

The Four Children

Contributed by [Muslim-Jewish Solidarity Committee](#)

Source:

Our tradition speaks of four different types of children who might react differently to the Passover seder. The Hagaddah teaches us that we should speak to each child in the language that they can understand. We speak of wise, wicked, simple and innocent children, knowing that each of us can be at times of our lives one of these children.

חכם מה הוא אומר? מה העדות והחוקים והמשפטים אשר צוה יי אלהינו אתכם? ואף אתה אומר לו כהלכות הפסח: אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן

Chacham mah hu omeir? Mah ha-eidot 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 him all the traditions of Passover, even to the last detail.

כשע מה הוא אומר? מה העבדה הזאת לכם? לכם - ולא לו. ולפי שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל כפר בעקרו. ואף אתה הקהה את שניו ואמר לו: בעבור זה עשה יי לי בצאתי ממצרים. לי - ולא לו. אילו היה שם, לא היה נגאל

Rasha, mah hu omer? Mah ha-avodah ha-zot lachem? Lachem v'lo lo. Ul'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" 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..." (Exodus 13:8) "For me" and not for him -- for had he been in Egypt, he would not have been freed.

תם מה הוא אומר? מה זאת? ואמרת אליו: בחזק יד הוציאנו יי ממצרים, מבית עבדים

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 him: "It was with a mighty hand that the Lord took us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

ושאינו יודע לשאול - את פתח לו, שנאמר: והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר, בעבור זה עשה יי לי בצאתי ממצרים

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 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.'" (Exodus 13:8)