

B'H

Hillel High Haggadah

Created by the Girls of Hillel High



Designed by: Miryam Cairns

The Real Definition of Freedom

By: Chana Bekker

People who work under high stress conditions tend to take time off to relax, or go on vacation. However, the cycle of intense stress followed by utter relaxation does nothing to help prevent or reverse the mental and physical effects of chronic stress. Scientists claim that the only way to truly manage stress and offset the negative affects of it, is by learning to respond in effective ways to stress inducing situations as they arise. In other words, relaxation does not help stress, but reshaping our day to day behavior and reactions to life events is what helps to a less stressful life.

During the holiday of Passover, we celebrate our freedom, and strive to leave our own "Egypt".

But, are we really free? what freedom are we celebrating and striving for?

To us, freedom means being care-free, no responsibilities and burdens in life. To us, freedom means relaxation.

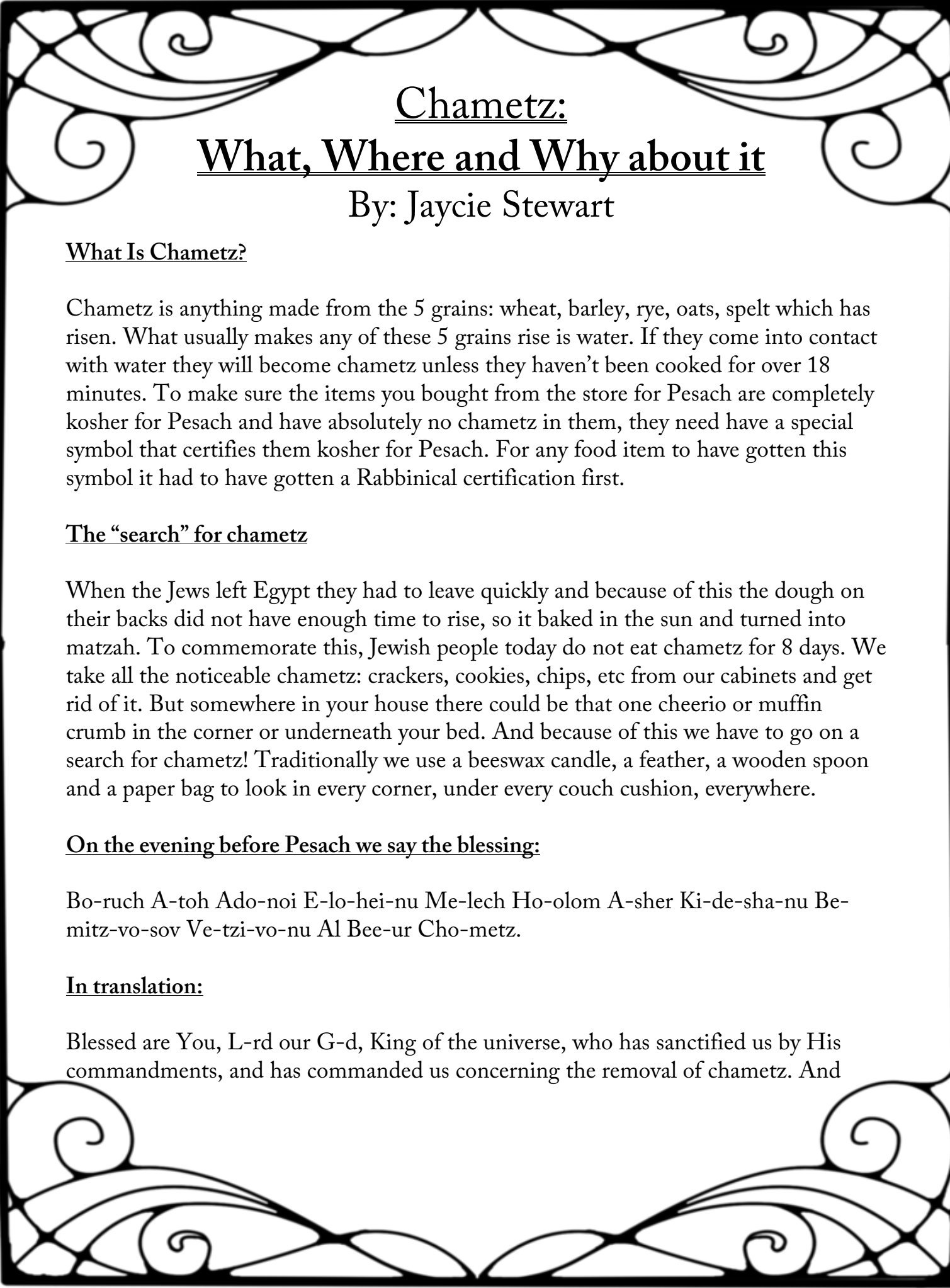
The laws of Passover such as banishing every crumb of chametz from every nook and cranny in our home, eating precise amount of matzah, and drinking a certain measure of wine with each of the four cups is not what most people would define as "freedom".

G-d is the creator of the world, and we need to find G-d in the world we live in, since escaping won't help, sooner or later we will come back from vacation to square one.

Passover teaches us that in order to truly be "free", we must bring and find G-d in the details of the world we live in. Stress is not eliminated by escaping our life frameworks, but by remaining within them and transforming them from within.

REPEAT AFTER ME;

I AM FREE



Chametz: What, Where and Why about it

By: Jaycie Stewart

What Is Chametz?

Chametz is anything made from the 5 grains: wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt which has risen. What usually makes any of these 5 grains rise is water. If they come into contact with water they will become chametz unless they haven't been cooked for over 18 minutes. To make sure the items you bought from the store for Pesach are completely kosher for Pesach and have absolutely no chametz in them, they need have a special symbol that certifies them kosher for Pesach. For any food item to have gotten this symbol it had to have gotten a Rabbinical certification first.

The "search" for chametz

When the Jews left Egypt they had to leave quickly and because of this the dough on their backs did not have enough time to rise, so it baked in the sun and turned into matzah. To commemorate this, Jewish people today do not eat chametz for 8 days. We take all the noticeable chametz: crackers, cookies, chips, etc from our cabinets and get rid of it. But somewhere in your house there could be that one cheerio or muffin crumb in the corner or underneath your bed. And because of this we have to go on a search for chametz! Traditionally we use a beeswax candle, a feather, a wooden spoon and a paper bag to look in every corner, under every couch cushion, everywhere.

On the evening before Pesach we say the blessing:

Bo-ruch A-toh Ado-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olom A-sher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Ve-tzi-vo-nu Al Bee-ur Cho-metz.

In translation:

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us concerning the removal of chametz. And

then we put all the chametz we found into the paper bag and finally, burn it.

The “burning” of chametz:

On the morning before Pesach we burn the chametz. Even a simple thing as changing our toothbrushes, washing our clothes and changing our dishes, to make sure there is no visible chametz. Also after the burning we declare that any chametz that I might not have found, is disowned by me, by saying: All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.



The idea of selling chametz:

Most Jews since they might have too much food to just throw away, they sell it to a non-Jew through a Rabbi; and right after Pesach they can buy it back.

Chametz after Pesach:

Normally the minute after Pesach is over the Rabbi buys the food back from the non-Jew it was sold to. What we can learn about not having chametz for 8 days is that there are designated times for designated things. During this time of Pesach not having chametz helps us connect to G-d a little bit more!



Seder Plate

By: Kayla Meegan

The סדר plate is placed on top of the מצות. It's set up at the beginning of the סדר. Each food on the סדר plate signifies something that is in the story of יציאת מצרים. We set up the seder plate according to the אריזל. The אריזל says:

"Arrange the Plate on the table by taking three מצות and placing them one on the other: The ישראל on the bottom, לוי in the middle, and כהן on the top. The מצות also represent דעת, חכמה, and בינה.

On the right, place the זרוע, corresponding to קסד, and on the left, place the egg corresponding to גבורה. Below them, place the מרור in the center; this represents תפרת. Next, place the חרוסת on the right, below the זרוע corresponding to נצח, and opposite it, on the left, below the egg, place the כרפס which is hinting to הוד. Below the מרור place the חזרת. This symbolizes יסוד. The סדר plate itself, hints to מלכות, which encompasses all 10 ספירות itself."

This is the way the אריזל told us to set up the סדר plate.



- הביצה - The egg represents the חגיגה קרבן.
- הזרוע - The chicken neck represents the פסח קרבן.
- הכרפס - The potato/onion represents our tears of slavery
- החרוסת - The paste represents the bricks we had to make for the pyramids in רמסס and פתאם.
- החזרת - The lettuce is used for the מרור and כורך.
- המרור - The bitter herb represents our bitterness/suffering in egypt when we were slaves to פרעה.

4 Cups of Wine

By: Hadassa Abramov

At our Pesach Seder we have four glasses of wine. Each one is drunk at a certain time of the meal. The first one is at the conclusion of *kiddush*. The second after telling the story of the freedom from Egypt, before eating the matzah of *Motzi Matzah*. The third one is at the conclusion of the benching after our meal, and the last one is after reciting the Hallel.

The reason we have four glasses of wine is because wine signifies freedom from when we were in Egypt. G-d used four terms to describe our redemption, which is also why we have four cups:

- a) "I shall *take* you out..."
- b) "I shall *rescue* you..."
- c) "I shall *redeem* you..."
- d) "I shall *bring* you..."

These cups are amazing because they describe our freedom and the happiness of being free.



Matzah

By: Rochelle Felix

We eat matzah commemorating the Exodus in Egypt. The Jews were in a hurry to leave Egypt that they didn't have time to let their bread rise. So they baked matzah because it's flat. Matzah is called "the break of affliction" because matzah is flat, so it symbolizes humility. Regular chametz represents arrogance because it rises. On pesach we remove all of our chametz from our houses and only eat matzah for eight days. By getting rid of chametz, we are getting rid of our ego and arrogance and we turn it into humility.

What's the difference between Chametz and Matzah? Time, nothing else. They both have the same ingredients. The way we make chametz is we have to be careful not to get the wheat and flour wet until the dough is made. To make sure none of the flour rises. The matzah should be watched throughout the entire process. This is called Shmurah Matzah. We watch when the matzah is being harvested until the time that it gets to the bakery. Our matzah should be made by hand. Matzah that's made by hand is usually round and matzah made by machines is square. So always look for the round matzah. We have three matzah's at the Seder table because two represent the two challahs we usually have on the table on shabbos, but since it's Pesach we use two matzah's. The third matzah we need to break at the beginning of the seder, and we will need two complete Matzahs for Motzi Matzah.

Also, the number three symbolizes the three measures of fine meal from which Sarah baked cakes for husband Abraham's three angelic visitors. The three categories of Jews are Kohanim, Levi, and Yisrael.

A nice quote about Matzah is, "Matzah is the only food whose manufacture demands that it be created without time. The prohibition of leaven also teaches us that nature doesn't operate independently but is controlled by G-d."

מה נשתנה

By: Sydney Salama

Do you have questions about the questions? Well to have questions you need to know the questions...

Question 1: **On all other nights** we do not need to dip our food even once. Why on this night do we dip two things-karpas into salt water, and marror into charoses?



Question 2: **On all other nights** we may eat either chametz or matzah. Why on this night do we eat only matzah?

Question 3: **On all other nights** we eat any kind of vegetables. Why on this night do we eat marror?

Question 4: **On all other nights** we eat either sitting upright or leaning. Why on this night do we all eat leaning?



Now that you know the questions, here is a little Q and A...

Why do we ask questions?

We ask questions because G-d wants us to ask them. Also, the mitzvah is to answer questions, so in order to complete the mitzvah we ask questions.

How do you go by asking the 4 Questions?

When you want to ask the 4 questions, you have two introduction options.

1. "Father, I want to ask of you four questions"
2. "Father, I will ask of you four questions"

If you are supposed to read the questions to your father, what do you do if you don't have a father?

If you do not have a father present or a father that is no longer alive, then you ask the questions to your father in the heavens, G-d.

Why wouldn't the Ma Nishtana include a question about the 4 cups of wine, the other questions ask about strange things that we do, why isn't the 4 cups of wine considered strange?

All of the questions are connected to a Mitzvah. For example, the second and third questions include doing a Mitzvah. The first and fourth questions are Minhagim connected to Mitzvahs. The 4 cups of wine on the other hand, are complete Minhagim, not connected to Mitzvahs at all.

Why do we find different versions of the 4 questions in the Talmud?

There are different versions of the questions in the Talmud because it shows us that there were multiple acceptable versions, or maybe not even an exact order at all. This is because in Jewish law, we don't have to ask all the questions. But, the sages looked at all the different customs when it came to asking questions, and they picked an universal practice of asking the four questions.



The Four Sons

By: Tova Noll

There are many lessons that we can learn from the questions of the four sons and the answers they are given.

The Torah is usually written in way that speaks of one path and one truth for every person. However, when speaking about our redemption from Egypt, the Torah uncharacteristically gives a different explanation for each of the four different types of children. This teaches us an important lesson in education. When we reach out to others, to teach them and help bring them out of their own personal “Egypt’s” we can’t use one approach for everyone. We must understand that each person is an individual and therefore understands things in different ways. We must speak to them and answer their questions in their unique way. By providing four different answers for the four different son’s question, the Torah enables and teaches us how to find the right words and the right approach to teach each individual and successfully ignite their G-dly spark.

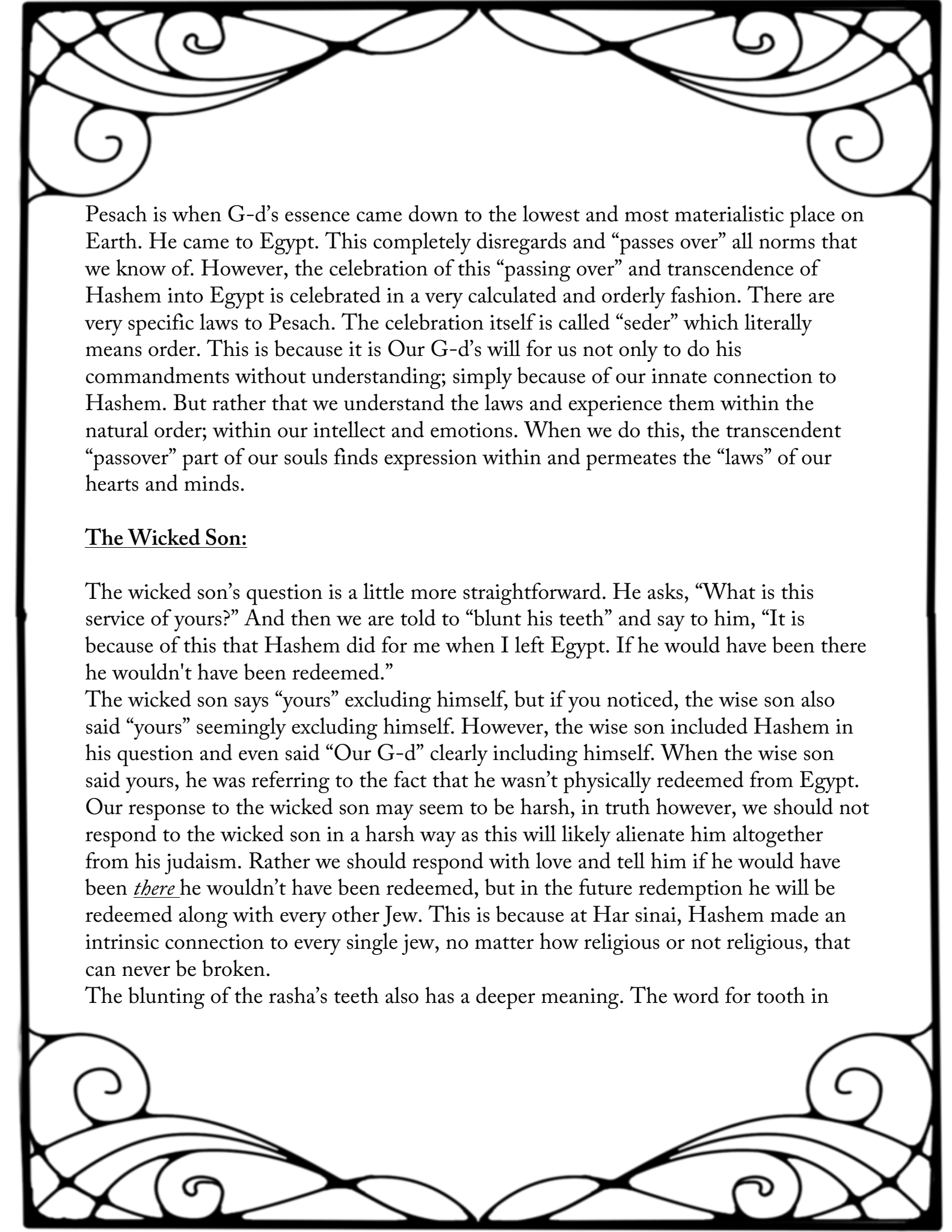
The four sons teach us another valuable lesson. Since the Torah addresses all of Israel, we must conclude that we each possess the “four children” within ourselves. We can’t think that we fit into only one of the four sons characteristics. We aren’t completely good or bad. Rather, at times in our life we may behave as the wise son and at times we may behave as the wicked. Therefore we have to apply all the answers to each of the four sons to ourselves.

The Wise Son:

The wise son asks an interesting question. He asks, “What are the commemorative laws, suprarational laws and civil laws which Hashem, our G-d, has commanded you?” We are told to instruct him in the laws of the Korban pesach such as, “We do not serve any dessert after the Korban Pesach.”

Why are we told to instruct the Wise Son about the laws of the Korban Pesach? If he is truly a Chacham, wouldn’t he already know these laws?

The answer is that the word “instruct” alludes to something deeper. The two words, “laws” and “Pesach” represent to complete opposites. Pesach means “passing over.”



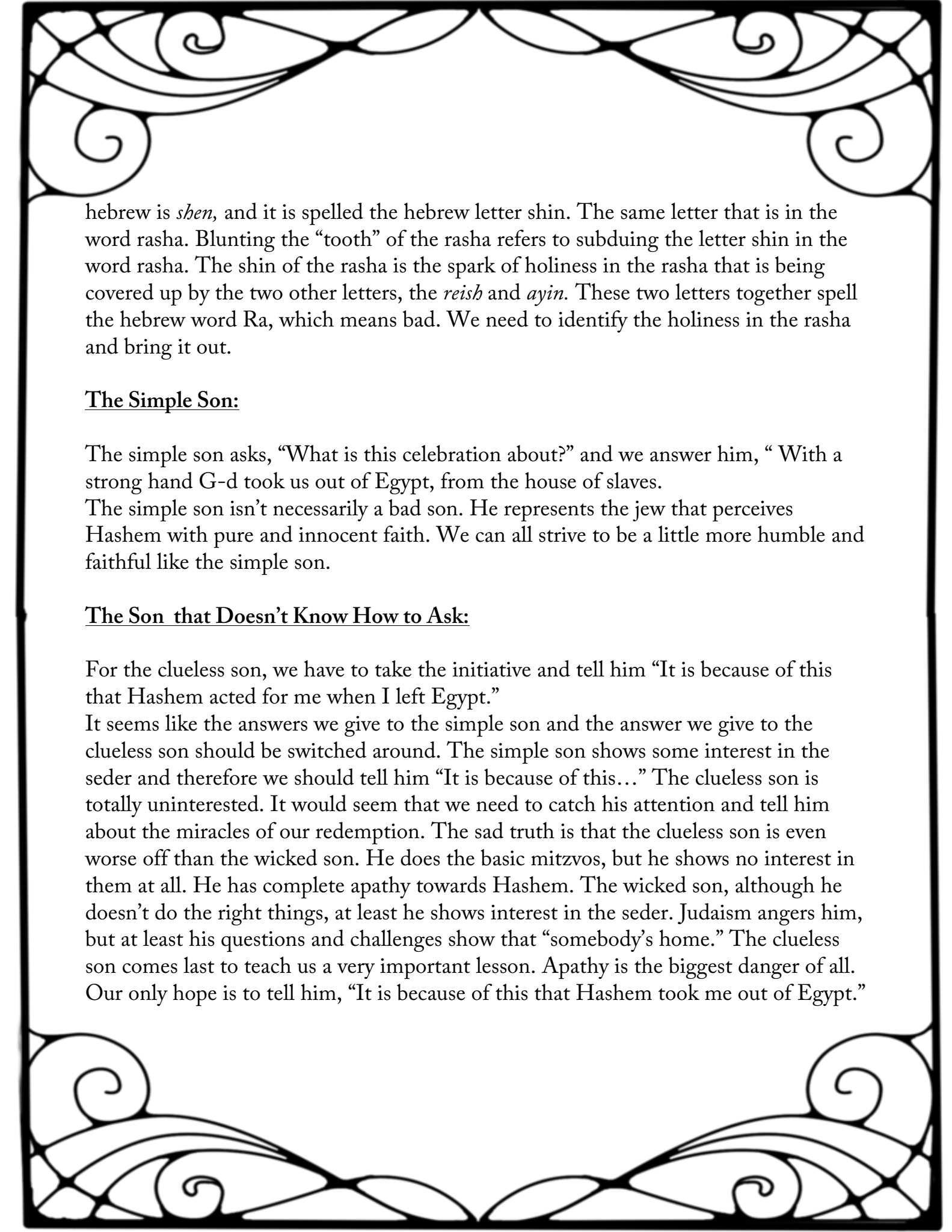
Pesach is when G-d's essence came down to the lowest and most materialistic place on Earth. He came to Egypt. This completely disregards and "passes over" all norms that we know of. However, the celebration of this "passing over" and transcendence of Hashem into Egypt is celebrated in a very calculated and orderly fashion. There are very specific laws to Pesach. The celebration itself is called "seder" which literally means order. This is because it is Our G-d's will for us not only to do his commandments without understanding; simply because of our innate connection to Hashem. But rather that we understand the laws and experience them within the natural order; within our intellect and emotions. When we do this, the transcendent "passover" part of our souls finds expression within and permeates the "laws" of our hearts and minds.

The Wicked Son:

The wicked son's question is a little more straightforward. He asks, "What is this service of yours?" And then we are told to "blunt his teeth" and say to him, "It is because of this that Hashem did for me when I left Egypt. If he would have been there he wouldn't have been redeemed."

The wicked son says "yours" excluding himself, but if you noticed, the wise son also said "yours" seemingly excluding himself. However, the wise son included Hashem in his question and even said "Our G-d" clearly including himself. When the wise son said yours, he was referring to the fact that he wasn't physically redeemed from Egypt. Our response to the wicked son may seem to be harsh, in truth however, we should not respond to the wicked son in a harsh way as this will likely alienate him altogether from his Judaism. Rather we should respond with love and tell him if he would have been *there* he wouldn't have been redeemed, but in the future redemption he will be redeemed along with every other Jew. This is because at Har Sinai, Hashem made an intrinsic connection to every single Jew, no matter how religious or not religious, that can never be broken.

The blunting of the rasha's teeth also has a deeper meaning. The word for tooth in



hebrew is *shen*, and it is spelled the hebrew letter shin. The same letter that is in the word rasha. Blunting the “tooth” of the rasha refers to subduing the letter shin in the word rasha. The shin of the rasha is the spark of holiness in the rasha that is being covered up by the two other letters, the *reish* and *ayin*. These two letters together spell the hebrew word Ra, which means bad. We need to identify the holiness in the rasha and bring it out.

The Simple Son:

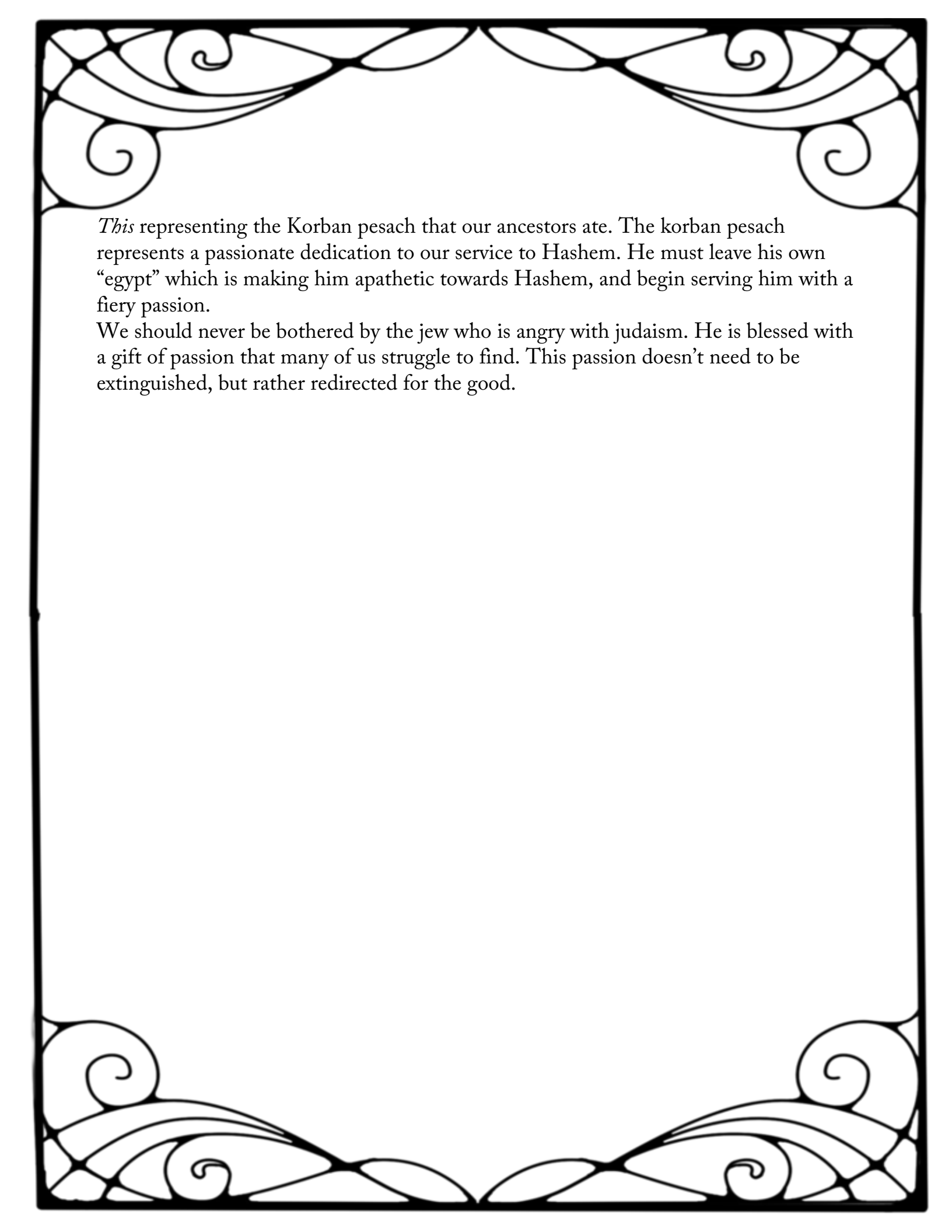
The simple son asks, “What is this celebration about?” and we answer him, “ With a strong hand G-d took us out of Egypt, from the house of slaves.

The simple son isn’t necessarily a bad son. He represents the jew that perceives Hashem with pure and innocent faith. We can all strive to be a little more humble and faithful like the simple son.

The Son that Doesn’t Know How to Ask:

For the clueless son, we have to take the initiative and tell him “It is because of this that Hashem acted for me when I left Egypt.”

It seems like the answers we give to the simple son and the answer we give to the clueless son should be switched around. The simple son shows some interest in the seder and therefore we should tell him “It is because of this...” The clueless son is totally uninterested. It would seem that we need to catch his attention and tell him about the miracles of our redemption. The sad truth is that the clueless son is even worse off than the wicked son. He does the basic mitzvos, but he shows no interest in them at all. He has complete apathy towards Hashem. The wicked son, although he doesn’t do the right things, at least he shows interest in the seder. Judaism angers him, but at least his questions and challenges show that “somebody’s home.” The clueless son comes last to teach us a very important lesson. Apathy is the biggest danger of all. Our only hope is to tell him, “It is because of this that Hashem took me out of Egypt.”



This representing the Korban pesach that our ancestors ate. The korban pesach represents a passionate dedication to our service to Hashem. He must leave his own “egypt” which is making him apathetic towards Hashem, and begin serving him with a fiery passion.

We should never be bothered by the jew who is angry with judaism. He is blessed with a gift of passion that many of us struggle to find. This passion doesn't need to be extinguished, but rather redirected for the good.

The 10 Plagues

By: Shoshanah Altman-Shafer

G-d always has a deep meaning behind everything that He does. There are also many ways of understanding the ten plagues. Each of the plagues was a punishment to the Egyptians and showed the power of the one true G-d.

Blood

Deeper meaning: The plague of blood showed that the “god” that the Egyptians worshiped, the Nile river, was powerless against the might of Hashem.

Measure for Measure: While the Jews were slaves the Egyptians drowned Jewish children in Nile river so water into blood, a symbol of death.

The plagues of blood, frogs, and lice were all done by Aaron, because they are connected to the Nile river, which saved Moshe's life. If Moshe had done those plagues, it would have been showing a lack of gratitude.

Frogs

Deeper Meaning: Frogs also affected the Nile river. This reinforced the idea that G-d was more powerful than the “god” of the Egyptians. The plague of blood was somewhat passive because there was no real danger, there were other sources of water and the blood was not poisonous. The plague of frogs was active, because the frogs actually destroyed things. Some frogs stayed in Nile to remind the Egyptians that their “god” was powerless. The Egyptian sorcerers were unable to make Hashem's miracle in same way; they couldn't make one big frog that turned into many different little frogs

Measure for Measure: While the Jews were in Egypt, the more the Egyptians oppressed them the more the Jews grew in number. The frogs were the same way, they started as one big frog and the more the frogs were hit the more they multiplied.

Lice

Deeper Meaning: The Egyptian sorcerers unable to duplicate the plague of lice at all. Sorcerers then said that this plague was the finger of G-d. The lice affected everyone even the Jews in order to show that G-d is unlimited. All other plagues up to this point affected everywhere to show Moshe and Aaron weren't just sorcerers

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians thought the Jews were as low as bugs, so Egyptians afflicted with lice.

Wild Beasts

Deeper Meaning: This was the most destructive plague so far, because more than one animal species attacked. This plague was not brought about with any dramatization from Aaron or Moshe, which showed that G-d was directly responsible for the plagues. The sorcerers didn't even try to duplicate this plague or the next one, because they saw that G-d was responsible for the wild beasts.

Measure for Measure: Pharaoh ordered midwives to kill Jewish males and they refused saying that the women gave birth on their own like wild animals, so the Egyptians were attacked by wild animals.

Cattle Disease

Deeper Meaning: The Egyptians lost their main source of income in this plague. Livestock was very important to ancient cultures. If the animals were brought inside they lived, like plague of hail, and those animals that survived were used to chase Jews later.

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians were cruel even to the animals of the Jews, so their animals died.

Boils

Deeper Meaning: The Torah says that the sorcerers were not even able to stand before Moshe and Aaron because of their boils, but it was also because their egos had been completely crushed. Boils were within the ability of sorcerers create, but Moshe was able to make a widespread plague which the sorcerers were unable to accomplish.

Measure for Measure: The magicians tried to duplicate the plagues, so their boils were so bad they couldn't stand before Moshe and Aaron.

Hail

Deeper Meaning: This plague was much harsher than those before it, and caused Pharaoh to say that he sinned and terrorized Egyptians into begging Pharaoh to let the Jews go. This plague also showed that G-d is precise in his work, because the plague happened exactly when Moshe said it would happen.

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians forgot Joseph who saved their crops, so the crops were destroyed.

Locusts

Deeper Meaning: During this plague, Hashem hardened Pharaoh's and Moshe had to warn Pharaoh about the plague. Pharaoh said before that G-d could not influence his choices and here we see that G-d could and did influence Pharaoh's choices.

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians wouldn't even eat at the same table as a Jew, so the only kosher bug was sent to eat the Egyptians food.

Darkness

Deeper Meaning: The Egyptians believed that day and night were controlled by two different “gods” by putting Egyptians in dark and Jews in light showed G-d controlled both darkness and light.

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians were sinners, so they were punished with darkness because they wanted their sins not to be seen.

Death of the First Born

Deeper Meaning: During the plague of death of the first born Jews put the mark on the door, which protected them from the angel of death, and showed us that G-d is all powerful.

Measure for Measure: The Egyptians tried to kill all Jewish baby boys, and G-d killed all of their first born sons.

That Would be Enough

Dayenu

By: Tamar Lakritz

Throughout the stanzas of Dayenu, we can often find ourselves saying something odd, one line after the other.



For example, “If G-d had split the sea for us and had not crossed us through on dry land, it would have been enough.” How could this have been enough? We would have drowned in the ocean! Dayenu comes to show us that Hashem deserves thanks for each one of these steps.



In reality, if Hashem had just “split the sea for us, and not brought us through on dry land,” it would not have been enough in terms of our livelihood as a nation. However Dayenu teaches us that this act alone, is enough to make us thank Hashem.

Each act alone is enough for us to praise Hashem-- How much more so when all 15 acts are presented in front of us! After reading through Dayenu, and each of the acts that Hashem performed for us, can we truly appreciate and be thankful for them.

Pesach, Matzah, Maror

By: Tamar Lakritz

Raban Gamliel would say, "Whoever does not discuss the following 3 things on Pesach does not fulfill his obligation." Pesach, Matzah, and Maror. Why did Bnei Yisrael eat the Korban Pesach? Because Hashem passed over their homes in Egypt. "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... "

Why do we eat the Matzah? Because the dough did not have time to rise before Hashem redeemed them. As it is written: "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 provisions."



Why do we eat the maror? Because the Egyptians made our lives bitter, as it is written: "They made their lives bitter with hard work, with mortar and with bricks, and with all manner of work in the field; all their work which they made them serve with crushing labor."



Why do we specifically mention these 3 things? There is a direct commandment in the Torah to eat these things on Pesach night.

“ יֹאכְלֶהוּ מַרְרִים עַל וּמִצּוֹת אֱשׁ צְלִי הַזֶּה בְּלִילָה הַבֶּשֶׂר אֶת וְאָכְלוּ ”

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto sees these three commandments as the steps by which Bnei Yisrael rose up from idol worship, and prepared themselves for the receiving of the Torah. First they eradicated idol worship, by sacrificing the lamb, the Egyptian god. Then they got the Mann, which came directly from G-d, and was free of imperfections. This corresponds to the Matzah, which is free of chametz- which represents the evil inclination. Lastly they had to painstakingly purify themselves in preparation of receiving the Torah.



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