

TRADITIONAL

Maggid

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Retelling the Passover Story

Raise the tray with the matzot and say:

This is the bread of affliction that our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry, let him come and eat; whoever is in need, let him come and conduct the Seder of Passover. This year [we are] here; next year in the land of Israel. This year [we are] slaves; next year [we will be] free people.

The tray with the matzot is moved aside, and the second cup is poured. (Do not drink it yet).

Now the child asks "Mah Nishtana?"

What makes this night different from all [other] nights?

On all nights we need not dip even once, on this night we do so twice!

On all nights we eat chametz or matzah, and on this night only matzah.

On all nights we eat any kind of vegetables, and on this night maror!

On all nights we eat sitting upright or reclining, and on this night we all recline!

The tray is restored to its place with the matzah partly uncovered. Now we say "We were slaves. . ."

We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and the L-rd, our G-d, took us out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of Egypt, then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah, we would still be obligated to discuss the exodus from Egypt; and everyone who discusses the exodus from Egypt at length is praiseworthy.

It happened that Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarphon were reclining [at a seder] in B'nei Berak. They were discussing the exodus from Egypt all that night, until their students came and told them: "Our Masters! The time has come for reciting the morning Shema!"

Rabbi Eleazar ben Azaryah said:"I am like a man of seventy years old, yet I did not succeed in proving that the exodus from Egypt must be mentioned at night-until Ben Zoma explained it: "It is said, `That you may

remember the day you left Egypt all the days of your life;' now 'the days of your life' refers to the days, [and the additional word] 'all' indicates the inclusion of the nights!"

The sages, however, said: "'The days of your life' refers to the present-day world; and 'all' indicates the inclusion of the days of Mashiach."

Blessed is the Omnipresent One, blessed be He! Blessed is He who gave the Torah to His people Israel, blessed be He! The Torah speaks of four children: One is wise, one is wicked, one is simple and one does not know how to ask.

The wise one, what does he say? "What are the testimonies, the statutes and the laws which the L-rd, our G-d, has commanded you?" You, in turn, shall instruct him in the laws of Passover, [up to] 'one is not to eat any dessert after the Passover-lamb.'

The wicked one, what does he say? "What is this service to you?!" He says 'to you,' but not to him! By thus excluding himself from the community he has denied that which is fundamental. You, therefore, blunt his teeth and say to him: "It is because of this that the L-rd did for me when I left Egypt"; 'for me' - but not for him! If he had been there, he would not have been redeemed!"

The simpleton, what does he say? "What is this?" Thus you shall say to him: "With a strong hand the L-rd took us out of Egypt, from the house of slaves."

As for the one who does not know how to ask you must initiate him, as it is said: "You shall tell your child on that day, 'It is because of this that the L-rd did for me when I left Egypt.'"

One may think that [the discussion of the exodus] must be from the first of the month. The Torah therefore says, 'On that day.' 'On that day,' however, could mean while it is yet daytime; the Torah therefore says, 'It is because of this.' The expression 'because of this' can only be said when matzah and maror are placed before you.

In the beginning our fathers served idols, but now the Omnipresent One has brought us close to His service, as it is said: "Joshua said to all the people: Thus said the L-rd, the G-d of Israel, 'Your fathers used to live on the other side of the river - Terach, the father of Abraham and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods.

"And I took your father Abraham from beyond the river, and I led him throughout the whole land of Canaan. I increased his seed and gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave Mount Seir to possess it, and Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt."

Blessed is He who keeps His promise to Israel, blessed be He!For the Holy One, blessed be He, calculated the end [of the bondage], in order to do as He had said to our father Abraham at the "Covenant between the Portions," as it is said: "And He said to Abraham, `You shall know that your seed will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will enslave them and make them suffer, for four hundred years. But I shall also judge the nation whom they shall serve, and after that they will come out with great wealth.'"

According to the instructions of Rabbi Isaac Luria, the wine cup is now raised and the Matzot are covered.

This is what has stood by our fathers and us!For not just one alone has risen against us to destroy us, but in every generation they rise against us to destroy us; and the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hand!

Put down the wine cup and uncover the Matzah.

Go forth and learn what Laban the Aramean wanted to do to our father Jacob. Pharaoh had issued a decree against the male children only, but Laban wanted to uproot everyone - as it is said: "The Aramean wished to destroy my father; and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation - great and mighty and numerous."

"And he went down to Egypt" forced by Divine decree. "And he sojourned there" - this teaches that our father Jacob did not go down to Egypt to settle, but only to live there temporarily. Thus it is said, "They said to Pharaoh, We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks because the hunger is severe in the land of Canaan; and now, please, let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen."

"Few in number" as it is said: "Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now, the L-rd, your G-d, has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven."

"And he became there a nation"this teaches that Israel was distinctive there.

"Great, mighty," as it is said: "And the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied and became very, very mighty, and the land became filled with them."

"And numerous," as it is said: "I passed over you and saw you wallowing in your bloods, and I said to you `By your blood you shall live,' and I said to you `By your blood you shall live!' I caused you to thrive like the plants of the field, and you increased and grew and became very beautiful your bosom fashioned and your hair grown long, but you were naked and bare."

"The Egyptians treated us badly and they made us suffer, and they put hard work upon us."

"The Egyptians treated us badly," as it is said: Come, let us act cunningly with [the people] lest they multiply and, if there should be a war against us, they will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the land."

"And they made us suffer," as it is said: "They set taskmasters over [the people of Israel] to make them suffer with their burdens, and they built storage cities for Pharaoh, Pitom and Ramses."

"And they put hard work upon us," as it is said: "The Egyptians made the children of Israel work with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard work, with mortar and with bricks and all manner of service in the field, all their work which they made them work with rigor." And we cried out to the L-rd, the G-d of our fathers, and the L-rd heard our voice and saw our suffering, our labor and our oppression.

"And we cried out to the L-rd, the G-d of our fathers," as it is said: "During that long period, the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel groaned because of the servitude, and they cried out. And their cry for help from their servitude rose up to G-d."

"And the L-rd heard our voice" as it said: "And G-d heard their groaning, and G-d remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

"And he saw our suffering," this refers to the separation of husband and wife, as it is said: "G-d saw the children of Israel and G-d took note."

"Our labor," this refers to the "children," as it is said: "Every boy that is born, you shall throw into the river and every girl you shall keep alive."

"And our oppression," this refers to the pressure, as it is said: "I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them."

"The L-rd took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with a great manifestation, and with signs and wonders."

"The L-rd took us out of Egypt," not through an angel, not through a seraph and not through a messenger. The Holy One, blessed be He, did it in His glory by Himself!

Thus it is said:"In that night I will pass through the land of Egypt, and I will smite every first-born in the land of Egypt, from man to beast, and I will carry out judgments against all the gods of Egypt, I the L-rd."

"I will pass through the land of Egypt,"I and not an angel;

"And I will smite every first-born in the land of Egypt,"I and not a seraph;

"And I will carry out judgments against all the gods of Egypt,"I and not a messenger;

"I- the L-rd,"it is I, and none other!

"With a strong hand," this refers to the dever (pestilence) as it is said: "Behold, the hand of the L-rd will be upon your livestock in the field, upon the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds and the flocks, a very severe pestilence."

"And with an outstretched arm," this refers to the sword, as it is said: "His sword was drawn, in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem."

"And with a great manifestation," this refers to the revelation of the Shechinah (Divine Presence), as it is said: "Has any G-d ever tried to take for himself a nation from the midst of another nation, with trials, signs and wonders, with war and with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great manifestations, like all that the L-rd your G-d, did for you in Egypt before your eyes!"

"And with signs," this refers to the staff, as it is said: "Take into your hand this staff with which you shall perform the signs."

"And wonders," this refers to the blood, as it is said: "And I shall show wonders in heaven and on earth."

When saying the following words "blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke," spill three times from the wine in the cup. Do not remove wine by dipping a finger, but by spilling from the cup itself, and do so into a broken/chipped dish. (Have in mind that the cup symbolizes the aspect of malchut which contains an aspect of "anger and indignation." By means of our faculty of binah (understanding) we pour out [that aspect of "anger and indignation" - by spilling from the wine in the cup into a broken dish which represents kelipah, i.e., that which is called accursed [the principle of evil]].

Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke

Another explanation: "Strong hand" indicates two [plagues]; "Outstretched arm," another two; "Great manifestation," another two; "Signs," another two; and "Wonders," another two.

These are the Ten Plagues which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians, namely as follows:

When saying the ten plagues, spill from the cup itself ten times, as stated above (and when spilling, again have in mind what was said above). The wine remaining in the cup (will have become 'wine that causes joy,' thus) is not to be spilled, but other wine is added to it [to refill the cup].

Blood.

Frogs.

Lice.

Wild Beasts.

Pestilence.

Boils.

Hail.

Locust.

Darkness.

Slaying of the First-born.

Rabbi Yehudah referred to them by acronyms:

DeTzaCh (blood, frogs, lice);

ADaSh (beasts, pestilence, boils);

BeAChaV (hail, locust, darkness, first-born).

Rabbi Yosi the Gallilean said:How do you know that the Egyptians were stricken by ten plagues in Egypt, and then were struck by fifty plagues at the sea?

In Egypt it says of them "The magicians said to Pharaoh `This is the finger of G-d.' At the sea it says, "Israel saw the great hand that the L-rd laid against Egypt; and the people feared the L-rd, and they believed in the L-rd and in His servant Moses."

Now, how often were they smitten by `the finger'?Ten plagues!

Thus you must conclude that in Egypt they were smitten by ten plagues, at the sea they were smitten by fifty plagues!

Rabbi Eliezer said: How do we know that each individual plague which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of four plagues?

For it is said: "He sent against them His fierce anger, fury, and indignation, and trouble, a discharge of messengers of evil": `Fury,' is one; `Indignation,' makes two; `Trouble,' makes three; `Discharge of messengers of evil,' makes four.

Thus you must now say that in Egypt they were struck by forty plagues, and at the sea they were stricken by two hundred plagues.

Rabbi Akiva said: How do we know that each individual plague which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of five plagues?

For it is said: "He sent against them his fierce anger, fury, and indignation, and trouble, a discharge of messengers of evil": "His fierce anger," is one; "fury," makes two; "indignation," makes three; "trouble," makes four; "discharge of messengers of evil," makes five. Thus you must now say that in Egypt they were struck by fifty plagues, and at the sea they were stricken by two hundred and fifty plagues.

How many levels of favors has the Omnipresent One bestowed upon us:

If He had brought us out from Egypt, and had not carried out judgments against them Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had carried out judgments against them, and not against their idols Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had destroyed their idols, and had not smitten their first-born Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had smitten their first-born, and had not given us their wealth Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had given us their wealth, and had not split the sea for us Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had split the sea for us, and had not taken us through it on dry land Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had taken us through the sea on dry land, and had not drowned our oppressors in it Dayenu, it would

have sufficed us!

If He had drowned our oppressors in it, and had not supplied our needs in the desert for forty years Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had supplied our needs in the desert for forty years, and had not fed us the manna Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had fed us the manna, and had not given us the Shabbat Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had given us the Shabbat, and had not brought us before Mount Sinai Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had brought us before Mount Sinai, and had not given us the Torah Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had given us the Torah, and had not brought us into the land of Israel Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

If He had brought us into the land of Israel, and had not built for us the Beit Habechirah (Chosen House; the Beit Hamikdash) Dayenu, it would have sufficed us!

Thus how much more so should we be grateful to the Omnipresent One for the doubled and redoubled goodness that He has bestowed upon us; for He has brought us out of Egypt, and carried out judgments against them, and against their idols, and smote their first-born, and gave us their wealth, and split the sea for us, and took us through it on dry land, and drowned our oppressors in it, and supplied our needs in the desert for forty years, and fed us the manna, and gave us the Shabbat, and brought us before Mount Sinai, and gave us the Torah, and brought us into the land of Israel and built for us the Beit Habechirah to atone for all our sins.

Rabban Gamliel used to say: Whoever does not discuss the following three things on Passover has not fulfilled his duty, namely:

Passover (the Passover-sacrifice),

Matzah (the unleavened bread)

and

Maror (the bitter herbs).

Passover - the Passover-lamb that our fathers ate during the time of the **Beit Hamikdash** - for what reason [did they do so]?

Because the Omnipresent passed over our fathers' houses in Egypt, as it is said:

"You shall say, It is a Passover-offering to the L-rd, because He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians with a plague, and He saved our houses. And the people bowed and prostrated themselves."

Take the broken Matzah into your hand and say:

This Matzah that we eat for what reason? Because the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of the kings of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them.

Thus it is said: "They baked Matzah-cakes from the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, because it was not leavened; for they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay, and they had also not prepared any [other] provisions."

Take the maror into your hand and say:

This maror that we eat for what reason? Because the Egyptians embittered our fathers' lives in Egypt, as it is said:

"They made their lives bitter with hard service with mortar and with bricks, and with all manner of service in the field; all their service which they made them serve with rigor."

In every generation a person is obligated to regard himself as if he had come out of Egypt, as it is said: "You shall tell your child on that day, it is because of this that the L-rd did for me when I left Egypt."

The Holy One, blessed be He redeemed not only our fathers from Egypt, but He redeemed also us with them, as it is said: "It was us that He brought out from there, so that He might bring us to give us the land that He swore to our fathers."

Cover the Matzah and raise the cup. The cup is to be held in the hand until the completion of the blessing, "Who Has Redeemed Us..."

Thus it is our duty to thank to laud, to praise, to glorify, to exalt, to adore, to bless, to elevate and to honor the One who did all these miracles for our fathers and for us. He took us from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, and from mourning to festivity, and from deep darkness to great light and from bondage to redemption. Let us therefore recite before Him Halleluyah, Praise G-d!

Halleluyah - Praise G-d! Offer praise, you servants of the L-rd; praise the Name of the L-rd. May the L-rd's Name be blessed from now and to all eternity. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the L-rd's Name is praised. The L-rd is high above all nations, His glory is over the heavens. Who is like the L-rd, our G-d, who dwells on high yet looks down so low upon heaven and earth! He raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the dunghill, to seat them with nobles, with the nobles of His people. He restores the barren woman to the house, into a joyful mother of children. Halleluyah - praise G-d.

When Israel went out of Egypt, the House of Jacob from a people of a foreign language, Judah became His holy one, Israel His dominion. The sea saw and fled, the Jordan turned backward. The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like young sheep. What is with you, O sea, that you flee; Jordan, that you turn backward? Mountains, why do you skip like rams; hills, like a pool of water, the flint-stone into a spring of water.

Blessed are You, G-d, our G-d King of the universe, who has redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt, and enabled us to attain this night to eat matzah and maror. So too, G-d, our G-d and G-d of our fathers, enable us to attain other holidays and festivals that will come to us in peace with happiness in the rebuilding of Your city, and with rejoicing in Your service [in the Bet Hamikdash]. Then we shall eat *(Note: if the festival is on any day except Saturday night say)* of the sacrifices and of the Passover-offerings *(If the Seder is on Saturday Night say)* of the Passover-offerings and of the sacrifices whose blood shall be sprinkled on the wall of Your altar for acceptance; and we shall thank You with a new song for our redemption and for the deliverance of our souls. Blessed are You, G-d, who redeemed Israel.

Recite the following blessing, and drink the cup in the reclining position:

Blessed are You, L-rd, our G-d King of the universe,