



THE CHABAD TIMES

VOL. 16 NO. 2

A PUBLICATION OF CHABAD-LUBAVITCH OF GREATER MERCER COUNTY Spring 2008 - Passover 5768



The College of NJ Appoints Chabad Rabbi as Jewish Chaplain

The past six months have seen a remarkable rebirth for the Jewish students at The College of New Jersey. Estimates show that there are 600 Jewish young adults who attend TCNJ, approximately 10% of the student population. Late last summer, Rabbi Akiva ("Kivi") Greenbaum and his wife Zeesy arrived at the scenic Ewing Township campus of TCNJ to serve the needs of this growing segment of the student body, and what a remarkable match this dynamic couple has been for the campus. Since the school year began, Chabad at TCNJ has been in contact with over 250 of the Jewish students, while Rabbi Greenbaum has been designated the Official Jewish Chaplain for the campus. Dr. Harold Eickhoff, ex-President of the College, serves as the Faculty Advisor to Chabad.

The Chabad Center for Jewish Life, as it is now known, is in the process of purchasing a house next to the campus that will serve not only as the residence for the Greenbaums but also as a focal point for

Chabad activities. In addition to providing the students with a myriad of social events throughout the school year, Chabad offers holiday and Shabbat services on a regular basis. A Shabbos dinner is offered every Friday night, with an average of thirty students in attendance. Chabad has further initiated Kosher food now being served in the main dining hall as part of the College's regular food plan.

As many as 80 students have been in attendance at the variety of events offered by the Chabad Center. Upcoming events include all Passover meals in addition to the two seders, as well as the distribution of Shemurah Matzos to all Jewish students. The past several months have also seen Chabad sponsor an Israel night, a NY Shabbaton, Hamentashen baking, and several barbecues (a specialty also known as a "barbie" to the native Australian Rabbi Greenbaum). All in all, in a very short amount of time The Chabad Center for Jewish Life has clearly made its presence felt on campus in a most positive way.

Chabad Brings Purim Spirit to over 30 Nursing Homes!



Registration for Camp Gan Israel in Full Gear!

On Monday June 23rd, Camp Gan Israel of Greater Mercer County will open its doors and heart to campers for the eighth consecutive summer. Chabad is proud that it has established a loving summer home for local campers to enjoy and to be nourished in for many years to come.

Camp "Gan Izzy", established in 2001, is a treasure trove of custom-tailored activities. The programs offered allow campers to experience summer the way it should be experienced: with exciting, relaxing, eye-opening, and educational activities that will become a source of their best childhood memories. Counselors, staff, and administration are defined by their ethics, patience, and energetic devotion to the campers and their safety.

Camp Gan Israel continues to meet a vital need in the Greater Mercer County area, presenting a dream summer of arts, athletics, adventure, and friendship for children ages 3-12, all within a loving Jewish framework. All campers learn fundamental techniques in a large variety of activities, along with the important values of teamwork and sportsmanship.

For more information regarding Gan Israel's outstanding program, or to register your camper(s), log onto www.princetonchabad.org.

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Log onto www.princetonchabad.org for more information
& to download a registration form.



Special Tribute

**Hinda Bas
Binyomin Hakohen**

As Chabad of Greater Mercer County has grown, so has the prominence of the Chabad Times. Over the past sixteen years, no individual has been more responsible for the development of this newspaper than Laura Szabo Cohen. Without her hard work, dedication, and guidance, the growth of the Chabad Times would not have been possible. Most unfortunately, Laura's recent attention has been diverted to family matters. Condolences are extended to Laura on the death of her mother, Hinda bas Binyomen ha Kohen. The entire Chabad community wishes our esteemed friend Laura Cohen nothing but happiness and joy, along with continued future good health for her entire family.

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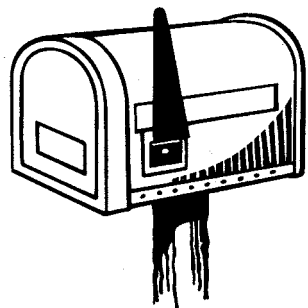
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**From
Our
Mailbox**

Dear Rabbi & Mrs. Dubov,

It was a great pleasure to have you attend my Bar Mitzvah in Zurich Switzerland. Thank you so much for coming and for the 5 books of Moses! I will read my Haftorah, Maftir, and Shlishi every year at the Chabad.

Thanks Again,

Ron Gerschel

Dear Rabbi & Mrs. Dubov and family,

Thank you once again for hosting me for Shabbos, and for making what could have been a very challenging weekend such a pleasure. What a treat to see your family growing and developing and seeming to be in such a good place.

Your kids are simply darling, and you run such an open and relaxed home that my brother was able to pick up on it within moments. It's just so EASY to be with you.

Thank you –and please thank your kids, as well. Your big ones were a pleasure to talk to–and your little ones were too cute and squeezable.

Good luck with the move, which I hope comes soon, despite water and hills, and may you be able to continue to disseminate Torah and Yiddishkeit for many happy, healthy years to come.

Tizku l'mitzvos.

Rhona Finkle

Dear Malka,

Thank you for providing a kosher meal to Amir Goldman on February 7th at the Witherspoon Grill. We appreciate it so much that you took the time from your busy day to help him to eat a kosher meal during the business dinner at the Witherspoon. Thank you very much for your help.

Very sincerely yours,

Sharon Teres

Susquehanna Growth Equity, LLC

Dear Rabbi Dubov,

Please be advised that I have instructed the Chief of Highway, Sigmund Zegarski, to reach out to you to make the necessary arrangements. As always, the County Executive stands ready to assist you in this very important occasion and I thank you for your kind words and pray that G-d will continue to bless you in all your good work.

Happy Holidays to you and those you represent.

Sincerely,

Aaron T. Watson, Director

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure

Chabad Times

Director: Rabbi Dovid Dubov

Co-Director & Editor: Malky Dubov

Editing • Design & Layout: Steve Zuzulock

Editing & Proofreading: Mushky Dubov

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731 Princeton-Kingston Rd. • Princeton, NJ 08542 • 609.252.0124

Email: chabadmerc@aol.com

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Matzah After Midnight

By Yanki Tauber

When you were a child, you were blessed with faith. The world was good, people were good, and being good yourself was simply a matter of following the the dos and don'ts of life which G-d had told your Mom and Dad.

Then you grew up, met some of the bad guys, and found that following the rules doesn't always pan out the way you imagined it would. Morality muddled into an amalgam of maybes, ifs and usuallys. Faith alone wasn't enough anymore: you also needed intellect, sensitivity, feeling, will and desire to navigate this thing called life.

When you first married, you were blessed with faith. Your husband/wife was the most good-hearted, intelligent, beautiful, talented, caring and loving person in the universe. Your love for each other would get you through anything. Then your marriage aged, acquiring wrinkles, an irregular heartbeat and bouts of dementia. Love alone just wasn't enough anymore: you also needed intellect, sensitivity, feeling, will and desire to maintain the relationship.

You begin in faith, and move on to experience. But there is also a third stage: a stage in which the faith reemerges. A stage in which you discover that your spouse really is the greatest, most wonderful person in the universe. A stage in which you discover that the world is good, that people are good, that the G-d-given dos and don'ts are the formula for a meaningful life. No, it's not as simple and straightforward as your youthful faith saw it. But this mature, complex, thoughtful, willed and inspired faith has something that youthful faith didn't have: it has a density, a texture, a taste. A richness.

You've returned to that original faith, that same faith which shone so bright and hard because it wasn't saddled with knowledge and experience. Now, however, your faith co-exists with -- indeed feeds upon -- your knowledge and experience. The roots of your faith reach deeper



Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson
O.B.M.

than them, its crown towers higher than them, but it also leans against them and is fortified by them.

Matzah is the most basic icon of the festival of Passover. The biblical name for Passover is "The Festival of Matzahs." For eight days, this flat, "unleavened bread" displaces all leavened forms of the staff of life. And on Passover eve, the three seder matzahs, enthroned on their special plate at the head of the table, take center stage in the seder rituals.

But there's no small amount of confusion surrounding the significance of the matzah. The sages of the Talmud and the Kabbalah give it different -- even conflicting -- names: "The Bread of Affliction," "The Bread of Poverty," "The Bread of Humility," "The Bread of Instruction," "The Bread of Faith," "The Bread of Healing."

And then there's the matter of timing: Just when was the matzah born? At the beginning of the seder we announce, "This is the bread of affliction which our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt..." But later in the evening, we recite: "This matzah that we eat, for what reason [do we eat it]? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them."

Thus we have pre-Exodus matzah and post-Exodus matzah. Or, as they're referred to in the teachings of Chassidism, pre-midnight matzah and post-midnight matzah.

For matzah, the bread of faith, has two faces. It is the faith of "poverty" which thrives in pristine souls free of the tangles of intellect and the burdens of experience. And then, when it emerges from the other side of the night, it is a faith enriched by the very elements that stifled it in its years of exile.

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe OBM

Suspended Hailstones

By Yanki Tauber

You're walking down the street when suddenly -- bam! -- a hard object with sharp edges hits you smack in the middle of the forehead. You take a step back and, amazingly, the thing is still there, suspended in mid-air. It looks like what you would imagine a meteorite from outer space would look like: an asymmetrical chunk of ice and rock, glowing with heat on the inside, hard and cold on the outside.

You look around you. The lunchtime throng of sidewalk traffic flows on around you, mildly aware of the lone pedestrian obstructing their path (you), completely oblivious to the chunk of fire and ice hanging at forehead level in front of you. Apparently, you're the only one who has noticed it.

And then it hits you (this time inside your head): you've bumped into a piece of your past.

The seventh of the "ten plagues" to strike Egypt was the plague of hail, described in Exodus 9:22-35:

Moses stretched out his rod towards heaven, and G-d rained hail upon the land of Egypt: there was hail, and fire flaring up within the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation...

All of the plagues, from the Nile turning to blood to the midnight death of the Egyptian firstborn, had a miraculous element to them, designed to "let Egypt know that I am G-d" (ibid. 7:5). What's remarkable about the plague of hail is the supernatural way in which it ended.

As the Torah tells it, "Pharaoh sent and summoned Moses and Aaron and said to them, 'I have sinned this time; G-d is the righteous one, and I and my people are the guilty ones...I will let you go.'" So "Moses went away from Pharaoh, out of the city; and he spread out his hands to G-d; and the thunder ceased, and the hail and rain did not reach the ground." "Also those that were already in the air" explains Rashi in his commentary on the verse, "did not reach the ground."

What is the deeper significance of this strange phenomenon? The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that Pharaoh's suspended hailstones emphasize the underlying dynamics of sin, punishment and repentance.

When we talk about an evil deed being punished by G-d, many envision a supernal judge entering sins and failings into a cosmic accounts ledger, tallying up the debits, and meting out misfortunes as "retribution" or

revenge. The truth runs deeper than that. According to the great Jewish thinkers, punishment is the result of sin rather than its retribution. When a person jumps out of a third storey window and breaks a leg, one might say that he was "punished" for his reckless deed; but it would be more precise to say that the Creator instituted certain laws of behavior in the physical world -- such as the laws of gravity, kinetic energy, etc. -- which "dictate" the broken-leg result of jumping out of a 3rd-storey window. By the same token, the Creator also instituted spiritual laws of behavior, which dictate that evil deeds bring misfortune upon their perpetrators.

So while Pharaoh's suspended hailstones may have violated the laws of physical nature, they were consistent with a more primary nature -- the spiritual nature of creation which precedes and underlies its physical nature. The moment that Pharaoh repented his evil ways, expressing regret over his deeds ("I and my people are the guilty ones") and resolve regarding the future ("I will let you go") -- the moment that the spiritual cause of the plague was no longer -- the plague too, ceased. For a single hailstone to have moved even one millimeter closer to striking the land of Egypt would have violated the basic law of creation that the spiritual reality affects the physical reality, and not vice versa.

Nevertheless, the hailstones that were already in the air did not disappear. Pharaoh's repentance had the power to stop the future results of his behavior, but not to undo the past. By stopping the cause (his refusal to let the people of Israel go), he stopped its result (the plague of hail); but the hailstones which had resulted from his past deeds, he could not undo.

Life is a journey (or a river, a road, a rollercoaster -- pick your cliché) in which we move on, leaving the past behind. But though we may have left it behind us, the past still exists. And as long as the past still exists, its results also remain in existence, hailstones suspended in midair.

There is, however, a deeper level of teshuvah (repentance) that can change the past. A teshuvah that draws on the timeless core of our souls to effect such a radical change in our life's trajectory that it redefines the significance -- and thus the results -- of our past failings. No more hailstones to hit you on the forehead as you walk down street.

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Chabad's Upcoming Events

- Lag B'Omer Shabbat Dinner on Friday, May 23rd.
- Shavuot Ice Cream Party on Monday, June 9th.
- Gan Israel Summer Camp beginning on Monday, June 23rd.

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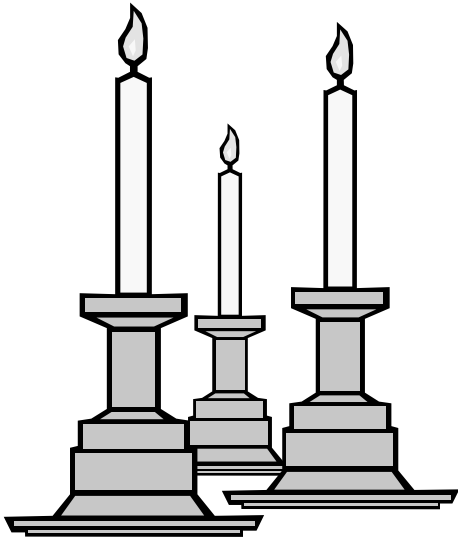
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THE PESACH CALENDAR 5768 2008

Times shown are for Mercer County

Date	Activity	Time
April 17	Formal search for Chometz	after 8:17 p.m.
April 18	Burn Chometz	before 11:41 a.m.
	Light Shabbas candles**	
	Say blessing 2	at 7:23 p.m.
April 19	Eat Chometz	until 10:38 a.m.
	Flush remaining Chometz	before 11:39 a.m.
	Light Yom-Tov candles*	
	Say blessing 1 and 3	after 8:25 p.m.
	Start the Seder	after 8:27 p.m.
April 20	Light Yom-Tov candles*	
	Say blessing 1 and 3	after 8:26 p.m.
	Start the Seder	after 8:28 p.m.
April 21	Holiday ends	at 8:27 p.m.
April 25	Light Shabbat candles**	
	Say blessing 4	at 7:31 p.m.
April 26	Light Yom-Tov candles*	
	Say blessing 1	after 8:33 p.m.
April 27	Yiskor memorial prayers	
	Pesach ends	after 8:34 p.m.



* Do not light before the time indicated. Light from a pre-existing flame.

** Do not light after sunset.

A pre-existing flame is a flame burning continuously since the onset of the festival, such as a pilot light, gas or candle flame.

CANDLE LIGHTING BLESSINGS

- Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheh Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vo-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.
- Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheh Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vo-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Sha-bbos Ko-desh.
- Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom She-heh-chi-yo-nu Vi-ki-ye-mo-nu Vi-hi-gi-o-nu Liz-man Ha-zeh.
- Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sheh Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vo-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Sha-bbos V-shel Yom Tov.

HOW TO SELL THE CHOMETZ

Since it's prohibited to possess chometz on Pesach, we need to sell to a non-Jew all chometz that will not be eaten or burned before Pesach and all chometz utensils which will not be thoroughly cleaned by then. These are stored away in closets or rooms while preparing for Pesach. Now we lock or tape shut the closets or rooms, and they are leased to the non-Jew at the time of the sale.

Since there are many legal intricacies in this sale, only a competent Rabbi should be entrusted with its execution. The Rabbi acts as our agent both to sell the chometz to the non-Jew on the morning before Pesach starts and also to buy it back the evening after Pesach.

Fill out the form below and give or mail it to:

Rabbi Dovid Dubov
Chabad Lubavitch of Greater Mercer County
731 Princeton-Kingston Road, Princeton, NJ 08540

Return this form early, as responsibility cannot be accepted for forms received after April 14, 2008.

CERTIFICATE AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CHOMETZ

Please print neatly or type as illegible forms cannot be processed.

I (We)* _____
 hereby authorize Rabbi Dovid Dubov to dispose of all chometz that may be in my (our) possession wherever it may be — at home, at my (our) place of business, or elsewhere — in accordance with the requirements of Jewish Law as incorporated in this special contract for the sale of chometz.

Residence Address _____
 Apt. No. _____ City/State/Zip _____
 Business Address _____
 Suite No. _____ City/State/Zip _____

Signature(s) _____
 Date _____

*Husband and Wife, specify names.
 Must be signed by head of household and preferably by all parties.



Erev Pesach

ON THE EVE OF PASSOVER

SEARCH FOR CHOMETZ: Finally, we begin a "Search and Destroy" mission to eliminate Chometz from our homes and, in the process, to clean ourselves of the self-inflation it represents.

When Passover falls on Sunday (in this year), the search is performed with a lit candle at nightfall on Thursday (April 17, 2008; see above for exact times). It is customary to distribute ten small pieces of Chometz (wrapped in paper or foil) throughout the home before the search.

We gather the Chometz crumbs, with a ladle into a wooden spoon. Hold the lit candle and search in every room or area of the home (and/or business) that may have Chometz - including the basement, attic, garage, and car.

To begin, recite the following blessing - reciting the evening search, burning the Chometz Friday morning and disposal of the remaining Chometz on Shabbat morning:

Baruch Atah Ado-nai E-l-oh-einu Melech ha-olam asheh Kdeshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al b'yar chometz.

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us to remove leaven.

When the search is completed recite the following:

All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered null and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

Afterward, cover the found Chometz securely (in a paper bag, etc.) and place it in a conspicuous spot, to be burned in the morning. Chometz that you will sell (or not sell) should be put aside separately.

If unable to search at night, search with a candle the following morning. If you will

not be at home during Passover, search the night before departure (within thirty days of the Festival), without a blessing.

BURNING THE CHOMETZ: Before the end of the fifth hour on Friday (April 18, 2008 (see above for exact time)), burn all Chometz found during the search and not saved to be eaten at the Shabbat meals.

Prepare Shabbat meals Kosher for Passover in Passover cookware with only Kosher-for-Passover ingredients. Leave out only enough Shabbat bread for the meals.

UNTE WHEN CAN WE EAT CHOMETZ? On the morning before Passover, Saturday (April 19, 2008), we may eat Chometz only until the end of the fourth hour (see above for exact times). After that time, we eat only Kosher-for-Passover foods. However, we do not eat Matzah until the Seder.

DISPOSAL AND NULLIFICATION OF CHOMETZ: Before the end of the fifth hour, dispose of leftover bread and crumbs by flushing down the toilet and recite the declaration, nullifying any Chometz that might remain:

All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be completely considered null and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

THE FAST OF THE FIRST-BORN: The Jews were spared the most painful of the ten plagues that befell the Egyptians, the slaying of the first-born. In gratitude, our first-born sons (and fathers of first-born sons under 13 years old) fast the day before Passover. The exemption? A festive meal! The custom is to celebrate completion of a Talmud tractate - (check with your local synagogue). It is prohibited to fast on Shabbat, so when Passover falls on Sunday (in this year) the fast is Thursday (April 17, 2008).

Step-by-Step Seder Wizard



Millennia before the XBOX, an ancient desert tribe of mystics enacted the first multimedia educational experience. Beyond anything we have today, it reached deep into the human psyche in every way possible and all at once: Rich audio, dynamic visuals, spoken language and written text, even the visceral senses of taste, smell and touch.

It was intergenerational -- involving all the family with something special for each one. It was customizable, adjustable to a spectrum of personalities. It was interactive, with role-playing and creative manipulation of materials. It was a whole-person experience, developing a sense of inner freedom within all who participated.

But its most fascinating aspect was that every detail was firmly grounded in the mystical teachings of an esoteric tradition. Each step had not just a body, but a soul as well -- a simple meaning as well as a deep lesson towards higher consciousness.

Its success has been awe-inspiring. No ritual has survived so long and so true to its original form. No lesson has affected humankind with such impact, propagating the values of human dignity, liberty and the search for higher meaning to every society it has reached.

To this day, in every corner of the world, Jewish families come together to reconstruct that original Passover Seder, again and again, year after year. And every year, there is more to learn.

Let us begin...

Ordered Freedom in Fifteen Steps

If there was ever a paradox it is this: that on Passover eve, the night that freedom was born, we experience freedom by following a sequence of fifteen defined and ordered steps. We call it the *Seder* or "Order."



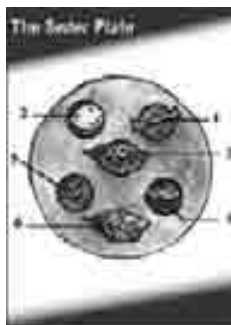
The fifteen steps are:

1. Sanctify
2. Cleanse
3. Appetizer
4. Break
5. Tell
6. Wash
7. Bread
8. Matzah
9. Bitter
10. Wrap
11. Set the Table
12. Hidden
13. Bless
14. Praise
15. Accepted

Before we can start, however, we'll need to set up the Seder Plate and prepare the other Seder ingredients...

The Seder Plate

The Seder Plate (*Ka'arah*) includes most of the ingredients that go into the making of the Seder. Its three matzahs and the six other items are arranged in a formation dictated by their mystical significance and relationship vis-a-vis each other.



Here's how you set it up:

On top of a large plate, tray or cloth place three whole matzahs, one on top of the other. It's best to use round, hand-baked *shmurah* matzah. (We'll be using middle matzah in steps 4, 5, 7, 8, and 12 of our 15-step Seder, the top matzah in steps 7 and 8, and the bottom matzah in steps 7 and 10.)

Cover the matzahs with a cloth or tray. On top, position the following six items as pictured above right:

- 1) "Zeroa" - a roasted chicken bone with most of the meat removed. This will represent the Passover offering. It will not be eaten.
- 2) "Beitzah" - a hard-boiled egg, representing the festival offering.
- 3) "Maror" - grated horseradish (just the horseradish -- not the red stuff that has vinegar and beets added) and/or romaine lettuce, for use as the "bitter herbs" (step #9).
- 4) "Charoset" - a paste made of apples, pears, nuts and wine. We'll be dipping the bitter herbs in this (steps 9 and 10).
- 5) "Karpas" - a bit of vegetable, such an onion or potato (used in step #3).
- 6) "Chazeret" -- more bitter herbs, for use in the matzah-maror sandwich (step #10).

We'll also need a wine cup or goblet for each participant, and plenty of wine (four cups each).

And a dish of salt water (in which to dip the Karpas).

Ok, we're ready to start our 15-step Seder. We'll talk more about the function and significance of these items as we proceed.

Matzah is unleavened bread. It's made from flour (from one of the "five types of grain" -- wheat, barley, oats, rye or spelt) and water only -- absolutely nothing else -- that are swiftly combined, kneaded and baked before the dough has a

Introduction Ordered Freedom The Seder Plate

1. Sanctify
2. Cleanse
3. Appetizer
4. Break
5. Tell
6. Wash
7. Bread
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9. Bitter
10. Wrap
11. Set the Table
12. Hidden
13. Bless
14. Praise
15. Accepted

chance to ferment and begin to rise. It looks something like a large, round flat cracker. It tastes simply delicious.

Matzah may be flat, but it has many faces: it is the "bread of affliction" and the "bread of poverty" which our forefather's ate as slaves in Egypt. It's the "bread of proclamation" over which we tell the story of the Exodus. It's the "bread of humility" that represents our self-abnegating commitment to G-d, and the "bread of faith" that embodies our simple faith, trust and devotion to Him. It's the "bread of healing" with which we imbibe spiritual wholeness and wellness into our beings.

Shmurah matzah ("guarded matzah") is made from grain that is guarded from the time it was harvested lest it come in contact with even the merest hint of water and moisture. It is also baked by hand, with the specific intention and awareness that it will be used as a vehicle of connection to G-d -- to fulfill the mitzvah of eating matzah on the seder night. (No machine can do that, can it?)

1. Kadesh - Sanctify

Body

It's been a crazy week. The world with all its worries and bothers is still clamoring for your attention. The first step is to forget all that. Leave it behind. Enter into a timeless space, where you, your great-grandparents and Moses all coincide.

Begin with a full cup of sweet red wine. A full cup of hundreds of generations of rejoicing and tears and celebration and wisdom and... of doing just what you are going to do tonight.



Fill cup with wine. That's cup #1.

Have someone else fill your cup. Return them the favor. This way, we are all like nobility, whose cups are filled by someone else. Make sure your cup holds at least 86 mil. (a little more than three ounces).

Everyone stands and says the kiddush together.

The rest of the year, when the sanctity of Shabbat or a festival is pronounced upon a cup of wine in the kiddush, one person says kiddush for everyone else. Tonight, each man, woman and child recites every word together.

Drink. And get ready for some serious relaxing: Recline on a cushion to your left side. Remember the ancient times, when we used to recline on couches while stuffing down grapes? That's what we are dramatizing by reclining now. We are not just free, we are masters.

Soul

The beginning of all journeys is separation. You've got to leave somewhere to go somewhere else. It is also the first step towards freedom: You ignore the voice of Pharaoh inside that mocks you, saying, "Who are you to begin such a journey?" You just get up and walk out.

This is the first meaning of the word, "Kadesh" -- to *transcend* the mundane world. Then comes the second meaning: Once you've set yourself free from your material worries, you can return and sanctify them. That is when true spiritual freedom begins, when you introduce a higher purpose into all those things you do.

2. Urchatz - Cleanse

Body

Before we get to work, especially on such a sensitive and cosmic task as the ritualistic handling of food to manipulate spiritual truths, our hands should be clean. Wash them clean of the impurities of a life in a materialistic world.



Fill a cup with water.

Many Jewish homes have a large two-handled cup especially designed for this. You could leave the table to go to the kitchen.

What? We just sat down and now we have to get up and leave already? Well, that's a fairly normal migration pattern for Jews.

On the other hand, you could bring a basin and towel to the table.

Pour the water to cover your right hand. Repeat. Repeat again. Ditto for your left hand.

That's how the kohanim ("priests") did it when they entered the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Dry hands.

Usually, we would recite a blessing at this point. When we wash the second time before eating the matzah, we'll say it then. But not now.

Soul

Our hands are the primary tools to interact with our environment. They generally

obey our emotions: Love, fear, compassion, the urge to win, to be appreciated, to express ourselves, to dominate. Our emotions, in turn, reflect our mental state.

But, too often, each faculty of our psyche sits in its cell, exiled from one another. The mind sees one way, the heart feels another and our interface with the world ends up one messy tzimmes.

Water represents the healing power of wisdom. Water flows downward, carrying its essential simplicity to each thing. It brings them together as a single living, growing whole. We pour water over our hands as an expression of wisdom pouring downward passing through our heart and from there to our interaction with the world around us.

3. Karpas - Appetizer

Body

Take a small piece of some edible vegetable (potato, onion, etc.)



We're doing everything we can to spark questions from the children. If they say, "Hey mom and dad! The table is all set for a grand dinner. Aren't we supposed to eat real food now? Why just this little itty-bitty piece of vegetable?" -- then you know you're doing things right.

What do you answer them? You say, "We're doing this so you will ask questions." And if they say, "So what's the answer?" -- just repeat, as above. That's the best answer. Because you can't learn if you don't ask questions. And the first thing to learn is that not all questions have answers.

That's a distinctive mark of Jewish education: More than we teach our children how to answer, we teach them how to ask -- and how to be patient in their search for answers.

Dip it into saltwater.

Like our earlier reclining with our cup of wine, we're engaging in a display of expansiveness and sovereignty, mimicking the custom of nobility and hoity-toity folk to precede their meals with an bite of appetizer dipped in a dip.

Also: karpas (the Hebrew word for "greens" and "vegetable") read backwards forms an acronym of a phrase meaning "600,000 [were enslaved with] spirit-breaking labor," and the saltwater in which it is dipped are the tears they shed.

This duality will repeat itself throughout to Seder. Telling the story of the Exodus means reliving how things were before (slavery and suffering) and what was achieved (freedom). We'll drink wine (joy, liberty) and we'll eat the maror (bitterness, slavery). At times, the same food or ritual will embody both aspects.

Say the blessing for vegetables ("Borei Pri Haadamah"), and have in mind also the "bitter herbs" we'll be eating later. Munch it down.

Munch good. You're not going to get much more for a while.

Soul

We need to re-taste the breaking labor of Egypt to liberate ourselves from it once again. It was this labor that prepared us for freedom. It was this labor that gave us a humble spirit to accept wisdom.

Today, as well, you can choose to achieve this humble spirit by enduring the battle to survive the rat race. There will be plenty of futile, hamster-wheel tasks to bring you to your knees.

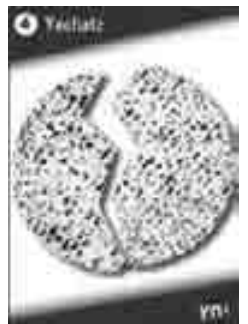
Or you could choose another path: achieving true humility with the realization of just how small we earthly creatures are. That will free you from the need to experience materialistic futility.

Choose your battle. It's up to you.

4. Yachatz - Break

Body

Take hold of the middle of the three matzahs on your Seder Plate.



We need the top matzah to remain whole. We'll be making a blessing on it later on. Blessings are said on whole things.

Break it in two. Leave the smaller half between the two complete matzos.

The piece that remains on the Seder Plate is the "poor man's bread" over which the tale of our slavery is said. Poor people only eat a small part of their bread -- they need to save the rest in case tomorrow there is none.

Break the remaining (larger) piece into five pieces and wrap them in a cloth.

According to Kabbalah, the world is created through five contractions of light.

Hide the package until the end of the Seder when it will be eaten as the Afikoman, or dessert (step #12).

In many houses, the children hide the afikoman and the adults have to find it at the end of the meal. In others, the adults hide it and the children find it. Either way, it keeps the kids up and in suspense until the end of the meal.

Many Sephardic Jews have the tradition of tying the afikoman under the arms of the children, who carry it like that all night, just like when we left Egypt.

Soul

Why is there so much broken in this world? Why did the Cosmic Designer make a world where hearts break, lives shatter, beauty crumbles?

A whole vessel can contain its measure, but a broken one can hold the Infinite.

Matzah is called the poor man's bread. He is low and broken. And it is this

brokenness that allows him to open his soul and escape his Egypt.

As long as we feel whole, there is no room left for us to grow. It is when we realize we are but a fragment, that we need the others around us, that so much of us is missing -- that is when miracles begin.

5. Maggid - Tell

Body

This is it, folks. This is why it's called a "Haggadah" ("telling"). Now we get to the meat and potatoes of the Seder your soul is longing for. (As for the meat and the potatoes your stomach is longing for, you can probably smell them simmering in the kitchen. Hold on, we'll get there.)



Fill the second cup of wine, following which the children ask the four questions.

Of course, they can always ask more.

No children? Let an adult ask. There's just you? You be the child, and G-d will be the father. While you're at it, ask Him a few other difficult questions for us all.

Continue with the telling of the story, as written in your Haggadah.

Hey, you're not limited to the Haggadah's version! That was written so that everybody would have something to say. But now is your chance to get creative. Tell every story you know about the exodus. Examine every word of the Haggadah and get into the deeper meaning. Keep it real, make it profound.

Here's a basic summery of what we'll be talking about:

The Haggadah is two narratives bundled together, each of which (like any good story) has a distressing beginning and a happy ending. The central narrative is the story of the Exodus: how at first "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt" and then "G-d took us out with a Mighty Hand." The larger story is how "In the beginning, our ancestors were idol-worshippers" and then "G-d brought us to Him, to His service."

We'll trace the origins of the Jewish people starting with Abraham's rejection of his family's idolatry. We'll recount how the enslavement in Egypt -- but also the redemption and the "great wealth" that will be taken from there -- was foretold to Abraham at the "Covenant Between the Pieces." We'll confirm that G-d's promise to Abraham has stood us by, not only in delivering us from Egypt but throughout Jewish history as "in every generation, they pounce upon us to destroy us, but G-d saves us from their hands." We'll describe the terrible suffering of the Children of Israel in Egypt and the plagues brought upon the Egyptians. We'll sing of the fifteen great gifts G-d bestowed upon us, from the Exodus to the Splitting of the Sea to the Manna to the Giving of Torah to granting us the Holy Land and the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

We'll explain the significance of the Passover offering (in gratitude to G-d for passing over our homes when He smote the Egyptian firstborn), the matzah ("because our fathers' dough did not have time to become leavened before G-d revealed Himself to them and redeemed them") and the maror (the bitter herbs, which recall the bitterness of our exile and enslavement). We'll conclude with the first part of the Hallel (Psalms of praise) recited over the second cup of wine.

Basic Rules of telling the story:

- *Get the children involved.*
- *Tell it in first person, in the now. Don't say, "Long ago, the ancient Hebrews..." Say, "When we were slaves in Egypt, the perverse socio-bureaucratic system thoroughly crushed every individual's sense of self-worth!" Everything that happened there parallels something in each of our lives. We are truly living it now. We are simply examining our own lives in the dress of ancient Egypt.*
- *It's all about miracles. Moses and his signs and wonders. The Ten Plagues. The splitting of the sea. All those miracles happened so that we would look at the events of our daily life and recognize that these too are miracles. Tell it like it is: We are a people born of miracles. We endured by miracles. The very fact that we are here now telling this same story to our children in an unbroken chain of 3,316 years is an abrogation of natural law.*

We drink the second cup at the end of this step.

Soul

The exodus was not simply an event that happened to us. It is an event that we became. It is who we are. It is the life of each one of us, occurring again and again, in our wrestling match with the world, in our struggle with our own selves. We embody freedom in a constant mode of escape. Perhaps that is why Jews have always been the rebels of society, the ones who think out of the box. The experience of leaving Egypt left such an indelible mark on our souls, we never stopped doing it. A Jew who has stopped exiting Egypt has ceased to allow his soul to breathe.

To tell the story is to bring that essential self into the open, to come face to face with who we really are and resuscitate it back to life.

6. Rachtzah - Wash

Body

Fill a cup with water

Again? Yes, again. It's been a long time since the last washing. And the last time you didn't have the matzah in mind. Anyways, it's good to get up and stretch a little, right?

Pour the water to cover your right hand. Repeat. Repeat again. Ditto for your left hand.

Say the blessing. "Blessed be You, L-rd our G-d, King of the World, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing of the hands."

Dry your hands.

Soul

As long as we live in this world, freedom remains elusive: While moving forward, we are free. Stop, and we are bound and fettered again.



That is why freedom is something you cannot buy nor steal. Never can you put freedom in your purse and say, "Freedom is mine forever!"

For freedom is a marriage: Freedom is the bond our finite selves with the Infinite, the power to transcend the world while working inside it. It is a marriage of heaven and earth, spirit and matter, soul and body. And like any marriage, it is kept alive only by constant renewal. Like the miracle of the splitting of the Red Sea, suspended in its state of paradox by a continuous, other-worldly force.

Yet, in our exodus, we were granted eternal freedom. Not because we were released from slavery. But because we were given the power to perpetually transcend.

That's the order of the Seder tonight: *Kadesh/Urchatz*, Transcend and Purify. Over and over. Rise higher, then draw that into deeds. Rise higher again, then draw that down even more. Never stop rising higher. Never stop applying.

7. Motzei - Bread

Body

Matzah is the most important item in the Seder, and eating it fulfills the central mitzvah of Passover. But matzah is also bread -- albeit of the decidedly unleavened sort. Tonight it fulfills the role of the two whole loaves that are the mainstay of every Shabbat and festival meal. That's why we have three matzahs on our Seder plate -- so that in addition to the "piece" of matzah over which we tell the story of the Exodus, we'll have two whole matzahs over which to pronounce the "Hamotzi" blessing, praising and thanking G-d "Who brings bread from the earth."



Grab all three matzahs—the top one, the broken middle one and the bottom one—and pick them up a little.

Say the blessing: "Blessed be You, L-rd our G-d, King of the World, Who brings bread out of the earth"

Hold on... more techie instructions to follow in the next step.

Soul

We feel an affinity with the food we eat: We too are a miracle out of the earth.

We and the bread share a common journey. The bread begins as a seed buried beneath the ground. And then, a miracle occurs: As it decomposes and loses its original form, it comes alive, begins to grow sprout and grow. As spring arrives, it pushes its way above the earth to find the sun, and then bears its fruits for the world.

We too began buried in Egypt, all but losing our identity. But that furnace of oppression became for us a firing kiln, a baker's oven, the womb from whence we were born in the month of spring. In our liberation from there, we brought our fruits of freedom to the world.

8. Matzah

Body

Techie instructions continued: Carefully release the bottom matzah. Recite the blessing on the remaining whole matzah and the broken matzah: "Blessed be You, L-rd our G-d, King of the World, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning eating matzah."



Break off a piece from each of the two matzos for yourself and for each of those sitting at your table. Pass them around.

What we're doing is covering both our bases, ensuring that we experience both the poverty and humility that matzah represents (the broken matzah) and the freedom and healing it brings (the whole matzah).

Supplement the two pieces of matzah from the Seder Plate with more matzah, so that everybody gets at least 2 oz. of matzah altogether (about two thirds of a large shemura matzah.)

Hey, it's a mitzvah after all!

Don't forget to recline to the left while you munch—just like with the wine.

Soul

Since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, matzah is the only opportunity we have to actually eat a mitzvah. That's right, the matzah you are eating is pure G-dliness. In fact, it has enough G-dly energy to blast your soul out of the deepest ditch into the highest heights.

The Zohar calls matzah "Bread of Faith" and "Bread of Healing". Did I say "faith?" Well, actually, that's a rather feeble translation. "Emunah" is the word in Hebrew, and it means a lot more than "I believe, brother!" Faith can often be something people rely upon when they don't care to think too much. Emunah is when you go beyond thinking and you get somewhere your mind could have never brought you to.

Emunah is when you touch that place where your soul and the essence of the Infinite Light are one. It's a point that nothing can describe. Where there are no words, no doubts, no uncertainty, no confusion—nothing else but a magnificent oneness before which all the challenges of life vanish like a puff of vapor.

Eating matzah is a means of plugging your entire self into that reservoir. Your physical body digests the Emunah of your soul, everything is integrated back into one, your body and spirit are whole and harmonious.

How on earth, you may ask, can a mixture of water and wheat from the ground baked in an oven contain a spiritual cure? Well, welcome to the Jewish People, where there is no dichotomy of spirit and matter, soul and body. Where the spiritual transforms into physicality and material objects rise to become spiritual in a perpetual chemistry of exchange. Where bodies are healed by empowering the soul and souls are nourished by the rituals of the body.

After all, we live in the world of a single G-d.

9. Maror - Bitter

Body

Grab some of that bitter herb, enough to make the size of a small egg if you would crunch it into a ball. Some have the custom of using both horseradish and romaine lettuce (though either/or is also ok).



Dip the bitter herb in the charoset. Shake off any excess. *It's a careful balance: You want bitter herbs, but you want to sweeten the bitterness a little. But it's still got to be bitter herbs—not a sumptuous charoset hors d'oeuvre. Look, you can try that later at the meal. We'll get there—don't worry.*

Say the blessing: "Blessed be You... and commanded us concerning eating bitter herbs."

Eat it. All of it. No funny faces now.

Soul

What's so great about the bitterness? Why do we want to remember that?

Actually, our bitterness in Egypt was/is the key to our redemption. We never got used to Egypt. We never felt we belonged there. We never said, "They are the masters and we are the slaves and that's the way it is." It always remained something we felt bitter about, something that was unjust and needed to change.

If it hadn't been that way, we probably would never have left. In fact, tradition tells us that 80% of the Jews said, "This is our land. How can we leave it?" And they stayed and died there.

But as for the rest of us, when Moses came and told us we were going to leave, we believed him. It was our bitterness that had preserved our faith.

Everyone has his Egypt. You've got to know who you are and what are your limitations. But heaven forbid to make peace with them. The soul within you knows no limits.

This is the sweetness we apply to the bitter herb: Bitterness alone, without any direction, is self-destructive. Inject some life and optimism into it, and it becomes the springboard to freedom.

10. Korech - Wrap

Body

Break off two pieces from the bottom matzah. (You'll need one oz. of matzah altogether. Supplement with matzah from the box if needed.)



Now you know what the third matzah is for! If you've followed instructions until now, it should still be whole.

Take an olive-size volume of the bitter herb and place it in between those two pieces. Again, some mix together the horseradish and lettuce. Ask your bubbe (grandma) for your family custom.

Now you know what that second pile of bitter herb at the bottom of the seder plate is for.

Dip the bitter herb in the charoset. Shake off any excess.

Say the words: "This is what Hillel did, at the time that the Temple stood. He wrapped up some Pesach lamb, some matzah and some bitter herbs and ate them together."

And you thought it was because they packed sandwiches to leave Egypt. Well, it is fast food.

Hillel read the words of the Torah about the Pesach lamb, "on matzah and bitter herbs you shall eat it," and he took it literally. And so the sandwich was invented. Or maybe we should be calling it a hillel?

Lean to the left while you eat.

Soul

In the view from within Egypt, this world is a mess of fragments. It's called "The Passoverly Challenged Perspective." Plain materialism. Where mitzvahs are a mishmash of dos and don'ts, Jews are a collection of irreconcilable riffraff, daily life is a cacophony of hassles and, well, just stuff.

Once we blast off far enough to escape materialism's gravitational pull, we look back down and see a whole new perspective: It's all a single landscape.

From up there looking down, mitzvahs are multiple expressions of a single spiritual path, Jews are multiple faces to a single soul, all the artifacts of today's journey harmonize together as a symphony with a single conductor playing a single melody.

When we make ourselves into a temple for the Divine, the bitter, the sweet and the tasteless responsibilities of life wrap together in a single sandwich.

11. Shulchan Orech - Set the Table

Body

The festive holiday meal is now eaten (You know how to do this, right?)



It's been a long haul; on a regular Shabbat and Yom Tov, we'd have eaten hours ago. But well worth the wait. So far everything we've eaten had a ritual significance; now we eat to fulfill the mitzvah of enjoying the festival.

It's customary to begin the meal with the hard-boiled egg that was on your Seder Plate (commemorating the festival offering), dipped in salt water.

A boiled egg is a sign of mourning. On every festive occasion, we remember to mourn for the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem.

Soul

This step, along with Korech before it, marks the re-entry we mentioned at the beginning. We've escaped Egypt and reached a higher vision. And then we start the process again -- on a higher level.

Because freedom consists of more than escape. Complete freedom is when you can turn around and liberate all the elements of your world from their pure material state, and make them transcendent as well.

That's what we do when we eat every day—we take foods which grow from the earth, say a blessing over them and bring them into our journey as human beings. And when it's Shabbos or another Jewish holiday, we elevate them further, into the realm of pure spirituality. As for tonight, this meal is going to be truly Divine.

So don't imagine we're just fressing now. We're reaching a higher state. And what a great way to do it!

12. Tzafun - Hidden

Body

Are you sure you've eaten enough? Filled up on that exotic fruit salad? Had enough to drink? Better be sure, because this is your last chance. The only thing to pass your lips tonight after this afikoman is another two cups of wine.



Retrieve that hidden matzah. Eat, reclining on your left side.

With the first matzah, we fulfilled our obligation to eat matzah. This one is in place of the Pesach lamb (which can only be brought in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem) that is meant to be eaten on a full stomach.

Soul

In the Kabbalah, it is explained that there is something deeper than the soul. There is the body, the spirit, and then there is the essence. If the soul is light, then that essence is the source of light. If it is energy, then the essence is the dynamo. It is called "tzafun," meaning hidden, buried, locked away and out of reach.

Whatever we do, we dance around that essence-core, like a spacecraft in orbit, unable to land. We can meditate, we can be inspired, but to touch the inner core, the place where all this comes from, that takes a power from beyond.

On Passover night, we have that power. But only after all the steps before: Destroying our personal chametz, preparing our homes for liberation, the eleven steps of the Seder until now. Then, when we are satiated with all we can handle, connecting every facet of ourselves to the Divine, that's when that power comes to us. Whether we sense it or not, tasteless as it may seem, the matzah we eat now reaches deep into our core and transforms our very being.

In general, it is this way: Those things you find inspiring and nice may take you a step forward. But if you want to effect real change, you need to do something totally beyond your personal bounds.

13. Beirach - Bless

Body

It's late now. Adults are falling asleep. Kids are having a great time taking advantage of that. But it's not over. There's songs and wine and Elijah the Prophet is on his way...



Pour the third cup of wine. All the way to the tip, just like the other ones.

Say the Grace After Meals as printed in your Haggadah.

Say a blessing on the wine and drink it down, reclining on your left side.

Soul

The theme of grace after meals is confidence. Confidence in a Higher Force that is with us in our daily lives. With that confidence you don't just see food before you. You see a river of life travelling from Above onto your plate.

When we say this out loud, with joy and sincerity, we initiate a reciprocal current. The energy we receive is bounced back with even greater force, replenishing all the higher worlds and ethereal beings through which it passed on its way here. The channels of life are widened and their currents grow strong.

Miracles happen when Divine energy from beyond the cosmos enters within. Why did miracles happen in Egypt? Because we believed they would. Those who didn't believe in miracles saw only plagues. To see a miracle, you need an

open heart and mind, open enough to receive the Infinite. That is the opening we make when we thank G-d for the miracle of our food.

14. Hallel - Praise

Body

Pour another cup of wine (#4). Yes, you can handle it.



Now pour another cup and set it in the middle of the table. You won't drink this wine—it's for Elijah the Prophet.

Send some kids to open the door. Recite the lines, "Pour out your wrath..." from the Haggadah. Watch Elijah the Prophet enter. Can't see him? That's precisely why you need another cup of wine.

Elijah the prophet comes to announce the imminent arrival of the final Exodus.

Tonight is a night of protection—"Leyl Shimurim" we call it. Tonight, we are not afraid of anything, for we are carried securely in His holy, gentle hand. We open the door in the middle of the night and we show that confidence, that deep trust that no harm will befall us.

On that very first night of Passover in Egypt, we were redeemed on the merit of our trust that He would redeem us. Tonight, we will be liberated from this Egypt of the soul. Again, we must show our trust.

Now we finish the Hallel, the "Psalms of Praise" (the first half was said at the end of step #5). It's all there, in your Haggadah. Sing whatever you have a song to.

At the end, say a blessing and drink the wine. You guessed it: reclining. But try not to fall over.

Soul

The ancient rabbis clued us in on a key principle in cosmic functions: Whatever He tells us to do, He does Himself. Of course, there's a difference: We do it in our little human world. He does it on a cosmic plane.

He told us to open our door on the night of Passover. So, tonight, He opens every door and every gateway of the spiritual cosmos to every member of the Jewish People. To each one of us, regardless of what we have been doing all the rest of the year. Tonight is the chance to reach to the highest of spiritual levels. Prophecy, divine spirit, wisdom and insight—take your choice and jump a quantum leap. There's nothing stopping us.

15. Nirtzah - Accepted

Body

Do nothing. This is His job now.



Look up from your wine. The table's a delicious mess. Uncle Irving looks so serene, snoring into his Haggadah, serenaded by the first chirping of dawn. As you carry the little ones to their beds, the sound of matzah crunching beneath your feet, you wonder, "And who will carry me to bed? Who will wake me in the morning to go to shul?"

Was it the best Seder that could have been? Look, it had its highlights. A few times, the kids got a little over-excited. And the horseradish and chicken soup didn't mix too well in little Miriam's stomach. But Grandpa told some great stories. We all had fun with the songs. We told the tale again, with new enhancements and flourishes, just like we have for 3300 plus years. We did what we are supposed to, in our own human way.

And now, let Him do what He has promised to do: A re-run. A modern exodus of liberation. Starring us. With lots of miracles. But this time, forever.

Soul

Some people think we are meant to make a perfect world. But if that is what our Creator wanted, why did He make us such imperfect beings?

Rather, what He wants of us is our very humanness. Sometimes we do good. Sometimes we fall. But we keep on struggling, and eventually we make some real change.

And then, once we have done all we can, like a kind parent helping with the homework, He makes sure to touch up the job and make it shine.

For 3300 years we have been leaving Egypt. For 3300 years we have been doing our human job of transforming the darkness of His world into light. And now it is His turn to lift us up, to banish the darkness forever, to make our work shine.

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Chabad Rabbi First Rabbi Ever to Address U.S. Military Chaplaincy

HILTON HEAD, S. CAROLINA -- (March 21, 2008)
Dvora Lakein



In a speech hailed by one priest as the most inspiring talk since Martin Luther King Jr., Chabad Rabbi Yossi Jacobson addressed the Chief of Chaplains Senior Leader's Training Conference on March 6, 2008.

As the featured religious speaker at the event in Hilton Head, South Carolina, Rabbi Jacobson was the first rabbi to ever address the United States Military's annual chaplaincy event.

His invitation came at a very difficult time for the U.S. Military Chaplains. Two-star General Chief of Chaplains Doug Carver later reflected, "We are broken, but Rabbi Jacobson helped us find light within our brokenness."

During the five-day conference, General Carver and other advisors tried to instill faith within the beleaguered chaplains' hearts. These spiritual advisors "have grown tired and stressed in the midst of providing ministry and support to those who are fighting the war," said General Carver of the seven-year battle in Iraq and the general war against terrorism. The goal of the conference is to provide them with the religious strength to continue their personal battle.

Colonel Yakov Goldstein, also a Chabad rabbi, who has been in the military for more than three decades and is currently the highest ranking Jewish chaplain, was approached by conference organizers a year ago. Coordinators wanted his help to create a "different kind of event," in what would be General Carver's first year as chief of chaplains. They specifically wanted a Jewish speaker to "break the Christian paradigm."

Coordinators wanted his help to create a "different kind of event," in what would be General Carver's first year as chief of chaplains. They specifically wanted a Jewish speaker to "break the Christian paradigm."

Rabbi Jacobson was Goldstein's first choice, and after listening to his taped speeches and investigating his background, the "Chief went along

with my [Goldstein's] recommendation."

A hushed crowd of 1,000 chaplains and chaplain assistants, from active duty, army reserves, and the National Guard, were present for the address. In attendance, there were only three Jewish and one Muslim clergymen. Flanked by the six flags, Rabbi Jacobson addressed the theme of "Spiritual Leadership in Persistent Conflict."

During his hour on the podium, he discussed ways to find G-dliness in a broken world and how to transform that latent spirituality into daily relevance. Although he referenced Biblical sources, Chasidic thought, and the Lubavitcher Rebbe's teachings from the 1960s and 1970s, the chaplains were amazed at the words' contemporary relevance.

Of their own volition, each chaplain pulled out his Bible to follow the Rabbi's Biblical references. In one instance, he analyzed the importance of Joseph, the son of Jacob as one of the original chaplains who encouraged his fellow prisoners as well as the Egyptian population when he was appointed viceroy.

One senior chaplain, who heads a large church, told Colonel Goldstein that Rabbi Jacobson's insights have given him ideas enough "for months of sermons."

At the end of his talk, Rabbi Jacobson was met with a thunderous standing ovation. Several chaplains told Carver that had he scheduled the speech for an hour more, "no one would have left."

Motivating his audiences is not a novel task for this veteran speaker. Rabbi Jacobson lectures in his native Brooklyn and has addressed Jewish and non-Jewish audiences in 40 countries and six continents. But for him this speech was different.

"These are people who follow our men and women in the military into very difficult situations around the world," Rabbi Jacobson explained. "It was awesome and humbling to address them and to be a conduit for G-d's message."

Chaplain Carver expressed his admiration for Rabbi Jacobson's words. "It was fabulous how he related to each of the chaplains."

Organizers were so impressed with the speech that it is currently being prepared for publication on the official U.S. military website.

Shliach to be 1st Ever Jewish Chaplain to Georgia's State Defense Force, Army, Air & National Guard

On Sunday, March 2nd, Rabbi Zalman Lipskier, Director of Chabad at Emory University, Atlanta, GA, will be formally commissioned as the first Jewish Chaplain in Georgia's military history to serve in the Georgia State Defense Force and Army, Air and National Guard.

This is the second appointment of a Chassidic Rabbi to one of the country's 25 volunteer State Defense Forces. "I've wanted Jewish representation in the Georgia State Defense Force and National Guard for a long time," said Commanding General Michael McGuinn, "and I was absolutely thrilled when a friend of mine told me that a Chassidic Rabbi had joined the Maryland State Defense Force. He put me in touch with The Aleph Institute who is appointed by the U.S. Department of Defense as an Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agency and serves the Jewish military population worldwide. They sent out a request and Rabbi Lipskier answered the call." The Aleph Institute endorsed the Rabbi into chaplaincy service and provided the financial assistance to procure his military uniforms and equipment.

Fueled by the vision of the Rebbe to reach every Jew wherever they may be, Rabbi Lipskier, 31, has long recognized the need for Jewish Chaplaincy in the military. He previously served as a volunteer civilian Rabbi Chaplain at Fort Benning for five years. "I am looking forward to fulfilling this position in a formal way," he said, "and to using the vital resources and services provided by The Aleph Institute to help the many people who would not otherwise have Jewish Chaplaincy or programming and support available to them."

"For us to be able to work with The Aleph Institute in commissioning a Rabbi of this caliber is a real asset for us," said Chaplain (Col) John Owings, The Joint Forces Chaplain for Georgia, over the Army, Air Guard and State Defense Force. "I have a high degree of trust in the ability of Chabad Rabbis

to provide pastoral care to people of all faiths. Rabbi Lipskier is already working with the student body at Emory and doing excellent work.

We will do everything we can to support him and ensure that he is on equal footing with all religious denominations."

With no Jewish chaplains to serve the 13,500 troops in Georgia's National Guard, Rabbi Lipskier, in the spirit of all military Chaplains, will provide critical chaplaincy services for soldiers and their families, as needed, regardless of religious denomination across the entire spectrum of Army and Air Guard. He will assist soldiers deploying to and returning from combat zones. "I'll be there for them," he said, "for them and their families - when they go out and when they return safely, G-d willing."

The appointment of an orthodox Rabbi to military Chaplaincy comes with an untraditional waiver to allow facial hair. "It's a matter of having authentic Jewish representation in the Defense Force, or not," said Commanding General Michael McGuinn about Rabbi Lipskier's beard. "Rabbi Lipskier is a fine, fine man, and he will perform a tremendous service for the troops. We're thrilled to have him join us."

Rabbi Lipskier will be formally commissioned into Chaplaincy service at a graduation ceremony at The State Department Defense Complex in Atlanta on Sunday at noon. Lipskier says that he is grateful for the accommodations that the Defense Force made for him to attend training on Sunday instead of Saturday in order to honor the holy Sabbath. "I very much appreciate the support and consideration of the Defense Force to help me better serve the State Defense Force and National Guard volunteers, and for making the best interests of the soldiers a top priority," he concluded.





Chanukah 5768 at The College of New Jersey

Directed by Rabbi Kivi & Zeesy Greenbaum



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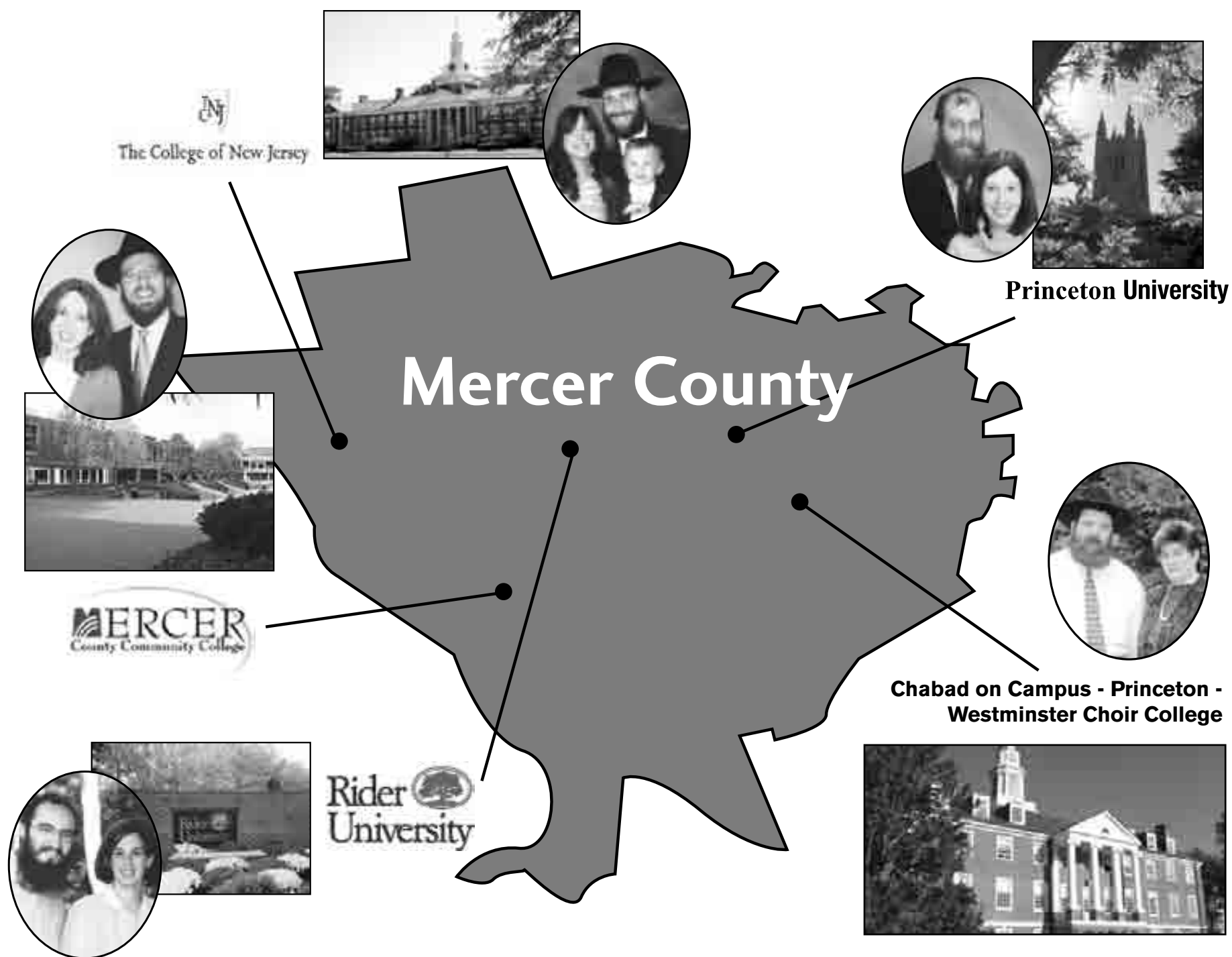
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Dear Chabad Hebrew School,
I have really enjoyed working with you and learning Torah. I am very thankful for your help and encouragement. I am sure that you will successfully prepare me for my Bar Mitzvah and will help me learn the Hebrew Language.



I love the Chabad Jewish community and the Rabbi's own family who are friendly, honest and encouraging. I have enjoyed coming for prayer on Saturday and staying for Lunch and Kiddush.

Again, I thank Rabbi and company very much for their support and helpfulness.

Pasha Temkin

I personally really enjoy this Chabad Hebrew School. I couldn't believe that I would be able to learn Hebrew and read the Prayer book in such a short time.



I have great appreciation to Rabbi & Malky Dubov for teaching me with such diligence.

I can now read Hebrew in just a few short months being in Chabad Hebrew School. One day you will understand why I wrote this

Harry Kazenoff

I really like coming to Hebrew School. I like learning the Hebrew and hearing stories.



The one thing I will always remember is what I learned in Hebrew School – The Jewish Aleph Bet – The Aleph Bet is different from all other languages, because it was created by G-d himself, and all others were man made.

My favorite part is coming to Shul on Shabbos to pray. I love that a lot. I am many times honored by the congregation to tie the belt around the Torah, and place the mantle over it.

Malky and Rabbi Dubov are the best teachers.

Markus Korn
Princeton, NJ

When you think of Baruch Atoh Ado-noi; what do you think about?



I used to think it was just Hebrew. Now I know that it means we praise G-d. The reason I know this is because the Chabad Hebrew School helped me understand the meaning of the prayers as well as learning how to read it. Rather than thinking of Hebrew as just another language, I now appreciate that I am praying and thanking G-d.

Every lesson, we spend time on everything. We do not rush through it. I now feel that I am properly preparing myself for the day I become a Bas Mitzvah – a daughter of Israel responsible for Mitzvot.

At first my family and I came because we were at my cousins Bat Mitzvah celebration and it was so beautiful. It just so happens that they belong to Chabad of Westchester, NY. We then too decided to change my school to Chabad to be able to experience that beauty and prepare myself properly for my special day. Everyone was so nice – we knew we made a wise decision.

Other than Mrs. Dubov being great at teaching, Chabad is very welcoming and invited my family over for Shabbat dinner. We had a great time!

Nicole (Chana) Lefkowitz



Chanukah Wonderland at Chabad of Princeton



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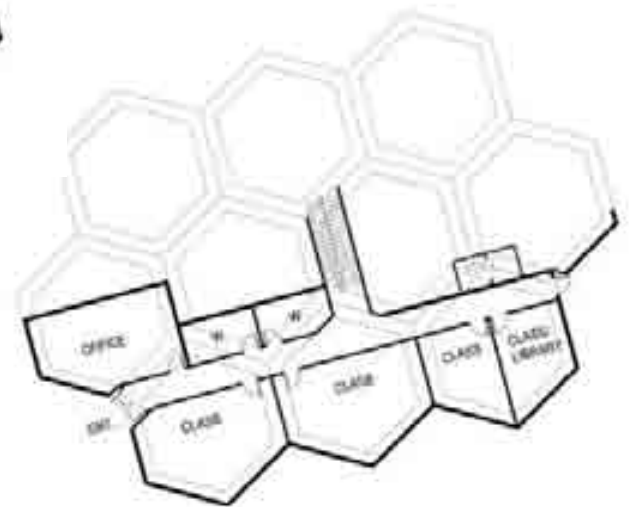
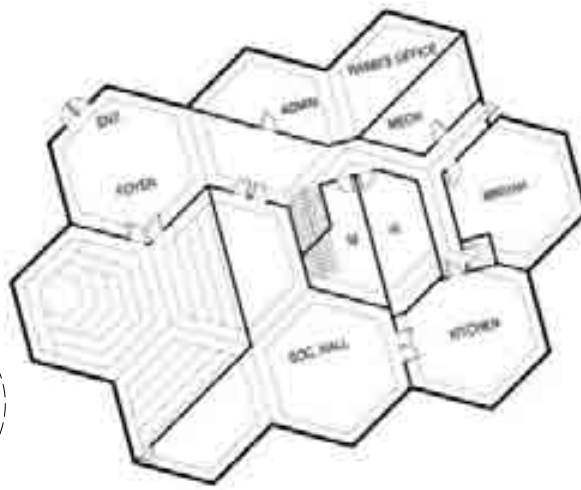
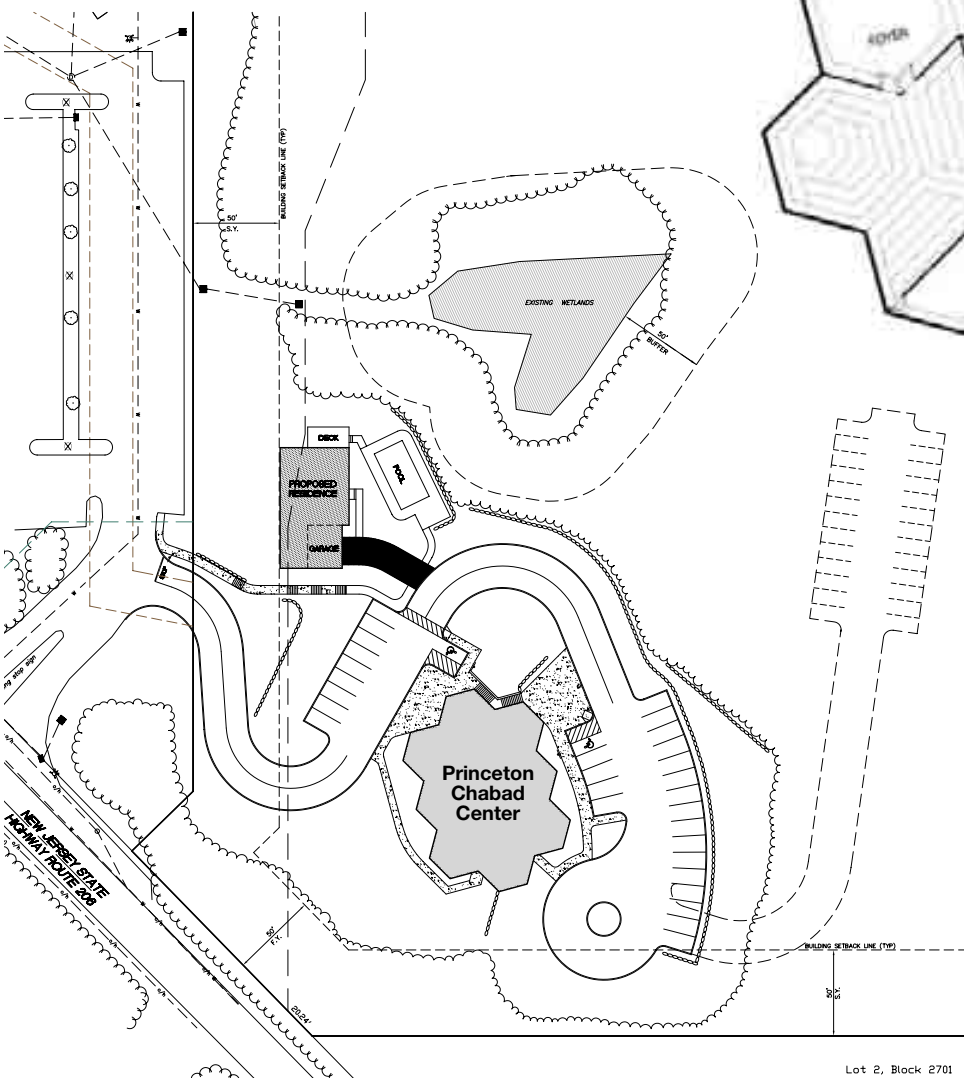
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Over the years Chabad-Lubavitch programming has been spread throughout the area. Beyond the formality of a synagogue and the informality of home, the Princeton Chabad Center will provide a third space for the Jewish soul. A place of study and experience, laughter and joy. Worship and reflection. The Chabad Center will be a place where every Jewish person, regardless of affiliation or non-affiliation, will feel at home and welcome to explore, study and connect to their Jewish heritage, on their level, at their pace.


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