

# Four Children

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Source:

## The Four Children

Our society likes to break people into categories: the weak and the strong, the good and the bad, the fast and the furious, the haves and the have-nots. Our tradition speaks of four children: the wise child, the wicked child, the simple child, and the one who does not know how to ask. Each child has a different reaction to hearing the Passover story. . .

**What does the wise child say?** "What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the laws our God has commanded us?" We answer this child, "God brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," and then instruct them in all the rules of Passover.

**What does the wicked child say?** "What does this have to do with *you*?" This child considers themselves distant from the seder, and excludes themselves from the community. We answer this child, "It is because of this that I would fulfill the commandments, that God acted for *me* when / left Egypt" - using "I" and not "us". According to tradition, the wicked child would not have been redeemed from Egypt, perhaps indicating that a loss of community and identity is its own bondage.

**The simple child asks:** "What's this all about?" We answer this child, "God brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand, out of the house of slavery."

**The child who does not know to ask,** we must begin the conversation.