


CHABAD  
  
 RESEARCH UNIT

שבת..... *for Friday night*..... שקדש

Friday 26 March 2010 - 11 Nisan 5770  
 Sedra Tzav—Approaching Pesach



### GETTING RID OF THE LEAVEN

**I**N THE DAYS LEADING TO THE FESTIVAL OF PESACH (BEGINNING MONDAY EVENING) the dominant theme is searching for leaven, chametz, in all its forms, and getting rid of it. Leaven takes the form of bread, cake and many other varieties of food. We get rid of it by cleaning our homes in preparation for the Festival<sup>1</sup>. Then by ancient custom described in the Talmud<sup>2</sup>, on Sunday evening we “look for the leaven”, going round our home with a candle, searching for any stray chametz we may have missed. On Monday morning, the eve of the Festival, any leavened substances we found in this search is burned ceremoniously.

Apart from the various kinds of physical chametz, there is also another kind of leaven. This is in the heart.

Leavened bread is swollen and puffed up, unlike thin Matza, unleavened bread. The swollen chametz of the heart represents our swollen ego, negative forms of pride and being self-centred. During the lead-up to Pesach we are looking for physical leaven and getting rid of it in one way or the other. Yet at the same time this is having an affect on our spiritual chametz, the leaven in the heart. As we remove the leaven from our homes, we are also eradicating the leaven of the heart<sup>2</sup>.

Dedicated to the Memory of  
 Rabbi M. M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe ע"ר  
 born 11 Nisan

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This links with the Sedra<sup>3</sup> of the week, which describes the offerings in the Temple. These express the bond of the individual and of the Jewish people as a whole to the Divine. Some of the offerings are animals such as sheep, but each of these is also accompanied by an offering of flour called a Mincha offering.

The fine flour is mixed with olive-oil and frankincense. Generally, a small part of the flour offering, together with all the grains of frankincense, is burnt on the sacred Altar. The rest of the flour offering is baked and is eaten by the Cohanim, the Priests.

However, the Torah expressly commands that it should be baked as Matza, unleavened bread. "It should be baked as Matza... Do not bake it as chametz", it cannot be allowed to become leavened<sup>4</sup>. When we bond with G-d through an offering in the Temple, we have to be free of the sense of ego and pride, free of chametz, leaven.

As we prepare for Pesach, which expresses the special relationship of the Jewish people with G-d and the birth of Jewish identity, we liberate ourselves from leaven. Matza expresses the selflessness of the sacred, the bond of each individual with the Divine.

### **HELPING THE JEW BOND WITH G-D**

The great Sages and famous righteous figures of the Jewish people serve as an example and inspiration. The Lubavitcher Rebbe was born on 11 Nisan in 1902, and the Rambam was born on the eve of Pesach in 1135.

Remembering these great figures, their teachings and the example they set, helps each of us get rid of our inner chametz, and truly live up to our potential in our relationship with the Divine.

1. We also 'Sell the Chametz'. This means putting the leaven (eg whisky and leavened foods and substances) in separate cupboards, and signing a form through which it will effectively be sold according to Jewish Law by a Rabbi to a kindly non-Jew for the duration of the Pesach festival. **For help in this contact the CRU: [cru@LubavitchUK.com](mailto:cru@LubavitchUK.com) or 020 8800 5012.** 2. Pesachim 2a. 3. See Rabbi Shneur Zalman's *Likkutei Torah, Tzav*, 13c. 4. Leviticus chs.6-8. 5. Lev. 6:9-10. See also Lev.2:11.

Torah teachings are holy - please treat this page with care

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*SEDRA TZAV-SHABBAT HAGADOL*

***FREE! FINALLY***

Leah was really upset. Her friend Shira had a sleepover at her house for a weekend with four friends, but had not invited her to be one of them. Leah always felt that Shira was her best friend, and now Shira made a sleepover without her!

"I don't want to talk to her ever again" said Leah angrily to herself. "I always invited her over to our house, and now she doesn't invite me to her things. I'm not going to talk to her!"

It was already a week and a half since Leah decided not to say a word to Shira. Leah would ignore her the whole time. Once Shira approached her and tried to start a conversation, but Leah just walked away.

"I don't know what to do" said Leah, sulking by the kitchen table "it's driving me crazy".

"What is?" asked her mother. "The fact that I haven't spoken to Shira for almost two weeks" she answered. "Well, it must be hard to talk to her since she got you so upset" her mother said. "It sure is hard, and why should I talk to her anyway?" Leah shot back. "I don't know" said her mother calmly.

After a short silence her mother asked "Leah, why are you so upset that you are not talking to Shira? I thought you don't want to talk to her anyway?"

“That’s true” Leah answered thoughtfully, “I suppose I don’t know why I am so upset”.

“Well” continued her mother “let me tell you something interesting. Sometimes a person forces herself to do something but really doesn’t want to do it. She locks herself into an attitude...”

“Yes” said Leah “I heard about something like that from the gym teacher. She said that you could sometimes lock yourself into something and decide that I will never climb that big rope. But really it’s nonsense, she said.”

“Exactly” said her mother. “In Hebrew this is called Mitzrayim – Egypt. It means limitations. A person gets stuck in Egypt, in some kind of limitation.”

“What do you mean?” asked Leah.

“Well, for example, you put yourself into a tight limitation, a kind of Egypt, where you won’t talk to Shira, but in truth you know that this is not right, so you are upset” said her mother gently.

“That could be” said Leah. “So you’re saying that if I go and speak to her, then it means that I am going out of my Egypt, my own limitations. Like when I did after all climb up the big rope, right to the top...”

“That’s right” said her mother. “And it’s great timing too, because we are coming to Pesach, when everyone will be going free from Egypt!”

“Thanks Mum,” said Leah. “I suppose that’s true. Now I have to think up what to say to Shira...”

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