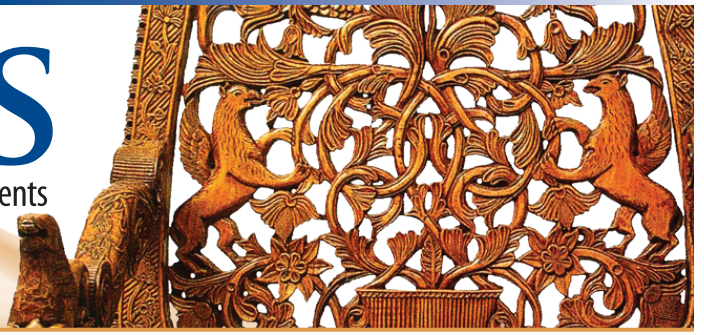


# PATHWAYS

Crossing the Narrow Bridge with Rebbe Nachman and His Students

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## One Day at a Time

By Yossi Katz

**“THE ARCHITECT OF the world never does the same thing twice. Every day is an entirely new creation” –**  
Reb Noson of Breslov

People like to say, “Today is a new day.” There’s an incredible amount of wisdom in that expression. That’s because we have a tendency to view time as one complete unit, and therefore get caught up in the past. If yesterday was a “bad” day, it means today doesn’t have much of a chance. But in truth, each day is a new creation and a new opportunity. This is what is meant by what we say in our prayers, “He who renews every day the Act of Creation.”

The Torah prescribes a day-based waiting period depending on the severity of the impurity with which a person comes in contact. For example, one who has a minor encounter, like a seminal emission, only has to wait until the sun sets and the next day begins. Someone with a severe impurity, like being in contact with a corpse, requires a seven-day waiting period until he can be purified. This is because each day is different and unique; each day has its own power to cleanse and add additional holiness.

Even after the one who came in contact with a serious impurity has waited seven days and immersed himself in the holy waters of the *mikvah*, the Torah says, “And when the sun is down, he shall be clean; and afterward *he may eat of the holy things*” (Leviticus 22:7). Why should he have to wait? He’s already waited the required amount of days and immersed – shouldn’t that be enough? No, because by waiting just a bit more for the sun to set, he merits receiving the holiness of an additional day – an entirely new creation.

This teaching is very applicable to our own lives. If we feel “unholy” and are dismayed at the prospect of engaging in sincere Torah study, prayer or other spiritual devotions, we should realize that every day is a new opportunity. What we didn’t take advantage of yesterday is no longer applicable, because God never creates the same day twice. We must say to ourselves, “Today I have the ability to receive something entirely new that will never come into existence again! I need to visualize today as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!”

But what if I take the initiative, yet don’t feel purified? I must not be discouraged. Depending on the extent of my impurities, I must now be patient and count each day, but in the end, I, too, will “eat of the holy things.”

During Pesach we strive to become a free people. The slavery we are freed from is most likely not the physical type. It’s not a matter of running away from a taskmaster with a whip, or a boss with a big mouth. The freedom we experience during this time is about recognizing that we have a Creator and that everything, even seemingly routine and natural occurrences, are under His direct control. When we accept that He is in charge, and that no matter what difficulties and craziness we experience, everything is proceeding according to plan, we become free people. This is especially important to remember while preparing for Pesach itself, when we may feel overwhelmed by the enormous amount of work needed to properly usher in this Yom Tov.

Right now is the perfect opportunity to begin living in the moment. Don’t get caught up worrying about yesterday or being stressed about tomorrow. We have the power to live each day as it comes if we acknowledge that God is in charge. It was He who freed us from slavery in Egypt to bring us to the Land of Israel, and it is He who is waiting to redeem us from our stresses and worries to bring us to personal freedom and joy, Amen!

*Based on Likutey Halakhot,  
Hilkhot Birkhot HaShachar 5:41*

# The True Taste of Pesach

By Yehudis Golshevsky

**THE GRINDING POVERTY** suffered by ordinary people in Ukraine over a hundred years ago is hard for us to imagine. Pesach was especially difficult for the poor. So many expenses ... where was the money supposed to come from?

Reb Noson was no stranger to poverty. One year his family lacked the most basic requirements, such as matzah. As they drew water for Pesach, Reb Noson began to dance. He joyously proclaimed, "Thank God we have water for the coming holiday!"

On a different occasion, Reb Noson overheard a chassid saying to his friend, "Pesach is coming and I still don't have what I need. How can I possibly get everything in time?"

The poor man's pain was obvious. Reb Noson spoke quickly to allay the man's fears: "Don't worry. You will certainly have your physical requirements for the holiday." Then he wondered aloud, "But how can one merit to bring in the Pesach itself?!"

Reb Levi Yitzchok Bender explained that Reb Noson meant this should be our main concern. The matzos, clothing and wine will all work out in the end. But how can we be sure to absorb the inner light and purpose of this precious holiday?

We find a similar Yom Tov story that took place during Sukkot. Reb Nachman of Tulchin labored tirelessly to erect Reb Noson's sukkah. That evening, while sitting in the sukkah, Reb Nachman remarked, "There is a different feeling of joy and satisfaction when sitting in a sukkah that one has worked very hard to build." Reb Noson replied, "You have not yet tried this. Spend an entire day crying out to God: 'Master of the Universe! Let me taste the true taste of sukkah!' Then see what feelings a person can experience in the sukkah."

Rebbe Nachman once said, "Why do you work so hard when nothing will remain? Labor less so that something will remain!"

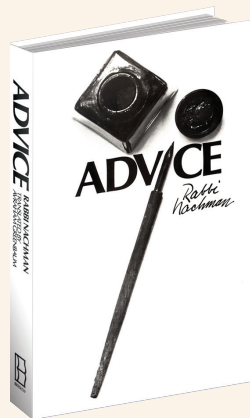
As one labors for the material things of this world, his time is taken up. But he must eventually leave it all behind. By working less for the physical, a person can have time for that which does remain with him — his spiritual accomplishments.

*Based on Siach Sarfey Kodesh, III, 172; V, 88; I, 649; I, 263; Aveneha Barzel, p. 52, #12.*

## SIDEPATH

**Advice (Likutey Etzot) translated by Avraham Greenbaum**

**AWE AND DEVOTION.** 25. God's main joy and pleasure come only from this lowly world of ours. God has the whole array of angels, *seraphim, chayot, ophanim* and all the higher worlds—all of them serving Him. But when we in this lowly world magnify and sanctify His Name and carry out His will, it gives Him the greatest joy, for He sees the service of this lowly world rise to the realms above (*Likutey Moharan II, 4:7*).



26. When people study and discuss one of the original Torah concepts of the true tzaddikim, they can become filled with the fear of Heaven (*ibid. II, 4:13*).

27. Your main aim should be to serve God with simplicity, with no ulterior motive. Follow His ways in order to know Him. This is what He wants. A person who serves God in order to earn the World to

Come is just hungry: he wants to fill his stomach with the reward. Even so, it is better to serve God for the sake of the reward of the World to Come than it is to chase after this world. At least someone who serves God for the sake of the reward is wiser than one who struggles for this world all his life. This world is transient, but the World to Come is the world of eternal life. Even so, the main aim should be to serve God with no ulterior motive whatsoever (*ibid. II, 37*).



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*The photo on the front is a close-up of Rebbe Nachman's chair, which is displayed in the main Breslov synagogue in Jerusalem.*