

Pesach



Part 1: Holiday Summary

The holiday of Pesach celebrates the Jewish people's leaving Egypt and our becoming a free nation. One important part of the holiday is the mitzvah to eat matzah and not to eat chametz. Another key mitzvah of Pesach is *sippur yetziat mitzrayim*, telling the story of the exodus from Egypt. We fulfill this mitzvah on the first night of Pesach (and second night outside of Israel) as part of the Pesach Seder, where we read the Haggadah, retelling the story of our slavery and redemption.



Part 2: The Inside Scoop

Look at the *pesukim* below that describe the mitzvah of retelling the story of leaving Egypt.



Shemot 13:3, 8	שמות פרק יג פסוקים ג, ח
<p>Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, when you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for with a mighty hand, the Lord took you out of here, and [therefore] no leaven shall be eaten.</p> <p>And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, "Because of this, the Lord did [this] for me when I went out of Egypt."</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָעָם, זָכוֹר אֶת-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים, כִּי בְחֹזֶק יָד, הוֹצִיא ה' אֶתְכֶם מִצֵּרָה; וְלֹא יֵאָכֵל, חֻמֶּץ.</p> <p>וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר: בְּעִבּוֹר זֶה, עָשָׂה ה' לִי, בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרָיִם</p>

The Rambam explains that these *pesukim* serve as the source for the mitzvah to tell the story of leaving Egypt every year on Pesach.

Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatzah 7:1	רמב"ם, הלכות חמץ ומצה ז:א
<p>It is a positive commandment of the Torah to relate the miracles and amazing things done for our forefathers in Egypt on the night of the fifteenth of Nisan, as it states: "Remember this day, on which you left Egypt"... From where [is it derived that this mitzvah is to be fulfilled on] the night of the fifteenth? The Torah states: "And you shall tell your son on that day, saying: 'It is because of this...'" [implying that the mitzvah is to be fulfilled] when matzah and maror are placed before you.</p>	<p>מצות עשה של תורה לספר בנסים ונפלאות שנעשו לאבותינו במצרים בליל חמשה עשר בניסן שנאמר זכור את היום הזה אשר יצאתם ממצרים... ומנין שביליל חמשה עשר? תלמוד לומר: "והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר בעבור זה" - בשעה שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך.</p>



Part 3: Let's Discuss

Kids:

- According to the Rambam, why is the mitzvah to tell the story performed specifically on the night of the 15th of Nissan?
- Why do you think it is important to teach the story of the redemption from Egypt?
- In your opinion, what is different about how we learn the story on the Seder night from how it might be taught by your teacher in school? Which do you like better?
- What do you think is the most important message to learn at the Seder on Pesach? Why?
- Name one special memory you have of the Seder from past years. What was it and why was it special?

Grownups:

- Do you have a special way that you conduct part of the Seder? What is it, and where did you first learn about it?
- What is your favorite part of the Seder and why?
- Share a memory of yours from a Seder when you were a child.



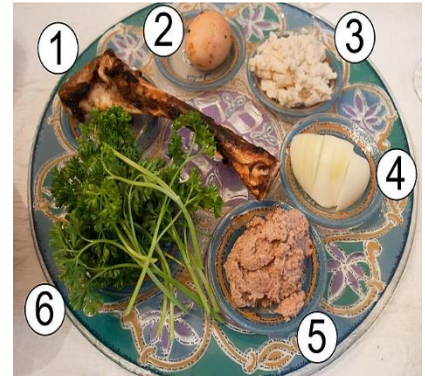
Part 4: Activity

Younger Grades: Drawing

Print out and color in a picture of the Seder plate from [here](#). Then see if you can name each of those foods.

Older Grades:

Everyone loves hiding or searching for the Afikomen at the Seder! Join Abbey to learn how to make your own Afikomen bag that you can use at the Seder [here](#).



Part 5: Bonus

If the mitzvah of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* is for the parents to teach the children, what happens if there are no children at the Seder? Do you still recite the Haggadah? Look at the statement of the Gemara below about asking the “Mah Nishtanah” at the Seder.

Tractate Pesachim 116a

מסכת פסחים דף קטז עמוד א

The Sages taught: If his son is wise and knows how to inquire, his son asks him. And if he is not wise, his wife asks him. And if even his wife is not capable of asking or if he has no wife, he asks himself. And even if two Torah scholars who know the *halakhot* of Passover are sitting together and there is no one else present to pose the questions, they ask each other.

תנו רבנן: חכם — בְּנוֹ שואלו. ואם אינו חכם — אשתו שואלתו, ואם לאו — הוא שואל לעצמו, ואפילו שני תלמידי חכמים שיודעין בהלכות הפסח — שואלין זה לזה.

- Based on this Gemara, do you think the Haggadah is still recited if there are no children at the Seder?
- What do you think Torah scholars can gain from repeating the story of leaving Egypt every year even if they know it already?



Part 6: More on the Parsha – For Grownups

In a Tanach Study podcast entitled “The Paschal Lamb: In Egypt and for Future Generations”, Dr. Yael Ziegler discusses *Pesach Mitzrayim* and *Pesach Dorot* [here](#). The commandment of the Korban Pesach was meant to help Bnei Yisrael to define their relationship with God and separate themselves from Egyptian culture.