

## Warsaw 1943

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Source: self



### Warsaw Ghetto, 1943

The date that the Nazis chose to destroy the Warsaw Ghetto was Passover, April 19, 1943. By this time, the Jews of the Ghetto knew that the daily trains to Treblinka were not transporting anyone to resettlement camps in the East, but were taking them to be killed in the gas chambers.

In spite of the Nazis' efforts to enslave and dehumanize our people before they murdered us, we maintained our values and traditions. Public prayer became a forbidden act, punished by severe beatings or even execution, but prayer services continued secretly, in hundreds of hidden sanctuaries. When kosher slaughter was outlawed, we risked our lives to avoid violating the laws of Kashrut. We observed Passover in any and every way that we could: matzah was baked in clandestine factories; raisin wine and beet juice filled the Four Cups of the Seder.

The Piaseczner Rebbe held prayer services, provided meals, and gavederashot (Hasidic teachings) throughout the three years of occupation and the Ghetto. He spoke of our unshakable faith in our Creator. He taught that despite all appearances, the world is still a holy place, and all evil will one day be transformed into good. If we stayed true to our G\*d and our Torah, we would survive, and we must never forget our dignity and self-respect. We are royalty; even while being beaten, we remain royalty. Most of all, the Rebbe taught us compassion: compassion for other Jews, whom one must help in any way possible, and compassion for G\*d, who suffers with us when we are in pain.

In the face of the Nazis' efforts to destroy us, we remained faithful to our Torah and to our G\*d, never giving up hope that the world would one day emerge from darkness.

Together:

*We remember the heroism of the Jews—men, women, and children—  
who fought in the ghettos, in the forests, on the war fronts,  
together with all of democratic humanity,  
to stop the curse of fascism from engulfing the earth.*

*We will honor their memory by dedicating ourselves to the cause of  
peace and freedom in our land and throughout the world.*