

A Taste of Torah Miraculous Nation

By Rabbi Levi Lebovits

In a couple of days we will be sitting at the Seder retelling the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The Seder is one of the most well-known Jewish traditions performed by Jews from all backgrounds. Why? What is the point of the Seder? Why must we retell the story of the Exodus every year - don't we know it already?

R' Yitzchak Isaac Chaver explains that the central message to be transmitted on the night of Pesach is how fortunate we are to be Jews. In other words, the night of the Seder is the celebration of being a Jew. The way we relay this message to others, and specifically to the younger generation, is through the story of the Exodus.

Hashem has two planes through which He interacts with the world. One is nature; our world is governed by the laws of nature. Of course, nature does not have a mind of its own and is completely controlled by Hashem, but it is the system by which Hashem runs the

world. The second is "beyond nature", i.e., Hashem's interaction with the world through miracles. All of the other nations of the world must work within the framework of nature. The Jewish people, however, are not bound by nature. This is due to the fact that our existence is based on our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos. Both the beginning of the Jewish nation and their freedom from Egypt occurred through miracles. Avraham and Sarah were, according to nature, unable to have children. Hashem made a miracle which resulted in the Jewish people. Our freedom from Egypt was a complete miracle and came about through miracles, namely, the Ten Plagues. They were not merely acts of mercy on Hashem's part, but actually a lesson to the Jewish people that they have the ability to live above nature insofar as they are committed to Torah and Mitzvos.

May we relive the story of the Exodus on the Seder night and gain a deeper appreciation of how fortunate we are to be Jews!

Ask the Rabbi e-Shabbos

Cheryl from Long Beach wrote:

On erev Shabbos I can access via Internet the local Jerusalem time. It is not yet Shabbos in California, but Internet tells me it is already Shabbos in Jerusalem. Every time I log on I am drawn to pull up the time to have that link to Jerusalem. Is this permitted?

Shmuel Steele wrote:

Is it permitted to send email to you on erev Shabbos in America?

Saul G. Behr of Univ. of Witwatersrand, South Africa wrote:

What is the law in the case of any sort of instantaneous communication between different time zones on or around Shabbos?

David Mitchell of SMU, Dallas wrote:

I hope there is no problem with me sending email to your account while it's Shabbos by you!

Stories For The Soul

A Father's Love

When I graduated Yeshiva high school, all I wanted was to have a good time. Regrettably, I fell in with a bad group of friends, and soon Shabbos and *kashrus* meant nothing to me.

My parents were devastated. Because of the bad influence I was having on my brothers, my father asked me to leave the house. When I moved out, I said some cruel and spiteful things. I can remember my father standing silently at the door, with my mother crying at his side.

I had no contact with my family for almost a year. I missed them a lot, but I foolishly thought that I would be seen as weak if I contacted them.

One morning, I was shocked to find my father outside my apartment building. He asked if we could talk. I only nodded and we walked to a corner coffee shop. He told me how much everyone missed me, and how I had been in their minds and hearts every second. He told me that he wasn't there to lecture me. He just had one request. He wanted me to drive with him that afternoon to Monsey, NY, and say one chapter of *Tehillim* at the grave of a certain *tzaddik*. As far removed as I was from Judaism, I was still moved by his request.

I told him that I couldn't go that day. In truth, I had plans to go with friends to Atlantic City. He took my hand in his and just looked at me with his tear-streaked face. I felt my own eyes begin to water, and I agreed.

We didn't talk much during the trip. Ten minutes after we had arrived, we were on our way back. My father let me off in front of my apartment

Kollel Happenings

The Kollel is on Pesach break. Programs resume May 4.

'WHITES LIES AND PROTECTING THE NOT SO INNOCENT' AT MAY 4 TORAH FOR TYCOONS

Join Dr. Ian Topelson D.M.D. Topelson Dentistry and Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, Denver Community Kollel for "White Lies and Protecting the Not So Innocent" at the next Torah for Tycoons, Wed., May 4. Program will be at noon at the East Side Kosher Deli. CLE credits pending. Cost \$20. To RSVP, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org



'PARSHA AT DENVER TECH CENTER' MAY 5

Want to add meaning to your workweek - and Shabbos? Rabbi Yehuda Amsel's 'Parsha at the Denver Tech Center' for men will be held on Wed., May 5. The biweekly class is held at 2:30 p.m. at 6565 S. Dayton, Suite 1200. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rya@denverkollel.org



CHERRY CREEK MUNCH AND LEARN, MON., MAY 9

The next Cherry Creek Munch and Learn for men, led by Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, will be held on Mon., May 9 at 12:30 p.m. at Colorado Capital Bank, 55 Madison Ave. The class focuses on Pirkei Avos. For information, contact Rabbi Amsel at 303-820-2855 or at rya@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues Tantamount to Theft

There are a number of things that our sages say are tantamount to theft.

Failing to return a greeting of "shalom" is tantamount to theft; one is regarded as "owing" a "shalom" in return.

One who fails to make a blessing

on a pleasurable activity that requires a blessing, such as eating or drinking, is regarded as having "stolen" from Hashem.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

continued from front

Dear Cheryl, Shmuel, Saul and David:

There are two concerns here:

1. May someone set up a machine before Shabbos to receive email on Shabbos?

2. May someone for whom it is not yet Shabbos cause violation of Shabbos to be done in a place where it is Shabbos?

Regarding the first point, one is allowed to initiate a process before Shabbos, even though the work will continue unattended throughout Shabbos. For example, one may program a timer to turn lights on and off at specified times during Shabbos.

As for the second point, the question centers on whether the mail server or fax machine located in the area where it is Shabbos is:

1. An extension of the sender (picture the sender of the email having really long arms), which would be prohibited on Shabbos. Or:

1. Independent of the sender (the sender has nothing to do with the machine once he issues the send command).

A source that apparently supports the position that the machine is independent of the sender is found in the book Shemirath Shabbath. It states that in a place where it is not Shabbos it is permitted to phone a non-Jew in a place where it is Shabbos.

In order to receive a definitive ruling with regard to email and faxes I asked Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg. He ruled that it is in fact permitted to send email and faxes from an area where it is not Shabbos to an area where it is Shabbos. So as the sun is beginning to lower on the horizon on erev Shabbat and you are faced with a question that just has to be answered, don't hesitate to send it to us!

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Stories for the Soul

Continued from front

building. He told me that no matter what, I was always going to be his son and that he would always love me.

The next morning I woke up to some shocking news. On the way back from Atlantic City, my friends were involved in a head-on collision with a tractor trailer. There were no survivors.

That evening, I just walked back into my parents' home, and was taken back with open arms and no questions asked.

Today, I am observant once again and have a son of my own. I try to be the kind of father to him, that my father was to me.

Two of Aharon's sons died while transgressing the Divine commandments in the Temple service. Though his love for them was great, he remained silent. One can never underestimate the love of a parent for a child.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.