

From Generation to Generation

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Source: Ricky Dessen

From Generation to Generation - Exodus, Holocaust, and 9-11

Tonight, along with Jews throughout the world, we sit down to begin our Seder. We tell a story that has been repeated year after year for over 3,000 years. The story of the Exodus from Egypt reminds us of the hardships and bitterness that our ancestors endured while slaves in Egypt. The Exodus also celebrates freedom. Not only is it important to tell this story on Passover, but the Torah also commands it. We discuss the Exodus so that each generation knows the struggles of the Jewish people and the importance of freedom.

For this same reason, we must also teach our children about the Holocaust. Our responsibility to talk with our children about Jewish hardships must not end with the Exodus but must also include modern difficulties. Understanding these struggles binds Jews throughout the world as one nation.

Tonight, we also remember those who lost family and friends in the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center. We remember them always-but especially on Passover-because Passover represents freedom. On 9-11, terrorists attacked not only the buildings but also attacked the freedoms we hold so dear and sometimes take for granted. While the 9-11 tragedies were not limited to the Jewish people, the attacks violate the freedoms so fundamental to us, both as Jews and Americans, that it is appropriate to remember and discuss these tragedies during the Passover Seder. We remember those who died and those whose lives were forever changed, both Jews and non-Jews alike.