

# The Weekly *Farbrengens*



**MERKAZ ANASH**  
מרכז אנאש

לחמן ישמעו • צו תשפ"ו • 872  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## 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 *yoshevim* – 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 *hachnsos 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

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* (מִשְׁנָה) has the same letters as *neshama* (נֶשְׁמָה). 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 הזמרים תשי"א ע' 29)

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**

**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?**

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 *farbrenge*d 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



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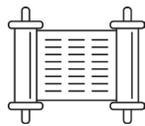
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## EARLY SEDER

**In our place of *shlichus*, nightfall is very late. Can I start the seder before night?**

The Torah specifies that the mitzvos of Pesach must be fulfilled after nightfall (*balailah hazeh*). The same applies to the rabbinic mitzvos — such as *daled kosos*, *maror*, and *afikoman* — which must all be done at night.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, we are encouraged to begin the seder as soon as possible, so the participants can remain awake.<sup>2</sup>

Starting a meal before the seder raises several halachic issues. One may not eat matzah before the seder to preserve one's appetite for it (see issue 871). Filling foods — i.e., *matza ashira* or kosher for Pesach *mezonos* — may not be eaten during the last quarter of the day.<sup>3</sup> Wine may not be drunk either from that point (other than an in-between amount that's hard to measure).<sup>4</sup> Other foods that are not filling may be eaten, but even so, one should not eat to satisfaction.<sup>5</sup>

Practically, the proper approach is to begin the seder only after nightfall. However, one may say *divrei Torah* and even parts of the haggada beforehand — especially the sections that fall under “*kol hamarbeh lesaper*,” as telling the story is praiseworthy at any time. Once night comes, the required parts of the haggada and the mitzvos should be performed (see issue 354 for haggada minimum).

If participants cannot manage the full seder at night, one could serve a light first course before nightfall and discuss parts of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Candle lighting the first night must be after *plag hamincha* (second night, after *tzeis*).

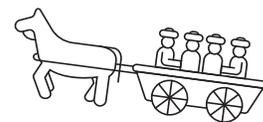
If eating will continue after *shkiah*, some *poskim* allow making *kiddush* after *plag hamincha* (or *shkiah*), fulfilling *kiddush bimkom seuda* with a (additional) *revi's* of wine or grape juice, and then serving a light course. After nightfall, the main components of the Seder can be done—with the four *kosos*, basic Haggadah, and a short meal.

Although less than ideal, when this is the only way to help participants fulfill the mitzvos of the night, it is seemingly a valid solution.

1. תע"ב ס"ב.  
2. שוע"ד תע"ב ס"א.  
3. שוע"ד סי' תע"א ס"א.  
4. ראה שוע"ד שם ס"א וס"ב. וראה דברי אדה"ז.  
5. שוע"ד שם ס"ב וס"ג.

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

# Our Heroes



## R. ZALMAN CHAIKIN

R. Zalman Chaikin was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash, and Rebbe Rashab, and a *talmid* of R. Pesach Molostovker. A wealthy businessman and generous *baal tzedakah*, he lived in Podobranka where his brother, R. Yoel, was the Rov. R. Zalman was the Rebbe's great-grandfather—the father-in-law of R. Baruch Schneur Schneersohn (Rabash – R. Levik's father).

A wealthy man and a great *baal tzaedaka*, R. Zalman hospitality was truly exemplary.

In shul, he would sit near the oven among the beggars, so that the visiting paupers thought he was one of them. When one of them would mention that he's hungry, R' Zalman would tell him, "There's a man named Zalman Chaikin who serves meals to the poor, and I've eaten in his house."

After davening, he would take the poor to his home, open the cabinets, and serve them good food. The guests, who didn't know him, would sometimes demean him, "What an arrogant beggar without an ounce of respect! Look at how he just takes from the cabinets without permission..."

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 260)

During the Friediker Rebbe's Sheva Brachos,

a *farbrengen* was held in his new home with various chassidim, notably R. Zalman Chaikin. The *farbrengen* went all night long, and at 4 am, the chassidim wanted to go prepare for davening.

Sensing that they were rushing anxiously, R. Zalman shared with them a *vort* he had heard from his teacher, R. Pesach Molostovker, who heard it from the Mittlerer Rebbe: "*Va'avadtem meheira*, you should rid yourself of rushing, *mei'al ha'aretz hatova*, even from a good desire." While *zerizus* is a good *midda*, one must know when to use it.

He also told of a youngerman who the Mittlerer Rebbe *bentched* to be a "*baalabus*"; to be organized and make use of life situations as a homeowner keeps and uses whatever he finds.

(ס"ה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 236)

In his later years, when R. Zalman entered *yechidus*, the Rebbe Rashab stood up for him and offered him to sit. R. Zalman insisted that he would only sit after the Rebbe sat down. When the Rebbe refused, he had no choice but to sit first.

On one of his trips to the Rebbe Rashab, he was accompanied by his grandson R. Levik. The Rebbe Rashab stood up and asked R. Zalman for a *bracha*, but R. Zalman evaded it.

(תולדות לוי יצחק ח"א ע' 47, תשורה מאן, ש"פ)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



### SPEAK TO THE HANHALA

In conflicts with school *hanhala*, the Rebbe would direct students and parents to submit to their authority and work things out with them.

In the early 5720s, Mrs. Devorah Butman a"h served as principal of the Beis Rivka High School in New York.

One winter, the daughter of a wealthy donor traveled with her family to California in the middle of the school term without permission from the *hanhala*. When they returned, Mrs. Butman informed them that since she had left without permission, the girl could not return to school.

The decision quickly caused a stir, and people pressured Mrs. Butman to reconsider. Did she realize who the girl's father was? But the principal refused to bend on principle.

Around that time, the philanthropist entered *yechidus* and raised the matter with the Rebbe. The Rebbe, however, defended the principal's decision and instructed that an apology be made.

With the message conveyed, the girl was welcomed back to school.

(As related by her son, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Butman, during her *shivah*)