

## TRADITIONAL

# Ma Nishtana

Contributed by [Eric Schiffer](#)

Source: ayeka

### *Ma Nishtana* and Making a Change

The life of a slave never changes.

The clothes are the same. The food is the same. The routine is the same.

At the very beginning of the Seder, we ask an important question: "*Ma nishtana ha'lailah hazeh?*"

Why? We could surely ask the same question during Succot, when we sleep outside in a fragile booth. Or on Purim when we put on masks and drink all day. Why on Passover?

Because the changes on this night are more fundamental - in fact, change itself is Passover in a nutshell. On Passover, we move - we PASS OVER - from slavery to freedom. We're not stuck; we're not trapped. We can control our lives and change what we want. And once we change what we want, everything changes.

Every child learns *Ma Nishtana*; we even ask our youngest children, before they have any experience of life, to recite it, like a mantra. From the earliest stages we have to imbed it deep inside - we are free. We can be different.

*Ma Nishtana* is the song of hope. Things can be different. We are slaves no longer.

### *Activity for Seder:*

*Make the seder table different this year. Put something new on it - sparkles, chocolates, a gimmick or props. Encourage conversation - "Ma nishtana?"*