



## DON'T STAND STILL

*Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita*

We are well into the whirling rush of pre-Pesach preparations. The kaleidoscope that is Jewish life adds ever more "stuff" that we are coaxed into buying. Hiemisha magazines are rife with lush visions of tropical venues for glatt kosher non gebrochts Pesach extravaganzas. Pages illustrate this "seasons" newest Tish Bekashas whispering that the best dressed Chassid must have this year's newest style. Pressures grow, nerves become frazzled yet the onslaught of Golus America does not abate. All this is not new, as the years roll on, ever more trivia is added to the barn fire of our values. All this stuff is totally kosher yet, we must wonder where Pesach comes into all this chaos. This great yom tov is meant to instill in our core selves a greater sense of trust and belief in the Eibishter.

Every year we must rise above the noise of the everyday and march beyond the canned enticement of rapid consumerism. Yet well, here we are, the drum roll gets loader as we stumble along.

Some years ago, I shared a story that is brought down for generations by Alexanderer Chassidim that features the Baal Shem Tov ZTL.

It seems the Tzaddik was once told from Shomayim that in such and such a village lives a Yied whose Seder was extolled in the heavens and brought great light to the world.

The Baal Shem sought to find this jewel of a Yied and perhaps share his Seder night and learn what he did that made such an impact on high. After some searching the Rebbe found out where this Yied lived and arranged that on Erev Pesach he would be at the fellow's door.



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Came the day and the Baal Shem Tov put his plan into action. He found the hovel where this gentleman lived and knocked on the door. A decidedly poor looking soul answered and hearing that this stranger sought to share in his Seder he was overjoyed. He took the Baal Shem Tov for an itinerant peddler who sought somewhere to be for Pesach. Night fell and the Yied put on his threadbare kittel and started his Seder.

The Baal Shem Tov was astounded; nothing he heard or saw was especially remarkable. He was left wondering what it was that set this sweet poor man's Seder apart from the many thousands that were being held throughout the world.

Just then they reached the passage "Tam, mah hu omer?" "What does the simple son say?", and with a great cry the man broke down and kept repeating these words... Tam, mah hu omer... again and again with tears streaming down his weatherworn face. After some time, the fellow gathered himself together and continued his Seder without further disruptions. Afterwards the Yied fell into a conversation with his guest. The Baal Shem Tov couldn't hold back and asked him what it was about that one passage that caused him to cry with such intensity.

The Yied explained simply that he had once heard that there's a Gemorah that says that the word Tam in Aramaic can mean "there." When I say these words, I stop and think: When I reach "There", where am I? I am at the same place as I was last Pesach! Nothing has changed. I haven't really grown. Then I think: what will I say when I arrive "There" (at my final destination after 120 years) at the Beis Din Shel Maalah?

I will be ashamed to have to admit that I didn't take the opportunity to become stronger in my emunah. I just remained firmly rooted to where I was".

All lives are complicated. We can sadly opt to stay put, but we can also choose to move ahead. The order of the day is to allow ourselves to listen to the greater voice of our neshomah and strive to go higher than the latest style fad.