

The Four Children

Contributed by [Hillel at UCLA](#)

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.

הַכֵּם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מֵה הַעֲבֹדוֹת וְהַהִקְיָם וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲתֶכֶם? וְאָף אַתָּה אָמַר לוֹ כֹּה־לַכּוֹת הַפֶּסַח: אִין מִפְטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֶפִיקוֹמֵן.

Chacham mah hu omeir? Mah ha-aidot v'hachukim v'hamishpatim, asher tzivah Adonai Eloheinu etchem? V'af atah emor lo k'hilchot hapesach. Ein maftirin achar hapesach afikoman.

The Wise One asks: "What is the meaning of the laws and traditions God has commanded?" (Deuteronomy 6:20) You should teach them all the traditions of Passover, even to the last detail.

כִּשְׁעֵי מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מֵה הַעֲבֹדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם? לָכֶם - וְלֹא לוֹ. וְלִפִּי שְׁהוֹצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכָּלל כִּפְר בְּעֵקֶר. וְאָף אַתָּה הִקְהֵה אֶת שְׁבִינֵי וְאָמַר לוֹ: בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם. לִי - וְלֹא לוֹ. אִילוּ הָיָה שֵׁם, לֹא הָיָה נִגָּאֵל

Rasha, mah hu omer? Mah ha-avodah ha-zot lachem? Lachem v'lo lo. U'fi shehotzi et atzmo min hak'lal, kafar ba-ikar. V'af atah hakheih et shinav, ve-emor lo. Ba-avur zeh, asah Adonai li, b'tzeiti mimitzrayim, li v'lo lo. Ilu hayah sham, lo hayah nigal.

The Wicked One asks: "What does this ritual mean to you?" (Exodus 12:26) By using the expression "to you" they exclude themselves from his people and denies God. Shake their arrogance and say to them: "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt..." (Exodus 13:8) "For me" and not for them -- for had they been in Egypt, they would not have been freed.

תָּם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מֵה זֹאת? וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו: בְּחֹזֶק יָד הוֹצִיאָנוּ יי מִמִּצְרַיִם, מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים

Tam mah hu omeir? Mah zot? V'amarta eilav. B'chozek yad hotzi-anu Adonai mimitzrayim mibeit avadim.

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

וְשִׂאֵינוּ יוֹדְעֵי לִישׁוֹל - אֶת פֶּתַח לוֹ, שְׁנֵאֵמַר: וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבָנֶיךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בְּעֵבוֹר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי בְצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם

V'she-eino yodei-a lishol, at p'tach lo. Shene-emar. V'higadta l'vincha, bayom hahu leimor. Ba-avur zeh asah Adonai li, b'tzeiti mimitzrayim.

As for the One Who Does Not Know How To Ask, you should open the discussion for them, 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.'" (Exodus 13:8)