

YachatZ

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YACHATZ

Is matzo poor man's bread or the food of free men? Can it be both? If we regard it as the Bread of Affliction why did we carry dough on our backs out of Egypt, to let it bake in the hot sun without leavening and rising? Can one Matzo be both a symbol of wretchedness and deliverance?

Matzo is a paradox.

Not only is it so, but in breaking the middle matzo we also break with symmetry. There is a bigger half and a smaller half. This unpalatable truth is almost a preamble to the Haggadah. The universe is not symmetrical, all is not evenly divided. There is a richer and poorer half. The distribution of assets is not equal. This is one of the mysteries that persists, omnipresent, throughout time. Life, the universe, and everything is not fair. We cannot balance this sorry scheme of things entire, and so it goes.

What was our response as children to the dawning realization that it was not fair? Did we have coping mechanisms? We survived so we must have coped, but we sacrificed our health in order to do so. We split. We broke into pieces. We hid ourself away. And this is how we prepared ourselves for life. Like the hungriest of paupers eating what we absolutely must, laying aside the greater part for later, when the time is riper. We compromised, accepting this imbalance, bowing to the "Law of Unfairness" which must prevail.

In many ways this acquiescence preceded addiction. We grew satisfied with the expression of a mere fraction of our personalities. We went into "survival mode", subsisting on crumbs of humanness, hiding the greater part of ourselves from ourselves.

As we do with the AFIKOMEN.

The focus of our lives grew narrower as our preoccupation with gnawing hunger grew stronger. We had nothing to spare for growth when all we had went to feed our habits. Fewer and fewer opportunities to begin the fixing, as we chased the fix with growing desperation. In the end it became obvious that we had developed a pathological relationship with the "bread of our affliction".

We break the middle matzo because the middle matzo represents the Great Mothering Principle of the Kabbalistical Sphere of BINAH. We lost the ability to take care of our most basic needs, to Mother ourselves.

If the recitation of the Haggadah is our "war-story", our qualification, why are we breaking the matzo now before beginning our war story?

The answer is heartbreaking. The reason this happens before the Haggadah, is because the splitting of the self almost always occurs when we are still in a pre-verbal state. The disorder of our personalities, the shaming and abandonment of ourselves happens when we are still babies, infants. What follows is the story of our lives after the rupture. The inevitable, inexorable descent into the blast-furnace that was our Egypt, and our deliverance. There are no words to describe the event. We simply break the matzo, leaving the smaller section on the Seder plate, We wrap the larger piece in a pillow-case

and put it away for afikomen.