

MOSHIACH SEUDA

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
...a closer look at the holidays



HANDBOOK



*A How to Guide on Conducting
a Meaningful Moshich Seuda*

Introduction:

The Rebbe instituted and encouraged for every person, men and women, to attend a Moshiach seuda, so we have to do whatever it takes to bring people in and encourage them to drink four cups. The purpose is to inspire every single Jew that there is a tangible, hisgalus of the Ohr of Moshiach, on Acharon Shel Pesach, which brings us all a real personal geulah, and one step closer to the universal Geulah.

The Goal: Inspire every participant (no matter who they are) that there is an actual revelation of Moshiach right now, which affects our very lives and causes a personal Geulah

~ The Moshiach Seuda ~

The Annual Banquet of Moshiach

Pesach is a holiday of freedom. We celebrate and relive our redemption from the Egyptian exile over three thousand years ago. But its real purpose is to inspire ourselves for the imminent future redemption, that will take place very shortly in our very own lives.

We start with the two sedorim, two evenings filled with customs and meaning designed to help us relive the days in Egypt as if we were just there, and remember the bitter exile and the awesome redemption as if we personally experienced it.

Then come the last days. The Jewish people suddenly find themselves trapped by the sea, about to see their short-lived freedom about to come to a horrific end, and moments later they see the amazing miracle of the splitting of the sea, and all the Jewish people finally escape their pursuing captors. And, moments later, when the waters settle, and they see the entire Egyptian army destroyed, they finally experience another redemption, a spiritual and emotional one, as they realize that those dark days of exile are really over, because the mighty Egyptian nation is now gone forever.

It was not something they could ever have imagined, but upon seeing the Egyptian army dead on the seashore, finally the truth hit home: That the Jewish nation will never ever be tormented by these people ever again, for they have been completely and utterly obliterated.

Even though we went out of Egypt, it was not a complete redemption and we remain in a different exile. It's less physically demanding, we aren't forced to build cities, or flogged and beaten daily, but our distraction from G-d and the challenge focus on spirituality, and G-d's truth, remains just the same. The only difference is that we now have even harder taskmasters controlling us: Ourselves.

Then comes Acharon Shel Pesach: A day where we focus exclusively on taking all the lessons and all of our inspiration of Pesach, from the seder to the splitting of the sea, and applying it to our daily lives, to help us escape our current exile.

We have to realize that world the way we see it, will soon be changed forever. Evil, which we see as an integral part of life, which we cannot imagine living without, will soon be completely destroyed. There might come a time where we will find ourselves trapped by it, and it may even look like the end of our lives! But then suddenly, Moshaich will come, and it will be gone forever.

One the very last day of Pesach, during the very last hours of the day, the power of redemption is at its greatest.

It is at this moment that we can tap into the inspiration and use it to 'jump' (Pesach) out of our current exile.

We each have our own challenges. For some it's keeping shabbos, for others it is giving charity, for some it's learning and for other it's being more patient and understanding of others. If challenged, we might just answer 'This is how I am', 'this is me, I can't change'. But the truth is that these are challenges we all have to face eventually, we have to break out of these personal exiles and limitations. And we can harness the essence of Pesach and redemption to propel our lives to a level we could not usually reach on our own.

The last hours of the Pesach holiday are when this energy is strongest. It's when we are most inspired. We have fulfilled all the customs of the six days of Pesach, and now we have drunk the four cups of wine, we have eaten the Matza, we have listened, we have sung, we have resolved and we have become uplifted.

And at the last few moments, as we all close our eyes, singing and dancing together, this is the very moment when we will feel that Moshiach is actually here, when we can believe that if we would only open our eyes, we would see him right there dancing with us. And if we truly believe that, with all our hearts, then when we open them, he will finally be here.

Minhogim

1. Wash and Eat Matzah
2. Other food is usually brought for a Seudah
3. Drink Four Cups of Wine.
 - a. There should be hefsek between each cup of at least a few minutes (similar to the seder), and one announce so it is clear which cup we are up to.
 - b. The Rebbe mentioned that the four kosos are so important that even if someone would come after havdoloh, he should still drink four Kosos.
 - c. One does not have to drink full kosos (ideally rov, minimum would be reviiis)
 - d. The cups are drunk to bring bepiol the geulah haamitis vehashleima.
4. Farbrengen, with Divrei Torah especially about Geulah and Moshiach
 - a. Focus on strengthening, internalizing and actualizing our belief in Moshiach.
5. Sing Various Nigunim
 - a. The Rebbe also used to sing Hupp Cossack and Nyezuritzi.
 - b. A Nigun from each of the Rabbeim
6. It is customary to end the Moshiach Seuda with all participants dancing to a lively tune, this custom is known as the Dance of Moshiach,

Suggested Activities

1. Prepare a handout on Moshiach concepts to stimulate discussion about what moshiach is.
2. Try to bust some of the popular misconceptions of Moshiach, like:
 - a. 'Why isn't Moshiach Mentioned in the Torah?'
 - b. How is it possible for Moshiach to come today if things are so bad in the world?
3. Each person can read or prepare something you give them.
4. Ask around the table 'what does Moshiach mean to you?' or 'Talk about a time you experienced a personal geulah in some way' or 'What can we do to live in a more geulah way today?'
5. Inspire people that every action we do should be permeated with the focus on moshiach. I.e. THIS mitzvah is directly bringing Moshaich.
6. Other Songs to sing:
 - a. Seder Songs: Ve Hi Sehomdo, Dayeu, Al acahaas etc.
 - b. Moshiach Songs: Vekorev, We Want Moshiach Now, Ad mosai, Mimitzrayim
 - c. Song about Seudas Moshiach (Seudanyu...), for old-timers in Yiddish, or English translation.

Preparation

1. Set out extra Matzah, wine and grape Juice.
2. Prepare interesting handouts on Moshiach for them to read during the Seuda.

Running a Moshiach Seuda

Tip: Although all the Rabbeim's nigunnim are usually sung together at the end, it is usually more effective for a Chabad House crowd if they are spread out during the whole Moshiach Seuda.

1. Right after Mincha wash and sit down to the Seuda.
2. After everyone is settled down, announce to pour the first cup

First Cup

- *Give a basic overview of the meaning and purpose of the Moshiach Seuda, especially how special this time is, and how there is a special revelation of the Or of Moshiach.*
- *Some communities may need an introduction to Moshiach – (suggestion: teach or hand out the last two prokim of the Rambam.), which should be made personal and strongly connected to each of our individual challenges and limitations, our own mitzrayim.*

History

The Baal Shem Tov initiated the custom of a third meal at the very end of Pesach. The meal, became known as the ‘Moshiach Seuda’, the feast for Moshiach.

It started as a custom to remember his own miraculous story of himself and his daughter safely returning from his final attempt to reach Israel, however in Lubavitch, we commemorate this as the third Seuda of Acharon Shel Pesach, while other Chassidim have also a third meal but as a Seudas Hodaa for the miracle of the Baal Shem Tov, and some follow a litvisher minhag to have a seudah because the Gr”a would wash and eat Matzah to say goodbye as he would not eat Matzah an entire year. So there is a special achdus in this minhag too.

Development

Directly mirroring the transmutation of the teachings of Chassidus (as seen for example in the Maamorim of Basi Legani) that were adapted, refined and expounded by each successive generation of Chabad Rabbeim, each generation added customs and symbolism to the Moshiach Seuda.

Originally, the Seuda consisted of little more than just eating Matzah, however in the Mittler Rebbe added the element of a farbrengen, and the Rebbe Rashab instituted an additional custom that four cups of wine should be drunk at the Moshiach Seuda.

- The Rebbe Rashab then exclaimed “THIS is moshiach seda.”, making it clear horaa for all future generations.
- The Seuda was held in Tomchei Temimim Yeshiva, and it was the first meal that all bochurim ate together on Pesach.
- The wine was always connected to Tomchei Temimim, because they are the Chayolei Beis Dovid who are on the front lines, and will be the ones to bring moshiach. Originally people would try to specifically purchase wine owned by, Tomchei Temimim.
- The year that the Rebbe Rashab instituted the custom of drinking the wine, was the year he began his ground breaking Chassidic text known as ‘Samach Vov’. This unique revelation of Chassidus created a hachana and keli for Moshiach that was seen in this innovation at the Seuda.
- Details: The Rebbe Rashab also writes a detailed calculation about a Keitz in samach vov (Maamorim 5663 – p. 253)

The Moshiach Seuda was still primarily conducted by the students of Tomchei Temimim, (and part of the Chassidim), however the frierdiker Rebbe began to encourage every single Chassid to participate, and also said that in addition to drinking wine and eating matzah they should dance a moshiach dance.

The Rebbe expanded this further, including even those who may not consider themselves to be Chassidim, and especially encouraging that every single person should make sure to drink the four kosos (not just temimim)

If it is so special, why wasn't it known about previously?

- Just like Chassidus, it was only revealed in later generations, that are darker and closer to Moshiach. (Midrash on 'Dovor beito mah tov', that Matan Torah was exactly 26 generations after creation, although Torah was prepared from day one. This shows that all the revelations of Torah are carefully prepared and planned, and Hashem waits for the correct time to reveal each one)
- The Moshiach Seudah was specifically revealed by the Baal Shem Tov because it is connected with the spread of Chassidus. This is because Hafotzas Hamaayanus is the method to bringing Moshiach (Aymosay ko'osi mar),
- Al Pi Kaballah: Matza represents Chochma, Abba, and the number Three. And Wine represents Bina, Eima, and the number Four. Matzah is lacking in taste, but wine has taste and joy. So the Baal Shem Tov began in the level of Chochma, and the Rebbe Rashab brought it into the level of Binah. (which is also bichlal the seder of the Rabbeim, to bring more Taanug into Torah)

L'chaim! Drink the first cup, "Ad Kan Kos Alef!
We now pour the second cup"

Second Cup

- *You can always make a L'chaim in memory of someone, or to wish a recovery or health for a member of the community, or to Israel. Keep stressing that this is a very special time.*
- *Sing an upbeat nigun (Ad Mosai, We want Moshiach Now etc...)*

Why do we eat and drink?

- Why do we have a physical seuda, why not a shiur, or learn Chassidus? Because we need to take physical actions to bring Moshiach. So too, to bring down this Ha'ora of Moshiach into something gashmi (just like a nevua or brocha from a Rebbe – which one reason the Rebbe gave out dollars) we need to do a physical thing like eat Matzah and drink wine. In addition, the food actually becomes part of us, so we are internalizing and making Moshiach part of us.
- The Ohr is here, we just have to internalize it. That's why we have the seuda and the four cups.

Why do we drink four cups?

- Just as the redemption from Egypt had four types of redemption, In the future G-d will pour 4 cups of nechomo and purniyos on the evil umos ho'olam.
- The wine and the four cups also relate to the four levels of Torah (pardes), which are the tool to bringing Moshiach.
- They also correspond to the four sons of the Hagaddah, the four expressions of Geulah, four olamos, and the 4 osiyos in shem havaye, and the four types of Teshuva (mentioned in Tanya)
- In addition, the four koses are shlo be'erech the ones drunk at the seder, because those remind us of the past geulah, while these reflect the upcoming redemption!
- Al Pi Kaballah: The Rebbe explains that the four cups we drink are in the order of Milmalah lematah in sefiros: Chocha bina, zoh maluchus,

L'chaim! Drink the second cup, "Ad Kan Kos Sheini!
We now begin the third cup"

Third Cup

- *Sing (Dayeu, Al acabaas etc.)*

Why is this time so special?

- On the day of Acharon Shel Pesach, today, there is a special, tremendous revelation connected to Moshiach. a gilui Or HaMoshiach, which we have to take advantage of.
- On Pesach, the pipe for Geulah was opened, so each year at this time, the power for geulah is strongest on Pesach, and as things are always stronger at the end, Acharon Shel Pesach is most powerful revelation of the Geulah, and specifically at the end of the day.
- Acharon Shel Pesach is not just auspicious day, it's much more. There is an actual ha'oroa of the energy of Moshiach, HERE bepoel. It is shayach for every person and affects us, no matter who, or what we do. The seuda only helps us realize it, and helps what's already there come real into our lives.
- The main purpose of Moshiach is to turn chol into kodesh, the most special time is right after tzeis. Because it is the end of Pesach, we are bringing the concept of Geulah into the entire year, and the concept of Moshiach gives us the power to turn our chol into kodesh, by pouring spirituality into our daily lives with inyonim of moshiach.
- Alter Rebbe's Vort: The difference between first and last days (Seder and Moshiach Seudah), is like a new doctor that has not practiced, and a doctor that has practiced. Back then, Moshe brought them to a Geulah, and taught them Torah in the midbar, but it was not real life, it was more like school and education (this what we commemorate at the seder). Now, we are going to experience the real thing, in a real golus. It's not practice. It's the real thing. This is what we celebrate at the Moshiach Seuda.

L'chaim! Drink the third cup, "Ad Kan Kos Shlishi!
We now begin the fourth cup"

Fourth Cup

Moshiach Seuda and Moshiach Points

- This is a test of bechol dor vador. Generally, we have to see ourselves going out of Mitzrayim (Keilu HU yatzah). So too at the seudas moshiach, we should visualize as if we are actually going out of Golus today!
- Moshiach is mentioned in Torah:
 1. "Rusach elokim marachafes" Medrash says ze rucho shel moshiach. Moshiach is already in this world from the start, we just have to reveal it.
 2. The Oz Yoshir is written in future tense, 'will sing'. The Torah is hinting that there will be a future redemption. Kriyas Yam suf revealed an energy that was above time, and this energy reveals on Shevi and Acharon shel Pesach. Also, on Shveii shel Pesach, just as one must feel 'as if' he just experienced kriyas yam suf, we can say that on Acharon Shel Pesach one must feel 'as if' he is actually experiencing the Geulah!
- A person could think that each day the world is getting worse (situation in Israel, economy etc) and harder to believe in Moshiach. A person can ask, how can we honestly believe he is coming? In'62 during the height of the cold war, the Rebbe answered the following: We can learn a lesson from Chizkyau (Haftorah of Acharon Shel Pesach) The army of Sancheirev came and surrounded the city. The army was huge and not possible to defeat, so Chizkiyahu just went to sleep, and there was a miracle that the entire army died overnight. (Sicha Achs'p 12)
- We say in the posuk 'Veyiskayem Bonu.... venochu' how can we ask G-d to give us ALL nevua? Do we have such a chutzpah? Only because we each have a nitzutz of Moshiach.
- Moshiach is yechida, and each one of us has the spirit of Moshiach because every single person is necessary in order to bring the Geulah!
- And if we bring a personal geulah to our personal golus, we affect others and then bring down yechida kolli.

L'chaim! Drink the fourth cup.
"Ad Kan Kos Revii!"

Seder Nigunnim

- *The Moshiach Seuda is the combined efforts of all the 7 Rabbeim, and it's known that by singing the niggun of a Rebbe we are able to bring their souls into our world. We therefore will sing seven songs for each of the Rabbeim. (Can be done out of order).*
- *Nigunnim are the pen of soul, they touch a person. Kol meorrer hakavono, they inspire us.*

Alter Rebbe

- **Nigunnim:** Sholosh Tnuos (Sholosh=3, sung because it also includes the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid), Keli Atah.
- **Vertlach:**
 1. Igeres Hatshuva: The concept of Geulah is revealing the essence of the Neshamah.
 2. Whatever we have in emunah now, we will have in understanding when the Geulah comes. Because our faith will be elevated to a higher level where it will be intellectually understood.
 3. Is Moshiach going to be a Chosid/Misnagid? If Chassid, maybe not all will follow, but if he is a Misnagid all will believe in him.
- **Story:** During the war between Russia and France, there was a disagreement between the Alter Rebbe and the other Tzaddikim of that generation as to who would be better for the Yidden. The Russians would cause the Jews to continue their physical hardships, but the French, with their enlightened views would cause great spiritual hardships. The tzaddikim realized that if the Alter Rebbe blew shofar first on Rosh Hashana, it would decide the outcome of the war, and Napoleon would lose. They got up early and davened quickly to try blow the shofar early, however the Alter Rebbe, realizing the serious stakes that were at hand, woke up early, and blew Shofar even before davening. This is how the Russians won and yiddishkeit was saved.

Tzemach Tzedek

- **Nigunnim:** Yemin Hashem
- **Vort:** The Tzemach Tzedek once said that Mashiach will delight in the company of unscholarly, self-sacrificing Jews. A unique chamber will be set aside for them, and they will be envied by the greatest of intellectuals.
- **Story:** the Alter Rebbe once saw the Tzemach Tzedek writing chassidus, and asked to see it but he did not want to show it to him. So the Alter Rebbe asked the Tzemach Tzedek's wife bring it to him, and after reading it, he immediately called in a few chassidim and recited the Brocha of Shehechyonu. He then explained: "Now that we have a chazokah of three generations of Chassidus, we know that chabad chasidus will continue until the coming of Moshiach!"

Mitteler Rebbe

- **Nigunnim:** Acapeliya
- **Vort:** In the Maamar podo vesholmes nafshi, the Rebbe explains that the only way to achieve a complete, lasting redemption, is through peace. (Other Geulahs were temporary) The Gemora says one who is involved in in Torah, Gmilas Chassadim and davens with a tzibbur, brings Geulah to this world. But to bring the Geulah in sholom, is davka through Torah (Chassidus).
- **Story:** There is a saying that the Mitteler Rebbe's Chassidim didn't need actually Moshiach. Because the whole point of Moshiach is "Umalah Haaretz deah es hashem", and because the Mitteler Rebbe would often say over chassidus for ten hours at a time, the Chassidim felt that they lived like in the times of Moshiach.

Rebbe Maharash

- **Nigunnim:** Lechatchila Aribber
- **Vort:** We will go out of golus, not running like mitzrayim. Because evil was still there they had to run, but in the future the Aibeshter will remove all the evil so we won't need to run!
- **Story:** There is a well-known story about the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe the Tzemach Tzedek concerning what the Alter Rebbe said: that the year 5608 was a keitz (a predetermined date for the coming of Moshiach).
The Rebbe Maharash approached his father the Tzemach Tzedek and he asked him: "What happened to the keitz?!" The Tzemach Tzedek responded: "What do you want; wasn't the Likkutei Torah published this year?" To this the Maharash replied, "The Jewish people want to have Moshiach in the literal sense – plain and simple!"

Rebbe Rashab

- **Nigunnim:** Nigun Rostov
- **Vort:** The ultimate redemption will be when Moshiach comes, because then the world will be able to maintain its refined level on its own
- **Story:** During the construction of the "Rostov Palace of Sport" on top of the Old Jewish Cemetery in 1940, The remains of the Rebbe Rashab were secretly moved by a devout group of chassidim to a different burial site where they are located to this day in the "Rostov Jewish Cemetery." While relocating his grave, the chassidim found his body full and not decomposed even though this was a full twenty years later.

Friediker Rebbe

- **Nigunnim:** Nigun Benoni
- When Moshiach will come (speedily in our time, amein), then we shall really long for the days of the exile. Then we will truly feel distress at our having neglected working at avoda; then will we indeed feel the deep pain caused by our lack of avoda. These days of exile are the days of avoda, to prepare ourselves for the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our time, amein. (H"Y)
- **Vort:** My father-in-law, the Rebbe, gave us a mission: "Stand ready to greet Moshiach." "Everything is already prepared, all that remains is to 'polish the buttons.'" The analogy of "polishing the buttons" is a precise one. In the overall picture, buttons are quite minor; they merely serve to fasten a garment onto the person. Spiritually speaking, "to polish the buttons" means that the Jewish People themselves, their "garments" and even their "buttons" are ready for the Redemption. They need to merely be "polished" in order for Moshiach to come.
In practical terms: Every Jew must do their part in this mission by enhancing their Torah study, observance of Mitzvos, and prayer. All those who work to earn a livelihood, should set aside a time during every work day for Torah study. They certainly want to run their businesses according to Torah guidelines, and fixed times for Torah study are a way to assure that a Jewish business runs according to Torah.

The Rebbe

- **Nigunnim:** Atah Vecahrtanu, Hu Elokeinu
- **Vertlach:**
 1. Hayom Yom: (The reason it's called seudas Moshiach):
"The presence of Mashiach is revealed on Acharon Shel Pesach, and this revelation has relevance to all Israel: Pesach is medaleg, "skipping over" and leil shimurim, In general the mood of Pesach is one of liberty. Then Pesach ends, and we find ourselves tumbling headlong into the outside world. This is where Mashiach's revealed presence comes into play - imbuing us with a powerful resoluteness that enables us to maintain ourselves in the world.
 2. By eating a meal that's referred to as Seudas Moshiach you are solidifying his arrival..
- **Stories:**
 1. Big Rov came to rebbe to discuss important inyonim connected to Rabbonus, the Rebbe said I am now at the Moshiach Seuda, why are you pulling me into these things? – I.e. this is such an auspicious time!
 2. Story of Avrom Moshe Deitsch at Moshiach Seudah in 1968. Rebbe told him to drink lchaim four times. After Pesach his father miraculously survived a heart attack, and the Rebbe told him that your refua came because your son said Lechiam on Acharon Shel Pesach
 3. Some Chassidim were once talking in the upstairs zal and were discussing how exactly will Moshiach come? The Rebbe was passing, and as he overheard the conversation, the Rebbe went over to the door and opened it saying "just like this".

Seuda Finale

- Hup Cossack (or Kol Bayaar)
Commemorates the Shpolar Zeide who personified the concept of Pidyon Shevuyim (similar to going out of golus).
- Story of the dancing bear, how the Shopleh Zeide would dance before Russian noblemen to entertain them, in order to free his fellow Jews from captivity. Y”L that this is how we save people today!!! Are we really this? Maybe we just dress up as a (little less scary) Rabbi, in order to save people spiritually.
- Nigun Hachono
- Explain the Meaning of Daled Bovos.... And why we need a Hachono.
 1. Daled Bovos
 2. Nyezuritzi
- It is customary to end the Moshiach Seuda with all participants dancing to a lively tune, this custom is known as the Dance of Moshiach, for the Guelah is said to come like it was in Egypt with '(Hashem) dancing on the mountains'. (not just physically, but actually skipping time and shortening the golus). Also this inspires us to 'jump and dance' out of our current state of personal golus.
- We could either understand;
 1. Dancing to prepare for Moshiach, or
 2. Moshiach is dancing WITH us. The Rebbe said I prefer to say that it's called Moshiach's dance because Moshiach is actually dancing with us! – (ach”p ’12) (You can explain this as the nitzutz of Moshiach in each Jew)
- Pour a cup for Bentching.
- Bentching



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