

Motzi-Matzah

Contributed by [HIAS](#)

Source: HIAS Haggadah 2019



Leader: At the Passover Seder, we eat matzah as we remember the modest means by which the Israelites sustained themselves on their journey out of slavery, enabling them to survive and thrive in their new

homeland.

Like our ancestors, today's refugees rebuild their lives with precious few resources at their disposal. These meager resources often become the seeds of their liberation as they go on to lay down new roots, rebuild their lives, and make important contributions to their local communities and our country as a whole.

A participant reads the following story:

Tashitaa Tufaa, Ethiopian refugee living in Minnesota

In 1992, at the age of 24, Tashitaa Tufaa came to the United States, where he sought political asylum. Though Tashitaa had earned a college degree in his native Ethiopia, when he came to the U.S., the only work he could find was as a dishwasher, making less than \$6 per hour. In order to make ends meet, Tashitaa took on several jobs, including working as a taxi driver.

After almost a decade of working long, hard hours, Tashitaa challenged himself to start his own business. In 2003, he went door-to-door in his new home state of Minnesota to try to find clients for his new transportation business. Three years later, Tashitaa had successfully launched the Metropolitan Transportation Network (MTN). Started with just his taxi and his wife's minivan, this new company was so successful that Tashitaa was able to buy school buses; though, he had to pay for them in cash. Today, MTN is one of the largest bus companies in Minnesota, employing hundreds of people and generating tens of millions of dollars in income. In addition to running the business, Tashitaa also mentors refugees across the country to help them achieve financial self-sufficiency and success for themselves and their families.

Take turns reading these facts aloud:

Did You Know?

- Though refugees living in the United States for five years or less have a median household income of roughly \$22,000, that number more than triples in the following decades, growing far faster than other foreign-born groups.
- Refugees are taxpayers. Over a twenty-year period, the majority of refugees fully pay back the cost of resettlement and other related benefits. They contribute, on average, \$21,324 more in taxes than any costs associated with their initial resettlement.
- Refugees across the United States are helping to revitalize Main Street. In Akron, Ohio, Bhutanese and Burmese refugees have transformed the North Hill neighborhood from a landscape of vacant storefronts into a bustling corridor of grocery stores, clothing vendors, and jewelry shops. Bosnian refugees in St. Louis have transformed a section of the city called Bevo Mill, once known for its high crime, into an area full of popular Bosnian-owned restaurants, bars, and cafes.

Discuss one of the following questions together:

1. Does Tashitaa's story resonate with your own family's story of coming to the United States?
2. How might you use Tashitaa's story or the facts above to respond to those who claim that refugees take more from the American economy than they contribute?

When your discussion concludes, recite the following blessings as a group, distribute the top and middle matzot set aside earlier in the Seder, and then taste the matzah:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who brings bread from the land.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat matzah.