

FOUR MORE

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EATING MATZAH, 3000 YEARS AFTER THE EXODUS?



Matzah is frequently termed 'the bread of affliction', a symbol of our slavery in Egypt. We're all very aware of how difficult and painful the slavery must have been, but why do we have to keep eating the same bread, or matzah, that they ate back then? We are free now – we live in a society where we are able to practice our religion easily. In Israel we have a Jewish state. The standard of living for all of humanity is better than it has ever been.

There are a number of reasons why we must continue to relive the slavery every year on Seder night. The matzah represents a

lack of ego, in the sense that it doesn't rise. We are reminded on Seder night to invite all who need a place to go, to our tables. Moshe taught us this when he left his palace to be with the Israelites – we should never be too proud to help our fellow. Especially in a time where people are generally more comfortable materially, we must remind ourselves that this wasn't always the case.

If the Exodus at Pesach time was the birth of the Jewish nation, matzah is the birthday cake.

Every year we celebrate that we were slaves, we were freed, and we are still holding on to gratitude for it until today.

QUESTIONS



PESACH QUIZ

WHEN DID MATZAH BRAND RAKUSENS COME UNDER SUPERVISION OF THE LONDON BETH DIN:

- LATE 1960s
- LATE 1950s
- LATE 1970s

IN AUGUST 2022, DAYANIM FROM THE LONDON BETH DIN TRAVELLED TO YORKSHIRE TO SUPERVISE THE CUTTING OF HOW MANY TONNES OF WHEAT FOR THIS YEAR'S RAKUSEN'S SHMURA MATZOT:

- 19 TONNES
- 20 TONNES
- 21 TONNES



ANSWERS:
LATE 1970s;
20 TONNES

WHY DO WE NEED PESACH IF THE EXODUS IS MENTIONED IN THE SHEMA EVERY DAY AND IN FRIDAY NIGHT KIDDUSH?

Pesach is like an anniversary of a special moment – be it a birthday, wedding or something you have experienced – recalled in its time each year. But you don't just remember the significance of that event on the anniversary though, you remember it much more often than that. Imagine only expressing your appreciation to somebody you really care about on their birthday and never in between!

The anniversary of the Exodus from Egypt when the Jewish people emerged from slavery, showed their acceptance of God, started their journey to Mount Sinai and beyond is Pesach. Once a year, we eat special foods, sing Pesach songs, retell our story and do our best to recreate the atmosphere of the original Pesach. We try to imagine that we too, as part of the chain from our ancestors, left Egypt. Pesach is the special moment for this.

Yet we couldn't let a year pass between each Pesach without mentioning the Exodus and its impact on our lives. Not only might we forget about it, but we would lack appreciation to God and for His daily involvement in the world for each of us.

So, we mention the Exodus each day in our prayers – which teach us about our values and beliefs, not just giving us a way to ask things of God – and every Friday night in Kiddush, as but two examples. Shabbat is a particularly significant time, since if there hadn't been an Exodus and our ancestors had stayed slaves in Egypt, how could there ever have been Shabbat?

Pesach is the anniversary of that special moment, the time to experience it as best we can; but we mention it everyday to show we still appreciate it.

QUESTIONS



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PESACH QUIZ

WHICH US PRESIDENT WAS THE FIRST TO HOST A PESACH SEDER AT THE WHITE HOUSE?

- BARACK OBAMA
- JOE BIDEN
- GEORGE BUSH II

WHICH CITY HOSTS THE LARGEST PESACH SEDER EVERY YEAR?

- KATHMANDU, NEPAL
- BANGKOK, THAILAND
- TEL AVIV, ISRAEL



ANSWERS:
BARACK OBAMA,
KATHMANDU,
NEPAL

WHY MUST THE SEDER TAKE PLACE AFTER DARK? WHY CAN'T WE DO IT DURING THE DAY?

On this night, 15th Nissan, in the Jewish year 2448, the Jewish people sat down for their final meal in Egypt. God's final plague on the Egyptians, the Death of the Firstborns, was going to be taking place and the Jews were commanded to paint their doorposts with the blood of a lamb. They were also told to make a Passover offering of a lamb, to be eaten that night.

They were not to leave their homes, lest they too be smitten by the Angel of Death. This is why one of the names of the Seder is 'Leil Shimurim' – 'The Guarded Night'. We are in effect reliving the experience that took place then, in order to fulfil our task of seeing ourselves as though we too, were redeemed from Egypt.

The redeemed Jewish nation were born at night, in the darkness, through immense struggle. Today we still live in

a world that can at some times and in some places seem devoid of light, full of pain and difficulty. Just like the growth of a plant begins in the dark, heaviness of soil and dirt, so to, did our development as a nation in the slavery of Egypt. In our own lives, when we go through times of 'night', we can look to the Pesach story to remind us that our struggles are in fact a sign of our growth.

When the world is dark, we can be the light.

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QUESTIONS

PESACH QUIZ

**THE MOST POPULAR
HAGADDAH IN THE USA
IS SOLD BY A:**

- JEWISH PUBLISHING HOUSE,
ARTSCROLL
- DEPARTMENT STORE,
WALMART
- COFFEE COMPANY,
MAXWELL HOUSE

**ROUGHLY HOW MANY COPIES
OF THE MAXWELL HOUSE
HAGADDAH HAVE BEEN
SOLD SO FAR:**

- OVER 50 MILLION
- OVER 15 MILLION
- OVER 30 MILLION

**HOW MUCH WAS PAID FOR
THE MOST EXPENSIVE
HAGADDAH SOLD SO FAR AT
SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE,
IN 2012:**

- \$1,003,000
- \$962,500
- \$980,000



ANSWERS: COFFEE COMPANY,
MAXWELL HOUSE;
OVER 50 MILLION; \$962,500

FOUR MORE

WHY ARE CHILDREN THE FOCAL POINT OF THE SEDER?

Rabbi Sacks taught that "the world we build tomorrow is born in the stories we tell our children today".

The Pesach Seder is, in essence, an act of passing on the story of our people from one generation to the next. The name of the Haggadah (which literally means 'telling') refers to the mitzvah of vehigadeta l'vincha – the telling of our national story to our children. So important is it to give our children this sense of their identity that Moses emphasises the duty of parents to educate their children four times following the Exodus - "Teach your child..." "When your child asks... you should tell them..."

At the Seder, therefore, it is clear that children are not an afterthought, instructed to sit quietly whilst the adults get on with it, rather, they are simultaneously the intended audience and the stars of the show!

It is well known that Jews ask questions – they even answer

questions with questions!

Perhaps this is rooted in the Jewish belief that the best form of learning is through asking questions. And that's why the telling of our story is introduced by the Mah Nishtanah – the four questions asked by the youngest child.

The Seder is designed to be engaging and interactive, theatrical even, with the raising and lowering, washing and dipping... It is a physical, sensory experience – the taste of the bitter herbs, the sweet smell of charoset and the sound of the cracking and crunching of matzah! It is designed to create memories in our children that will last a lifetime.

Let's end as we began, with a quote from Rabbi Sacks: "Education is the single most important determinant of the future of the human race, and what and how we teach our children is the most important decision we can make."



QUESTIONS

PESACH QUIZ

HOW HEAVY WAS THE WORLD'S
BIGGEST MATZAH BALL
(KNEIDEL), CREATED IN 2010
IN ARIZONA:

- 137 POUNDS
- 488 POUNDS
- 549 POUNDS

IN 2008, HOW MANY MATZAH
BALLS (KNEIDLACH) DID
COMPETITIVE EATER JOEY
CHESTUNT EAT IN 8 MINUTES:

- 78
- 56
- 103

ANSWERS:
1,488 POUNDS
278

