

SECOND DAY PESACH 1992
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

Why is it that more Jews celebrate Pesach than any other Jewish holiday? More Jews have a seder at home than come to shul even on Yom Kippur. Why is it that the rabbis have an argument as to when Pesach is, whether it is the 15th day or the 14th day of the month of Nisan? Since in the Torah portion, Emor, which we read on the second day, it seems pretty clear that it says that Pesach is the 14th and Chag HaMatzos, the Holiday of Matzos, is on the 15th. What's more, why is it that when we say Hallel we do not end the Hallel with the normal paragraph. We do not end the Hallel with this praise to G-d, but, instead, we add Kerul Hashem Keetov, thank G-d because He is good, and also the prayer, Nishmas Zo Chai, the soul of all living things bless You, and then we add the Hallelucho, they will praise You, G-d. Why do we do that? All the other times of the year when we say Hallel, like when we say Hallel today and when we said Hallel yesterday and the other days of Pesach, we end Hallel with Yalucha. We do not add Hogo Ladoshem Keetov. We do not add Nishmas HoChai. Why is it that we split up the Hallel this way?

Perhaps we can understand the answer to these questions if we look at the very first part of the Haggadah. In the very first part of the Haggadah when we invite people to our home we say, "All who are hungry, let them come in to eat, and all who have a need, let them come and make the Korban Pesach." Why is it that we have these two different statements? They seem to be redundant. The rabbis say, no, they are not redundant, that these two statements refer to two different needs. Each human being has a physical need, a need to have clothing and shelter and food, but he needs more than that. A human being needs other people. In fact, there was a very famous sociological study made by Herzog and Zubrowski and edited by Margaret Mead, of life in eastern Europe. The name of that book is Life is With People. We have other needs. We have a need to be with people and to work with people for the betterment of this world. There is a famous story they tell about a poor shamus who did not have

hardly anything to eat. It came to Pesach and he did not have anything to make a seder. There was a very rich widow who did not have any family, who was all alone by herself at her seder. Of course, she had a terrible need and he had a terrible hunger, and somehow they got together, and you all know the happy ending that ensued. Man needs more than just bread. Human beings have a need of a dream. We need to work with others to bring the dream of redemption to the world. Of course, that is what Pesach gives us all. Pesach gives us this dream of redemption, and without a dream of redemption it would be very difficult to exist in the world. That's why campaigns against drugs which stress "Just say no" will never work because negative ideas, negative protestations just showing the terrible effects drugs have on an individual will not stop anybody from taking drugs, or very few people. To stop people from taking drugs when they have a dream and in order for them to achieve the dream they will realize that drugs get in their way, they will not take drugs because drugs stop them from realizing their dream. Drugs stop them from putting into action those dreams that they have, the dreams of helping this world be a better place. Pesach is a holiday which gives the Jewish people dreams which allows us to continue to live and to overcome all temptations and all obstacles because we have a dream to fulfill.

That is why, of course, we learn about Avraham Oveinu. We learn about Avraham Oveinu when G-d said that He is fulfilling His promise we learn about the promise of the covenant between the pieces. We do not learn about the covenant of the Bris Milah because Abraham was a man who followed G-d even before a Bris Milah because he had a dream, and that dream took him from the land of Meopotamia into the land of Canaan. It was the dream which allowed Abraham to endure. Of course, we know that in Biblical times that someone who was not circumcized could not participate in a seder because he did not want to implement his dream

in practice, but the most important thing is to have a dream. Without a dream man cannot survive.

That is, too, the reason why the rabbis say that Pesach is the 15th and not the 14th because on the 15th the Jewish people were going to implement their dream. On the 14th they only rejected the gods of the Egyptians, but they had not committed themselves positively to the dream until the 15th. In the Gemorah Brochas we learn that if a person has a dream near the morning, and it is a dream which is repeated, and it is is a dream that has the interpretation of the dream within the dream, then that is a true dream. What do we need in order to have a dream be a true dream? We need to have a dream near morning, which means that it must concern itself with dawn, with redemption, with the coming of a new day, that it must be an insistent dream which drives a person to want to implement, and that there must be a practical program which will allow a person to implement the dream. We all know that the reason that Herzl was able to galvanize the Jewish people into the Zionist movement when there were many other earlier movements, like the Kol Vaitzion which strove to galvanize the Jewish people to return to the land of Israel, Herzl was able to succeed while they were not because Herzl had a practical plan. It turned out that his plan was wrong, but it was a practical plan. Turkey, the sick man of Europe, needed money. Herzl thought, I will go to Turkey and I will buy Palestine from him. The western European Jews are rich and they will pay for Palestine. Then I will transfer all these eastern European Jews to Palestine. It did not work out that way in actual practice, but it was a feasible plan at that time. After all, Russia sold Alaska to the United States as late as 1914. The United States bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark. It did not work out in practice, but the wheels were put in motion and other ways were found to secure Israel for the Jewish people. We need dreams. Without dreams we cannot succeed. We have to be willing to implement these dreams and have a

practical program for implementing these dreams.

That is, too, why we say the Shmas Kol Chai and Hodo Lashem Heetov before we finish the Hallel because the Jewish dream is not just a dream of redemption for the Jewish people. The Jewish dream is a dream for the redemption of the whole world, and if we follow our religion we are not just being selfish. We are not just concerned about redeeming ourselves and the Jewish people but it is actually about redeeming the whole world. It is a universal redemption that is talked about. What our prophets talk about when they say that at the end of days all the people will come up to Jerusalem to worship G-d each in their own way, that we are longing for the time when there will be peace and harmony and brotherhood and friendship in the whole world. That is the dream of the seder. That is why Jews flock to the seder, because Jews know that they have to have a dream in order to live. It is not just enough to fulfill your physical needs. It is not just enough to have a closet filled with clothes and a fancy car and lots of food. You need also a dream, and with fulfilling that dream you can feel life's full meaning and you accomplish great things, but without a dream it is hard to live. Without a dream you can fall prey to alcohol and drugs and other nefarious things.

I am reminded of the story they tell about a man who came to a psychiatrist and he was taking therapy for 3 years. At the end of the 3 years the psychiatrist came to him and said, "Mr. Goldberg, I have very good news for you. It very rarely happens, but in your case after 3 years I can say that you are completely cured." A very sad look came over Mr. Goldberg's face. The psychiatrist looked at him and said, "What's the matter? I thought you would be thrilled." Mr. Goldberg said, "Listen, 3 years ago I thought I was Moshe Rabbeinu and now I am a nothing." We all have to have dreams. With dreams we are important. We know we count and we are counted on and life has great meaning. The Jewish dream is a dream of universal freedom with the redemption of the world and

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all mankind. Let us all do our part to fulfill this dream. Let us open the door for Elijah. Let us do our part so that quickly the world will be redeemed and the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.