

Entering the Broken World

Contributed by [Mishael Zion](#)

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<http://haggadahsrus.com/NTR.html>

The Pesach story begins in a broken world, amidst slavery and oppression. The sound of the breaking of the matza sends us into that fractured existence, only to become whole again when we find the broken half, the afikoman, at the end of the Seder.

This brokenness is not just a physical or political situation: It reminds us of all those hard, damaged places within ourselves. All those narrow places from which we want to break to free. In Hebrew, Egypt is called *Mitzrayim*, reminding us of the word *tzar*, narrow. Thus, in Hassidic thought, Mitzrayim symbolizes the inner straits that trap our souls. Yet even here we can find a unique value, as the Hassidic saying teaches us: "There is nothing more whole – than a broken heart."

SHARE: Pass out a whole matza to every Seder participant, inviting them to take a moment to ponder this entrance into a broken world, before they each break the matza themselves.