

# CSJO: Four Questions

Contributed by [Congress of Secular Jewish Organization](#)

Source: The Jewish Secular Community Passover Hagada

Reader 11: We are about to hear the TRADITIONAL FOUR QUESTIONS. These are only some of the many questions that the holiday raises. Since one of the reasons for the Seder is to inform the young, it is traditionally the young people who get to ask the questions.

Ma-nish-tahnah hah-lie-lah hah-zeh me-kol hah-lay-lot?

Why is this night different from all other nights?

ALL: Once we were slaves in ancient Egypt and we were liberated. Tonight we celebrate that freedom from slavery and we dedicate ourselves to the continuing struggle for freedom for all people.

Reader 12: 1. Sheh-beh-chol hah-lay-lot ah-nu o-chleen chah-matz u mah-tzah,  
hah-lie-lah hah-zeh ku-loh mah-tzah?

On all other nights we eat both bread and matza. Why on this night do we eat only matza?

ALL: Once we were slaves in ancient Egypt. Our foreparents, we are told, in their flight from bondage, did not have time to let the dough rise, so they carried the dough into the desert. The hot sun baked it into a flat bread called matza.

Reader 12: 2. Sheh-beh-chol hay-lay-lot ah-nu o-chleen sheh-ar yer-ah-kot,  
hah-lie-lah hah-zeh mah-ror?

On all other nights we eat many kinds of vegetables and herbs. Why on this night do we eat only bitter herbs at our seder?

ALL: Once we were slaves in the land of ancient Egypt. The bitter taste of these herbs helps us to remember the cruel ways we were treated when we were slaves, and of the hard lives that many people throughout the world have today.

Reader 12: 3. Sheh-beh-chol hah-lay-lot ayn ah-nu maat-bee-leen af-fee-lu pah-am ah-chat, ha-lie-lah hah-zeh sheh-tay feh-am-im?

On all other nights we do not usually dip one food into another. At our Seder we dip the parsley into salt water and the bitter herbs into kharoset. Why on this night do we dip foods twice?

ALL: The first time, the salty taste reminds us of the tears we cried when we were slaves in the land of ancient Egypt. The second time, dipping the bitter herbs into the kharoses, which Eastern Europeans made of chopped apples, nuts, and wine, is to remind us of the clay our ancestors mixed to build cities for the Pharaohs.

Reader 12: 4. Sheh-beh-chol hay-lay-lot ah-nu o-chleen bayn yosh-veen u-vayn miss-u-been, hah-lie-lah hah-zeh ku-lah-nu meh-su-been.

On all other nights we sit up straight or we recline. Why on this night are we supposed to recline?

ALL: Once we were slaves in the land of ancient Egypt. Reclining at the table was a sign of freedom in olden times. Since our ancestors were freed from bondage, on this night we recline to remind ourselves that we, too, with struggle, can overcome bondage and slavery.

