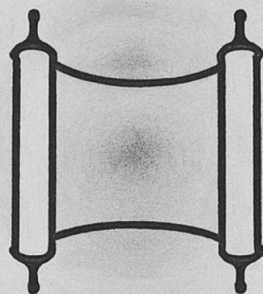


בס"ד

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach



Dedicated To:

ר' נחום אהרון & חיה

ליטשקאווסקי

May Hashem bless you over the top

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

Introduction

Shabbos HaGadol marks more than a historical event—it awakens a spiritual force that recurs each year. When Bnei Yisrael took the Paschal lamb and the Egyptians stood silent, it was the beginning of the nullification of idolatry. According to the teachings of the Rav, of blessed memory, that spiritual dismantling reactivates annually. Shabbos HaGadol atones for even the hidden thoughts of idolatry, and through its connection to both Shabbos and the korban Pesach each equal to the whole Torah it becomes a powerful time of purification.

Every Shabbos brings elevation, but Shabbos HaGadol brings an even greater unification above, allowing miracles to manifest. This day touches the light of Moshiach, rooted in simplicity and self-nullification. From the lamb tied in Egypt to the practice of repeating the same teaching each year, it is clear that idolatry is not just statues, it is anything that replaces God in our hearts.

These days before Pesach are filled with inner work: fasting, burning chametz with the intention to burn away false gods, and shedding one form to receive another. Even customs like reading the Haftarah “Ve’arvah,” or saying “Avadim Hayinu” after Minchah, carry spiritual weight. The tzaddikim taught that Pesach demands smallness before greatness, humility before redemption. The goal is not just external preparation, but internal transformation—so that when the Festival of Matzos arrives, we are vessels for new light, free of inner idols, and ready for true geulah.

Siman #160

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory,	בְּשֵׁם הָרַב זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבִרְכָה
on Shabbos HaGadol they took a lamb,	בְּשַׁבַּת הַגָּדוֹל לָקְחוּ אֶת הַאֵיִל
and the Egyptians were forced to remain silent,	וְהַמִּצְרִיִּם הוּכְרְחוּ לְשִׁתּוֹק
and there was in Egypt a nullification of idolatry, as is known	וְהָיָה בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּטוֹיֵל עֲבוּדָה זָרָה כְּנוֹדָע
(see Tosafos Levush Shabbos, siman 430).	(עֵינֵי טוֹיֵל לְרִי"ס סִימָן ת"ל)
And every single year, it touches on the first point	וּבְכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה בָּא עַל נְקוּדַת רֵאשׁוֹנָה
and the nullification of idolatry is aroused,	וּמִתְעוֹרָר בְּטוֹיֵל עֲבוּדָה זָרָה
therefore Shabbos HaGadol atones for thoughts of idolatry.	לְכַן שַׁבַּת הַגָּדוֹל מְכַפֵּר עַל הַרְהוּרֵי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה
And the Rav used to say this matter every year on Shabbos HaGadol.	וְהָיָה הָרַב אוֹמֵר דְּבַר זֶה בְּכָל שָׁנָה בְּשַׁבַּת הַגָּדוֹל
And he, of blessed memory, would not remember in that year	וְהוּא זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבִרְכָה לֹא הָיָה זוֹכֵר בְּשָׁנָה זוֹ
what he had said the previous year,	מֵה שֶׁאָמַר בְּשָׁנָה שְׁעֵבְרָה
and they would remind him: last year you also said this matter.	וְהָיוּ מְזַכְרִינָיו אוֹתוֹ: אֲשַׁמְתְּקוּד גַּם כֵּן אָמַרְתָּם דְּבַר זֶה

Reb Pinchas of Koretz
Imrie Pinchas
Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

And he, of blessed memory, said: it seems to him that therefore	ואמר הוא זכרונו לברכה: שְׁנֵי רָאָה לוֹ דְלָכֵן
we say the Haggadah until “to atone for all our sins,”	"אוֹמְרִים הַגָּדָה עַד "לְכַפֵּר עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ
for idolatry is equal to the entire Torah	כִּי עֲבוּדַת זָרָה שְׁקוּלָה כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה
(see Shadal on Shemos 23:13),	(לְשׁוֹן שְׁמוֹת כ"ג, י"ג)
and also Shabbos is equal to the entire Torah	וְגַם שַׁבָּת שְׁקוּלָה כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה
(Shemos Rabbah 25:18),	(שְׁמוֹר"ר כ"ה, י"ה)
therefore, with the combination of both, etc.	לְכֹה, בְּצִירוּף שְׁנֵיהֶם וְכו'.

[NOTE: Explanation

1. Shabbos HaGadol and the Lamb

“On Shabbos HaGadol they took a lamb...” This refers to the miracle in Egypt, where the Jewish people took the Paschal lamb—an Egyptian deity—and tied it up, openly preparing it for slaughter on Pesach. “...and the Egyptians were forced to remain silent.” The Egyptians couldn’t stop them. Their idolatry was powerless in the face of the Jews' courage and Divine protection. This was a nullification of idolatry—the beginning of spiritual freedom.

2. Spiritual Recurrence

“Every single year, it touches on the first point...” Each Shabbos HaGadol reawakens that same spiritual energy. Time in Judaism is cyclical, not linear—so the same Divine light that was present back then returns every year. Thus: “Shabbos HaGadol atones for thoughts of idolatry.” Not just actual idol worship, but any misplaced allegiance—money, ego, power, fear, etc.

3. The Rav Who Repeated It Each Year

This part is touching: The Rav would say this teaching every single year, but somehow not remember that he had said it before. His followers had to remind him: "You said this last year too!" And he replied: “*It seems to me that therefore we say the Haggadah until ‘to atone for all our sins’ ...*” He connected this forgetfulness to a deeper truth: this message must be repeated every year because it addresses a core sin idolatry in all its forms.

4. Why This is So Powerful

- **Idolatry is as severe as the entire Torah.** (Shadal)
- **Shabbos is equal to the entire Torah.** (Shemos Rabbah)

So when Shabbos HaGadol (a powerful Shabbos) and the nullification of idolatry combine it's a cosmic reset.

Reb Pinchas of Koretz Imrie Pinchas Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

Takeaway:

- Shabbos HaGadol isn't just historical—it's spiritual surgery.
- It burns away the hidden "idols" in our minds and hearts—fears, ego, dependencies.
- Even if you've heard the teaching before, you need to hear it again—because idolatry takes new forms every year.
- When Shabbos (the symbol of surrender) meets the nullification of idolatry, we reach a place equal to the whole Torah.

Chassidic Story: The Idol in the Pocket

There was once a wealthy merchant who traveled from town to town doing business. He was a follower of the **Chiddushei HaRim**, the first Rebbe of Ger. One Shabbos HaGadol, the Rebbe gave a fiery drashah about modern forms of idolatry—not bowing to statues, but being enslaved to **money, honor, and control**. After Shabbos, the merchant came to the Rebbe trembling. He said: "Rebbe, I think I found the idol in my pocket." The Rebbe smiled gently. "And now that you've seen it, you can begin to tear it down." The next year, the Rebbe gave the *same drashah*—nearly word for word. The merchant again felt shaken and said, "But Rebbe, you said this last year." And the Rebbe answered: "Yes. Because every year, the idol tries to sneak back into your pocket. And every year, you need to cast it out again." **END NOTE]**

Siman #161

A miracle cannot occur unless a unification is made Above.	אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְהִיּוֹת נֶס, אֲלֵא אִם כֵּן נַעֲשֶׂה יְחִוּד לְמַעַלָּה
Why is it called Shabbos HaGadol? Because of the miracle that occurred.	לָמָּה נִקְרָא שַׁבַּת הַגְּדוֹל? עַל שֶׁמֶּה נִשְׁנַעַשֶׂה
For then the elevation of the Shechinah was so great that a great unification was made Above.	כִּי אַז הִתְּהַלְּעָה עֲלֵית הַשְּׂכִינָה גְּדוֹל כַּכֵּן עַד שֶׁנַּעֲשֶׂה יְחִוּד גְּדוֹל לְמַעַלָּה
And this is the aspect of "point," that before the creation of the world	וְהוּא בְּחִינַת נְקוּדָה, שְׂקָדִים בְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם
everything was equal—sea and dry land, and the like—and understand this.	הָיָה הַכֹּל שָׁוֶה, יָם וְיַבֶּשֶׁת וְכַדוּמָה, וְהָבֵן
And through this, one great miracle was made.	וְנַעֲשֶׂה עַל יְדֵי זֶה נֶס אֶחָד גְּדוֹל
And on every Shabbos there is an elevation of the Shechinah,	וּבְכָל שַׁבַּת יֵשׁ עֲלֵית הַשְּׂכִינָה
but not in the great aspect mentioned above.	רַק שְׂאִינֵנוּ בְּבְחִינָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַנִּזְכָּרַת לַעֲוִיל
And this is the secret of taking the lamb	וְזֶה סוּד שְׁלֶקְחוּ שֶׁה

Reb Pinchas of Koretz Imrie Pinchas Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

and dragging it on the ground, and the Egyptians had nothing to say,

וַגָּרְרוּ אוֹתוֹ עַל הָאָרֶץ וְהַמִּצְרִים לֹא לָהֶם שׁוֹם דָּבָר

because idolatry was nullified.

כִּי נִתְבַטְּלָה הָעֲבוּדָה זָרָה

And this is from the chamber of Moshiach,

וְהוּא מִהֵיכַל מְשִׁיחַ

for so they said in the Gemara (see Sanhedrin 97a):

(שָׂבוּ אָמְרוּ בְּגִמְרָא (עֵין סְנֵהֲדִין צ"ז, א

Moshiach comes when one is not paying attention.

מְשִׁיחַ בָּא בְּהֶסֶח הַדַּעַת

For “da’as” (conscious awareness) is a created entity,

כִּי הַדַּעַת הוּא נִבְרָא

and the light of Moshiach existed before the creation of the world.

וְאוֹרוֹ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ הָיָה קִדְמָה בְּרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם

[NOTE: Explanation

1. Why is it called Shabbos HaGadol (The Great Shabbos)?

Because a **miracle** occurred. But not just any miracle—this one was rooted in a "great unification Above", a powerful spiritual alignment in the supernal realms that allowed the miracle to manifest.

A miracle cannot occur unless there is a unification made Above. This is a Kabbalistic concept: unity in the upper spiritual worlds causes blessing and miracles to flow into our world.

2. What happened spiritually? The Shechinah (Divine Presence) was elevated to an extraordinary degree. This elevation allowed a unification of opposites, returning to the pre-creation state where: "everything was equal—sea and dry land, and the like." That is, the distinctions of this physical world—between concealment and revelation, impurity and holiness—were temporarily erased.

3. Every Shabbos brings elevation but not like this one. Shabbos always elevates the world, but on Shabbos HaGadol, it was on a pre-creation, Moshiach-level scale. This was a preview of redemption.

4. What’s with the lamb? “And this is the secret of taking the lamb and dragging it on the ground...” This refers to the Jews publicly taking the Egyptian deity (the lamb) for slaughter before Pesach. The Egyptians were stunned and silent. Why? Because **idolatry was nullified**. Spiritually, the **power of impurity collapsed** in the face of divine clarity.

5. Connection to Moshiach “And this is from the chamber of Moshiach...” That great Shabbos tapped into the same spiritual light that will be revealed in the time of Moshiach—a light that:

- **Preceded creation**
- **Transcends da’as** (human understanding)

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

- **Arrives unexpectedly**, as the Gemara says:
“Moshiach comes when we’re not paying attention.” (Sanhedrin 97a)

So, **Shabbos HaGadol** is a **taste of Geulah (redemption)**.

Takeaway Shabbos HaGadol reminds us:

- **Miracles** flow from **unity Above**.
- **Elevation of the Shechinah** prepares the world for redemption.
- Even our **smallest efforts**—when real—can unlock **cosmic transformation**.
- **Moshiach** comes not through cleverness, but when we surrender our da’as and yearn with simplicity.

Story: The Boy Who Prayed with Animal Sounds

It was Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year. The synagogue was packed, and the air was thick with awe. The Baal Shem Tov was leading the prayers, and all eyes were on him. In the back of the room stood a simple shepherd boy, perhaps brought along by his father or wandering in on his own. He didn’t know how to read Hebrew. He didn’t even know the *Alef-Bet*. But he had a good heart—and he wanted to pray. All he knew was how to make animal sounds, because that’s how he spent his days—with the sheep and goats in the field. And so, feeling deeply moved by the holiness of the day, he began to whisper:

“Baa... Neigh... Cluck...”

Softly at first, then louder. The congregation was horrified. People tried to shush him. Some looked at the Baal Shem Tov, expecting him to throw the boy out. But instead, the Baal Shem Tov smiled. He stopped the prayers, turned to the congregation and said: “Until now, the gates of Heaven were closed. Our prayers could not ascend. But the pure sounds of this boy—straight from his heart—have opened all the gates, and now everyone’s prayers can rise!” **END NOTE]**

Siman #162

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory,

בְּשֵׁם הָרַב זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבָרָכָה

Shabbos HaGadol is a rectification for thoughts of idolatry.

נִשְׁבֵּת הַגָּדוֹל הוּא תִּיקוּן לְהַרְהוּרֵי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה

As it is written (Shemos 12:21), “Draw out and take for yourselves...”

"וַדַּכְתִּיב (שְׁמוֹת י"ב, כ"א) "מִשְׁכּוֹ וּקְחוּ וְגו'

and Rashi explains (ad loc. v.6): “Withdraw your hands from idolatry.”

"וּפִירֵשׁ רַשִׁ"י (שָׁם, ו'): "מִשְׁכּוֹ יְדִיכֶם מֵעֲבוּדָה זָרָה

And he, of blessed memory, said that therefore

וְאָמַר הוּא זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבָרָכָה, שֶׁעַל כֵּן

Reb Pinchas of Koretz
Imrie Pinchas
Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

it is now easier to strengthen oneself in prayer.

הוא נקל עכשיו להתחזק את עצמו לתפילה.

Siman #163

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory:

בשם הרב זכרוננו לברכה:

to read the Haftarah “Ve’arvah” on every Shabbos HaGadol,

להפטיר "ויערבה" בכל שבת הגדול

even when it does not fall on Erev Pesach.

אפילו שאינו חל בערב פסח.

Siman #164

he Rav was accustomed to say “Avadim Hayinu”

"הרב נהג לומר "עבדים היינו

on Shabbos HaGadol specifically after Minchah,

בשבת הגדול דוקא אחר מנחה

while still wearing the tallis,

בעודו לבוש הטלית

and not before Minchah.

ולא קודם מנחה.

Siman #165

This was the practice of the Tzadik, of blessed memory,

זה נהג הוא צדיק זכרוננו לברכה

even when Pesach fell on Shabbos,

אף כשחל פסח ביום שבת

that on the preceding Motza'ei Shabbos one does not say

שאין אומרים במוצאי שבת שלפניו

“Vihi Noam” and “V’Atah Kadosh.”

"ויהי נועם – ואתה קדוש"

And his son, our teacher the Rav David Yisrael, told me

ואמר לי בנו מורנו הרב דוד ישראל

that this is from Rabbi Yaakov Emden, of blessed memory

שהוא מרבי יעקב עמדין זכרוננו לברכה

(according to his yahrzeit, like the customs of the great Sens).

(כסלולו כמנהגי סנס הגדול)

For Erev Pesach is considered like a Yom Tov.

כי יום ערב פסח נחשב ליום טוב

And it seems this applies specifically to Pesach,

ומשמע דוקא בפסח

and not to the other Yomim Tovim.

ולא בשאר יום טוב

ערב פסח

Siman #166

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory, the burdens and efforts that one toils before Pesach through this, a person forgets his own matters, he entirely forgets about himself.

בשם הרב זכרוננו לברכה, הטרחות ושטרותיו קודם פסח, על ידי זה שוכח האדם עסקי עצמו, ער פארגעסט גאר אין זיך.

And this is the aspect of “shedding a form,” and through this he “puts on a form” and is able to receive vitality and new light for Pesach.

והוא בתינת פושט צורה, ועל ידי זה ילבוש צורה ויכול לקבל חיות ואור חדש לפסח

[NOTE Summary

Rebbe Pinchas of Koretz taught that the intense physical and emotional effort required before Pesach—the

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

cleaning, the preparations, the countless tasks—has a hidden spiritual purpose. Through this labor, a person forgets about himself and his personal concerns. He becomes emptied of ego and self-absorption. This state of self-forgetting is called "shedding a form" (*poshet tzurah*). And once the old self is shed, a new inner form can be received—a vessel ready for the vitality and light of Pesach. The preparations are not just for the home but for the soul. They ready the person for transformation.

Practical Takeaway

The exhaustion and pressure before Pesach are not obstacles—they are part of the Avodah. When you feel stretched, overwhelmed, or emptied, know that something holy is happening beneath the surface. By losing yourself in the mitzvos, you shed your ego and make room for a new spiritual identity. Enter Pesach not just with a clean house, but with a renewed self.

Chassidic Story

Rebbe Pinchas of Koretz once saw a poor Jew scrubbing his wooden floor before Pesach with tears in his eyes. The man was exhausted, clearly worn down by the burden. Rebbe Pinchas said to him gently, “Do you think Hashem needs your floorboards clean? He wants your heart. But sometimes, when we scrape away the chametz outside, we also scrape away the chametz within.”

Then he added, “Don’t be afraid of forgetting yourself in the work. That’s how Hashem reminds you who you really are.” **END NOTE]**

Siman #167

The primary removal of chametz is the removal of idolatry (ZMG 182:30).	עיקר בעור חמץ הוא בעור עבודת זרה (זמ"ג קפ"ב, ל).
Therefore it is said about Yoshiyahu (Melachim II 23:23) that he eradicated all the idolatry,	לכך נאמר ביאשיהו (מלכים ב' כ"ג, כ"ג) שבער את כל העבודה זרה
and it is said there: “There had never been a Pesach like this one,” etc.	. ונאמר שם: כי לא נעשה כפסח הזה וגו'
And therefore the verse “Molten gods you shall not make for yourself” (Shemos 34:17)	ולכן נסמך "אלהי מסכה לא תעשה לך" (שמות ל"ד, י"ז)
is juxtaposed to the verse “You shall observe the Festival of Matzos” (ibid. v.18).	(לפסוק "את חג המצות תשמר" (שם י"ח
And if all of Israel would burn the chametz with this intention—to destroy idolatry—	ואילו היו כל ישראל שורפין את החמץ בכונה זו לבער עבודה זרה
the exile would already have been much easier.	. ואלט צע גרינגער גווען דר גלות

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Shabbos HaGadol & Erev Pesach

[NOTE Summary

Rebbe Pinchas of Koretz taught that the essence of removing chametz before Pesach is not merely physical—it is spiritual. The chametz represents idolatry, and the act of destroying it symbolizes a rejection of all foreign influences, inner corruption, and self-worship. This is why the Torah juxtaposes “Molten gods you shall not make for yourself” with “You shall observe the Festival of Matzos.” The burning of chametz is a ritual of inner purification. This connection is also seen in the days of King Yoshiyahu, who eradicated all idolatry in Israel—and only then did the Torah declare, “There had never been a Pesach like this one.”

Practical Takeaway

When you burn the chametz, do so with kavannah—not just to clean your home, but to cleanse your heart. Let it be an act of rejecting the ego, pride, and false beliefs that take the place of God. If all of Israel would approach biur chametz with this clarity, Rebbe Pinchas says, the burden of exile would already have been lightened. Redemption begins with what we are willing to let go of.

Chassidic Story

Once, before Pesach, a man came to Rebbe Pinchas and asked, “Why must I search so carefully for crumbs of chametz that I cannot even see?” Rebbe Pinchas replied, “Because your soul has crumbs too. Bits of arrogance, fear, stubbornness—so small you don’t notice them. But they still block the light.” Then he added, “The fire you use to burn your chametz—use it also to burn away what keeps you from Hashem.” **END NOTE]**

Siman #168

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory,
each person should fast on Erev Pesach,
because there must be smallness (humility) before greatness.

בְּשֵׁם הַרַב זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבִרְכָה,
לְהַתְעַנּוֹת בְּעֶרֶב פֶּסַח כָּל אֶחָד,
לְפִי שְׂצָרִיד לְהִיּוֹת קְטַנּוֹת קוֹדֵם לְגִדְלוֹ.

Siman #169

My grandfather [Morenu Harav Raphael, of blessed memory]
was accustomed to fast on Erev Pesach even though he was not a
firstborn.

זְמַנִּי [מוֹהַר"ר רַפָּאֵל זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבִרְכָה] הָיָה רִגְלִיל
לְהַתְעַנּוֹת בְּעֶרֶב פֶּסַח אֶף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה בְּכוֹר.

And this was from his teacher [the Rav, of blessed memory],
because there must be smallness before greatness.

וְהוּא מְמֹרוֹ [הַרַב זְכוֹרוֹנוֹ לְבִרְכָה], מִפְּנֵי שְׂצָרִיד
קְטַנּוֹת קוֹדֵם לְגִדְלוֹ צוֹ.

Only in the two or three years before his passing, when he was
ill, he did not fast then.

רַק קִדְם הַפְּטִירָה שְׁנָתַיִם אוֹ שְׁלוֹשׁ שָׁנַיִם לְשָׁהִיָּה
חֹלָה, לֹא הִתְעַנָּה אַזְ.