


CHABAD

RESEARCH UNIT

שבת..... *for Friday nights* קדש

Friday 29 March 2013 - 18 Nisan 5773
End of Pesach


SPLITTING THE SEA OF EXISTENCE

THE SEVENTH DAY OF PESACH, BEGINNING SUNDAY EVENING (31 MARCH) COMMEMORATES a remarkable event, the climax of the process of leaving Egypt. It was on this day that the Sea split, and the power of “Egypt” as a force against G-d was destroyed.

The Sages tell us that the goal of Creation was that the Torah should be given and that by means of the Torah the Jewish people would transform the entire world into a dwelling for the Divine. However, there were deep levels of impurity in the world, which made it an environment so hostile to holiness that the sacred Torah could not be revealed to humanity

One stage in the purification of the world was the Flood. In some ways this was like a Mikveh, a purifying pool, bringing an atmosphere of renewal and pristine purity to existence. However, as we read in the Torah, even after the Flood many unhappy events took place. A further stage of purification was necessary before the Torah could be given.

This was achieved by the destruction of the negative power of Egypt. The land of Egypt was not only a political territory and power in the ancient world. The Sages describe the Egypt of the Exodus as

	In Memory of Jean Morgenstein Sheina bas Moshe Yosef - ע"ה 23 Nisan 5759 (1999) - Dedicated by her Nephews שי'
---	--

105 BAKER STREET , LONDON W1U 6EZ
www.chabadresearch.net - cru@LubavitchUK.com

representing the force of impurity, expressed as the denial of the power of G-d. The Torah quotes Pharaoh's words: "Who is G-d, that I should listen to Him... I do not know G-d"¹.

The Jewish people, the nation of G-d, had the task to purify the world so that the Torah could be given. They did not realise this at the time, but it was for this purpose that they first settled in Egypt. Their task was to dissolve its negative spiritual power.

At last came the Exodus, which we celebrated at the Seder nights. But the power of impurity was not yet totally broken. We see this from the fact that Pharaoh regretted letting them go and determined to pursue them. At this point came the Splitting of the Sea and the destruction of the Egyptian force. Now the Torah could indeed be given. However, this too was a stage in a process. For the goal of Creation can only be fulfilled when all humanity recognises G-d and there is true peace in the world.

In order for this stage to be reached, after our Redemption from Egypt we went into further varieties of Exile, culminating in the fact that today we are scattered all over the globe. We are therefore still in a kind of "Egypt", awaiting the final Redemption. The Haftorah on the Last Day of Pesach, Tuesday 2 April, therefore concerns the Messiah². The Messiah will redeem us from this present Exile and through this will transform not only our lives as Jews but also the lives of all humanity.

The Sages describe the Splitting of the Sea as tearing through the 'veil' which divides the holy from the profane, the spiritual from the physical. The Giving of the Torah at Sinai was another similar breakthrough, but much greater in effect, and the coming of the Messiah will complete that process. The veil hiding holiness will be drawn aside³.

Then each person will be able to discover sanctity and spirituality in every aspect of life. Our Sages tell us that only then, after our final Redemption, will we and all humanity really begin to live as G-d intended, fulfilling the ultimate purpose of Creation.

1. Exodus 5:2. 2. Isaiah 10:32-12:6. 3. See Rabbi Shneur Zalman's *Likkutei Torah, Tzav* 'Vehenif Yado', 16d ff.

Torah teachings are holy - please treat this page with care
SPONSORED BY DR REUVEN JOEL



53

END OF PESACH

ANOTHER KIND OF REDEMPTION

'My favourite time of year', Rafi pronounced as he stepped onto the bus, looking around at his friends over the top of his sunglasses.

They were on the way to their annual Pesach Chol Hamoed trip, taking place on the days in between the festive days. This year they were going to a new water-works park. There was perfect sunny weather. They were all in good spirits.

'The best, best time of year!' replied a happy looking Eli as he offered his snack bag to Rafi, 'want a bite of Matza?'

'Nah', Rafi laughed, 'I've had too much of that. I'm going to have my apple instead - it's kinder to the stomach'. They both laughed. Rafi sat down next to Eli.

'Me too', said Daniel, sitting behind the pair, taking a break from the book he was reading to join in the laughter.

'I guess it's just hard to get rid of the ego'. Daniel said - laughing at his own joke.

The other two looked on, slightly confused. 'I don't get the joke', said Rafi, bemused.

'This guy,' said Daniel, pointing to his book, which had Hebrew and English on the front cover, 'says that we eat Matza on

Pesach because Chametz, leavened bread, is puffed like the puffed up Ego. Matzo is like humility. So,' he said, explaining, 'my joke was that on Pesach, we eat all this matza, which is the idea of getting rid of our ego, and matza is hard to eat; so I guess it is just hard to get rid of one's ego!'

'Very funny', said Rafi, smirking. 'Ha ha.'

'Yes,' said Eli, 'and also, I think it is a nice idea'.

'What do you mean?' asked Rafi. He did not expect fun-loving Eli to stick up for Daniel.

'My father explained to me something similar, that part of the Exodus from Egypt applies every day. It is about G-d redeeming us from the trap of our Ego and Evil Desire which enslave us, and in that way we go free again and our souls are able to serve G-d.

'What do you mean, "the Ego enslaves the person?"', asked Rafi. 'Everyone says you always have to be on top. Think of Number One!'

'Well', said Eli, 'my father said that if you only think about yourself rather than other people you are actually a slave. You are a slave to your own Ego. So if you can get rid of your Ego, at least a bit, you can go free.'

'Well,' said Rafi, 'I've never heard of that!' .

'It's true,' said Daniel. 'We remember the physical redemption from Egypt thousands of years ago, but we also try to go free, inside us. And that is every day.'

'Sounds philosophical...,' said Rafi.

'But true', said Eli. 'It's just another kind of Redemption...'

***Torah teachings are holy –
please treat this page with care***