

# LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

## Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

### Reflections on Shavuoth

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

The festival of Shavuoth marks the season of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. This was the time that we became a nation unto G-d.

This holiday is also a celebration of three great Jewish leaders. Moses - since the Torah was given through Moses it is closely associated with him. King David - who passed away on Shavuoth. The Baal Shem Tov - who passed away on the first day of Shavuoth. Both King David and the Baal Shem Tov have their "Yahrzeit" celebrated on this holiday.

Since everything (especially in matters of Torah) is by divine providence, there must be a common point between Moses, King David and the Baal Shem Tov. The common point is that all three were "Shepherds," either literally, or "shepherds of the youngest of Jewish children." The Torah tells us that Moshe was a shepherd, and the Midrash explains that he was fit for it from birth.

The Midrash relates that when G-d saw how Moshe shepherded sheep - that when a kid ran away, he ran after it, and took it upon his shoulders. G-d said: "Just as you have mercy to lead the

sheep of men, so, by your life, you will shepherd the sheep of Israel." And when Moshe was appointed shepherd of Israel, he made it his business to supply them with all their needs, physical and spiritual.

King David, before becoming King of Israel, tended the sheep of his father Yishai. The Midrash relates that when G-d "checked David .... he found that he was a fine shepherd." Then "G-d said he who knows how to shepherd sheep, shall come and shepherd my people." It was through proper tending of sheep, David merited to be king.

The Baal Shem Tov, our Rabbis relate that before he became leader of Israel, he was an assistant teacher of small children, taking them to school and saying "Blessed be he and blessed be his name." In other words, he was the shepherd of the youngest of Israel.

The lesson from all the above, is that one must endeavor to help his fellow, both in physical and spiritual matters - similar to a shepherd who tends to all the needs of his flock. When one sees a Jew who has run away from the "flock," one must run after him, even to the desert, and return him to the "flock," to Judaism.

## Shmurah Matzoh Distributed

As part of the Lubavitch mizvah campaign, hand-baked matzoh was distributed to many people in the community. This matzoh is very near to the original matzoh that the Jews ate during their exodus from Egypt. It is a tradition that this matzoh should at least be tasted during the Seder.

Also, a special Passover brochure was mailed to every Jewish household in the Charlotte area and to many Jewish families in the Carolinas. This informative brochure contained many customs and rituals for the Pesach holiday, including a full description of how to conduct the Seder.

The Pesach Seder was con-

ducted in a traditional manner both nights of Pesach at the Lubavitch residence. The first night saw the attendance of over 50 people including a group from the Davidson Jewish community led by Dr. Irwin Goldstein. The second night attracted a similar number of people. The Seder was led by Rabbi Yossi Groner.

The participating children had a chance to ask the four questions. In fact it was asked in three languages, Hebrew, English and Yiddish.

Traditional holiday food was served. The excellent meal was catered by Mariashi Groner and her sisters Esti and Bassi Shemtov from Detroit.

## Passover Experienced at Pre-School

For the children at Lubavitch pre-school, this Pesach holiday was a living experience.

First, the story of Passover was brought to life through a creative puppet show produced by Mariashi Groner. Through the show the children learned about the plight of their ancestors under the cruel and mighty king of Egypt, Pharaoh. They experienced the miraculous redemption of the Israelites that G-d did through Moses.

A new video entitled the "Animated Haggadah" enhanced the story of Pesach with its many customs and rituals.

The high point of the Pesach project was the special hands-on Haggadah the children created. This unique book contained actual samples of the food and utensils used during the Seder. This was a special arts and crafts project in which all the children participated. Each child created his/her own Haggadah. Many parents reported that the children used their Haggadah throughout the Seder.



Mariashi Groner serving the pre-schoolers at their Seder.



The children enjoying the Seder.



Mariashi Groner helping Rebecca Spangenthal in the hand-washing ritual.

The children also conducted their own model Seder. They went through the entire Seder including the four cups of wine (actually grape juice). They ate hand-baked Shmurah matzoh (guarded matzoh - extra care is taken from the time the wheat is cut throughout the baking) which is more like the real thing the Jews ate when they left Egypt.

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