



PESACH

Erev Pesach

Recalling his *erev* Pesach experiences in the home of his father, the Rebbe Rashab, the Frierdiker 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 *simcha*. 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)

In the year תרנ"א (1891), when the Frierdiker Rebbe was ten years old, the Rebbe Rashab told him, "*Erev* Pesach is a *Yom-Tov*, for that is when the *Yidden* would offer the *Korban Pesach*. It was offered in the afternoon, so we say the *Seder Korban Pesach* after *Mincha*. I will teach you its meaning so that you understand it. Then you should review it, and after *Mincha* we will recite it together."

When saying the *Seder Korban Pesach*, the Rebbe Rashab was dressed in his *Yom-Tov* clothing, with his *Yom-Tov* hat and a *gartl*. He would stand facing south, and with a shining face would say every word carefully, and discuss its *halochos*. From the

year תרנ"ו (1896) he explained some parts of it according to *Chassidus*, and from תרס"ח (1908) he added an explanation according to *Kabbala*.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"ד ע' תרפד)

The Seder

The *Maharil* writes that one should be filled with awe as he fulfills every particular instruction that the *Chachomim* ordained for the *Seder*. Even if a certain observance may seem to be unimportant, one should realize that every detail has significance. As the *Shaloh* writes, "All the *mitzvos* of the *Seder* have lofty reasons, both revealed and hidden. It is a *mitzva* to discuss them and to try to understand them."

(הג"ש פ עם לקוטי טעמים ומנהגים ע' ה, של"ה)

When he was eight years old, the Frierdiker 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 *mishna* (משנה) has the same letters as *neshama* (נשמה). Start to review the *mishnayos* 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)

In the original *Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim*, the whole of Pesach, including of course the *Sedarim*, was celebrated joyously, with almost all of the *talmidim* staying in *Lubavitch* to hear *Chassidus* from the Rebbe Rashab, instead of traveling home.

Many tables were set up for all the *seudos* in a large room, and a director and an assistant were chosen to take care of all the necessary *Yom-Tov* preparations for the hundred-and-fifty *talmidim*. At the *Sedorim*, one person at each table was appointed as *mashgiach*, to be responsible for the needs of that table. One *talmid* was chosen to be the announcer, and he would auction the *zechus* of asking the *Mah Nishtana*, filling the *Kos shel Eliyahu*, opening the door for Eliyahu, and leading the *bentching*. Following the announcer's instructions, one table would start *Kadesh*, and when they concluded the next table was instructed to begin, each table taking its turn.

Urchatz was done in the same organized fashion.

In the middle of the room was a table, on which stood a handcrafted *menorah* of the Rebbe Maharash, and around it the *talmidim* danced during the *seuda*. The *Seder* continued into the early morning hours.

(רשימות דברים ח"א ע' של"א)

The *Shaloh* writes: The *Seder* night and all its *halachos* are filled with *kedusha*, for at this time *HaShem* chose us from the nations and gave us His *mitzvos*. On this night one should refrain from engaging in mundane chatter so as not to be separated from *HaShem* even for a moment. And by telling the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, we arouse the power of *geulah*.

The Alter Rebbe once said that the *matza* that we eat on the first night of Pesach fortifies our *emuna*, and the *matza* of the *Second Seder* brings health, both *begashmiyus* and *beruchniyus*.

(של"ה, סה"ש תש"ב ע' 94)

Reciting the Haggada

The *Zohar* writes that whoever retells the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim* and celebrates it joyfully will be privileged to rejoice with the *Shechina* in *Olam HaBa*. The *AriZal* taught that the *Haggada* should be recited aloud, with great *simcha* and focused *kavana*.

The *meshamesh* Reb Nachman Maryashin related that when he was once at the *Seder* of the Rebbe Maharash, and all the *chassidim* at the table were sitting with awe and *derech erez* as they read the *Haggada* quietly, the Rebbe instructed that the *Haggada* should be recited aloud.

The Frierdiker Rebbe also read the *Haggada* aloud, and when he became physically unable to do so, he asked others to do it instead. The Rebbe likewise would motion to the person reading the *Haggada* to read it aloud. During *Hallel*, the Rebbe would read aloud with a sweet tune and a noticeable *dveikus*, tears flowing from his eyes.

(אוצר מנהגי חב"ד ע' קנד, קצח)

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OUR HEROES

Reb Dovid Furkes



Reb Dovid Furkes was a trusted *talmid* of the Baal Shem Tov, and is often mentioned as being part of many of the events involving his Rebbe. He was sent by the Baal Shem Tov on many missions to collect *tzedaka* and the like.

The Baal Shem Tov once traveled from the city Polnoah to another city and encountered the cemetery on the outskirts of the town. Sighting a pillar of fire over one of the graves, the Baal Shem Tov sent his *shamash* to check who was buried there. The *shamash* returned, clarifying that it is the grave of a *tzaddik* who is referred to as "Moshe, the servant of Hashem." The Baal Shem Tov then said that a man named Dovid would be buried near this grave.

About twelve years after the passing of the Baal Shem Tov, Reb Dovid Furkes arrived in Polnoah for Shabbos Chazon. While still in his wagon, he encountered the rov and asked for permission to travel to the nearby town for Shabbos. Upon receiving the rov's consent, he continued on to the home of the rov in the next town; however, there was no one there to greet him, for the rov had traveled away. Throughout the entire Shabbos, Reb Dovid wondered to himself, "What am I doing here? The only reason I have traveled here was to see the rov of this town, who is a true *tzaddik*..."

On Motzoei Shabbos, which was Tishaa B'av that year, Reb Dovid became very weak and called for the *chevra kadisha*. He made a *tzavah* (will) in front of them and then passed away. After the *levaya*, they buried him next to the grave of Reb Moshe, only then realizing what was written on the nearby *matzeiva*. Later, an elderly woman, the mother of the local *maggid*, remembered and related what had occurred when the Baal Shem Tov had come more than twenty years earlier.

Reb Dovid would often travel and spread the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov. Once, while speaking about Chasidus in a *shul*, a *misnaged*, who was quite ignorant and foolish, began screaming and ridiculing Reb Dovid without letup, until he slapped Reb Dovid across the face. Some of the participants who respected Reb Dovid, declared, "This man is surely worthy of punishment." Reb Dovid responded, "I do not want that any Yid, no matter who it may be, to be punished because of me." He explained, "The Gemoro says that when Hashem wanted to build the Beis Hamikdash, every *shevet* desired to have it built in his section of land. Hashem said that he would build it in the share of the one who had no part in the sale of Yosef, namely Binyamin. Seemingly, it is not understood: Why was Yosef himself not chosen? Surely, he had not sinned. Nevertheless since he had been the *cause* for his sale, he would not merit this *zechus* either. From here we can learn that one who is merely the *cause* for negative results is affected negatively as well."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

Grape Juice for Arba Kosos

Is it permissible to use grape juice for the *arba kosos* at the Seder?

We first must first examine whether grape juice is acceptable for *kiddush*, and then discuss grape juice from concentrate.

■ The Gemara¹ says "One may squeeze a cluster of grapes [before Shabbos] and recite *kiddush* on it," stating clearly that grape juice is permissible. However, *poskim*² note that whereas freshly squeezed grape juice retains the potential to ferment and become wine, today's commercially available grape juice has been treated so that it does not have this potential. Others responded that today's grape juice does have the potential to ferment under certain conditions³. The vast majority of *poskim*⁴ hold that grape juice is acceptable for *kiddush*, although wine is preferable, and the common practice reflects this ruling.

■ Concerning reconstituted grape juice (which involves evaporating the water from the juice, leaving a highly concentrated form, and when ready to bottle a quantity of water four times the amount of the grape juice concentrate is added to reconstitute it), there is an opinion⁵ that the *bracha* is not *borei pri hagofen* and it cannot be used for *Kiddush* since it is considered grape juice-flavored water, not grape juice. However others disagree, and common practice follows the lenient opinion.

■ Referring to the *arba kosos*, the Gemara⁶ states that one who uses undiluted wine (since in the times of the Gemora wine was too strong and was usually diluted) fulfills his obligation of drinking the cups, but not the obligation to commemorate and celebrate freedom ("*cheirus*"). We see that there is an additional obligation of *cheirus* required for *arba kosos*.

■ Some *poskim*⁷ (including Rav Moshe Feinstein) rule that grape juice is also not a symbol of freedom, and is therefore unacceptable for *arba kosos*. The Yerushalmi⁸ relates that *amora* Rav Yona would drink the *arba kosos* and suffer a headache until Shavuot and Rav Yehuda would suffer until Sukkos. Had grape juice been acceptable, these *amora'im* would have drunk grape juice to avoid the headache for such an inordinate amount of time.

■ However, many *poskim*⁹ permit grape juice for *arba kosos* since for one who prefers grape juice that is *cheirus*, and according to some it is even preferable for someone who does not enjoy wine. The Yerushalmi cannot serve as a proof since in previous generations grape juice was simply unavailable at Pesach time. After harvesting in the autumn, grapes would either be made into wine or spoil during storage. Only in the modern age has it become possible to preserve grape juice to last year round¹⁰. The prevalent custom is to be lenient.

- 1 ב"ב צז, ע"ב.
- 2 ראה בכ"ז בדבר יהושע ח"א סי' יא, וזה"ה סי' ה, באר משה ח"ו סי' נג, כתבי רב הנקין ח"ב, סי' כח, מועדים וזמנים ח"ג, סרני"ה ועוד.
- 3 ראה בכ"ז בשו"ת ויען יוסף ח"א סי' קיא, חיי הלוי ח"א סי' לה.
- 4 ראה בכ"ז בשו"ת הר צבי ח"א סי' קנה, מנח"י ח"ה סי' יד, ישועת משה ח"א סי' ל, שבט הלוי ח"ט סי' נח, יחווה דעת ח"ב סי' לה, ועוד. וכן נהגו כמה מגדולי הפוסקים בפועל כמובא בספרי המלקטים.
- 5 ראה מנחת שלמה ח"א סי' ד, ועוד כמובא בפסקי תשובות סי' רד ס"ק ח.
- 6 פסחים קח ע"ב.
- 7 הובא בשמו בהגדת בנו הגר"ד 'קול דודי' סי' ג, מקראי קודש פסח ח"ב סי' לה.
- 8 פסחים פ"י.
- 9 שו"ת מנחת הלכות ח"י סי' פז [ויש לתקן היציון בפסקי תשובות סי' תעב הע' 44], ועוד, וראה נט"ג ח"ב פרק עא הע' ט, שכן נהגו כמה מגדולי הפוסקים ושלמעשה נתפשט להקל.
- 10 ראה בספר גן שושנים (גנק) ח"ב סכ"ו.

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

To Grant a Compliment

Reb Sholom Ber Ganzburg, an assistant in the Rebbe's home, tells the following anecdote which displays the Rebbe's sensitivity to another's feelings:

One year, the wine at the *seider* went bad, though through no fault of the one who had prepared it. After the *seider*, the Rebbe told me, "Still, tell the person who made the wine that we used it to perform the mitzvah of *arba kosos* on it with all the *brachos*."

And the Rebbe expected the same sensitivity from others too. Reb Faivish Vogel, the Rebbe's *shliach* to London U.K., related:

Mr. Peter Kalms, one of the prominent supporters of Lubavitch U.K., once told the Rebbe of the wonderful work that a certain *shliach* was doing. He highly complimented the *shliach's* capabilities and his dedication to his *shlichus*. When he finished the song of praise, the Rebbe asked him, "Did you tell these compliments to the *shliach* himself?"

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה