

## When Pesach Falls on Sunday

BY RABBI DR. SHMUEL HIMELSTEIN

There is an old saying that after the housewife slaves away for weeks on end preparing for Pesach, it is her husband who has the gall to sit down at the Seder, rested and relaxed, reclining on his pillow, and proclaiming to all: "Now I am a free man." And it is the exhausted wife that feels that she is the slave...

Imagine what a relief it would be to a woman if she could come rested into the Pesach Seder. Well, until technology designs a home which remains perpetually clean, dustless and spotless (plus instantly cooked Passover meals), there isn't much hope for that, except on those rare years when Passover begins after Shabbat, as we will see below. This occurs very rarely -- in 1981 and 1994, and not more until the next century. So it's now or (almost) never.

When Pesach begins on the night after Shabbat (i.e. where the first day of Pesach is a Sunday), homes must be in Pesach condition before Shabbat begins. All the cleaning must be completed on Friday. Most (as we shall see) of the Chametz (bread, etc.) has to be burned by Shabbat, and in essence most of the Pesach food has to be ready by that time. That being the case, all that the housewife can (hopefully) do on Shabbat is rest.

Let us see some of the ramifications of Sunday being the first day of Pesach. Firstly, one normally searches for Chametz on the night before Pesach. Since one cannot do that on Friday night (no candles, remember?), the ceremony is advanced to Thursday night. Similarly, while one normally burns all his Chametz on the morning before Pesach, since this will be Shabbat, one must burn it on Friday. But it isn't so simple. One must normally burn his Chametz by about 10 a.m. (depending on where he lives), because Jewish law forbids anyone to own Chametz after that time. In this case, though, that refers to 10 a.m. on Shabbat, or the day before Pesach. That means that only this year, one can burn his Chametz after the 10 a.m. deadline (but of course not after Shabbat has begun, when lighting a fire is forbidden).

But there is another complication. What is one to eat on Shabbat itself? As on any other year, one is not allowed to eat Matza just before Pesach. But if one burns all the Chametz on Friday, what will there be left to eat? And to add fuel to the fire, Jewish law requires one to eat three meals on Shabbat, at all of which one must eat either bread or Matza!

It seems like a vicious cycle -- but it isn't. In essence, it means that this is the one year where one burns most of the bread but not all of it. One leaves behind a small quantity of bread specifically for the meals of Shabbat. Alternately, as is the case in Jerusalem, one can purchase special Matza made without water,

which one is permitted to eat even on the day before Pesach since it may not be used for the Seder anyway. (Ashkenazim, though, have the custom of not using this Matza on Pesach).

But there is still a problem. Let us say that you have two small loaves left over for Shabbat morning. The law is that all Chametz cannot be eaten beyond about 9 a.m. and must be destroyed by about 10 a.m. That means a) that you will have to eat your Shabbat meal very early (most synagogues will make it a point to hold extremely early services that day) and b) you will have to get rid of the crumbs some way. Since you can't burn your Chametz then, the solution is to be sure to eat as much as possible by the deadline, and to simply flush any crumbs that might remain down the toilet, thus effectively destroying them.

Remember, though, there is still another consideration. What food will you eat on that Day? In what pots will it be cooked? While one is still permitted (at least theoretically) to use Chametz pots, most wives prefer to switch to Pesach pots and dishes before Shabbat. So you have to be extremely careful not to let the bread come into contact with any of your Pesach pots, dishes or silverware. It might thus be advisable to eat the bread in a separate place, rinse out the mouth, and then proceed to the table set with the Pesach dishes.

These, then, are the advantages and disadvantages of Pesach falling on Sunday, right after Shabbat. And if you find this is something you like, you'll have another chance to repeat it all -- in 1994.

## A Passover Statement

BY RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

One of the most moving Passover statements I have ever read was written by the commander of the Entebbe raid, who was killed during that great maneuver, Jonathan Netanyahu.

Before reproducing the statement let me reveal that I read it in an article in Commentary Magazine, a fine publication. You can subscribe to that magazine at 165 E. 56th Street, New York City 10022.

The article was by a brilliant essayist, Ruth Wisse, who teaches Yiddish at McGill University, Montreal, and whose own books

## JEWISH AND BLACK GROUPS BAND TOGETHER

NEW YORK (WNS) -- Jewish and Black groups have called for the speedy enactment of a bill amending New York's Civil Rights Law to include acts of racially and religiously motivated intimidation and harassment.

The bill calls for penalties carrying up to five years imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine was in-

troduced in the New York State Legislature in January by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the New York State Council of Urban Leagues.

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are a delight. You ought to read Wisse. Your nearest library will give you details about her works.

The Wisse article in Commentary was a book review of "Self-Portrait of a Hero: the Letters of Jonathan Netanyahu," published by Random House, with an introduction by Herman Wouk.

Writing to his parents, the Entebbe hero, who was known as Yoni, observes:

"Tomorrow is Passover. I pass through long years of suffering, of oppression, of massacres, of ghettos, of banishments, of humiliation; many years that seem devoid of light -- yet it isn't so. For the fact that the idea of freedom remained, that the flame of liberty continued to burn through the observance of this ancient festival, is to me testimony of the eternity of the striving for freedom, and the idea of freedom in Israel.

Last year I celebrated Seder with my men in a big tent near a tel in the Syrian enclave that was being shelled, and that too was a wonderful Seder in its way..."

Yoni's father, Benzion Netanyahu was editor-in-chief of what is deemed the greatest literary masterpiece of our century: the 16-volume Encyclopedia Judaica. But his offspring, Yoni, was also a masterpiece. As we celebrate Pesach, we honor his memory.

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