

Dvar Torah for Pesach

written by breslov.org

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Based on Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom #149

Rebbe Nachman said that if all he knew and all he taught the world was the story The Seven Beggars,* that alone would have made him unique.

The Seven Beggars, has anyone who has read it knows, is (in part) a story of the world's Exodus, of the slow and often painful progress/history that humankind has and will live through till its ultimate redemption.

Before you know it, we will be telling a story of exile and exodus.

How do you joyfully tell a story that is so pain-filled and blood-soaked, no matter how festive the outcome? I think we can find (at least) two ideas from the way The Seven Beggars came to be told.

A number of times during the ten or so days over which the story was told, the Rebbe mentioned that he wanted to "know" the story, even though he was the one who was telling it! How did the Rebbe start telling the story? At the Shabbat night meal he became aware that Reb Noson, his foremost disciple had sent a letter to another close chassid, Reb Naftali, telling him to be happy. Rebbe Nachman said to those present, "I will tell will you how people used to be happy!"

The Rebbe began the telling on Shabbat. Shabbat is the goal of the world, the tranquil Utopia that we pray for. We need to put ourselves in something even deeper than the usual Shabbat state of mind we may have. We need a Shabbat atmosphere so permeating that it is like air, unnoticed, but totally enveloping. From such a place, the horrendous undergoes a transfiguration and history itself becomes liberated from the

constricted thinking which now holds us prisoner. (But we are still very much in this pre-Shabbat era of history. So we must chew and taste the maror, the bitter herb, to remind us that we have not finished our work.)

The Rebbe began the telling with a curious prequel, the Prince's Coronation Ball. At the height of the festivities the King announces that his son will suffer a downfall. Being forewarned he can be forearmed. The telling of the Exodus, too, has a curious prequel: the Kiddush. On one hand, Kiddush celebrates the selection and elevation of the Jewish people. On the other hand, the accompanying Shehechiyanu (Who has kept us alive) blessing reminds us that our chosenness contains within it certain inevitable hardships and difficult times.

Knowing that that the fulfillment of our mission, responsibility and tikkun must be this way, gives us eyes for hope when all we see is affliction and agony.

Then we can tell some story!

agutn Shabbos!

Shabbat Shalom!

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