G-d's wisdom in an unprecedented way.

In other words, the great leader of the Jews, the warrior, the articulator of the Divine commandments and scribe of the Torah, needed a speech therapist. How did this happen? And why did G-d choose him for a job that required basic skills that he seemed to lack?

There's got to be a message here for us—if not in the realm of speech pathology then at least in the realm of spirituality and personal growth.

As a child I heard the story of how Moses lost his power of speech.

It goes something like this (Midrash Shmot Rabbah, 1:26): Moses, having been drawn from the water by Pharaoh's daughter Batya, was raised in the palace. Batya loved him, and treated him with great affection as if he were her own child. Pharaoh, too, loved Moses, and played with him on his lap. On more than one occasion, little Moses reached for Pharaoh's crown and put it on his own head. In the eyes of Pharaoh's advisers, this augured no good. Perhaps this is the child who will overtake the throne? He must be killed immediately. One adviser, Yitro, came to the child's defense: He is but a child without discernment, simply enthralled by the crown's glitter. Test him. Bring a plate filled with gold and glowing coals. If he reaches for the gold then he knows what he is doing and must be killed. But if he reaches for the coals this will prove that he simply likes to touch things that sparkle and shine and his reaching for the crown was innocuous. The plate was brought and Moses was about to reach for the gold, but the angel Gabriel quickly descended and pushed his hand to the coal. Reflexively, Moses put the hot coal to his mouth and burned his tongue. This affected his speech for life.

I recently reread the story and wondered to myself: What's the point? I am sure G-d could have found another way to save Moses without maiming him for life, so why didn't He?

...it became eminently clear that we did not accept the Torah because we were wowed by Moses; we accepted the Torah because we were wowed by G-d...

Commentators explain that it was in order to protect the purity of Moses' mouth from the get go. When he was an infant, Moses would not suckle unkosher milk from an Egyptian wet nurse, and Pharaoh's daughter had to seek a Hebrew woman (Moses's mother) to nurse him. In a similar vein, the stammer prevented Moses from frivolous small talk and unholy language. Moses' mouth was being protected. Those lips were meant to speak only words of goodness, of holiness—the word of G-d. And that's why Moses miraculously finds his voice and discovers his words only once his Divine mission begins. According to this explanation, Moses's impediment disappeared whenever he was conveying G-d's word, impressing upon people the divine source of his transmission.

On a simple level, Moses's stammer remained even when he was conveying G-d's word—but this was in fact a plus. The 14th-century sage Rabbi Nissim ben Reuben (known as the Ran) explains that had Moses been an eloquent and gifted speaker, there would always be room for skeptics to claim that the Jewish people accepted the Torah, its truths, and its mandates, only as a result of Moses' charisma. After all, a glib, captivating speaker can convince people of just about anything. Now that it was actually a challenge to listen to Moses, it became eminently clear that we did not accept the Torah because we were wowed by Moses; we accepted the Torah because we were wowed by G-d. This is reflected in G-d's words to Moses, "Who gave man a mouth . . . is it not I, the L-rd?" G-d was telling him, "Yes, you have a hard time speaking, but that is not a reason not to take this job. On the contrary, you have this handicap because I have selected you to take the job."

There's more: According to Chabad philosophy Moses's inability to speak stems from his constant listening, learning, and receiving. As the most humble man in the Torah, Moses sees

himself as a student not a teacher, as a listener not a speaker. It is in this context that Moses suggests to G-d that he find someone else. "I am not a man of words." But that was exactly the Divine objective in finding a suitable leader—for to lead a people you must first be a listener.

Drawbacks that ended up becoming advantages. If only

we could view our G-d given deficiencies like this and transform them into such positives we'd be doing quite well—except that for Moses it was only when he hit eighty that this all came into play. Let's hope it doesn't us take that long.

On a deeper level, the 18th century founder of Chabad, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, offers a mystical insight into Moses's famous stammer (Torah Ohr 51d). In short, you'll need to know some basic Kabbalah about the chaotic world of Tohu that preceded our



orderly world of Tikun. Before the world as we know it, G-d first created a universe of extremes, where G-d's light shone with an ultimate intensity. So intense that there was nothing able to contain it and nowhere to channel it. This world was known as the World of Tohu. As you can imagine, Tohu broke down. From its shattered remains, our imperfect yet sustainable universe of Tikkun was born.

Moses had a Tohu soul. Moses knew that the powerful ideas and G-dly energy in his head overwhelmed his ability to talk about them. There was so much brilliance but nothing to contain and convey it. Yet, this was exactly the intent of the intensity. Moses was taught

by G-d to find words that would retain the intense ideas. Moses was taught by G-d to find a voice for the unspeakable. And sure enough, Moses miraculously finds his voice and discovers his words once he commits fully to his Divine mission at hand. Perhaps, it was the commitment itself that proved to be most therapeutic of all.

Perhaps, the dedication and commitment to each of our personal Divine missions would be the best therapy of all.

So here are 10 things we can all learn from Moses's speech impediment

1. Always reach for the gold (under normal circumstances).
2. Do what it takes to save your life, even if it means eating hot coals.
3. Stay away from foul language. And even if you're not Moses, your mouth has the power to bring positive energy into this world. Why waste it on frivolity or negativity?
4. Take cleanliness seriously. A clean home and office—will lead to greater success in your spirituality.
5. G-d knows who you are and what you can do. Be mindful of your inabilities and whenever possible turn your drawbacks into advantages.
6. Be a listener; don't always rush to be the one with the answer.
7. Let others speak—you'll be amazed at how much you can learn from ordinary people.
8. Intensity can be good when harnessed properly. Unleash an insane amount of energy into time-tested ideals. Find a mitzvah, a good deed, or a Jewish cause to be crazy about.
9. Search hard enough and you will find the way to convey the preciousness of Torah to your loved ones.
10. And, most of all, don't be afraid of pushing yourself beyond your natural limits. Like Moses, it will help you achieve true liberation—for yourself, and maybe even for the entire Jewish people.

Rabbi Shmuel Marcus is the Editor-in-chief of Chabad's Soulwise Magazine

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Meet Our New Youth Directors



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"We always enjoyed working with youth. There is a certain purity found in children that doesn't exist elsewhere."

that can walk into The Shul and NOT love it! The community is so warm and friendly."

"We wish everyone true "nachas" from

Their past experience working with youth around the world for many years will certainly come in handy. Their summers and free time were filled with helping communities, holiday programs, Hebrew schools, and teaching Jewish children of many different ages and backgrounds.

"We always enjoyed working with youth. There is a certain purity found in children that doesn't exist elsewhere, and for that reason there is such a great stress placed on children in Judaism. Children are the forefront of our heritage, the future of our people, and that's why G-d chose the children above all the sages and prophets to be the guarantors for giving us the Torah. We take great pride in our important work and we realize the great responsibility we carry; we hope and pray that we will be successful in our mission."

Every member of The Shul feels that there is much to be said about the congregation, and Rabbi Yishai and Rochel Leah are already feeling the spirit. "Of course we love it! We don't think there can be anyone in the world

your children and grandchildren and we should all merit true freedom this Passover, becoming free from all our inhibitions and learn from the children how to be open and truly love one another. May we merit the ultimate and complete freedom with the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our days!"



Rabbi Yishai, Rochel Leah and Mushkale Elieffja are here to make an impact in their capacity as Youth Directors at The Shul. "Our vision is that all the youth in our community will have such a positive Jewish experience in their childhood, that they will carry these feelings and deep Jewish identity throughout their lives. This will in turn be a cause to inspire the next generation of Jews to continue in their heritage."

Rabbi Yishai got his training in Yeshivot in Los Angeles and Paris, then continuing to Jerusalem as a student-teacher before finishing his studies and receiving his Rabbinical ordination in New York. Rochel Leah completed her studies in Chicago before continuing to higher education in Sefad, Israel.

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Thursdays at 11 AM | Itty Shemtov

JEWISH MYSTICISM
Saturdays at 8:45 AM | Rabbi Dov

THE LIFE OF OUR PRAYERS
Saturdays after the Kiddush
(approx. 12:45pm) Itty Shemtov

Ongoing Programs

HEBREW SCHOOL
K-7th grades
Madrachim Program
SEE BELOW

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROGRAMS
Ages 11-13
SEE PAGE 12

SHABBAT CKIDS CLUB
MULTIPLE PROGRAMS:
Boys & Girls ages 2-5
Boys ages 6-11
Girls ages 6-11
SEE PAGE 14

BAT MITZVAH CLUB
April 6, April 27, May 11
Girls ages 11-13 | 11:00-12:00
SEE PAGE 12

GIRLS TEEN CLUB
Monthly

TEFILLIN CLUB
Teenage Boys
Sundays at 8:30 with monthly trip!

Upcoming Events

WOMEN'S CIRCLE
April 10 | 7:00 pm
May 19 | 3:00 pm
SEE PAGE 13

THE SHUL FAMILY SEDER
March 26, 2013 | 7:15 pm

THE SHUL KIDS TRIP DAY –
Detroit Science Center
March 28, 2013 | 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

ADULT SOCIAL: MOVIE & DINNER
March 28, 2013

BABY KIDDUSH
April 1, 2013 | 11:00

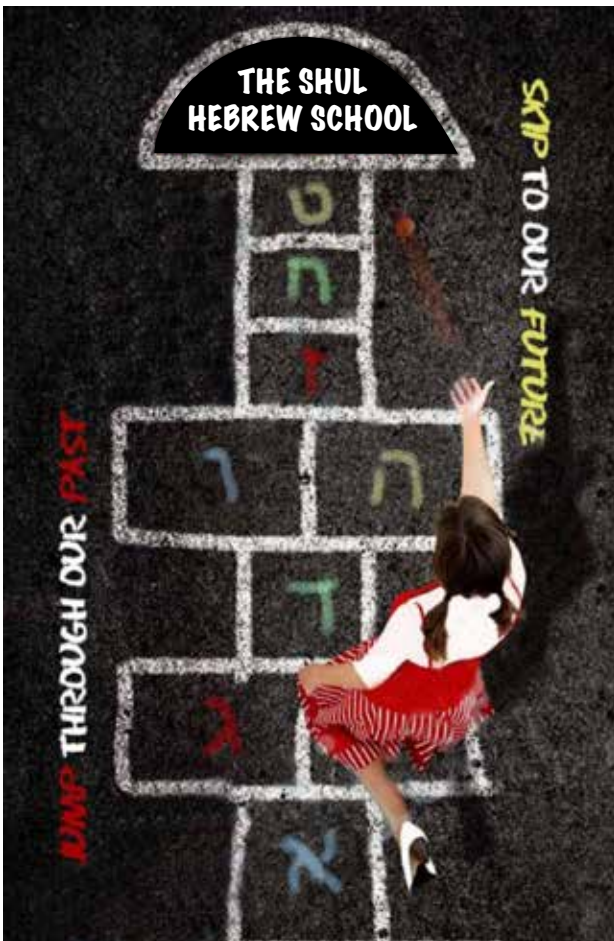
LAG BAOMER COMMUNITY BBQ
April 28, 2013
SEE PAGE 30

SHAVUOT ICE-CREAM PARTY
MAY 15, 2013
SEE PAGE 30

SUMMER CAMP
August 12-29, 2013
SEE BACK COVER

Check our website for regular updates www.TheShul.net

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Boys and girls 4-13

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August 12 - 23, 2013
BONUS WEEK August 26-29!