

The holiday of Pesah is called Shabbat in the Torah, as in "from the day after the Sabbath" (Lev. 23:15). Pesah is like Shabbat, of which Scripture says "remember" and "keep." Of Pesah too it says: "this day will be a remembrance for you" (Ex. 12:14) or "so that you remember the day you came out of Egypt" (Deut. 16:3) and "Keep the month of Aviv" (Deut. 16:1); "Keep the matzot" (Ex. 12:17). For memory is a point within, one where there is no forgetfulness. Since this point is revealed within the souls of Israel on Shabbat, it has to be "kept" or guarded from flowing into that place where forgetting occurs. That is why "keep" and "remember" were said [in the Ten Commandments] in a single utterance.

The same is true of the redemption from Egypt. On every Pesah a Jew becomes like a new person, like the newborn child each of us was as we came forth from Egypt. The point implanted by God within our hearts is renewed. That point is called *lehem 'oni* (poor people's bread), because it is totally without expansion. Matzah is just the dough itself, not having changed through fermentation. Every Jew has this inner place, the gift of God. Our task is really to expand that point, to draw all our deeds to follow it. This is our job throughout the year, for better or worse. But this holiday of matzot is the time when the point itself is renewed, purified from any defilement. Therefore, it has to be guarded from any "ferment" or change on this holiday.

"Keep the matzot, for on this very day I brought the children of Israel forth from the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:17)—*be'etsem* ("this very day") refers to that inward point, just as it is in itself (*be'atsmo*), without any change. This is why it needs "keeping." "This day is a remembrance"—for the renewal of that point within, the point of memory. One could also read it "a remembrance" indeed, a day that reminds us of the real reason we were created in this world: to do His will. . . .

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"The more one tells about the Exodus from Egypt, the more praiseworthy." For the Exodus from Egypt never ends, as Scripture says: "[So that you will remember the day when you went out of Egypt] all the days of your life" (Deut. 16:3). In the act of telling about the Exodus, the miracle itself is continually fulfilled and enhanced. Since this tale of the Exodus is a section of Torah, it has to go on forever. That is why the rabbis added to the tale, saying that there were really fifty plagues rather than ten, and even more. Now, they felt, the fifty could be revealed, while previously they had been hidden within the ten. That's what telling the tale does: it keeps drawing out further potential. The real point of the story is that we are liberated from the force of evil. The root of that force was back there in Egypt, but the specifics of our liberation are worked out each year.

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