

ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



פרשת צו (שבת הגדול) תשע"ה No. 26

Preparing for Pesach

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger, Editor

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"ק (the תרועה, שברים, תקיעה, 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"ק – קראצן, שאבען, רייבען, scraping, scrubbing and kashering."

(לקוטי דיבורים ע' 260)

In the home of the *tzaddik* **Reb Osher of Stolín**, 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)

A Spiritual Preparation

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 *gulus* 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 we buy the Yom-Tov necessities should be honestly earned. Otherwise, one would be feeding the *kelipa* with *kedusha*.

(קב הישר פרק פ"ט)

The main focus of Pesach is each individual's personal exodus from bondage to freedom. The preparation for this is *biur chometz* – investing

every effort in checking all holes or cracks, and taking every precaution when baking *matza*. All this is done out of vigilant concern for one's *neshama*, so that even the minutest amount of *chometz* should not be seen or found, and so that the *matza* will be properly prepared.

(סה"מ אעת"ר ע' סח)

One year, before *bedikas chometz*, the **Rayatz of Lubavitch** said, "One must check for *chometz* in *ruchniyus*, too, although the physical checking is much easier."

He added, "In the year 5525 (1765) the **Baal HaTanya** came home from Mezritch before Pesach. On the day of *bedikas chometz* he did not eat, as he was completely occupied with his preparations for the *bedika*, making sure to implement all the *kavanos* he had learned in Mezritch. That year, *bedikas chometz* took him the entire night, and he only owned one room!"

(סה"ש תרח"צ ע' 265)

The Sweat of a Mitzva

The effort and energy one expends while preparing for Pesach can destroy evil *malochim* and provide a person with *tikkun*. One should therefore make that effort, and HaShem, in His great mercy, will accept the good intentions of the *Yidden* and bring the *geula*. This is part of the purification one must undertake before Yom-Tov in order to be able to receive its *kedusha*.

(ספר קב הישר פרק צ')

At the beginning of each year, the **Rayatz of Lubavitch**, then the *menahel* of the Tomchei Temimim yeshiva, would present a list – with comments – of all the new students to his father, the Rashab. One year, upon receiving the list, the Rebbe took note of the name of a *bochur* about whom it was written that although he was learned, a veritable *lamdan*, he had coarse *middos* and his features lacked a certain refinement. After some thought, the Rebbe agreed to accept him, and added that he would have to be worked on.

As soon as the list was approved, the Rayatz set up a particularly demanding *seder* for this *bochur*. Soon after *Rosh Chodesh Adar* he received a letter from his father, the Rashab, who was then abroad, instructing him to entrust this *bochur*

with all the hard work needed for preparing the *shemura matza*, and asking for a report as to how he performed his tasks.

For two weeks, the student was kept busy with the physically taxing work of sorting the wheat, setting up the hand-mill, and grinding the wheat into flour. When the time came for baking, he was again assigned the heaviest work. On *erev Pesach*, he was awake most of the night, having been entrusted with doing *bedikas chometz* in the *shul* and the *yeshiva* building. The next morning he was up early to *kasher* the oven for the last batch of *matzos*.

When the preparations for Pesach were finally completed, and the hardworking *bochurim* went to *toivel* in the *mikve* and dress for Yom-Tov, the Rayatz instructed this *bochur* to learn a certain *maamar* of the Baal HaTanya. The *bochur* was to come to the Rayatz the next morning at seven o'clock, to review the *maamar*. On Pesach night he still had no rest, for he had to help serve the students who conducted their *Seder* together in the large *beis medrash*.

Nevertheless, the following morning he came to the Rayatz, having mastered the *maamar* thoroughly. It was now perfectly clear just how much the study of *Chassidus* mattered to him. The Rayatz reported all that had happened to his father, the Rashab, and on *Acharon shel Pesach*, when the Rashab joined the *bochurim* at their *seuda*, he commented to his son, "Just look how powerful is the sweat of a *mitzva*! Look how he has acquired different features; instead of *grobkeit* (coarseness), he now has the face of a *mensch*."

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' 244)

Consider This

Is the elimination of *chometz* primarily a physical activity, or a spiritual one?

How can the physical exertion of a *mitzvah* change a person spiritually?

Sparks of Greatness

י"ג ניסן - The Alshich

Reb Moshe Alshich lived in Tzefas and was a *talmid* of Reb Yosef Karo and Reb Chaim Vital. He was a *shadar* (traveled around to collect money for the *chachomim* of Eretz Yisroel) and a *dayan*. He is most famous for his sefer "*Toras Moshe*", where his unprecedented ability in *derush* comes to light. He also wrote many other *seforim* on various parts of *Tanach*. He was a great *tzadik* and many people add the word "*hakadosh*" to his name. He passed away on the 13th of Nissan, 1600 (ה'ש"ס).

The Chidah, in his sefer "*Shem Hegedolim*", writes in his entry on the Alshich: There was a Rov in Poland who would always quote the Alshich when he spoke. During the pogroms of *gezairos tach v'tat* (1648-1649), the Alshich revealed himself to the Rov while he was awake, and saved him from the pogroms.

There are certain *neshamos* which have a connection to a specific part of Torah that defines their mission in life in their current *gilgul*. When the Alshich would sit in front of the Arizal and hear the secrets of the Torah being expounded, he always would fall asleep. He felt very bad about this, until the Arizal told him that his *neshama* was connected to the world of *derush* and not to the world of *sod* (the secrets of Torah).

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explained that while sleeping, the *neshama* of the Alshich would ascend on high and learn parts of *derush* in Torah. Had he been awake when the Arizal was speaking, he would have lost out on both areas of Torah.

(שם הגדולים משה אלשיך, התועודיות תשמ"ה ח"ד (2082

Halacha Sparks

Checking *Sta'm* by Computer

Rabbi Chaim Chazan

Is one obligated to have one's *Sefer Torah*, *tefillin* and *mezuzos* checked for their *kashrus* by a computer?

All contemporary *poskim* concur that a computer cannot replace the obligation of checking *sta'm* by a person. However, since even after the *sta'm* has been checked by a person, the computer often finds missing words, letters and incorrectly formed letters, there are *poskim* who include a computer check in the general halachic principle "*kol ma de'efshar livrury mevarerinin*" - when the concern for *psul* is common we ought not to rely on a *chazaka* for anything that can be investigated. Hence, they hold that with the technological advances a computer check is obligatory.

Checking *sta'm* with a computer cannot be compared to checking vegetables for bugs with a microscope, or checking if *tefillin* are square with a modern mechanical device, which are both not required by *halacha*. *Halacha* is only concerned with phenomena observable to the naked eye; therefore anything not observable would not be included in the prohibition or obligation. However a mistake in a *Sefer Torah* is readily observable and hence renders the *Sefer Torah* *posul*. All the computer is doing is exposing the location of a *psul*.

Other *poskim* however, are of the opinion that although it is commendable to check *sta'm* with a computer, there is no obligation to do so, and there are surely no grounds to disqualify *sta'm* which was not checked by a computer.

Another possible issue may be the prohibition to erase Hashem's name on the computer screen in the process of scanning the *sta'm*. However *poskim* are not concerned with erasing Hashem's name on an electronic screen.

ש"ת שבט ה'ת"ס ב.ג.ד. תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סי' צט. קנין תורה ח"ה סי' קו. משנה הלכות ח"א סי' קיד, קטו.

ספריית היכל הבעש"ט

The Baal Shem Tov Library



Thousands of Seforim on all Topics



Digital Torah Resources



Magnificent Study Hall



Bookshop



Chassidus and Mussar

Come participate in an amazing

PESACH SHIUR

by the world famous author, lecturer, and philosopher



RABBI NOSON GURARY SHLITA
 Acclaimed author of "13 Principles of Faith"

Founder and Executive Director of:
 Center for World Culture Chassidism at Moscow State University,
 International Institute of Chassidic Studies,
 Women's Institute for Jewish Traditions in Buffalo.

הרב נתן גורארי שליטא

נכד האדמו"ר מקאפשיניץ זצ"ל

Topic:
 How is the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim relevant to this generation, and how do we transmit this lesson to our children

Thursday, March 26
 ה'תש"פ
 8:45 p.m.

1709 Avenue J (bet. E17&E18)
 Brooklyn, NY 11230 • 718-677-9000
 tbstlibrary@gmail.com
 www.thebaalshemtovlibrary.com

ⓑ11, B6 Ⓜ stop right there

Our new exciting shiurim program will be operating soon! Shiurim will be taking place weekly at our state of the of the art library for men.

Lectures will be taking place for women as well on a variety interesting & important topics.

Come visit our library at 1709 Avenue J, Brooklyn NY. Call us at 718-677-9000.
www.thebaalshemtovlibrary.com. tbstlibrary@gmail.com

Library hours: Sunday : 1:30 pm - 9:30 pm. Monday - Thursday: 2:00 pm - 10:30 pm.

Special Women's Hours: Sunday 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm.

This week's issue is sponsored by:



800-273-5176