

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

The Seder itself should start as early as possible, but the lighting of the candles and Kiddush should not be made before 8:32 PM. For the four cups we should make sure that we have cups not smaller than 3.3 oz. and not much larger than that, so that we can handle the wine we drink. It is of great importance that if at all possible we should drink specifically wine, even women and girls (above Bas Mitzvah). If we drink wine that has only 3.5% alcohol, and drink only the majority of a cup that has the accurate *shiur* (measurement), and drink water (no Shehakol needed if it is on the table) right afterwards, most people should not have a problem with drinking four cups of wine. The most proper practice is to drink the whole cup; if this is difficult, then one should drink the majority of the cup. Under exceptional circumstances, one may drink the majority of a *revi'is* (1.7 oz.) even if the cup is larger than a *revi'is*. The wine should preferably be drunk in no more than two sips, and within about 30 seconds; however, if it takes as long as 4 minutes it is also acceptable. If men or boys forgot to do *hasaivah* (leaning) during the first two cups, they must drink them again, and the same is true if we ate the Matzah, *korech* or *afikomen* without *haseivah*, but if one either said *bircas hamazon*, or even if he just washed *mayim acharonim*, he does not eat the *afikomen* again. For Matzah, the person(s) making HaMotzi should eat a larger *shi'ur* of about 2/3 of a *machine* Matzah (or 1/2 of a hand Matzah), while everyone else should eat 3/5 of a machine (or 1/3 of a hand. For Korech and Afikomen, we're less strict and the equivalent of 1/3 of a machine Matzah (or 1/4 of hand Matzah) should be enough. The *shiur* of *maror* is one fl. ounce. The most preferred *maror* is romaine lettuce, as long as it is bug free, and B"H, we have many good choices of lettuce that could easily be made bug free. There are those who have a *minhag* to eat horseradish, perhaps for the reason that back in Europe there was no lettuce available during this time of the year, or perhaps because of the bug problem, but we should be aware that in *halacha* romaine lettuce has precedence; furthermore, eating a full *shiur* of horseradish is also very difficult. Everyone should try to be present and follow as much of the Haggada as possible. The minimum is Ma Nishtana, the ten Makkos, and from Rabban Gamliel through the second cup. Every family has to balance the correct length of their Maggid, but the top priority is that the children should be up and awake for the Matzah and Maror. To accomplish this, one might be better off leaving some of the commentaries for the *se'uda*. This year, we also have a long Shabbos morning, which could be used as an opportunity for the children to say the many *divrei* Torah they learned in Yeshiva. One of the main purposes of the Haggadah is that one should attain the feeling as though he or she personally left Mitzrayim, and we should keep this in mind as we go through the explanation of the Haggadah: that our goal is to try to get to that feeling, and not to present a *shiur* on the details of the *p'shat* or the *mefarshim*. . If there are three men at the Seder, when saying *hodu* and *anna* Hashem in Hallel, the leader of the Seder should lead it, and the other two respond as done during *davening*. Let us remember that these are very precious *mitzvos*, that we have an opportunity to do only once a year (in *chutz la'aretz*, twice, but we hope that this practice will not continue for much longer at all), and through the merit of their fulfillment we should merit to bring the *korban* Pesach in Yerushalayim very soon, maybe even this year, Amen.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH...By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (**Malachi 3:4-23**)

Many *mefarshim* (Rashi, Tosafos et al.) attribute the name Shabbos Hagadol to the great miracle that happened to the Jews in Egypt on the Shabbos before the Exodus. On that day, the 10th of Nisan, the Jews brought into their homes lambs for the Korban Pesach. When the Egyptians saw what they were doing to their 'gods' they wanted to punish the Jews, but Hashem caused them to be stricken with all sorts of unusual afflictions and the Jews were saved. Some point to the words in the last *pasuk* of the Haftara as the reason it is read on this Shabbos, **הנה אנכי והנורא הגדול והנורא** *הנה אנכי והנורא הגדול והנורא*, but in reality, it is more likely that it is the Navi's message of the future *geula* which mirrors the message of *geula* that the Jews experienced their last Shabbos in Egypt! Another connection lies in the Navi's admonition of the people for not bringing *ma'aser*. Pesach is the time that Chazal tell us (Rosh Hashana 1:2) that the world's food supply is judged. People find all sorts of excuses for not fulfilling their *tzedaka* obligations, especially at Pesach time when the Yom Tov outlays are especially high! But the Navi tells us that Hashem offers us an unprecedented opportunity: Test Me! Do your part, give what you are commanded to the poor, and I promise that you will never regret it!

POINT OF INTEREST: In the **יוצר** for Shabbos Hagadol we find a synopsis of all the laws relating to Pesach; it is well worth reciting this **יוצר**. Interestingly, the author writes that Afikomen must be eaten **בכריכה** (together with Maror, as by Korech). Though some translators, obviously reluctant to accept such a custom, interpret **כריכה** here to mean 'break bread', Rashi, Rashbam, Rosh and others all bring down the ruling that Afikomen is eaten with Maror, just as Hillel did in the Bais HaMikdash...

A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

גדש...ולבשם - **כתנת בד קדש** - The clothes of the Kohen Gadol in which he performed the Avodah were worn on only one occasion, and then they were "retired". There is a *remez* to this in the word **גדש**, which can be rearranged to read **בדלו** - they disintegrated right then and there.

