

# The Four Children

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Source:

The Torah speaks of four types of children: one is wise, one is wicked, one is simple, and one does not know how to ask.

The Wise One asks: "What is the meaning of the laws and traditions God has commanded?" You should teach him all the traditions of Passover, even to the last detail.

The Wicked One asks: "What does this ritual mean to you?" By using the expression "to you" he excludes himself from his people and denies God. Shake his arrogance and say to him: "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt..." "For me" and not for him -- for had he been in Egypt, he would not have been freed.

The Simple One asks: "What is all this?" You should tell him: "It was with a mighty hand that the Lord took us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

As for the One Who Does Not Know How To Ask, you should open the discussion for him, as it is written: "And you shall explain to your child on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.'"

"Each one of us contains aspects of each child; each one of us is sometimes wise and sometimes wicked, sometimes simple and sometimes silent. We are the four children. As such we ask questions and we provide answers, different answers for different needs." -- Rabbi Miriam T. Spitzer

What do you make of this text? Split off into pairs or groups of 3 and discuss for 5 minutes. Do you agree with the characterizations of each question? Which child do you identify with?

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