

Introduction

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Many times throughout history, the Jewish people have lived without freedom. The Haggadah tells the story of one of those times. It tells the story of how the Jewish people were freed from being slaves in Egypt which is called the Exodus. By reading the words of the Haggadah and by eating special food, we perform the Mitzvah written in the Torah. "You shall tell the Passover story to your children in the days to come". The word "Haggadah" means a retelling. The obligation to tell and retell the story of the exodus from slavery to one's children is the core of the Seder ritual. Tonight, is a time for joy and relaxation as we celebrate the triumph of all people who have struggled for control over their own lives and fought and won over the forces of oppression.

The special meal for Pesach is called the seder. The word seder means order. The order of the seder meal helps us tell the story in a step by step way. Tonight we eat Matzoh the "bread of affliction" to remind us of our past so that in our lives we will be neither slave nor Pharaoh, but that we will recognize injustice and try to stop it. Tonight is a time to renew our courage and a chance to awaken to the present with fresh insight.

In the Torah, one of the most important ideas is freedom. Freedom is not the right to do whatever you want but the opportunity to do what is right. A person who is free may choose to say yes when everyone else is saying no. Throughout the seder meal, we celebrate the journey to freedom and remember that none of us are free till all of us are free. Let us do what our ancestors have done for thousands of years. Let us remember the story of the Exodus from Egypt, let us link ourselves with all who came before us. Let us celebrate freedom.