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The Kollel Kashering evening will take place on Monday night Nissan 10 (March 26), 5:30-8:30pm in the Werdiger Hall kitchen, Please ensure that all Keilim being koshered are thoroughly clean and have not been used in the past 24 hours.

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Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא
חידוש Chiddush



In this Edition

The Freedom of Renewal **P.1**

Making Charoses on Shabbos **P.2**

The Freedom of Renewal

This Shabbos we lein Parshas Hachodesh, the final of the four Parshios read in the lead up to Pesach.

While the Jews were still in Egypt, on the threshold of the Exodus, Hashem transmits the first Mitzvah - a directive to the Beis Din to declare and sanctify the new moon and determine the months of the calendar.

Surely a Mitzvah such as the belief in G-d or the prohibition on idolatry would be more appropriate as G-d's first command to the Jewish people? What is so unique about this Mitzvah that it was given first? And what is the connection between the calendar and the Exodus?

The Jewish calendar is based on the cycle of the moon. The Hebrew term for a month is Chodesh, coming from the word Chadash, meaning new. The renewal of the moon, when the first crescent of sunlight reflects once again on its surface, marks the start of each month.

The Sfas Emes explains the centrality of this Mitzvah as follows: The opening verse of Hachodesh (the passage concerning the new moon) literally reads this renewal (HaChodesh) shall be to you. The Mitzvah exhorts us to emulate the moon and its newness.

In Torah law, after a lapse of 30 days something becomes old and status-quo. For example the blessing recited on seeing the ocean is only said if one has not seen the ocean in 30 days. The Molad – the birth of the new moon, takes place every 29 days, 12 hours and 793 parts of an hour. The moon is in a constant cycle of renewal, never reaching a state of inertia.

Complacency is the ultimate form of slavery, one which is not imposed upon us by others but self-inflicted. Statements such as 'sorry, that is just who I am' or 'this is my level of observance, I don't need to do any more' are tell-tale symptoms of this inner Pharaoh. Like the moon we cannot become fixed in our ways, particularly concerning our spiritual development. To experience true freedom we must be like the moon, the perpetual born-again, exercising our choice to supersede the constraints of stagnancy. There is always room for improvement, always more to learn and constant room for growth.

Whilst a lunar renewal takes place every Rosh Chodesh, Rosh Chodesh Nissan is the head of all of the months. If so, the first of Nissan represents the essence of the idea of regeneration characterizing the lunar calendar.

There is a debate in the Gemara as to when the world was created: Rabbi Eliezer maintains that it was on the 1st of Tishrei – Rosh Hashona. Rabbi Yehoshua is of the opinion that it was the first of Nissan. The mystics explain that the two views are not in contradiction. Hashem's original thought to create took place in Nissan. Nissan represents creation in potential, whereas Tishrei marks creation in actuality.

The first of Tishrei is the Rosh Hashona of physicality and the natural order in which Hashem's presence is concealed. Rosh Chodesh Nissan, a month of miracles, is the Rosh Hashona of spirituality and G-dly revelation within the world. Whilst creation was about contracting G-dliness to create a finite existence, the Exodus is associated with miracles and the suspension of the veil of nature.

Seeing the world as dictated by the forces of nature is the same slavery as complacency: The belief that creation was a one-off event and that nature is now fixed in motion. For the rest of the world this mind-frame is acceptable and thus the first of Tishrei celebrates the New Year for all existence and all of mankind.

But for the Jews "this month (Nissan) shall be for you the first of months". Hashem imbued our souls with the Nissan perspective that neither nature, temperament nor circumstance can dictate how things should be. Through Torah and Mitzvos we connect to G-d who in His goodness renews daily, constantly the work of creation and can change ourselves and our world for the good.

Our sages teach that just as our ancestors were redeemed in Nissan so will the final redemption take place in Nissan. Then we will witness the revelation, as described by the prophet Isaiah in the special Haftorah reading for Rosh Chodesh, of the *Shamayim HaChadashim veHaaretz HaChadasha* – a new world reality where the heavens and earth will no longer conceal but reveal openly the presence of Hashem

Making Charoses when Pesach falls on Shabbos

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

One of the 39 Melachos is *Losh* - kneading. *Losh* is the act of binding small particles together with a liquid to form a solid or semi-solid mass. The Melacha of *Losh* is not limited to flour. All fine particles (בני גיבול) are subject to the Torah prohibition when mixed with liquid to form a thick mixture. Examples would include mixing soil with water to make mud or making instant mashed potatoes.

There is a Machlokes Rishonim whether the Melacha Deoraisa of *Losh* applies to coarser particles such as bran (לאו בני גיבול). The Shulchan Aruch (OC 321:14-16) brings both opinions.

The Lenient Opinion

According to the first opinion, coarse particles do not resemble flour and are therefore only subject to a Rabbinic prohibition of *Losh*. The Rabbis only apply this prohibition when making a large quantity at a time. However, a small mixture can be made even if it forms a thick mixture or solid mass. This is because making a small mixture is considered a *Shinui*.

Chaza"l allow one to make a large quantity of the mixture under the following conditions;

1. Only a mixture of a loose consistency (i.e. runny) can be made.
2. A two-fold *Shinui* is required when combining the liquid and particles.

The first *Shinui* is done by reversing the regular order of adding the ingredients; if the particles are usually placed first and the liquid added afterwards (for example when making baby cereal), on Shabbos the liquid should be placed in the bowl first.

A second *Shinui* is required for mixing which must be done either by using one's finger, shaking the bowl, or using a spoon /fork in criss-cross strokes.

The Stricter Opinion

According to the second opinion, there is no distinction between fine and coarser particles and both are subject to the Torah prohibition. Furthermore, the prohibition applies not only when stirring or mixing the ingredients together. It also applies when just adding the liquid (without mixing), since this will create some degree of bonding as well.

According to this opinion, there is no way to make a thick mixture on Shabbos, even if just a

small quantity. The only permissibility would be if some liquid was already added before Shabbos. More liquid could then be added on Shabbos even if the mixture remains thick.

If the mixture is loose, it is only subject to a Rabbinic prohibition and therefore can be made if the order of adding ingredients is reversed and a *Shinui* is used when mixing (as discussed above for the lenient opinion).

Practical scenarios

Scenarios which involve the Halachos of *Losh* include; mixing oil or mayonnaise with egg of tuna, making vitabrits or baby cereals or adding mayonnaise to grated horseradish etc.

In all cases it is permissible where the pieces are significantly large and will retain their distinct identity even when mixed with the liquid as this does not resemble *Losh*. Therefore one may add mayonnaise to potato salad or coleslaw. Similarly pieces of fruit may be mixed into yoghurt.

Charoses on Pesach which falls on Shabbos

Charoses is made by mixing finely chopped fruits, nuts and spices (for those who use spices during Pesach) to make a thick mixture which resembles the mortar. It should then be softened by adding wine (preferably red as a remembrance of the blood). Since the wine acts to bind the pieces together, the making of Charoses is subject to the laws of *Losh*.

Losh is one of the Melachos of food preparation which is permissible on Yomtov. When Yomtov falls on a weekday, Charoses can be made in the regular manner. However, when Pesach falls on Shabbos (as it does this year), the Melacha of *Losh* does apply.

Therefore the Alter Rebbe (OC 473:34) rules that one should add the wine to soften the mixture before Shabbos.

If one forgot to add the wine before Shabbos, they should make the Charoses on Shabbos employing the double-*Shinui* discussed above. The wine should be placed into the bowl and then adding the Charoses mixture (reversed order). The mixing should then be done with a *Shinui* - either mixing with one's finger or by moving the bowl around. This ruling is based on the Magen Avraham.

It is clear that the ruling of the Magen Avraham and Alter Rebbe follow the stricter opinion quoted above that considers the mere adding of liquid on Shabbos as an act of *Losh*, even without any

mixing.

Therefore it is surprising that both the Magen Avraham and the Alter Rebbe do not specify that even with the *Shinui* one may not make a thick mixture.

Machtzis Hashekel and Pri Megadim both write that the Magen Avraham is relying on his earlier ruling in the laws of Shabbos, which follows the stricter opinion in *Losh*.

Similarly the Ketzos Hashulchan (130:9) writes that in the laws of Pesach, the Alter Rebbe relies on his earlier ruling in hilchos Shabbos - as evidenced by the Alter Rebbe referring us to what he has written in Simon 321.

(Whilst we do not have the conclusion of Simon 321 from the Alter Rebbe, in Simon 324 the Alter Rebbe discusses the mixing of bran for one's animals on Shabbos. There he brings the two opinions and writes that we have already explained that one should follow the stringent opinion).

Therefore, even though Charoses should be thick to resemble mortar, if it was not made before Shabbos, only a mixture of loose consistency can be made (employing the *Shinui* above).

It remains preferable that the Charoses be made before Shabbos. (For those who don't wet the Matzah, some Charoses should be left without wine to use for Korech).

Chabad minhog is to prepare the Charoses fruits and nuts before the Seder and to only add the wine at the Seder before dipping the Marror. This practice is brought by the Chok Yaakov. (The Rebbe would place some of the dry Charoses into the wine which had spilled into the plate under the Kiddush cup).

Those who still wish to follow this minhog when Pesach falls on Shabbos should take care to follow the guidelines described above, including to be certain that there is sufficient wine in the plate to ensure that the resulting mixture will be a loose one.

Additional Concerns

If the Charoses was not made in advance, on Shabbos the fruits and nuts must be chopped just before the beginning of the Seder, using a knife. One may not use a greater, grinder or masher. The pieces should also be cut larger than they usually would be.