

Passover Readings in a Nutshell

On the SEVENTH DAY OF PASSOVER we read how on this day the sea split for the Children of Israel and drowned the pursuing Egyptians, and the "Song at the Sea" sung by the people upon their deliverance (Exodus 13:17-15:26; full summary with commentary here).

On the EIGHTH DAY OF PASSOVER we read Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17. Like the reading for the second day, it catalogs the annual cycle of festivals, their special observances, and the offerings brought on these occasions to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. The Eighth Day's special connection with the Future Redemption is reflected in the Haftorah (reading from the Prophets) for this day (Isaiah 10:32-12:6). ❖



"Know Him in all your ways". Jews are enjoined to know and remember and permeate with holiness every aspect of the daily conduct and activities. In so doing the observant Jew may frequently face the abovementioned challenge and test. Therefore, the Jew has been enjoined: "Remember your deliverance from Egypt, every day of your life." Remembering and identifying oneself with the aspects of Yetzias Mitzraim is a source of limitless strength to make every day meaningful and full of true Yiddish life, and as my father-in-law of saintly memory, has emphasized: The festival of Pesach irradiates not only every day, but every moment of the Jew's life.

-- The Rebbe

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Meal of Moshiach

Our experience of Mashiach does not remain confined to the realm of thought. Towards the setting of the sun on this final day of the holiday, we follow the custom initiated by the Baal Shem Tov, partaking of Mashiach's Seudah, "the feast of Mashiach." Partaking of Mashiach's Seudah translates our awareness of Mashiach into a meal, a physical experience, which associates this concept with our actual flesh and blood.

The Rebbe ❖

Join us for
Seudas Moshiach:
Thursday, April 13
at 6:30pm

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Halachic Zmanim
Shabbos, Apr 15, 2023
Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis..... 5:19 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:35 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) ..1:31 PM
Plag Hamincha6:17 PM
Earliest Evening Shema.....8:05 PM

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Shabbos & Yom Tov Schedule

Erev YomTov(Tues)Apr 11/Nissan 20

YomTov Candle Lighting 7:14 pm

Mincha 7:15 pm

YomTov (Wed) – Apr 12/Nissan 21

Shacharis 10:00 am*

Torah Reading..... 11:00 am

Mincha 7:15 pm

YomTov Candle Lighting-After 8:15 pm

YomTov (Thurs) – Apr 13/Nissan 22

Shacharis..... 10:00 am*

Torah Reading..... 11:00 am

Mincha / Moshiach Meal 6:30 pm

Yom Tov Ends 8:16 pm

Erev Shabbos (Fri) – Apr 14/Nissan 23

Candle Lighting 7:17 pm

Mincha 7:15 pm

Shabbos Day (Sat) – Apr 15/Nissan 24

Shacharis..... 10:00 am*

Torah Reading..... 11:00 am

Mincha 7:20 pm

Rabbi's Drasha 7:40 pm

Shabbos Ends 8:19 pm

*Latest morning Shema is now **9:35 AM**. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).

Chassidic Masters

Nachshon ben Aminadav: The Man Who Jumped Into the Sea

By Mendy Kaminker

He was a prince of the tribe of Judah. He was the brother-in-law of Aaron, the high priest. When everyone else hesitated, he jumped into the swirling sea. He was Nachshon, the son of Aminadav.

Here is a portrait of the man whose quiet action left an indelible mark on our nation.

Family Origin

Nachshon was a fifth-generation descendant of Judah, son of Jacob. (His father was Aminadav, son of Ram, son of Chetzron, son of Peretz, son of Judah.)

He appears for the first time in the Torah when Aaron marries his sister: "Aaron took for a wife Elisheva, daughter of Aminadav, sister of Nachshon." The Torah generally records names only when mentioning someone new, and the commentaries wonder why Elisheva's brother is mentioned here as well.

They suggest that before marrying Elisheva, Aaron had inquired about Nachshon, his future brother-in-law. We learn from Aaron that when searching for a wife, it is important to vet her brothers. Fine, upstanding brothers indicate that the sister will be a fitting life partner.

At the Splitting of the Sea

Seven days after leaving Egypt, the Israelites found themselves trapped between a raging sea and the vengeful Egyptian army. Then G-d gave Moses a command that seemed impossible to fulfill: "Speak to the people of Israel; they shall travel."

The order was given to go forward, sea or no sea. But who would make the first move? At that moment, Nachshon's devotion and bravery came to the fore. The Midrash and Talmud⁶ share the following account:

When Israel stood facing the Sea of Reeds, and the command was given to move forward, each of the tribes hesitated, saying, "We do not want to be the first to jump into the sea."

Nachshon saw what was happening—and jumped into the sea.

At that moment Moses was standing and praying. G-d said to him, "My beloved ones are drowning in the stormy seas, and you are standing and praying?"

Moses replied, "Master of the world, what am I to do?"

Said G-d, "You lift your staff and spread your hand over the seas, which will split, and Israel will come into the sea upon dry land."

And so it was. Following Nachshon's lead, the Israelites entered the sea and were saved.

Nachshon's Reward

The Midrash enumerates the rewards that Nachshon's brave deed earned him:

He was given the name Nachshon, since he jumped into the waves (nachshol) of the sea.

Five heroes of Israel were among his descendants: David, Daniel, Chananiah, Mishaël and Azariah.

The eternal kingdom of Israel was given to his tribe, Judah, and it follows that Moshiach will be his descendant as well.

After Moses completed the Tabernacle in the desert, the princes of the twelve tribes of Israel offered special inaugural sacrifices and gifts. Even though Judah was not the most senior of the tribes, Nachshon, prince of Judah, was the first to bring his sacrifice. This may have been a reward for his special deed of devotion.

Nachshon was also among the seventy elders upon whom Moses conferred his spirit.

His Passing

Nachshon's appointment as an elder had a tragic result. We read that in the second year after leaving Egypt, "the people were looking to complain, and it was evil in the ears of the L-rd. The L-rd heard, and His anger flared, and a fire from the L-rd burned among them, consuming the extremes of the camp." The Midrash explains that the "extremes of the camp" is a reference to the seventy elders, including Nachshon.

(Continued next page)

A Symbol of Strength

Nachshon's name has become synonymous with courage and the will to do the right thing, even when it's not popular.

Inspired by Nachshon, King David wrote in Psalms, "I have sunk in muddy depths, and there is no place to stand; I have come into the deep water, and the current has swept me away . . . Let not the current of water sweep me away, nor the deep swallow me, and let the well not close its mouth over me."

The Rebbe saw Nachshon's deed as a call to action:

"One fellow named Nachshon jumped into the sea, and caused the great miracle of the Splitting of the Sea. Technically, he was under no obligation to do so. But he knew that G-d wanted Israel to move onward toward Sinai. So he did what he needed to do. There was a sea in his way. So he jumped into the sea and plowed on toward his goal.

"The lesson for all of us is that we must stay focused on our life's mission, disregarding all obstacles." ❖

The Great Light Which Comes out of the Darkness

A Commentary on the Haftarah of the Seventh Day of Passover

By Yitzi Hurwitz

I once Why then do we read the Song of David on the seventh day of Passover? It is explained that on the seventh day of Passover, the light of Moshiach shines bright, as the day has redemptive qualities to it. That is why it was on this day that the Jewish people went through the Sea of Reeds, finally becoming free from the Egyptians. Since King David is the father of Moshiach, we read his song.

The Song of David is recorded twice in the Bible, once in the book of Samuel, and again, with variations, in Psalms. For the haftarah, the one from Samuel is read.

King David sang this song in gratitude to G-d, who saved him from his enemies and from King Saul. It is written in the Bible twice, since there are many lessons to be learned from it with regards to our personal salvation from dark and difficult situations and challenges. I will just mention one.

The haftarah tells us that G-d, "surrounded Himself with a canopy of darkness, from clouds of water, bound together..." This is said, not in a negative way, but rather, in a positive way. What is positive about G-d being in the darkness?

First, it is darkness that defines light. Second, darkness and difficulties bring out light in two ways. When a person is faced with a challenge, it brings out the will in him or her to overcome and break through the darkness. By overcoming the darkness, the light is greater than it would have been without the difficulty.

However, there is much more that can be achieved with this darkness. Sometimes, the darkness is so great that it feels insurmountable. When this happens, the only strategy is to turn the darkness into light. This is accomplished by taking the difficulty and finding a way to use it for good. It makes you realize that the darkness was not darkness at all. In Chassidic parlance this is "the great light which comes out of the darkness."

This message is found later in the haftarah as well. King David says, "You are my lamp, G-d, and G-d lights my darkness." A lamp dispels darkness, yet the darkness still exists; it is just overcome by light. "G-d lights my darkness" is when the revelation of G-d is so great that the darkness ceases to exist. ❖

Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz—father of seven, husband of Dina, and spiritual leader at Chabad Jewish Center in Temecula, Calif.—has been rendered immobile by ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). Unable to speak or type, he uses his eyes to write heartfelt thoughts on the weekly Torah portion.

From the Rebbe's Talks

So also in regard to Time, which G-d created and divided into days, weeks, months and years, where each day, week, month and year has its own special qualities and (hence) special goals, or, to quote our Sages, "Each day has its own task."

One of the basic purposes of all this diversity in the world, "which G-d created" precisely in this way, is (as the text continues)—"to do," i.e., "to improve," in order that a person should each day improve his or her daily conduct in accordance with the Will of the Creator, as revealed in the Torah, *Toras Emes* [the Torah of truth], and thereby bring about an improvement (perfection) in the whole Creation, through eliciting the inner unity of the universe, and thus accomplish the intent of the Creator "to make this material world a fitting abode for Him, blessed be He," the Absolute One. ❖

Seventh Day of Passover (Wednesday) Haftarah in a nutshell

II Samuel 22:1-51

This week's haftarah describes the song King David composed in his old age, echoing the weekly Torah reading, where Moses delivers his parting words to the Jewish nation in song form.

David's song expresses gratitude to G-d for saving him from all his enemies. He starts with the famous words, "The L-rd is my rock and my fortress." He goes on to describe the pain and hardships he encountered and reiterates that he always turned to G-d in his moments of distress. He recounts G-d's reaction to those who tormented him: "The Lord thundered from heaven; and the Most High gave forth His voice. And He sent out arrows and He scattered them, lightning and He discomfited them. . . I have pursued my enemies and have destroyed them; never turning back until they were consumed."

The King attributes his salvation to his uprightness in following G-d's ways: "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He recompensed me..."

The song ends with David's expression of thankfulness: "Therefore I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the nations, and to Your name I will sing praises. He gives great salvation to His king, and He performs kindness to His anointed; to David and to his seed, forevermore." ❖

Eighth Day of Passover (Thursday) Haftarah in a nutshell

Isaiah 10:32-12:16

This haftarah is a prophecy by Isaiah regarding the messianic time to come. He foretells of "a staff from the shoot of Jesse," father of King David, upon whom the Divine spirit will rest and who will be able to judge honestly by way of smell.

The prophet tells us that "the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie with the kid goat; the calf and the young lion will graze together, and a young lad shall lead them."

He continues to describe how G-d will gather the exiled Jews from all over the world, to bring them back home to the Holy Land. In the newly constituted Jewish kingdom, the ancient rivalry between Judah and Ephraim will end, and they will join forces to subdue their historic enemies.

At that time, Israel will sing G-d's praises, thanking Him for all that he did and does for them, even that which had once appeared to be punishment but has now been revealed to be goodness in disguise. ❖

THE MEAL OF MOSHIACH

The readings for What Is the Moshiach's Meal?

Following a tradition instituted by the Baal Shem Tov, Jews all over the world celebrate the waning hours of Passover with Moshiach's Meal (Moshiach's Seudah in Yiddish), a feast celebrating the Divine revelation yet to come.

Why Do We Celebrate This Meal?

On the last day of Passover, we read verses from the book of Isaiah as the haftarah.¹ This reading includes many wondrous prophecies about the era of Moshiach.

The prophecy foretells of a leader upon whom "the spirit of the L-rd shall rest, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and heroism, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the L-rd."

In addition to bringing peace to mankind ("he will judge the poor justly, and he shall chastise with equity the humble of the earth"), the new peace and G-dly understanding will extend to all of G-d's creatures: "And a wolf shall live with a lamb, and a leopard shall lie with a kid . . . and a small child shall lead them."

The Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the chassidic movement, was the first one to celebrate this meal, with an open door, allowing anyone who wished to partake.

The sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe explained that on the last day of Passover the radiance of Moshiach is already shining.

When Is the Moshiach's Meal

Moshiach's Meal is held following Minchah (the afternoon service) on the eighth day of Passover. In Israel, where Passover is seven days long, Moshiach's Meal is held on the seventh day.

The celebration customarily extends past nightfall, ushering out Passover amid song, words of Torah and inspiration.

How Is the Moshiach's Meal Celebrated?

In 1906 Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber of Lubavitch incorporated four cups of wine and matzah into Moshiach's Meal, mirroring the Seder held the week before. You can also serve fruit and other Passover goodies.

If you will be celebrating with a group you can have people prepare stories or Torah thoughts related to Moshiach. The actual program is flexible, but you want to pace your four cups throughout the singing and speaking. Customarily, the leader of the group announces which cup you are up to. Note that you do not need to drink these cups in their entirety. A sip suffices. ❖

Parshas Shemini in a nutshell

Leviticus 9:1–11:47

On the eighth day, following the seven days of their inauguration, Aaron and his sons begin to officiate as kohanim (priests); a fire issues forth from G-d to consume the offerings on the altar, and the divine presence comes to dwell in the Sanctuary.

Aaron's two elder sons, Nadav and Avihu, offer a "strange fire before G-d, which He commanded them not" and die before G-d. Aaron is silent in face of his tragedy. Moses and Aaron subsequently disagree as to a point of law regarding the offerings, but Moses concedes to Aaron that Aaron is in the right.

G-d commands the kosher laws, identifying the animal species permissible and forbidden for consumption. Land animals may be eaten only if they have split hooves and also chew their cud; fish must have fins and scales; a list of non-kosher birds is given, and a list of kosher insects (four types of locusts).

Also in Shemini are some of the laws of ritual purity, including the purifying power of the mikvah (a pool of water meeting specified qualifications) and the wellspring. Thus the people of Israel are enjoined to "differentiate between the impure and the pure." ❖

From Our Sages – Shemini

It came to pass on the eighth day (Leviticus 9:1)

That day took ten crowns: It was the first day of creation (i.e., a Sunday), the first for the offerings of the nesi'im (tribal heads), the first for the priesthood, the first for [public] sacrifice, the first for the fall of fire from heaven, the first for the eating of sacred food, the first for the dwelling of the Divine Presence in Israel, the first for the priestly blessing of Israel, the first day on which it was forbidden to sacrifice to G-d anywhere but in the Sanctuary, and the first of months.

(Talmud, Shabbat 87b)

That day was as joyous to G-d as the day on which heaven and earth were created.

(Talmud, Megillah 10b)

The number seven represents the cycle of creation; the number eight represents the "circumference"—that which lies beyond the perimeter of time and space. This is why the Divine Presence came to dwell in the Israelite camp on the eighth day. This is also alluded to in the saying of our sages (Talmud, Erchin 13b) that "the lyre of Moshiach has eight strings."

(Keli Yakar; Shaloh)

Aaron was silent (Leviticus 10:3)

Because Aaron was silent, he was rewarded that G-d spoke exclusively to him (see below, verses 8–11; ordinarily G-d spoke to Aaron only in conjunction with—or through—Moses).

(Midrash Rabbah)

Said Rav Papa: The merit of attending a house of mourning lies in the silence observed.

(Talmud, Berachot 6b)

In youth, one learns to talk; in maturity, one learns to be silent. This is man's problem: that he learns to talk before he learns to be silent.

(Rabbi Nachman of Breslov) ❖

Haftarah for Parshas Shemini in a nutshell

II Samuel 6:1-19

This week's haftarah mentions how Uzzah was struck dead when he disrespectfully touched the Ark of the Covenant; reminiscent of Nadab and Abihu's death described in this week's Torah reading.

The Holy Ark had been in storage in the house of Avinadav for many years, ever since the destruction of the Tabernacle in Shiloh. Recently crowned King David decided to move the Ark to the new capital, Jerusalem. He had the Ark placed on a cart and it was transported amidst singing and dancing. When the procession reached Goren Nachon, the oxen misstepped and Uzzah, Avinadav's son, took hold of the Ark to steady it—whereupon he was instantly killed.¹ David was devastated, and he temporarily placed the Ark in the home of Oved-edom the Edomite, where it remained for three months.

"And it was told to King David saying: 'G-d has blessed the house of Oved-edom, and all that belongs to him, because of the Ark of G-d.' And David went and brought up the ark of G-d from the house of Oved-edom into the City of David with joy." The Ark was brought up to the city of David with great singing and dancing. David then blessed and distributed presents to all the assembled Israelites. ❖



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שבת שלום גוט שבת!



Happy Pesach & Good Shabbos to all!