



PREPARING FOR PESACH (II)

Food of Faith

In Lubavitch, reaping the wheat for *matza* was a special event. Reb Zalman of Shzerbina was the chossid who supplied the wheat for the Rebbe's *shemura matza*, and all the local *yiddishe* farmers, several *yosheim* – men who studied full time in the Rebbe's *beis medrash* – and some guests in Lubavitch at the time, would join Reb Zalman and his family for the reaping. The Rebbe himself would also participate, first the Rebbe Maharash, and later, the Rebbe Rashab.

The harvest day had to be clear, with a hot sun, and had to be preceded by three dry days. Reb Zalman would travel to Lubavitch with a number of wagons to transport the chassidim, and since they could not forecast the weather, they often stayed in Shzerbina for a week or longer. The Rebbe was brought by special transport on the chosen day.

For Reb Zalman, this was a tremendous *simcha*. Blessed with the *zechus* of reaping the wheat for the Rebbe's *shemura matza*, being able to fulfill the *mitzva* of *hachnosos orchim*, which he truly enjoyed, and especially having the opportunity to host the Rebbe, gave him *chayus* for the whole year.

From the day he set out with his wagonloads of helpers, the townsfolk in Lubavitch began their speculations about the next day's weather. Day by day, they eagerly awaited the messenger from Shzerbina who would let them know that the harvest day had arrived. When that finally happened, the Rebbe would set out on the two-hour ride to Shzerbina.

When the sun blazed its strongest, between the hours of twelve noon and two, the chassidim reaped the wheat, happily and earnestly. Wearing their hats and *gartlach*, they worked energetically in the sweltering heat, as if they were accustomed to such intense physical labor.

Even when he was already advanced in years, Reb Zalman himself, with his flowing beard and joyful, shining face, would rush around the fields with his scythe in hand, as if he were a young man. His *simcha* carried him! His feet lifted lightly off the ground to fulfill a *shlichus* of *HaShem*, as can happen only to one of His

true servants who feels an inner delight in performing His *mitzvos*.

While some men reaped, others sang, their pleasant voices reaching far and wide. The local women and their children, dressed in their *Shabbos* best in honor of the occasion, stood at a distance. Their faces clearly showed that something extraordinary was taking place.

When the work was over, some of the chassidim went to wash themselves. Reb Zalman would put on his silk *Shabbos kapote* and lead *Mincha* to the joyous *niggun* of Simchas Torah. As he concluded the final *Kaddish*, he would wait for the *minyán* to help him turn over in somersaults, as they were accustomed to do on Simchas Torah. He did that three times back and forth, and broke into a lively dance.

Next came a festive *seuda* of *milchig* delicacies, at which the Rebbe delivered a *maamar* and *farbrenged* for hours. After *Maariv*, he would retire to rest in a room that had been prepared for him, while the chassidim continued *farbrenging* through the night.

At ten o'clock the next morning, after *Shacharis*, the Rebbe would leave for Lubavitch. Later that day, Reb Zalman would bring the *chassidim* back to Lubavitch, taking along the sack of wheat they had reaped, ready to hang in a designated room.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' קכא)

Getting Ready for the Seder

When he was eight years old, the Friediker Rebbe recorded the events of the previous Pesach in his diary: "Erev Pesach, after teaching me the *Seder Korban Pesach*, my father said, 'Tonight, Eliyahu HaNavi is coming to all the Yiddishe homes, and the great *tzaddikim* will be privileged to see him. Although in *Shamayim* all *neshamos* are able to see everything, once they are vested in a body they only *feel* things. In the Holy Tongue, the word *meshina* (משנה) has the same letters as *neshama* (נשמה). Start to review the *meshnayos* of *Mesechta Pesachim* eight times, and when you come with me to open the door for Eliyahu HaNavi, review the *mesechta* a ninth time....'"

(ספר המאמרים תשי"א ע' 296)

Recalling his *erev* Pesach experiences in the home of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, the Friediker Rebbe wrote: "On *erev* Pesach, my father would wake up no later than three in the morning and *daven* no later than five-thirty. Afterwards, until the time of *biur chometz*, he was occupied with removing the *chometz* and the *chometz'dike* utensils from the house. At *chatzos*, midday, preparations for *matzos mitzva* began and my father would study the *Seder Korban Pesach*. From that time onward, a *ruchniyus'dike* light shone in our home, filling everyone with joy. During the remaining hours, until *Yom-Tov* began, my father would discuss the meaning of the *Korban Pesach* in *Kabbala* and *Chassidus*, and its practical application in our *avoda*.

"The time between reading the *Seder Korban Pesach* and the beginning of *Yom-Tov* was not considered a mere preparation for *Yom-Tov*. That time was itself considered to be a *Yom-Tov*. It was permeated with an inner joy, a certainty and an expectation that at any moment we would have *Moshiach*, the *Beis HaMikdash* and the *Korban Pesach!* In this elevated mood we would go off to *daven Maariv*. The *shul* was always packed with Yidden with shining faces, dressed in clean, fresh clothing despite the hard work they had been doing to prepare for Pesach. No one spoke. Everyone waited eagerly for the joyous *Shir HaMaalos* that would signify the beginning of *Maariv*. An especially delightful *simcha'dike* melody filled the *shul* as the *mispalelim* sang *Hallel*, their voices gradually intensifying. And that holy *tefilla* climaxed in an *ahavas-Yisroel'dike* 'Gut-Yom-Tov!'"

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 270)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Why were the chassidim and their families so happy to prepare the *matzos*?
- Is *erev Pesach* a preparation for Pesach or is it a *Yom Tov* itself?

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A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Hora'ah Rechovot

Fish Tank on Pesach

Can I put *chometz* feed in my fish tank before Pesach which will last throughout Pesach?

- The Torah forbids owning or benefiting from *chometz* throughout Pesach.¹ The Torah precludes owning a piece the size of a *kazayis*, however *midrabanan* any recognizable morsel must be removed.²
- What type of *chometz* is included? Any *chometz* which was initially edible, although it's now inedible for a dog, must be removed *min haTorah*. If at the sixth hour on *erev* Pesach it was inedible for a dog, it is not considered *chometz*.³ (It is nonetheless forbidden to consume since that would render it "edible" for him.)⁴ If the *chometz* was never fit for humans (i.e. play-dough, glue) and it's edible for a dog, the obligation to remove it is *midrabanan*.⁵
- Many fish foods contain grain, and since they're edible for fish one may not use it on Pesach.⁶ The prohibition of benefit forbids one from having a non-Jew use his own *chometz* to feed the Jew's fish.⁷ If one sells the fish and the *chometz* feed to a non-Jew, the Jew may not feed the fish, since feeding any animal is considered a pleasure to the feeder. (One should therefore not feed animals in a zoo feed which may be *chometz*).⁸ Furthermore, *chometz* may not be handled on Pesach out of concern that he may come to use it (on Yom Tov it is also *muktza*).⁹
- If the owner sells both and has the non-Jew feed the fish, it would be permissible. While some consider it a trick (*ha'arama*) since one really wants the *chometz* to exist so that the fish will have what to eat,¹⁰ when selling with a guarantor (*arev kablán*) as the Alter Rebbe established it would seem to be a valid sale (like the general sale of *chometz*). One would have to sell the fish as well to the feeder, for otherwise he is essentially appointing him to feed fish belonging to the other non-Jew, which demonstrates that he did not release ownership of the *chometz* completely (*rotzeh bkiyumo*).¹¹
- If one has a feeder which lasts for many days, he can place the feeder in the tank on *erev Pesach* morning, and sell the fish and the feed through the regular sale of *chometz*.¹² To avoid contact with the *chometz*, the fish tank should be placed in a room sold for Pesach, or at least the cover of the fish tank should be taped down.¹³
- Using non-*chometz* feed (*kitniyos* included) is the preferred option since then one does not have any interest in the existence of *chometz*.¹⁴

1. כל יראה ובל ימצא – שמות י"ג ז', י"ב י"ט, וראה הקדמת אדמו"ר ל"שוע"ע הלכות פסח. לא תאכל עליו חמץ – דברים ט"ז ג', וראה שו"ע ר סי' תל"א ס"ב, והוא מחצות יום י"ד.
2. שו"ע ר סי' תמ"ב סכ"ח. וראה שם ק"א סק"ז, שו"ת חכ"צ סי' פ"ו דאין איסור בחצי שיעור אלא באיסורי אכילה או בקום ועשה.
3. שו"ע ר סי' תמ"ב סכ"א.
4. רא"ש פסחים פ"ב ס"א, שו"ע ר סי' תמ"ב סל"ב.
5. שו"ע ר שם ס"כ, ונפק"מ חמץ נוקשה שעבר עליו הפסח מותר בהנאה.
6. שהרי הוא נהנה מהחמץ (ולפעמים יש גם איסור קיום), וראה ס' בדק"ח וביעורו פ"ב הע' פ"ח שבהרבה מקרים יש בתערובת מאכלי בהמה ועופות חלקים שהם עדיין ראויים למאכל אדם (ואפשר להפרידם), ויש להעיר בנוגע מאכלי דגים מחלוקת רמב"ם וראב"ד
7. פ"א ה"ב בנוגע חמץ שאינו ראוי לחמץ.
8. שו"ע ר סי' ת"ג ס"ח. וראה משנ"ב או"ח סי' תמ"ח סק"ל.
9. שו"ע ר סי' תמ"ד ס"ג, ורק כדי לבערו מותר ליגע כמ"ש רבינו בסי' תמ"ו ס"ז. ושם שחיישין שמא יבוא לאכלו, וצ"ע אי חיישין שמא יבוא להאכילו.
10. ראה משנ"ב שם סקל"ג, וס' בדק"ח וביעורו פ"ב אות נ"ב.
11. כך אמר לי הגרמ"ל לנדא שליט"א שלא יהא כחוכא ואיטלולא שהגוי שמאכיל הדגים יהיה שלוחו.
12. כשמוכרו בעבר קבלן – כן הורה לי הגר"מ אהרון שליט"א.
13. ראה שו"ע ר סי' ת"מ ס"ה.
14. ראה שו"ע ר סי' תנ"ג ס"ה שמורה ליהנות מקטניות בפסח.

ל"ע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לעילוי נשמות

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יאהרצייט - ו' ניסן

OUR HEROES

Reb Alter Simchovitch



Reb Chaim Alter Nissan Shimon Simchovitch (known as Reb Alter Potchipper) was an outstanding *chosid* of the Rebbe Rashab and Friediker Rebbe. He served as a *mashpia* in various branches of Tomchei Temimim, including Toras Emes in Yerushalayim and Tomchei Temimim in Warsaw. For a while, he was the *chozer* of the Rebbe Rashab. Reb Alter passed away on the 7th of Nissan תרצ"ט (1939).

The *bochurim* in Toras Emes once asked Reb Alter to repeat for them a *maamar* and to *farbreng* with them. Reb Alter replied that he could only do one of the two, since each one required eight hours of internal preparation.

At one point, Reb Alter contracted tuberculosis and he suffered terribly. He once turned to the students sitting around his bed and shared what he was thinking, "Hashem! You create the world every moment anew. Does the fact that yesterday you created a sick set of lungs mean that you should continue to do so every moment?"

Once, while in Yerushalayim, someone referred to the Lithuanian Yidden who lived in Batei Broida as "*misnagd*im."

Reb Alter retorted: Those aren't "*misnagd*im"! In Russia we saw *misnagd*im who weren't particular about wearing a *talis katan* and other "small" *mitzvos*. These people are very particular with *mitzvos*; they are careful to avoid speaking *lashon hara* and they study Torah diligently. These are "*baal-shemske Yidden*"!

(אוצר החסידים – רוסיא ופולין ע' 361, 335, 464)

ליכות הרה"ת נחום וזוגתו ביילא שי' גרינוואלד להולדת הבת חי' מושקא שתחי'

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

This Is My Entire Mission

Reb Yossel Weinberg related:

I was once asked to deliver an urgent request for a *brocha* to the Rebbe in the middle of the night, on behalf of a *Yid* in Oklahoma. I immediately dashed to 770, only to find that *Harav* Chodakov had already entered the Rebbe's room to close for the night.

Because the matter was burning, I stuck the letter between the Rebbe's door and the doorpost. I expected *Harav* Chodakov to notice it as he exited, and give it to the Rebbe.

I stood outside and waited. *Harav* Chodakov opened the door, and the letter fell to the floor, without him noticing. To my dismay, as I looked on, the Rebbe himself bent over and picked it up.

I felt sick. How could I bother the *nossi hador* so?! With the appropriate *hachonos*, I penned a letter to the Rebbe, expressing my genuine remorse and asking forgiveness. This time, I handed in the letter through the secretariat.

The Rebbe's written response was short in coming: "This is actually my entire mission: to lift up, especially that which has been overlooked by others."

ליכות הת' מנחם ומוענדל שפון וב"ג חי' מושקא רסקין שיחיו לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעתומ"צ

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