

L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe on the Torah portion

In this week's Torah portion, Tzav, we read about the eight-day consecration of the Sanctuary. All the instructions for building the Sanctuary had been followed. The utensils and altar were ready for use, and the Jews began to bring the various types of sacrifices. Yet, "the Divine Presence did not rest on the work of their hands." For the first seven days, the Sanctuary was erected. But each day it was taken down again. Only on the eighth day of the consecration, when the last trace of spiritual impurity caused by the sin of the Golden Calf was removed, did the Heavenly fire descend and the G-dly Presence rest on the Sanctuary.

We see here two components to the perpetual fire which burned on the altar. On the one hand, a fire came down from Heaven to consume the offerings. But the priests were nonetheless commanded to bring ordinary fire, too. The act of bringing the fire served as a preparation for the G-dly flame which came from Above. Only after human initiative had been taken could the G-dly fire descend. And only at that point did the Sanctuary attain permanence.

Why could the G-dly fire be drawn down only after the human component of the worship was perfected? What special nature of the G-dly fire brought permanence to the Sanctuary?

Human beings are finite. No matter how high their aspirations, they can reach only a finite level of spirituality. And, being finite, human beings cannot reach a level of permanence in their worship without the assistance of G-d, Who is infinite and unlimited. Permanence cannot be attained solely through human effort. The G-dly intervention added a permanence that could not be achieved by human endeavor. The Sanctuary no longer needed to be disassembled.

The fire teaches us that we, as finite beings, must first complete our own tasks and achieve as much as our limited capabilities allow, in order for G-d to provide the spiritual edge which we cannot reach alone.

The completion of the first seven days of the consecration also symbolized the limitations of the physical world. A week constitutes a recognized, full cycle symbolizing the spiritual limitations inherent in the corporeal world. The eighth day of the consecration symbolizes the infinite attribute of G-d which cannot be contained in the natural order of seven. This is the level of "perpetual fire" which burned on the altar, showing that finite beings could transcend even time itself, through the perfection of their worship of G-d.

The verse concerning the perpetual fire reads: "A perpetual fire shall burn on the altar - it shall not go out." This means that our enthusiasm and warmth towards Judaism must remain kindled and never be allowed to diminish. It is not enough to rely on our spiritual achievements of the day before, or even a minute ago. We must be ever vigilant to ensure that the innate spark of love of G-d in every Jewish soul never grows cold.

Every single Jew is a sanctuary to G-d, as it states, "And they shall build me a Sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst" - in the midst of each and every Jew. If we always keep the spark of love for G-d and Judaism glowing, we can ensure that the Divine Presence finds a dwelling place in this world below.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Passover, Education, and the Power of Beginnings

The Exodus from Egypt was the birth of the Jewish People as a nation - the birthday of Israel. It was the first step in preparing us to receive the Torah. The word "Torah" means "instruction" - the Torah educates us how to live.

So, Passover is connected with education. One of the central mitzvot (commandments) is telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt as well as other teachings connected with Passover, found in the Hagada. In fact, the word "hagada" comes from the word "to tell." We recite the Hagada because G-d commands us "to tell your children" about the Exodus. In other words, we educate our children by telling them, reliving the story of the Exodus.

There's still another point of connection. All the holidays involve many customs and laws, but perhaps none has as many details as Passover. So we must educate ourselves - and teach our children - the practical requirements and long-standing traditions associated with observance of the holiday. But we must do so in a way that has a lasting effect. We don't want it to be like studying for a one-time test: memorize the material, take the test, and forget everything the minute it's over. Rather, the education, the knowledge of the laws and customs, should have a continuing influence throughout the year, penetrate and affect the character - ours and our children's. The "lessons of Passover" - the matza, the maror, the charoset, etc. - should benefit us even in the summer or fall.

And yes, there's still another connection between Passover and education. Celebrating Passover changes the educational venue from school to home. At the Seder, the formal classroom learning may be on hiatus, but the Seder table becomes the "hands-on" laboratory. Real "homework" takes place with the entire family participating.

Of course, a good teacher has his or her lesson plans in order. And so, too, we

should arrange the lessons for Pesach. Just as adults need to learn, relearn and review for Passover, each year learning something new, something deeper, so too should we have a "lesson plan" for our students and children to learn some new insights.

As a consequence, this will strengthen the relationship and influence of teachers and parents on their students and children. That, in turn, will help accomplish the purpose of Passover - freedom to learn Torah.

The Rebbe's birthday is the 11th of Nissan (Sunday, March 29 this year), just a few days before Passover. The Rebbe has always emphasized the need to educate the Jewish child - including the adult who is a "child" in his or her knowledge of Judaism as well as the "child" within each of us. Indeed, the Rebbe started a campaign to assure that every Jewish child receive a Jewish education. This campaign inspired tens of thousands and revolutionized the field.

But there's another connection as well. When a child starts his education, it's a time of great excitement, a new phase in life. Passover, the birthday of the Jewish People, was, and is, a time of great excitement, when the Jewish People began a new phase of life. And a birthday is also a time of great excitement, a new phase of life.

So, what would be an appropriate birthday gift to ourselves in honor of Passover, the birthday of the Jewish People, and to the Rebbe, in honor of his birthday?

Teach Torah to a child. If we teach Torah, or help others teach Torah, or let ourselves be taught Torah, why, that would be a wonderful present for us all.

Learning and teaching Torah will enable the entire world to receive the greatest present of all, the commencement of the Messianic Era, when the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea.

SLICE OF LIFE

Making The World A Smaller Place



Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam

I was a young yeshivah student, just twenty-one years old, who didn't know anything about electronics; I didn't even know how a telephone operated. But, by Divine Providence, I happened to be the right person at the right place at the right time, and I became a crucial cog in a wheel that eventually became the World Lubavitch Communication Center.

It all started in 1970, when Chabad was commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the passing of the Previous Rebbe on the tenth day of the Hebrew month of Shevat, which of course was also the twentieth anniversary of the Rebbe's assumption of leadership. And there was a request from chasidim in Israel for the proceedings in Brooklyn to be broadcast live.

In those days, to make a live audio broadcast, three things were needed: a phone line; a place from which to operate; and a room with view of the synagogue where the ceremonies would be held.

As it happened, I had all three. While a student at the Chabad yeshivah, I had been assigned a room in 770. This room had been the office of one of the Rebbe's secretaries – Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodshtein – but had stood empty since his passing. Of course, it had a phone, and also a window overlooking the large synagogue below.

That first broadcast – which unfortunately, due to the time difference, did not reach Israel because it was Shabbat there already – was nonetheless successful, as people in Chicago and Los Angeles were able to listen in. Also, after Shabbat was over, the Rebbe held another farbrengen, and this time the chasidim in Israel got to hear it live.

Afterwards we heard that the Rebbe was pleased with the broadcast, so we decided to make these live broadcasts on a regular basis.

The initial setup was very simple. An Israeli student named Shmuel (Mulik) Rivkin, who had some engineering know-how, opened up the mouthpiece of the telephone and connected the wires to the earphones of a tape recorder, which gave us the ability to broadcast.

The next time the Rebbe held a farbrengen, we pulled wires from all the offices in the nearby building four or five phone lines.

As I mentioned, I was involved because it was all happening in my room, but I was just a yeshivah student with no knowledge of technology. Nonetheless, just as G-d graced Betzalel with the technical skills to build the Tabernacle, so too He gave me the wherewithal to take this project forward.

After Mulik left, I started to study how a telephone works and I learned a great deal, mostly by trial and error. Little by little – with the help of others, including Yonason Hackner, Yossel Kazen, Eli Winsbacher and Shmuel Goldman – I was able to develop a very sophisticated system that was not available anywhere. Representatives of many companies came to see it and they couldn't believe it was home-made. It had 420 phone lines and gave us the ability to broadcast to 600 locations around the globe.

After each broadcast, we sent a report to the Rebbe, telling him the locations we had reached. People even saw the Rebbe scanning a collection of these reports when he was praying at the resting place of the Previous Rebbe before Rosh Hashanah.

Also, in subsequent farbrengens, the Rebbe mentioned several times that the event was being broadcast live and uniting people across the whole world. I recall once he said that just as gold, which has many uses, was really

created for Temple service, so too, broadcast technology has many uses, but was really created to spread Torah.

To broadcast just one farbrengen to Israel cost at the time over a thousand dollars, which would be equal to almost seven thousand dollars today. Every broadcast involved at least half a dozen people. One was in charge of the microphone downstairs, making sure that it was picking up the Rebbe's talk clearly. Another one was in charge of the PA system. Another one was in charge of the audio recording, for every one of the Rebbe's talks was also recorded, and even by modern standards, these tapes are of good quality. When we eventually added in video, we needed people to take care of that.

We also broadcast the Rebbe's talks on the radio in New York, as many chasidim wanted to hear him who could not attend the farbrengens..

The radio broadcasts proved especially useful after the Rebbe suffered his heart attack in 1977. The following evening, he wanted to speak to reassure everyone, and I was asked to run a microphone from his room to the PA system.

After that, the Rebbe ended up speaking from his room via radio every week following Shabbat, until his doctors allowed him to resume his normal schedule of farbrengens from the synagogue.

Initially, we broadcast only to major Chabad centers and yeshivahs, but eventually the network covered the world. For example, we broadcast to London, and London in turn broadcast to all of Europe, from Amsterdam to Zurich. We broadcast to Venezuela and from there we reached Brazil and Argentina.

The Rebbe sent his emissaries to all corners of the globe to change the world, but he also wanted to empower them and keep them close and united. And the live broadcasts of his talks at the farbrengens helped him do that.

Between 1970 and 1994, Rabbi Chaim Baruch Halberstam broadcast and recorded thousands of hours of the Rebbe's talks and interactions with individual while directing the World Lubavitch Communication Center. (Today, the office of WLCC serves as a visitors' center and Chabad House, welcoming guests to 770.) He was interviewed in March of 2019.



On Saturday evening, they headed to a Havdalah ceremony and concert held in Times Square

From Singapore to Brooklyn: Teens Find Their People at CTeen Shabbaton

A group of 15 Jewish teenagers from Singapore made the long journey last week to join thousands of their peers from around the globe for the annual CTeen (Chabad Teen Network) Shabbaton in New York City.

The Shabbaton is the largest gathering of Jewish teens in the world, bringing together more than 4,500 participants from over 60 countries. From Thursday through Sunday, the group was immersed in a packed program that blends fun with deeply meaningful experiences.

On Saturday evening, they headed to a Havdalah ceremony and concert held in Times Square. For one unforgettable evening, the "Crossroads of the World" transformed into a powerful epicenter of Jewish pride, as towering digital billboards lit up with Jewish themes and CTeen activities from around the globe.

A Call To Action

Get Rid of Your Chametz

Jewish law prohibits one from eating and owning chametz (leavened foods) on Passover. Any chametz in your possession can be set aside before passover in a special place in your home and sold to a non-Jew for the duration of the holiday.

You can sell your chametz through your rabbi or local Chabad Center. If you do not have access to a rabbi you can sell your chametz online at chabad.org. Also make sure to inquire as to when the sale of the chametz must be completed on the morning of Wednesday, April 1, 2026.



The Rebbe Writes

from correspondence of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Translated and adapted from a letter of the Rebbe 11 Nissan, 5723 (1963)

Passover is the first day of Jewish independence, and the first festival in the history of our Jewish people. It is first in rank and significance, for it brought the liberation of our people from enslavement and made it possible for them to live a free and independent life as a nation, governed only by the Torah and its commandments dictated by G-d alone.

As such, Passover is especially meaningful for our Jewish people, and for every Jew individually, at all times and in all places. For this reason also, every aspect of the festival and every detail attending the historical Exodus from Egypt, has a special significance in the way of a timeless message and practical instruction for the individual, the community and our people as a whole.

One of the important details of the Exodus is the haste with which the Exodus took place. When the hour of liberation struck, the Jewish people left Egypt at once, losing not a moment, or, as our Sages express it - not even a "heref ayin," "the blink of an eye."

They add, moreover, that if the Jewish people had tarried and missed that auspicious moment, the opportunity of the liberation would have been lost forever.

This seems incomprehensible. For it was already after the Ten Plagues, which prompted the Egyptians to virtually expel the Jews from their land. The situation was thus "well in hand."

Why, then, do our Sages teach that if that moment had been missed, the whole liberation would have been in jeopardy?

Above all, what practical lesson is contained in this detail, so that the Torah makes a point of revealing it to us with particular emphasis?

The explanation is as follows: When the end of the road of exile is reached, and the moment arrives for the liberation from the "abomination of Egypt," the opportunity must be seized at once; there must be no tarrying even for an instant, not even to the extent of

"blink of an eye."

The danger of forfeiting the opportunity lay not in the possibility of the Egyptians changing their mind, but in the possibility that some Jews might change their mind, being loathe to leave their habituated way of life in Egypt, to go out into the desert to receive the Torah.

The practical lesson for every Jew, man or woman, young or old, is:

The Exodus from Egypt as it is to be experienced in day-to-day life, is the personal release from subservience to the dictates of the body and the animal in man; the release from passions and habits within, as well as from the materialistic environment without.

This release can only be achieved by responding to the call of G-d, Who seeks out the oppressed and enslaved and promises, "I shall redeem you from bondage... that I may be your G-d." As at the time of the first liberation, true freedom is conditional upon the acceptance of the Torah and mitzvot (commandments).

This call of freedom never ceases. The Exodus must be achieved every day; each day the opportunity beckons anew.

Unfortunately, there are individuals who tarry and consign the opportunity to the "three solemn days" of the year, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur; others, at best, postpone it for Shabbos and Yom Tov, still others, who recall and experience the Exodus in daily prayer, fail to extend it to every aspect of daily life.

What is true of the individual, is true also on the community and national levels, except that on these levels the missing of the opportunities is, of course, even more far-reaching and catastrophic.

As in the days of our ancestors in Egypt whose exodus was not delayed even for a moment, whereby they attained full liberation of the body and full liberation of the spirit with the acceptance of the Torah at Sinai, which was the purpose and goal of the Exodus.

May G-d grant that every Jew seize the extraordinary opportunity of the present moment, to achieve self-liberation and to help others in the same direction; liberation from all manner of bondage, internal and external, and above all, liberation from the most dismal bondage - the idea of "let's be like the rest."

And when we return to the ways of Torah and mitzvot in the fullest measure, we will merit the fulfillment of the promise: When the Jewish people return, they are redeemed at once, with the true and complete redemption through our righteous Mashiach.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Baal Shem Tov established a custom to eat a third meal on the last day of Passover. This meal is known as "Moshiach's Meal," for on this day Moshiach's radiance is revealed. This revelation foreshadows the Redemption. It takes place specifically on the last day of Passover, for this is a day which is added only

in the Diaspora. The essence of the added day is that in the Diaspora and in the time of exile, the Jewish people transform 24 mundane hours into a day of holiness. On the last day of Passover this means transforming them into a festival of freedom and redemption. And this process of transformation is the essence of the imminent Redemption - converting the very exile itself into redemption, so that G-dliness is revealed even at the very lowest levels of creation.

(Likutei Sichos)

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

In Memory of Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman, Director of the Lubavitch Youth Organization and Founder of the L'Chaim Publication.

From the Archives

Every year in honor of the Rebbe's birthday, Rabbi Butman would dedicate this article to the new chapter of Psalms being recited in connection to the Rebbe's birthday.

On the 11th of Nissan, which falls out this year on Sunday, March 29, we begin reciting the 125th chapter of Psalms in honor of the Rebbe's 124th birthday. In keeping with that tradition, in addition to messages from the archives, this article will include insights on chapter 125 of the book of Psalms.

As we prepare for Pesach, a time of freedom and renewal, we turn to the powerful words of Psalms 125:1: "Those who trust in G-d are like Mount Zion, which will not falter but will abide forever." There is something deeply reassuring in that image. A mountain stands firm. It doesn't shake with every passing storm. It doesn't lose its place when the winds blow. It remains.

Pesach is not just about leaving Egypt thousands of years ago. It is about finding that inner place within ourselves that does not falter. Life can be unpredictable. Challenges come, struggles happen, and at times things feel unstable. But the message here is clear: when a person places their trust in G-d, they can stand strong, steady, and unshaken, like Mount Zion.

The next verse continues, "Jerusalem has mountains around it, and G-d is around His people from now and forever." The mountains may look like protection, but the true strength of Jerusalem is not the mountains, it is G-d's presence. Real security doesn't come from what surrounds us physically, but from the connection we carry within.

This is the deeper message of Pesach. True freedom is not just leaving a difficult place. It is living with a sense of trust, purpose, and connection that nothing can take away.

The Rebbe spoke about this idea, not only as a personal strength, but as a vision for the entire world. He believed that every person has the ability to bring goodness and kindness into their surroundings, to strengthen others, and to help build a more peaceful and meaningful world. A world where people feel supported, where dignity is protected, and where inner strength replaces fear.

Pesach reminds us that change is possible. Just as our forefather Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob passed down a legacy of faith and resilience, we carry that same ability within us. When we trust, when we act with kindness, and when we choose to uplift others, we are not just improving our own lives, we are shaping the world around us.

And that leads us back to where we began. "Those who trust in G-d are like Mount Zion, which will not falter." As the Rebbe reminds us that in a world that can feel uncertain, this is our anchor. To stand firm. To live with purpose. To bring light into the lives of others.

As we approach Pesach, may we each find that inner strength, and may it lead us, and the entire world, toward a place of peace, goodness, and lasting redemption. Amen.

Shmuel Butman

L'ZICHRON CHAYA I MUSHKA לזכרון חיה י מושקא

The name of our publication has special meaning. It stands for the name of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson (obm), wife of the Rebbe.



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