

אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְלֹא לְאִשָּׁרִים. לֵאמֹר יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

לֵאמֹר יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לֵאמֹר יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

הגדה של פסח

MAKING SEDER OF THE SEDER

Deeper Answers To Simple Questions You've Always Asked About The Haggadah

Commentary by Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel

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MAKING SEDER OF THE SEDER

Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel has employed his vast knowledge of Torah resources to create a refreshing, user-friendly, family-oriented Haggadah. He asks all of the right questions, and invites response from all those gathered round the Seder table. His insights are fresh and thoughtful and understandable to all. There is enough wise material here to last one a life time's worth of Sedorim. Share this wisdom with your family and guests on Pesach and it will certainly make your holiday more joyful and meaningful.

Rabbi Berel Wein

SOME QUESTIONS EXPLORED IN THIS HAGGADAH

- The meaning of the word "Seder" is order. But the seemingly illogical sequence and rituals of the Hagaddah seem like disorder and סדר. Why call it a Seder when the entire evening seems to be anything but an orderly process?
- In Kiddush, it says twice that G-d chose us from all the other nations. But once it is in singular form (אשר בחר בנו מכל עם) and once in plural (אשר בחרו בנו מכל העמים). Why is it mentioned twice in the Kiddush and why the change?
- What is the significance of calling the green vegetable Karpas (it does not mean vegetable in Greek)? The only appearance of this word in Tanach is in reference to Purim!
- Why is it the only paragraph in the Hagaddah in Aramaic? Why invite people only now to come and join us to eat - after we have begun the Seder and after we have already sat down? Why repeat the similar phrases כל דכפין and כל דצריך in the paragraph - they seem superfluous? Why does this paragraph specifically mention that next year we will be free and next year in Jerusalem? What's the connection to the first part about inviting people to eat with us?
- These cannot possibly be the questions that little children would ask their parents on Pesach night (how could they possibly know what will take place during the continuation of the Seder all night - tonight only Matzah, tonight only Maror)? How could they know we will dip twice when we only just dipped once? Why then did the Rabbis choose these 4 questions? And why aren't these questions ever specifically answered in the Hagaddah?
- Why specifically two dippings and not three or one? How does this parallel and symbolize the Pesach story?
- ואלו לא הוציא הקדוש ברוך הוא את אבותינו ממצרים, הרי אנו נבנינו ונבני בנינו. Does the Hagaddah mean to tell us that even after 3000 years, we would still be slaves today if not for G-d's intervention? What could this possibly mean?
- There is no other Mitzvah that we are allowed to add to. In fact, adding to any Mitzvah is a prohibition (בל תוסיף). Why is this Mitzvah different? Why and how is this praiseworthy?
- What is the story about Rabbi Elazar doing in the Hagaddah? It has absolutely nothing to do with Pesach and מצרים at all, but, rather, saying Shema each evening. Why, then, did the Rabbis choose to put it in the Hagaddah?
- יכול מראש חודש - Why would we ever think of celebrating Pesach on Rosh Chodesh, fifteen days earlier, when the Torah specifically tells us to make Pesach on the 15th of the month of Nisan?
- מתחילה עובדי עבודה זרה היו אבותינו - Why is this fact in the Hagaddah at all? Why do we care that Abraham's ancestors worshipped idols? It has nothing to do with the Egyptian slavery or Pesach!
- ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל - Why do we praise G-d for keeping his promises? EVERYONE should always keep what he or she promises, and need not be praised for it. What does it mean?
- צא ולמד - What does it mean -- "צא" - go out? Go out of what? And how can it be that Lavan is worse than Pharaoh? Lavan gave his two daughters to his son-in-law Yaakov, as well as giving Yaakov work and a livelihood. They parted amicably. How can this be compared to Pharaoh who enslaved the Jewish people and killed Jewish babies for no reason? How can the Hagaddah possibly say that Lavan was worse than Pharaoh?
- Ten Plagues -- Why did Rabbis insist that there were many more than 10 plagues? What is the difference? What is the practical implication of such a discussion? Why was Rabbi Judah "forced" to group the Ten Plagues into three groups and a three word acronym? What was the "advantage" and the message?
- רבן גמליאל היה אומר, כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח לא יצא ידי חובו. -- Generally, to fulfill a Mitzvah, a Jew must do something. Here it is logical that we should have to eat these three items to fulfill the Mitzvah. Why, then, does Rabban Gamliel write that we must recite these three things in order to fulfill the Mitzvah and not do something or eat them?
- Every other time Hallel is recited throughout the year it is said in one unit - except in the Hagaddah. Why is it that the first two paragraphs of Hallel are recited before the meal and the rest of Hallel after the meal? Why did the Rabbis want to split Hallel in this manner? What is the deeper meaning of such a split in the Order-Seder of the Hagaddah?
- Why is Hallel only recited during the day - except on Pesach night?