

TRADITIONAL

maror

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Source: ayeka

Maror

Bad times. Chewing on bad times.

In our family, we have a custom of biting into a big chunk of horseradish during the Seder. Faces turn red; eyes wince; we're burning from the inside.

And then it is over. A big "Aahhh". Everyone takes a big breath. We've survived *maror*.

The bitterness of *maror* is an essential part of Seder. The Torah tells us that the Paschal sacrifice should be eaten together with *maror* to remind us how the Egyptians embittered our lives with hard, mind-numbing work.

Slavery imprinted trauma on our souls that did not disappear when we crossed the Red Sea. Generations of anguish - physical and spiritual - do not just vanish. They linger in the inner recesses of our lives, waiting to be triggered. They can control us.

The bitterness of disempowerment and persecution is still with us, whether or not we choose to acknowledge it. We need to revisit the bitterness every year - to face it, taste it, and conquer it.

With the exhaling of the "Aahhh" comes fresh hope of moving ahead. We will not let lingering bitterness paralyze or diminish us. We have confronted it head on, and survived to tell the Haggada.

Activity for Seder:

Is there any difficult moment in Jewish History that gives you hope?