



The Community

Boruch Hashem

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Rabbi's Article

A Great Shabbat for a Great Miracle

The Shabbat before Passover is called, "Shabbat HaGadol -The Great Shabbat." The Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (-[Link](#)) in his *Shulchan Aruch* (Code of Jewish Law -[Link](#)) explains the reason for this name:

"The Shabbos that precedes Passover is called Shabbos HaGadol, because a great miracle occurred on [that day. To explain: The lamb to be offered for] the Paschal [sacrifice in] Egypt was set aside on the tenth of the month [of Nissan], as it is written (-Exodus 12:3): 'On the tenth of this month, each of them shall take a lamb for a family....' That day was Shabbos, for the Jews left Egypt on a Thursday, as will be explained in sec. 494 (-Law 1). Since the fifteenth of Nissan was a Thursday, the tenth of Nissan was Shabbos.

When the Jews took [the lambs for] their Paschal sacrifice on that Shabbos, the firstborn of the nations of the world gathered around the Jews and asked them: "Why are you doing this?"

The [Jews] answered: 'It is a Paschal sacrifice to G-d Who will slay the firstborn of Egypt.'

The firstborn [of each family] went to their parents and to Pharaoh to ask them to release the Jews, but they did not agree. The firstborn waged war against [Pharaoh and his supporters] and slew many of them. This is alluded to by the verse (-Psalms 136:10), 'To strike Egypt with their (i.e. through their) firstborn.'

[The Rabbis] established the commemoration of this miracle for the [future] generations on the Shabbos [preceding Passover] and called it Shabbos HaGadol."

Question: (i) Why does the Alter Rebbe need to emphasize that it was a *Great Miracle*, when any miracle on a specific Shabbat would make it, "The Great Shabbat"? (ii) Additionally, what makes *this* miracle so 'great', when it accomplished nothing for Israel and their redemption?! The civil war was had, defeated, and Israel remained slaves as before the war?!

Another question is, all holidays commemorating a miracle are established by the day of the *month* (10th of Nissan) it happened on, and not the day of the week (Shabbat)?! The Alter Rebbe himself, in the very same law asks and answers the question:

"Why did [the Rabbis] not establish [the commemoration of this miracle] on the tenth of the month regardless of whether [that date fell] on Shabbos or during the week, as all the other festivals are commemorated [on a given date]? Because Miriam [the prophetess -[Link](#)] died on the tenth of Nissan and [the Rabbis] established a fast [on that date] when it falls during the week, as will be explained in sec. 580.8. Consult that source."

However, this only affords us a *negation* reason of why *not* to establish it on the 10th of Nissan. Nevertheless, there *must* be a *proactive* reason on why to connect the commemoration of the *Great Miracle* specifically with the day of *Shabbat*! This becomes clear also from G-d's commanding Israel to specifically, "shall take a lamb," on Shabbat, when doing so entails desecrating the laws of Shabbat of making business acquisitions, carrying living animals, leading it from one domain to another, checking the it for blemishes, and the likes! (And even though this took place before the Torah was given, nevertheless: (i) The forefathers, the 12 sons, and the tribe of Levi always kept the Torah, and (ii) our sages tell us (-Shemot Rabba Portion 1:28), "And he (Moses) saw their suffering,' he saw that they had no rest, he went and said to Pharaoh, 'Whoever has a servant who does not rest one day in the week is dead, and these are your servants, if you do not give them rest you will put them to death!' He (Pharaoh) said to him (Moses), 'go and do to them as you said'"

-Cont. on Page 2

FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 2023 ★ ג' ניסן תשפ"ג

[Shabbat Candle Lighting](#): 7:19 PM · [Kabbalat Shabbat](#): 7:15 PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2023 ★ ז' ניסן תשפ"ג

TORAH READING: [Tzav](#) (Leviticus 6:1-8:36) · HAFTORAH: [Jeremiah](#) (7:21-28, 9:22-23)

[Shabbat HaGadol](#) · [Shacharit](#): 9:30 AM · [Mincha](#): 7:00 PM · [Shabbat Ends](#): 8:12 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2023 ★ ח' ניסן תשפ"ג

Birthday: The Rebbe; Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of blessed and saintly memory.

A day to reach-out and help a fellow-Jew physically and/or spiritually, and to bring Moshiach now!

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023 ★ יג' ניסן תשפ"ג

Search for Chometz: North Miami: *after* 8:12 PM -[Link](#)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023 ★ יד' ניסן תשפ"ג

Stop eating chometz: North Miami: 11:17 AM · Burn chometz: North Miami: *before* 12:20 PM

Holiday Candle Lighting: North Miami: 7:21 PM · 1ST SEDER NIGHT -See [Link](#)

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2023 ★ טו' ניסן תשפ"ג

1ST DAY PASSOVER: Holiday Candle Lighting: North Miami: *after* 8:16 PM · 2ND SEDER NIGHT -See [Link](#)

This Week...

A Great Shabbat for a Great Miracle -Cont. from Page 1

Moses went and fixed the Shabbat day for them to rest.") Hence, we must say that G-d commanded that Israel do this on Shabbat because its outcome, the *Great Miracle*, is intrinsically connected with Shabbat!

To understand this, we must understand the heart and soul of both concepts: (i) Shabbat, and (ii) the *Great Miracle* of, "To strike Egypt with (i.e. through) their firstborn".

Shabbat: Our sages teach us (-Yalkut Shemoni, Bechukoisai, Remez 672) upon the verse (-Psalms 92:1), "A song with musical accompaniment for the Shabbat day," "Rabbi Shimon said, 'When is the praise of G-d, when there is no harmers, or when there are harmers but they don't harm? One would say, when there are harmer but they don't harm. And so it says, 'A song with musical accompaniment for the Shabbat day,' to disable a harmer from the world that they will not harm. And so too it says (-Isaiah 11:6), 'a wolf shall live with a lamb...'" And in accordance with this, the Tzemach Tzedek, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch (-[Link](#)) explains (-Yehal Ohr, Page 328), that the "disabling of harmers" can happen in one of two ways: (i) Remove the entire existence of harmers from the world, or (ii) transform the harmers that they not be *harmers*. And the second way --which is the transformation from evil to good--, is the superior way. Now, even though the latter will primarily be when Moshiach (-[Link](#)) comes, nevertheless, *kind of like that* happened at the first Shabbat of creation, when (-Bereishit Rabba, Portion 11:2), "The light served for 36 hours, 12 of Friday, and 12 of Friday night, and 12 of Shabbat day." Hence, it was (-Psalms 139:12), "And the night will light up like day," that the darkness was transformed into light.

Transformation is not just a product of Shabbat, but rather, *transformation is what Shabbat is!* Our sages state (-Rashi, Genesis 2:2), "What was the world lacking? Rest (Inner-Peace; Holistic Oneness; Congruency and Alignment). Shabbat came, and so came rest. The work was completed and finished." However, to fully appreciate this, it is necessary to introduce the teaching of *The Maggid*, Rabbi Dovber of Mezeritch (-[Link](#)), that "Time" is a creation. Time was created as Seven 24-hour Creations --after which the 7-day cycle of 'Time' just renews itself-- hence, every day of the Seven Days of Creation was a new creation of 'Time'. Hence, what was still missing was the creation of 7th 24-hour cycle of Time!? Therefore, when the sages say that what was missing was Rest, they mean that Shabbat was not just another 24-hour 'Time' Creation, in which the product of Rest was created, but rather, that the very creation of the 7th 24-hour Period of 'Time', called Shabbat, is the creation of Rest. Deeper yet, the 6 prior creations 'Time' (Sunday-Friday) each entail within them the changes --the antithesis of Rest-- of a past, present, and future. However, the 7th creation 'Time', called Shabbat, which is Rest, these very Time Properties of Past, Present, and Future changes are transformed --through Shabbat being a trans-natural creation of Rest -- into a Holistic Oneness, above and beyond the restlessness of changes (Past, Present and Future) of 'Time'

Note: The Rebbe supplies an incredible Halachic manifestation of these two dimensions of Time (1. Past, Present, and Future, and 2. Holistic Oneness): *The Rogetchover Genius*, Rabbi Joseph Rosen (-[Link](#)) rules concerning a child becoming an adult in middle of Shabbat or Yom Kippur, that on a Biblical level, the child is obligated to begin observing Shabbat from the minute that he becomes an adult, because every minute of Shabbat has a Past, Present, and Future. Hence, even though the past Shabbat-minute he wasn't obligated, the present minute he is! However, concerning Yom Kippur (called, "Shabbat of Shabbatot"), in which the entire period of Yom Kippur is one holistic point, being that he missed one minute of Yom Kippur, he therefore missed any minute of Yom Kippur.

The same applies with the mitzvah of *Counting the Omer* (-[Link](#)), in which we are commanded to count 49 Days. There are opinions that by missing counting one day, one can no more make the blessing, because the entire 49 Days are all one holistic period of time.

Great Miracle: Mystically speaking, the *firstborns* represent the strength and might of the people. Hence, we are speaking of the "strength and might" of Egypt waging a war against Egypt, to let Israel go. And this is happening in a time when the darkness of Egypt is so strong, that even after the war, when the firstborns, "and slew many of them," nevertheless, Pharaoh did not let Israel go. This is the meaning of a *Great Miracle*, that the very "strength and might" of evil is demanding of evil to transform itself into goodness. Unlike other miracles, where the evil is broken, but not transformed.

This is the reason why this *Shabbat* is called the *Great Shabbat*, meaning that the very essence of 'Shabbat' -- "transform the harmers that they not be harmers"-- reached 'Great' --transformation of the *firstborns*, demanding of Egypt to transform! With this we also understand the lengthy wording of the *Alter Rebbe*, "That day was Shabbos, for the Jews left Egypt on a Thursday": The, "On the tenth of this month, each of them shall take a lamb," can be seen as: (i) Also as preparation to the 15th of Nissan's exodus of Egypt, or, (ii) Only a purpose unto its own. The *Alter Rebbe* is telling us, "Since the 15th of Nissan was a Thursday, (therefore) the 10th of Nissan was Shabbos," that it was, "(i) Also as preparation to the 15th of Nissan's exodus of Egypt."

Mystically Speaking: Shabbat is called, "Shabbat Malkeso," meaning that it is the *Emanation of Kingship*, which on Shabbat ascends to the higher *Emanations* of Six Male Emotions ("Small Faces") and of Understanding ("Mother"). However, being that when *Kingship* (on Shabbat) ascends to receive from its superiors, she is called, "Dark Light of Annihilation," in which she annihilates evil, and on the *Great Shabbat* we need it not to annihilate, but to transform evil, by ascending even higher into the *Emanation of Understanding* called, "World of Freedom (Redemption)," which will fully experienced only when Moshiach comes, hence, the *Alter Rebbe* points out that *This* Shabbat of the *Great Shabbat* is connected with the, "15th of Nissan, Exodus (Freedom; Redemption) of Egypt."

The Lesson: When a Jew (-Exodus 12:21), "Draw ('from idolatry; 365 Prohibitions') and take ('G-d; 248 Precepts') for yourself a lamb," with self-sacrifice, and encourages others ("for a family") to do so as well, he brings about an effect on the world (*Firstborns of Egypt*), and will bring about the (-Micah 7:15), "As in the days of your exodus from the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders."