

ACCOMPANYING THE QUEEN

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

HONORING SHABBOS

Every Motzoei Shabbos, when the Shabbos leaves us, it is proper to accompany it just as one accompanies a king who leaves the city. Therefore, on Motzoei Shabbos one should have a special seuda, called Melave Malka (accompanying the queen).

The Rebbe explains that even after Havdala the Shabbos queen has not yet completely left, for otherwise there would be any no one to accompany...

(שיח"ק תשל"א ח"א ע' 301)

One should set the table for a full seuda, even if he will only eat a little bit (one k'zayis), light candles and sing zemiros as one would do for a king. The Arizal said that one should rejoice during this seudah as one does during the seudos of Shabbos.

This seudah is also called, "The seudah of Dovid Malka Meshicha," being that it is connected to Dovid Hamelech and his role as Moshiach. Therefore, eating this Seudah will hasten the coming of Moshiach.

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' ש', לקו"ש ח"כ ע' 294)

The Gemara tells about Rav Avahu, who had an exceptional calf prepared for him every Motzoei Shabbos, of which he only ate the kidneys. Seeing this, his son Avimi suggested that he take the kidneys from the calf which was shechted on Erev Shabbos, thus saving an entire animal. Rav Avahu did as he advised, but a lion came and ate the second calf, which he had wanted to save. Based on this story, there is a minhag to prepare a special dish for Melave Malka, hence honoring the seuda even more.

(שבת קי"ט ע"ב)

The Medrash tells about a special bone in the spine, called 'Luz', which did not benefit from the Eitz Hada'as, for it can only benefit from Melave Malka. This bone cannot be destroyed by anything in the world, and from it, Hashem will bring every person back to life at Techiyas Hameisim. The Rebbe explains that since Melave Malka connects Shabbos and weekday, giving strength and bracha to the entire week, therefore it benefits the Luz bone, which will bring life into the rest of the body in the future.

(בר"כ ה, ג, ב"י או"ח סי' ש', לקו"ש חל"ו ע' 75)

On Motzoei Shabbos, one should wear Shabbos clothing. Some wear them until after Melave Malka, while others do not remove

them until they go to sleep. (This was the minhag of the Friediker Rebbe and the Rebbe, who also told others to do so.) Reb Yehoshua of Belz once said: For however long one wears his Shabbos clothing on Motzoei Shabbos, his stay in Gan Eden every Motzoei Shabbos will be extended.

(ראה ליקוט סעודת מלוח מלכה)

A FULL SEUDAH

It is preferable to wash for Melave Malka; however, if one is unable, he can fulfill this mitzvah by eating other foods. (The Rebbe was extremely careful to wash for Melave Malka.)

The Rebbe explains that as the Yidden in the midbar had Melaveh Malkah from the extra portion of Mon they received for Shabbos. For this reason, Melaveh Malkah completes the Seudos of Shabbos and elevates them to be an extraordinary mitzvah.

(שו"ע אדה"ז סי' ש', לקו"ש חל"ו ע' 75)

One Motzoei Shabbos, when the Chassidim of Reb Dovid Moshe of Tchartikov gathered for Melave Malka, singing zemiros and telling stories of Tzaddikim, the Rebbe himself suddenly made his presence. He sat down and expounded on the significance of the Melave Malka seuda established by Dovid Hamelech, and how the zechus of Dovid protects and saves those who celebrate it.

He then related a story of two Yiddishe business partners who were very careful to escort the Shabbos queen with a proper Melave Malka, even when it was exceedingly difficult. Once, the central fair was to take place on Sunday, compelling the partners to begin their journey on Motzoei Shabbos, so they packed food and planned to eat Melave Malka on the way. It was a frigid, cold night, and as they were traveling, snow began to fall, concealing the road path they were following. Remembering that they had not yet eaten Melave Malka, they decided to stop and have the seuda, but they suddenly realized that they had no water with which to wash their hands. Looking around, they noticed a light twinkling from afar, so they traveled towards it, arriving at a peasant's small hut. They knocked on the door and asked to wash their hands. The peasant agreed, offering them to come in, warm themselves and eat their meal. The partners sat down for their seuda and sang in honor of the Shabbos queen.

Concluding the Melave Malka, they prepared to leave and continue on their journey, when without warning, a group of thugs appeared, forcefully blocking them from leaving. "You will not leave from here alive," they shouted. "We kill all those who come here and

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take all their belongings." Seeing no way out, the Yiddishe partners begged for a few minutes to say vidui. The criminals granted them this last request.

Suddenly ringing chimes, announcing the approach of a carriage, were heard, followed by knocks at the door. A poritz had come to ask for directions, for he had lost his way in the snowstorm. Laughing, the robbers told him that he too would not leave their hut alive and demanded that he hand over all his money. Having no choice, he obeyed, but requested a last wish, that he be given some whiskey to quench his thirst. They agreed, and the poritz invited the wild goyim to join him in drinking. Just as they began to drink, the criminals suddenly became paralyzed, unable to move like stones. The poritz turned to the partners, instructing them to take their belongings and escape. In a short amount of time, they were far from the danger zone. The Tchorokover Rebbe concluded, "Do you know who the poritz was? It was Dovid Hamelech who had come to save the partners in zechus of their extra care to eat Melave Malka properly, including washing for the seuda."

The next morning, two strangers arrived in Tchorokov, telling over the miracle that had occurred to them while traveling to the fair...

(דברי דוד ליקוטים קפ"ט)

There are many minhagim associated with this seuda, all of which come from holy sources. Some of them are: Drinking or eating something hot, as Chazal say that it is a remedy (and some say it is a segulah to feel calm throughout the coming week); saying "דא היא טעודתא דדוד" "מלכא משיחא"; and telling stories of tzaddikim, particularly about the Baal Shem Tov, which is a segulah for many things. (The first two minhagim were known to be done by the Rebbe.)

THE ZECHUS OF MELAVE MALKA

Eating Melave Malka is a segulah for many things: an easy childbirth, parnassa, health, and long life. It also elevates a person b'ruchnius; protects them from lying, serves as a tikun for past aveiros and spares a person from chibut hakever.

As per the request of the residents from a small Lithuanian town, the Baal Shem Tov sent one of his Chassidim to be their Rov. In that town, lived a Talmid Chacham who was supported by the townsmen's contributions. The new rov, seeing the lack of support to the communal charities, was displeased that all the money was being given to the Talmid Chacham. He announced that it was better to give less to one person and not neglect the needs of the public. As a result, the contributions towards the Talmid Chacham slowly decreased. One Thursday, the Talmid Chacham's wife came to the Beis Medrash, as was her custom, to ask her husband for money to buy their family's Shabbos necessities. Being so distressed at having nothing to give her, he wept, and his tears went straight to shamayim, arousing a prosecution against the rov. Finding the rov guilty for this (and one other charge), the Beis Din above handed his judgment over to the prosecutors, who decided, that worse than killing him, they would turn him into an apikores.

That Shabbos, standing wrapped in his tallis, ready for shachris, the rov was suddenly crazed by a burning desire to convert. Throwing off his tallis, he drank all the liquor that had been prepared for the kiddush, and rushed to the house of the priest, who lived on the outskirts of town. Hearing his desire, the astonished but delighted priest showed him to a room with lots of food and drink, telling

him to wait. The rov drank freely from the large bottle of liquor, causing himself to feel nauseous and fall asleep on the floor. Soon, the townsmen heard what had happened and were shocked and dumbstruck.

Meanwhile, the Baal Shem Tov ascended above to see how his talmidim were doing, as he did every Shabbos during the time of shalosh seudos. When he saw his talmid, the rov, sinking in the powers of kelipah, he appealed to the Beis Din above, listing the rov's many mitzvos, but they were not sufficient to remove the decree. The Baal Shem Tov then spoke up, and pointed out that the rov had always been careful to observe Melave Malka. The Beis Din agreed that the rov be spared, on condition that he would fulfill it that night as well. The Baal Shem Tov descended immediately, and called over one of his close talmidim. He wrapped him with his holy gartel, handed him a loaf of chalah and one slice of his own chalah and commanded him, "Go to the window where the light is shining and you will know what to do." Without questioning, the chossid left. The Baal Shem Tov remained at the table, repeating again and again, "לבטלא בכל קליפין". The Chevraya Kadisha realized that something was amiss.

The chossid passed the city limits, but soon found many difficulties disturbing his travels. The roads were rough and his energy waned, so he cried out to Hashem that he be able to fulfill his Rebbe's instructions. Suddenly, it became easier, and he felt the ground miraculously disappearing under his feet, until he saw a lantern shining from a distant window. Entering the open door, he saw a Yid lying in vomit, fast asleep, and the watchman told him that this was the local rov who had come to convert. He understood the purpose of his mission. The drunken rov soon awoke, and immediately reached for more whiskey, but the chossid grabbed him, telling him to first wash his hands and eat some challa for Melave Malka. As the rov tasted the holy chalah, the kedusha filled him, releasing him of the powers of tumah. "What have I done?" he cried. "No one can help me, except for the Baal Shem Tov. Only he can direct me to do teshuvah, but he lives so far away!" The chossid instructed him, "Hold onto my gartel and we will leave this place." They stepped outside, and in only a few moments, they found themselves in Mezhibuzh. They opened the door, and upon seeing the Baal Shem Tov and his Chassidim sitting at their Melave Malka, the rov fainted. When he was revived, he wept bitter tears of a true Baal Teshuvah, and the Baal Shem Tov taught him how to correct his past and continue on the proper path.

(סיפורי חסידים, תורה ע' 274, בשילוב רשימות דברים ח"א ע' י')

At Melaveh Malkah some have the minhag of reciting a piyut with the words, "Do not fear, my servant Yaakov." The Rebbe explains: After an entire day of not working, one may be afraid that he will be losing money, for his competition is open on Shabbos. Hashem promises, 'Do not worry.' If you observe the mitzvos, Hashem will provide for you as a master who must provide for a servant.

(שיח"ק תשי"ט ע' קסט)

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