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Shabbat - 1st Day Pesach,

Sat. 30 - 31 Mar. 2018 - 15th of Nisan, 5778 -

15 ניסן תשע"ח

שבת א' פסח

Issue Number 839

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Pesach Timetable

פסח לוח זמנים

Passover (first day) (Exodus 12:21-51)

Pesach 5778

GOOD MORNING! Are you happy with who you are? Wish you could change, but don't know how? Wondering how does one make real changes?

The formula is straight forward: 1) Recognize that there is need for improvement. 2) Make a decision to improve. 3) Make a plan. 4) Follow through on the plan.

What holds us back? We think we can't change. Rabbi Noah Weinberg, of blessed memory, the founder of Aish HaTorah, would ask his students, "If God would help you, could you do it?" The answer is obviously "Yes." Then he'd ask, "Do you think the Almighty wants you to change, to improve?" The answer again is obviously "Yes". So, why is it so difficult to change? It's too painful. One doesn't want to take the pain of change. Only through taking

the pain and realizing that time is limited will we change. Failure is a status reserved only for those who try. Whether you think you can or you think you can't -- you're right.

The Midrash tells us that the Jewish people had the same problem in Egypt. Only 1/5 of the Jewish people were on a high enough spiritual level to leave Egypt -- and they were on the 49th level of *Tuma*, spiritual degradation -- and were within a hair's breadth of being destroyed.

Yet, what is amazing is that in the next 49 days they raised themselves to the spiritual level to receive the Torah at Mt. Sinai! Each day we climbed one step higher in spirituality and holiness. Many people study one of the "48 Ways to Wisdom" (Ethics of the Fathers, 6:6 -- found in the back of most *siddurim*, Jewish prayer books) each day in the *Sephirat*

HaOmer period between *Pesach* and *Shavuot* -- which will be explained below -- as a means to personal and spiritual growth. This is a propitious time for perfecting one's character!

Rabbi Noah Weinberg created his flagship series of lectures, now available as a book, [The 48 Ways to Wisdom!](#) You may also get it on audio at [AishAudio.com](#). I think of this series as the "Jewish Dale Carnegie Course" for getting the most out of life. It will be one of the great purchases in your life! Listen to a 5 minute "Taste of the 48 Ways" taught by Boruch Rabinowitz ... <https://BoruchRabinowitz.com/category/48-wisdoms/>

Q & A: WHAT IS SEPHIRAT HA-OMER?

On the second day of *Pesach*, the *Omer* offering from the new barley crop was brought in the Temple in Jerusalem. It began a period of counting and preparation for *Shavuot*, the anniversary of the giving of the Torah and the yearly celebration of re-accepting the Torah upon ourselves. This period is called *Sephirat HaOmer*, the counting of the *Omer*.

Forty-nine days are counted and on the fiftieth day is *Shavuot*, the *Yom Tov* celebrating the giving of the Torah. There is actually a *mitzvah* to count each specific day

which is done at the completion of *Ma'ariv*, the evening service.

This is a period of national semi-mourning (no weddings or even haircuts). It was during this period that Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students died for not showing sufficient respect for each other. It is a time for us to reflect how we look upon and treat our fellow Jews as well as the tragedies that have befallen us because of unfounded (self-justified) hatred. It is a wonderful time to undertake an extra act of kindness; this will help to bring perfection to the world and unity amongst Jews.

There are two customs for observing the semi-mourning period. The first is to observe it from the end of *Pesach* until the 33rd day of the *Omer* (called *Lag B'omer*). This year *Lag B'omer* is Wednesday night, May 2nd thru Thursday. Many people get married on the 33rd day of the *Omer* for this reason. The second custom is to observe the semi-mourning from *Rosh Chodesh Iyar* (the beginning of the month of the Hebrew month of *Iyar*, which begins this year April 14th in the evening) until *Shavuot*. Unusual for our heritage, one can choose each year which custom to follow. For more on *Sephirat HaOmer* and the 48 Ways go to aish.com/omer.



**TORAH PORTION
OF THE WEEK**

Pesach -- Exodus 12:21-51

This Shabbat coincides with *Pesach* (Passover). Therefore, there is a special reading for Shabbat of *Pesach* which supersedes the usual weekly Torah portion. The Torah portion reading includes: The Passover offering, the 10th plague (death of the firstborn Egyptian), Pharaoh's surrender, the Exodus from Egypt, and additional laws of the Passover offering. Also read is Numbers 28:16-25 including: the laws of *Pesach*, the offerings of the holiday and the designation of *Pesach* as a seven day holiday.

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Dvar Torah

adapted from The Passover Survival Kit by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf

During the Passover *Seder* we ask the Four Questions. So, why IS this night different? Because on this night we experienced our freedom. Because only on this holiday do all of the special observances, *mitzvot*, apply only at night. On Rosh Hashanah we blow the *shofar* only during the day. On *Sukkot* we sit in a *Sukkah* during the day or night. Only on Passover do so many *mitzvot* apply only at night. Why is this the only night of the year so brimming with *mitzvot*? Because on the night of Passover we

not only commemorate the moment of our birth, but we express the very meaning of our existence as a people. Our sages tell us, "For the *mitzvah* is like a candle and the Torah a light."

The purpose of Jewish existence is to be a source of light where otherwise darkness would hold sway. No matter how dark the world around us seems to grow, no matter how dim humankind's future may seem -- the Jewish nation never gives up. Deep inside we all know that things can be different. Deep inside we feel the call to cast a light on a darkened life, or to illuminate a clouded corner of the globe.

As dark as our lives may seem, lost though the world may have become, we still believe in the power of light. To illuminate our lives and our potential. to be a radiant force for all mankind. This is our message and our goal. We will not rest until the dark night again shines like the day.

Dvar Torah:

What does it mean to be free? "Free" means not having outside control over your actions, thoughts, behavior. There are different levels of freedom: 1) The freedom over physical actions -- where you go, what you do. 2) The freedom over what you think about. 3) The freedom to make moral decisions.

Deciding whether you are going to have chocolate or vanilla ice cream is not on the same level as deciding whether or not to return a lost wallet.

Moral decisions are a lot more difficult to make than physical ones. With physical decisions where one is enslaved, there is no choice because of physical restraint. With moral decisions it is the conflict between your free will and your body's desire.

Pirke Avot, Ethics of Our Fathers (6 chapters of succinct wisdom found in the back of most *siddurim*, [prayer books]) asks, "Who is the mighty person?" and answers, "He who conquers his passions." The free-est person is the one who controls his passions and his desires in order to make moral decisions.



Shabbat Shalom,
Kalman
Rabbi Kalman
Packouz

Mazal tov: Yakdhan and Farida Cohen and David and Ronneit Shamash on the new arrival of grand son, the son of Naim and Shontal Cohen .

Birkat Hailanot: can be recited in the month of **Nissan** in front of the Synagouge.

Kolel every Sunday: We are still having a Kolel every Sunday at the Synagogue hall from 09.30am - 12.00pm. Everyone is welcome.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE"
TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

02 Nissan Mr Norman Ezekiel	12 Nissan Mrs Berta Lawy
03 Nissan Mr Solly Yona	13 Nissan Mrs Suzette Lagnado
04 Nissan Mr Benjamin Sadka	14 Nissan Mr Joseph Laniado
07 Nissan Mr Abraham Cohen	15 Nissan Mr Richard Reuban Hannuna
07 Nissan Mr Dhia Cohen	19 Nissan Ms Angelique Burman
07 Nissan Mr Farid Cohen	20 Nissan Mr Simon Jacob
07 Nissan Mr Nabeel Cohen	22 Nissan Mr Meir David Lanyado
09 Nissan Mr Reuben Ezekiel	25 Nissan Mr Robbie Rahimian
09 Nissan Mrs Marcelle Benjamin	25 Nissan Mrs Homa Sarah Rahimian
10 Nissan Mrs Judith Silas	28 Nissan Mr Moses Jacob
10 Nissan Mrs Esther Silas	29 Nissan Mr Benny Benaiah

“ Quote of the Week ”

**Freedom is the responsibility
to fill our lives with meaning**