

# Living Jewish

חב"ד  
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צעירי אגודת חב"ד

## Tell your Children

### From Chabad to Conservative!

In the early days of Internet, I [Yehuda Grossberger of Flatbush] subscribed to an online forum dedicated to halachic discussions. The members of this forum came from a wide spectrum of Judaism, and debates often raged over different halachic (Torah law) and other Torah issues.

One contributor to this exchange was a Conservative cantor from Nevada who quickly became known for his outspokenness and opinionated liberal views. On one occasion, he posted an article he had written about Jewish marriage, which was not exactly according to halacha.

I felt compelled to reply and set the record straight. The cantor responded to my rebuttal, sparking a candid and heated debate. Eventually, this led to a general discussion of other topics concerning Torah and Judaism, as well as personal conversations about our families.

Around Pesach time, the conversation turned to matza, and I asked my new friend how had he conducted his Passover Seder. He replied, "well, since the point is to remember the story of the Exodus, I actually eat whatever I can get a hold of to symbolize the matza."

### The Gift of Matzah

He did not seem concerned that the matza be kosher for Pesach. Despite his objections, I sent him a box of shmura ("guarded" - i.e. super-strict) matza for the seder. After Pesach, I got an e-mail from my friend who, in typical fashion, complained that all the matzot had come broken and were also pretty tasteless.

Nevertheless, the following year he contacted me and requested that I again send him matza. This began an unlikely tradition that continued for many years. Notwithstanding all of his rejections and criticism of Orthodox values, he used the matza every year and came to look forward to it. He even showed his appreciation by sending me flowers.



*Crossing the Sea*  
painting by Sury Neuman, [suryneuman.com](http://suryneuman.com)

This man had a daughter who had rebelled against the family values she had been brought up with, and, as a student of the University of California at Berkeley, became deeply immersed in the anti-establishment culture that was popular at the time. She had also rejected even the limited Jewish values she had seen at home.

### Arriving in Israel

Her parents were very worried about her, as she had not been home for a number of years, not even for the holidays. Eventually, this girl's restlessness and searching spirit drew her to Israel where somehow she ended up in a young women's seminary for ba'alot teshuva (female returnees to halachic Judaism) in Jerusalem.

After a few months of study, she felt it was time for her to make a final decision: she could either stay in the seminary adopting a frum (Torah observant) lifestyle, or she could leave it behind and return home and continue soul searching. She decided she needed a break to think things over. She was comfortable with what she had been taught but was not sure she had the conviction and personal strength to make such a drastic lifestyle change.

It was now shortly before Pesach.

Her madricha (dorm counselor) in Israel, although unhappy to see her go, asked her to at least take home the basic necessities for Pesach that she might not have at home, primarily matza.

She declined and said, "why should I bother? If G-d wants me to have matza, He will send me matza."

Apprehensively, she departed and flew home to her parents

planning to spend time reflecting on her options at this critical junction of her life. She hoped that somehow she would be guided into making the right choice.

### Shock!

To her utter bewilderment, the first thing she noticed as she walked into her home was a box of shmura matza sitting on the dining room table. She could not believe her eyes. Her own ultimatum, "if G-d wants me to have matza, He will send me matza," had been fulfilled. Lo and behold, there it was!

*continued on page three*

### Shabbat Times

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat
Jerusalem	6:36	7:54
Tel Aviv	6:58	7:57
Haifa	6:48	7:57
Beer Sheva	6:57	7:55
New York	7:29	8:32

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## The Reason for the Exile

After many years of enslavement in Egypt, our ancestors had difficulty imagining any other type of existence. Today as well, after thousands of years in exile, many Jews find the concepts of Moshiach and redemption foreign.

### Acquiring the Wealth of Egypt

G-d's purpose in creating the condition of exile can be understood by analyzing the first exile in Egypt. In His covenant with Avraham, G-d decreed, "your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs. They shall serve them and they shall be afflicted by them for four hundred years.... I will also judge the nation that they serve, and afterwards they will leave with great wealth." This decree was fulfilled when the Jewish people descended to Egypt.

The conclusion of the decree, "afterwards they will leave with great wealth," is the key to understanding the purpose of exile. Before the Exodus, G-d commanded Moshe, "speak, please, in the ears of the people, and let every man ask his fellow, and every woman ask her fellow, for vessels of silver and vessels of gold."

The word "please" indicates a request. Our Sages explain that with this request, G-d was saying: "Let not that tzaddik (Avraham) say, 'the prophecy that they shall

serve them and they shall be afflicted by them was fulfilled, but the promise that later they will leave with great wealth was not fulfilled.'" The acquisition of Egypt's wealth was an objective not only for the Jews, but also for G-d Himself, as it were.

### Revealing the G-dliness Within

The acquisition of Egypt's wealth is part of the mission of the Jewish people, and helps explain the purpose for exile. The G-dly life-force which sustains the world is concealed within its material substance.

The Jewish people have been assigned the task of revealing that inner G-dliness by utilizing material objects for G-dly purposes. As a classical chassidic prayer asks, "G-d, grant Your people material blessings and they will show You how they can transform them into spirituality." By using our material blessings to serve G-d, we make the entire world a dwelling for Him.

At every stage in history, the Jewish people were given a specific dimension of the world to elevate. Through their servitude in Egypt, they were able to reveal the G-dly life-force latent within the land of Egypt. Once this task was completed, they acquired the entire wealth of Egypt.

A similar mission has been given to the Jews in subsequent exiles. Our Sages state that G-d exiled the Jewish people in order that converts should be enabled to

join them. Chassidus extends the word "convert" to mean not only individuals who accept Judaism, but also the sparks of the G-dly life-force which are hidden within the world's material substance and are revealed through the service of our people.

### Leading to Moshiach

Accordingly, the Jews have wandered throughout history from country to country fulfilling a unique G-dly mission, revealing the sparks of G-dliness in different lands by utilizing their physical substance in the fulfillment of mitzvot.

The many years of slavery in Egypt were a necessary stage in the process that led to the Exodus. Similarly, the purpose of the present exile is the ultimate Redemption. Since, in the Era of the Redemption, G-dliness will be revealed in all places and all things, the service that prepares for that revelation must be likewise all-inclusive.

For this reason our people have been dispersed throughout the world and have been involved in every aspect of existence. Each person's efforts in making his environment a dwelling place for G-d will prepare the entire world for the era when, "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed."

*From the teachings of the Rebbe; adapted from Timeless Patterns in Time, reprinted with perm. from Sichos in English.*

## From our Sages

### Joy on Passover

The Torah commands us to be joyful on Shavuot - "You shall rejoice before the L-rd your G-d," and on Sukkot - "You shall be joyful before the L-rd your G-d," "You shall be happy" - but there is no specific commandment for Passover. This is because an entire nation (Egypt) was punished; G-d said, "My handiwork is drowning in the Sea." Thus our joy on Passover is tinged with sadness and therefore incomplete.

*(Tanya Rabati)*

### Seder

The Hebrew word "seder" means "order," alluding to the fact that everything that has ever happened to the Jewish people, from the Exodus until today, has unfolded according to Divine plan. Nothing occurs by accident, even if we don't always understand why an event must take place.

*(the Maharal)*

*Blessed is the Omnipresent One ("Makom," literally "Place")*

Why is G-d referred to as "Place"? Because in truth, the world is "located" in G-d; G-d is not merely "located" in the world...

*(Bereishit Rabba)*

### Sefirat HaOmer (the Counting of the Omer)

A comment was made to the Rebbe Rashab that the Chasidim of the Alter Rebbe "were always keeping count." The Rebbe Rashab took a great liking to the saying, and commented:

"This idea characterizes man's Divine service. A person's hours must be 'counted hours'; then his days will be 'counted days'. When a day passes, one should know what he has accomplished and what remains to be done. In general, one should always see to it that tomorrow is much better than today."

*(Hayom Yom)*

*From our Sages reprinted from LchaimWeekly.org - LYO / NYC*

## Kinus Torah

Rabbi Yeshayahu Hertzfel relates: In the year 5726 (1966), I stood outside the entrance to 770 together with my father-in-law Rav Yaakov Friedman while a Kinus Torah (Torah gathering) was underway on Isru Chag Shavuot.

The Rebbe approached us and asked, "why are you standing outside the Kinus Torah?!"

We attempted to respond that we were dealing with a very important matter—details that were needed for my imminent wedding. But he paid no attention to our response, and again demanded, "is it not in the middle of Torah?! For wedding-related matters, you can steal some of your sleep time!"

From that moment on, I felt deeply taken by the importance of participating in these kinusim, even if it involves some difficulty. When I related this episode during the Kinus Torah following Shavuot, Rav Mentlik was extremely pleased. He exclaimed, "why did you leave such an important matter like this until the end of the kinus?!"

*"Kinus Torah" and Moshiach Now! reprinted from Day-to Day Halachic guide, crownheightsconnect.com*



# Chassidus page

## Festive Meal of Moshiach

The last day of Pesach is associated with our hopes for the coming of Moshiach. About two hundred and fifty years ago, as the time for Moshiach drew closer, the Baal Shem Tov instituted a custom: on that day he would partake of Moshiach's Seudah, the festive meal of Moshiach.

Moshiach's Seudah is intended to deepen our awareness of Moshiach and enable us to integrate it into our thinking. Partaking of Moshiach's Seudah reinforces our belief in the coming of Moshiach, translating our awareness of Moshiach into a physical experience which leads us to associate it with our flesh and blood.

The Baal Shem Tov's linking of our awareness of Moshiach to the physical is significant because it prepares us for the revelations of the Era of the Redemption, when the G-dliness encloded within the physical world will be overtly manifest

Chassidus explains that the preparations for a revelation must foreshadow the revelation itself. Since, in the Era of the Redemption, the revelation of G-dliness will find expression even in the physical world, it is fitting that our preparation for these revelations be associated with physical activities such as eating and drinking. When Moshiach comes, a similar transformation will occur throughout all of creation. Even the material and mundane aspects of the world will reveal G-dliness.

Like many other teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, the custom of conducting Moshiach's Seudah was explained and widely disseminated by the successive Rebbes of Chabad. Moreover, in 5666

(1906) the Rebbe Rashab added a new element to Moshiach's Seudah, the drinking of four cups of wine.

During the time of the Baal Shem Tov, the main ingredient of Moshiach's Seudah was matzah. The tasteless flatness of matzah symbolizes selfless humility, a desire to transcend oneself. Wine, by contrast, is flavorful and pleasurable, and thus symbolizes the assertiveness of our individual personalities.

Combining matzah and wine in Moshiach's Seudah teaches us that self-transcendence does not require that we erase our personal identities. Self-transcendence may be accomplished within each individual's nature. A person can retain his distinctive character and identity, yet dedicate his life to spreading G-dliness instead of pursuing personal fulfillment. Once he has transformed his will, an individual can proceed to a more complete level of service of G-d in which his commitment permeates every aspect of his personality.

Our generation has been charged with the responsibility of making all Jews aware of Moshiach - and this includes the custom of conducting Moshiach's Seudah. There are those who argue that speaking openly about the coming of Moshiach may alienate some people. The very opposite is true. We are living in the time directly preceding the age of Moshiach. The world is changing and people are willing, even anxious, to hear about Moshiach.

*Adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe, reprinted with perm. from Sichot in English*

## From Chabad to Conservative!

*continued from page one:*

Having not been home for Pesach in a number of years, she was absolutely astounded that her family had a box of authentic shmura matza waiting for her! The hashgacha pratit (Divine Providence [even] over individuals), was undeniable, and she strongly felt that the Master of the Universe was answering her challenge and showing that He cared about her intimately.

She had no idea how the matza got to her home, and at that point, she really didn't care; all she could think about was the sign that G-d had sent her.

After Pesach, she immediately returned to Jerusalem to complete her studies and to fully embrace Orthodox Judaism with all her heart and soul. Today, this girl is the mother of a beautiful family and works with her husband, a Rabbi, in kiruv (teaching other Jews about Judaism).

Many people told me that I was wasting my time and money sending these matzot to a Conservative cantor. For my part, I simply felt that a Jew should have matza for the seder, not a cho-metzdik (not-kosher-for Passover) substitute. What I did not know was that I was not only sending matza for this cantor; I was sending it for his daughter and eventually grandchildren, as well.

Yehuda Grossberger's conclusion: The lesson I learned from this is that we just have to do our small part and not give up. Hashem will take care of the rest. You never know the effect of your actions. Our mission is to do, and Hashem will accomplish!!

*Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from an article by Yehuda Grossberger.*

*Rabbi Tilles of Tsfat is a co-founder of ASCENT. His email list for stories is in its 27th year. To join the list a/o his WhatsApp group for Saturday night Audio, Video and Zoom stories, go to AscentOfSafed.com or WhatsApp +972-526-770-137.*

## Moshiach Now

### The Meal of Moshiach

The Previous Rebbe related that of the Baal Shem Tov's three meals on Acharon shel Pesach (the last day of Pesach), the final one was held in the afternoon, towards evening (at the close of the festival), and that it was called "Seudat Moshiach" because the light of Moshiach is revealed on Acharon shel Pesach.

The Rebbe said that the Previous Rebbe "was especially joyful at this meal (Seudat Moshiach), more so than during the rest of Pesach, except for the Sedarim, during which he was especially joyful—because as stated in Kitvei Ha' Arizal (the writings of the Arizal), we must be joyful at that time. In general, though, from the entire Pesach, the joy of Acharon shel Pesach was unique. Say l'chaim! Sing a happy niggun!"

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## Learning Rambam

In the wake of recent events in Eretz Yisrael, Rabbi Chay Amar, the Rebbe's Shliach (emissary) to Golden Beach, Florida, embarked on a mission of solidarity aimed at uniting world Jewry through the study of the Rambam's Mishneh Torah.

Rabbi Amar's journey took him to meet esteemed Rabbinical figures in Israel, where he received encouragement for the daily Rambam study as part of the Rebbe's initiative for Jewish unity. He met with ten esteemed Rabbanim in Eretz Yisrael, presenting them with the "Rambam Pardes Hamelech" set, featuring insights from the Rebbe.

Rabbi Meir Mazuz, a leading Sephardic Rav who has a connection with the Rebbe, praised the initiative and emphasized its widespread impact beyond imagination. At the Kollel of Rabbi Avraham Elkayam in Bnei Brak, Rabbi Amar addressed an audience of over 280 participants, sharing insights on emuna and Chassidus. Rabbi Kadosh engaged Rabbi Amar in a discussion on the significance of



the Rambam's concluding verse, fostering deeper understanding and appreciation.

Rabbi Shlomo Yehuda Be'eri (the "Yenukah") expressed admiration for the "Pardes Hamelech" set and shared his commitment to studying Rambam with the Rebbe's explanations. Rabbi Yitzchak Shaul Kanievsky, son of Rav Chaim Kanievsky and founder of the "Siach Emunah" Institute, revealed his family's tradition of studying Rambam, underscoring its importance in bringing Moshiach closer.

Rabbi Amar also visited Rabbi Mordechai Shmuel Edelstein, a nephew of the late Rav Gershon Edelstein, witnessing his dedication to praying for the sick and injured, and Rabbi Amram Fried, who extended blessings to the worldwide community of daily Rambam study.

The enthusiastic reception from the wide spectrum of Rabbanim, says Rabbi Amar, reaffirmed the significance of the Rebbe's initiative for daily Rambam study in fostering Jewish unity and hastening the arrival of Moshiach.

*reprinted from Anash.org*

## Cooking Tip of the Week

### Pesach Crispy Potatoes

Want to make crispy potatoes in your air fryer. Parboil potatoes in 1 liter of water with 1/2 tsp baking soda. Then bake them in your air fryer. Great treat for Pesach.

*Alizah Hochstead,  
alizahh@hotmail.com*

## Halacha Corner – Chol Hamoed

Men do not fulfill their obligation to rejoice during Pesach unless they drink (a revi'it of) wine each day. Children should be given nuts or other edible treats to draw them into the joy of the festival. There is no absolute obligation to eat matzah during Chol Hamoed, but it is considered a mitzvah for one to do so. It is similarly a mitzvah to eat meat to fulfill the requirement of rejoicing during the festival.

Honor Chol Hamoed with good food, drink, and special clothing, like on every festival. It is therefore appropriate to wear Shabbat or Yom Tov clothing, not conducting yourself as if it were an ordinary weekday. Devote time to the study of Torah. The Talmud Yerushalmi states that the reason for the restriction on activities during Chol Hamoed is to facilitate eating, drinking and rejoicing in honor of the festival and for toiling in the study of Torah.

*Rav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita, member of the Badatz of Crown Heights,  
Day-To-Day Halachic Guide, crownheightsconnect.com*

**Question:** A couple weeks ago you answered a person that suffered a big financial loss. I could relate to his situation in that things have really been going down hill for me the last few months. It's hard, really hard. I need something to pick me up and help me to feel better.

**Answer:** Since Hashem is all good, why does He bring challenges? And, if they had to come, can't He just quickly take them away?

Challenges raise us up, make us better people. We are forced to become stronger and more sincere, integrating our beliefs into our thoughts, speech, actions and even feelings. Below are several ideas to meditate upon. The more our faith permeates our total being, the better we will feel. Suffering is not easy, however, as we are taught in Ethics of the Fathers: according to the pain is the gain. The quicker we achieve the goal, the quicker the challenge will go away.

1. To create our finite world, Hashem concealed His infinite light. However, the ultimate intent of creation is not concealment. Through our G-dly service, a greater light will be revealed in this physical world—the light of Moshiach.

In our lives we experience periods of difficulty, concealment. Yet, the challenges we experience are a prelude to a greater good. In Chassidic terminology, tzimtzum (contraction or concealment) is for the purpose of revelation. As it says in Tehillim (118:5), "from the straights (narrowness) I called to G-d, and then G-d answered me with expansiveness." Our trust that Hashem will bestow revealed blessings, hastens the coming of this goodness.

2. All of creation, including unholy spiritual forces, receives its life force from holiness, albeit in a contracted and concealed form. Yet, when unholiness is confronted with an increase of holiness, it dissolves like smoke. As the saying goes, "a little light banishes a lot of darkness".

That being said: why is our evil inclination able to conceal our G-dly soul? In other words, why is it given the power to tempt us and lead us astray? That Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya (chapter 29), the intent is that we reveal our greatest potential. Challenges force us to dig deeper, uncovering hidden resources of faith.

3. Everything that happens is from Hashem and is good—even if we do not understand. As the Talmud teaches, one is to bless G-d for the bad just as he blesses Him for the good. In fact, Chassidus explains that suffering has a loftier spiritual source than revealed goodness. Our trust in Hashem during tough times, creates a vessel for the higher concealed good to be revealed. As King David says: "To relate Your kindness in the morning, and Your faith in the nights." (Tehillim 92)

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