



PREPARING FOR PESACH

REMOVING THE CHOMETZ

After saying the *Yehi ratzon* following *tekias shofar*, the *tzaddik* Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev once cried out to *HaShem*, "Sweet and compassionate Father! If the *malochim* that were created from my קשר" (the תקיעה, שברים, תרועה, and תקיעה) are weak, then let them be replaced by the holy and healthy *malochim* created by the hard work of Yidden before Pesach – by their קשר"ן, קראצן, שאבען, רייבען and קשר"ן – their scratching, scraping, scrubbing and kashering."

(לקוטי דיבורים ע' 260)

In the home of the *tzaddik* Reb Osher of Stolin, so much effort was expended on properly cleaning out the *chometz* from the cracks in the tabletops that the *chassidim* suggested to their Rebbe that it would be easier to get new tables.

The *tzaddik* responded, "If I buy new tables, with what will Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev defend the Yidden?"

(דברי אהרן ע' לו)

Chometz symbolizes *kelipa*. That is why we keep our distance from even the tiniest amount of *chometz*, just as a person takes every possible precaution to protect himself from robbers who wish to take his life.

While getting rid of all the *chometz*, we should have in mind our desire that just as we are scrubbing and scouring away even the minutest amount of *chometz*, *HaShem* should destroy every last bit of the *yetzer hora* from the world. We are certain that *HaShem*, Who sees all the work the Yidden invest in cleaning for Pesach, will do away with the *kelipa* and the *golus* we are in.

All the work we do for Pesach must be carried out with love and *simcha*, with no room for anger and arguments. And the money which which we buy the *Yom-Tov* necessities should be honestly earned. Otherwise, one would be feeding the *kelipa* with *kedusha*.

(ספר קב הישר פרק פ"ט)

"When cleaning the home for Pesach," the Rebbe once said at a *farbrengen*, "one has to begin in advance, and not wait for the last moment of *bedikas chometz*, for otherwise, how will all the

cracks and holes be properly cleaned? To do it all in one moment is impossible. One cannot wait for the last moment and then claim that it is too late.

"The same applies when *Yidden* need to rid themselves of their *ruchniyus'dike chometz*, which is pride. This must be done in advance, because closer to Pesach they may be busy with other aspects of *avoda*."

(תורת מנחם תשמ"ג ח"ב ע' 1171)

PREPARING THE MATZA

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 *yoshvim* – 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 *hachnosas 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)

CONSIDER THIS!

- Is the elimination of *chometz* primarily a physical activity, or a spiritual one?
- Is cutting the wheat for the *matza* a *mitzvah*? Why were the *chassidim* and their families so joyous?

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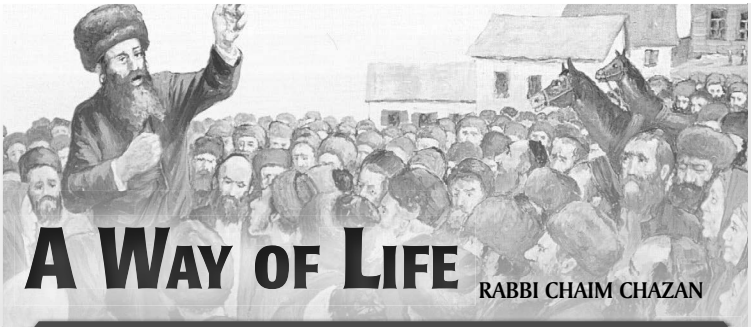
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OUR HEROES

ז' ניסן

Reb Alter Simchovitch



Reb Chaim Alter Nissan Shimon Simchovitch (known as Reb Alter Simchovitch) was a famous *chosid* of the Rebbe Rashab and Frieddiker Rebbe. He served as a *meshpia* 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.



On the Shabbos of Reb Alter's *sheva brochos*, his father-in-law asked him not to *daven* for a long time as he had already made a Kiddush. Reb Alter stood in a corner in the small *zal* in Lubavitch and tried his best, but when he got to "Nishmas," he could take it no longer and began davening at length as he was accustomed to. His father-in-law was seen coming behind him to plead with him...



When he would *farbreng*, Reb Alter would talk for several hours about one *inyan*. Once, he spoke about *iskafya* for about four hours. Concluding, he said, "To say that we are *shayach* to *iskafya* in the way that Chassidus teaches and tells us, that we cannot say. But one thing: At least when we sit down to eat or the like, we should make a short *cheshbon*, that at the time it should bother us that we are not holding where Chassidus wants us to be."

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

Hagomel After Flying

After traveling in an airplane over land, does one make the brocha of Hagomel?

There¹ are four categories of people whom need to thank Hashem for the kindness He did for them, with the "Blessing of Thanksgiving" (*Birkas HaGomel*).

- a) One who has crossed an *ocean*.
- b) One who has crossed a *desert*.
- c) One who recovered from a *serious illness*.
- d) One who was released from *prison*.

There is a dispute² whether one should make *Hagomel* on all other life threatening situations from which one is saved, such as a wall collapsing upon him, robbers, car accidents etc. or only on the specific four cases that *Chazal* enumerate. The Alter Rebbe³ rules like the first opinion, that one makes a Hagomel on all life threatening situations.

After air travel became popular, we find a disagreement in *poskim* whether *Hagomel* should be said after flying. Some *Poskim*⁴ hold, that Hagomel should be said only after flying over an ocean, because it is considered the same as traveling over an ocean in a ship; but not after flying over land. Others⁵ hold, that Hagomel should be said over any air travel, even if traveling merely over land. Others⁶ hold, that Hagomel with Hashem's name should never be said after air travel, rather Hashem's name should be omitted.

The Rebbe⁷ addresses the issue in a letter and writes that it would depend on the above mentioned dispute whether one should make *Hagomel* on all other life threatening situations from which one is saved, and since the *Alter Rebbe paskens* that we do, the same would apply to flying on plane.

The Rebbe adds, that even according to the opinion that says we only make *Hagomel* on the specific four cases that *Chazal* enumerate, flying over an ocean would be no different than traveling on a ship over the ocean.

Although the Rebbe's letter seems to imply that Hagomel should even be said when flying over land, it nonetheless seems that the prevalent custom within Chabad is not to make a Hagomel when flying merely over land, but to make it after flying over an ocean. Perhaps the reason is, that since from the time the letter was written air travel has become safer and does not constitute enough of a danger to warrant Hagomel.

1. שו"ע או"ח סי' רי"ט סעי' א.
 2. שו"ע שם סעי' ט.
 3. סדר ברכת הנהנין פי"ג ס"ז.
 4. ציץ אליעזר ח"א סי' ד, מנחת יצחק ח"ב סי' מז, תשובות והנהגות ח"א קצג, ועוד כמצינו בספרי המלקטים.
 5. אג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' נט, באר משה ח"ו בקונט. עלקטריק סי' סח, הליכות שלמה פרק כג אות ה בשם מהרש"ז אויערבך.
 6. בכמה מפוסקים הנ"ל הובא בשם הרה"ק מהר"א מבעלזא, ובקנין תורה בהלכה ח"א ס"ט הובא כן בשם הגרי"ז מבריסק, ועוד.
 7. שערי הלכה ומנהג ח"א עמ' ריז.

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

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Sees the Future



Every year, at the beginning of *chodesh Nissan*, the Rebbe would send *matzos* through Reb Zelig Slonim, to various *rabbonim* in Eretz Yisroel. The famous *tzaddik* of *Yerushalaim*, Reb Aryeh Levin, was one of them.

Before *Pesach* of 5729, Reb Zelig received the *matzos* for distribution, but Reb Aryeh's name was not on the list. When he mentioned this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe did not respond. On the ninth of *Nissan* that year, the *tzaddik* Reb Aryeh was *niftar*.

Reb Zusha Wilomovsky was one of the special few who would enter the *Gan Eden Hatachton*, to pick a *lulav* and *esrog* from the Rebbe's collection. As the selection would draw to a close, all those present would file by the Rebbe, and receive his *bracha*.

On *Erev Sukkos* 5747, Reb Zusha passed by the Rebbe, but the Rebbe did not *bentch* him and moved on to the next person (as is recorded on video tape). That year, on *Chol Hamoed Sukkos*, Reb Zusha was *niftar*.

לזכות השליח שלום דובער בן לובה

לזכות הת' רפאל דובער גורעוויטש וב"ג שיינא הירש שיחיו לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעטומ"צ