

bi Israel Baal Shem Tov, founder of the Chassidic movement, instituted the custom of partaking of "Moshiach's Feast"--a mirror seder of sorts that includes matzah and four cups of wine--on the afternoon of the eighth day of Passover.

Thus on the latter days of Passover, our transcendence of time enters a new, heightened phase: it is one thing to vitalize memory to the point of actual re-experience, but quite another to make real an event that lies in the future, especially an event that has no parallel in the history of man. Yet in the closing hours of Passover, we enter into the world of Moshiach. Having vaulted over millennia of past on the seder nights, we now surmount the blank wall of future, to taste the matzah and wine of the ultimate redemption.

Live & Laugh



Moshiach's Seudah:

Come and hear the **Rabbis** and our **young people** share ideas on the **Final Redemption**. (Seeff Hall)

By popular demand:

Moshiach's Seudah for Ladies with **Rebbetzins Rochel & Estee** and guests (Elk Hall)

Come along and together let us

conclude Yom Tov

with good food, song and inspiration.



Calendar

MONDAY 17 April—7th day of Pesach

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Abridged Hallel: 9:15 am
- ◆ Mincha: 5:35 pm
- ◆ Full Yom Tov Service: 6:00 pm
- ◆ Candle-lighting from a pre-lit flame after 6:22 pm (Blessing for Yom Tov only)
- ◆ No Shehechyanu in Kiddush either

TUESDAY 18 April—Last day of Pesach

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Abridged Hallel: 9:15 am
- ◆ Yizkor: approx. 10:30 am
- ◆ Mincha: 4:45 pm
- ◆ Followed by Seudas Moshiach (for men and women)
- ◆ Pesach ends: 6:21 pm
- ◆ N.B. Do not eat Chometz until an hour or so later

SYDENHAM SHUL'S "JERUSALEM 50!" ISRAEL TOUR 18-25 May 2017

34 people are now confirmed.

We have room for **ONLY** a few more!
Speak to Rabbi Goldman or Louis Gorsky in Shul or on 083 310 6140.

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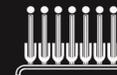
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◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.



Good Yom Tov SYDENHAM!

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17 & 18 Apr 2017 2nd Days Pesach 21 & 22 Nisan 5777

The Bones of Joseph

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

They say *adapt or die*. But must we jettison the old to embrace the new? Is the choice limited to modern or antiquated, or can one be a contemporary traditionalist? Do the past and present ever co-exist?

At the beginning of the Torah reading of the Seventh Day of Pesach we read that Moses himself was occupied with a special mission as the Jews were leaving Egypt. *And Moses took the remains of Joseph with him*. Over a hundred years before the great Exodus, Joseph made his descendants swear that they would take him along when they would eventually leave Egypt. As Viceroy, Joseph could not hope to be buried in Israel when he died as his father Jacob was. The Egyptians would never tolerate their political leader being buried in a foreign land. But he did make his brethren give him their solemn undertaking that when the time would come and all the Israelites would depart they would exhume his remains and take him along. And so they did. That's why while everyone else was busy packing up, loading their donkeys and getting ready for the Great Trek into the Wilderness, Moses himself was busy with this mission, fulfilling the sacred promise made to Joseph generations ago.

Now, according to tradition, Joseph was not the only one to be exhumed and reinterred in the holy land. His brothers, too, were accorded the very same honour and last respects. Yet, it is only Joseph whom the Torah finds it necessary to mention explicitly. Why?

The answer is that Joseph was unique. While

his brothers were simple shepherds tending to their flocks, Joseph was running the affairs of state of the mightiest superpower of the day. To be a practicing Jew while blissfully strolling through the meadows is not that complicated. Alone in the fields, communing with nature and away from the hustle and bustle of city life, one can more easily be a man of faith. But to run a massive government infrastructure as the most high profile statesman in the land and still remain faithful to one's traditions, this is not only a novelty, this is absolute inspiration.

Thrust as he was from the simple life of a young shepherd boy into the hub of the nation's capital to juggle the roles of Viceroy and Jew, Joseph represented tradition amidst transition. It was possible, he taught the world, to be a contemporary traditionalist. One could successfully straddle both worlds.

Now as they were about to leave Egypt, the Jews were facing a new world order. Gone were slavery and oppression and in were freedom and liberty. During this time of transition only Joseph could be their role model. Unlike his brothers, he was able to make the transition from meadow to metropolis, from spiritual dreamer to economic strategist. They would need his example to show them the way forward into uncharted territory, the new frontier. That is why the Torah only mentions Joseph as the one whose remains went along with the people. They needed to take him with them so, like him, they too would make their own transition successfully.

Ever since leaving Egypt, we've been wandering. And every move has brought with it its own chal-

lenges. Whether from Poland to America or Lithuania to South Africa, every transition has come with culture shocks to our spiritual psyche. How do you make a living and still keep the Shabbos you kept in the *shtetl* when the factory boss says "Cohen, if you don't come in on Saturday, don't bother coming in on Monday either?" It was a test of faith that wasn't at all easy. Many succumbed. But many others stood fast and survived, even flourished. It was the test of transition and those who modeled themselves on Joseph were able to make the transition while remaining committed to tradition. Democracy and a human rights culture have made that part of Jewish life somewhat easier but challenges abound still.

In all our own transitions today, may we continue to learn from Joseph.

Living the Story

By Rabbi Tzvi Freeman

As other peoples define their nations by boundaries of space, we Jews define ourselves by a story within time. Every nuance of Jewish wisdom comes in the form of that story, everything we do is tied to that narrative. Nothing—not our mitzvahs, not our customs, not our outrage nor our passion—can be understood outside of the context of that story.

And what is that story? It is the one we tell our children on the night of Passover, "Once we were slaves, then G-d gave us freedom." "Now we are slaves, next year we will be free." It is the tale of redemption. A tale yet to come complete. A tale in which at every moment we totter on the brink of fulfillment.

What happens when the Jew loses his story? He is still a Jew. But he is homeless. And if the Jewish People as a whole would, G-d forbid, lose their story—even if we would be

sitting in our own land with our own government—we would be a homeless nation. That is why we have survived the exile, because we never truly entered into it. We always knew where we were coming from and where we were returning to, and so, in a certain way, we were always already there. For we always had the story.

But there is more to the story than survival. The story is what makes life real.

Nothing is more real than the story. Before the world was created, G-d had the story in mind. He cherished the story so much, He built a world in which it would unfold. That is why, as long as you hold on to the story, you have truth, but when you abandon the story for the mere facts, you grasp an empty shell, a world that never was. For the world and all its facts, it is all nothingness—countless worlds could have told the same story. The story is everything. The story is the meaning behind all things.

Think of the stories we create every day: Just as countries are formed by borders invisible to the eye, so our reality is formed not by the events we see, but by the stories we tell about them. They are our favorite pastime, the obsession of every human being. We stand about the water cooler creating stories for one another out of the scattered fragments of our day. Whatever we see, whatever we hear, our mind immediately sets itself to the task, conforming all phenomena to the story we have already thus far created. Without the story, there is only one meaningless event followed by another. That is the point to the stories we tell: They provide meaning. Without meaning, we are hardly human. Without meaning, there is nothing.

That is how it is with our human fabrications. How much more so with the story of the Creator of all things. There is really nothing else but His story.

There is yet more: The story is power.

The story tells us that the iron walls are made to be shattered, the chains to be broken, the darkness to dissipate and the oppressor to be deposed. If we seem smaller than the big monster of a world that crushes us beneath its feet, it is only to make the story that much more exciting and novel. If we seem to be the victim, it is only so that the tables will be turned. If we are slaves, it is so that we may

become the masters.

In the story, evil is an illness for us to heal, oppression is a temporary disorder for us to rectify, every mitzvah we do is another transformation, another step from darkness towards the light.

Without the story we are small, we are victims, we are slaves. Evil is evil, oppression is the status quo, mitzvahs are quaint rituals, darkness will always return. "We were slaves in Egypt..." and that is where it ends. We look back and see they killed us, we look at the present and see they hate us, we look to the future and we do not see ourselves at all. If there is no story, we may all be very good and nice—but we are impotent, for we cannot heal a thing. The world is big and we are small. Even if we have our own land, we must bow to them. Without the story, we are still slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt.

Can a sabertooth tiger be a sabertooth without a tooth? Of course it can. What would it do with its life? It could live as someone's pet in their backyard. They would tell everyone, "This is a sabertooth tiger. Just that it's lost its teeth." They would throw it scraps of pre-chewed meat every day. And it would do its job of continuing to live, so that people can say, "See. The sabertooth tiger really once existed."

So too, you can be a good Jew and preserve our heritage and customs. You can be that relic of the past, continuing to exist today because you existed yesterday. A benign, harmless, tamed and victimized, impotent old tiger.

Or you can choose to live the story and take your bite out of the monster, as David took on Goliath, as Moses took on Pharaoh, as Abraham took on the entire world. And the monster will come crashing to the ground and you will be the hero, as the story tells.

Now you understand why, in our time, we must begin to celebrate the fulfillment of the story, even before it has fully come. Now, as we turn the final pages of the book. The only thing that could stop us now is if we forget there is a story.

The Baal Shem Tov used to eat three festival meals on the last day of Passover. He called the third meal of this day "Moshiach's Feast." The last day of Passover is the day for Moshiach's Feast because on this day the radiance of the light of Moshiach shines openly.

Remembering the Future

By Rabbi Yanki Tauber

"In every generation," say our sages, "a person is obligated to see himself as if he himself has come out of Egypt."

Mitzrayim, the Hebrew word for "Egypt," means "boundaries" and "constrictions"; *yetziat mitzrayim*, "going out of Egypt," is the endeavor to rise above all that inhibits the soul of man, be it limitations imposed by an outside force, or the physical, psychological or spiritual limitations imposed by habit and nature.

One of the most constricting elements of the human condition is the phenomenon of time. Time carries off the past and holds off the future, confining our lives to a temporal sliver of "present." But on the first night of Passover we break the bonds of time, having received a mandate to experience the Exodus "as if he himself has come out of Egypt." We recall the Exodus in our minds, verbalize it in the telling of the Haggadah, digest it in the form of matzah and wine. As we passover the centuries, memory -- those faded visages of past that generally constitute our only answer to the tyranny of time -- becomes experience, and history is made current and real.

Passover is an eight-day festival, with two opening and two closing days of heightened observance and commemoration (Yom Tov). While the theme of redemption runs as a current through the entire festival, the first days of Passover focus primarily on our first redemption -- our liberation from Egypt thirty-three centuries ago--while the closing days highlight the final redemption -- the future era of divine goodness and perfection heralded by Moshiach.

On the first two nights of Passover we conduct the Seder, reliving our redemption from Egypt in the telling of the Haggadah, the eating of the matzah and the bitter herbs, and the drinking of the four cups of wine. On the seventh day of Passover, we read the "Song at the Sea," which contains an important allusion to the Messianic era; on the eighth day, the haftarah (reading from the Prophets) is from Isaiah 10:32-12:6--one of the primary prophecies on the future Redemption. Rab-

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