

## Lesson 2: Getting Ready for the Seder

### A. Learning

#### a. What items are on the Seder plate:

**The Baytzah:** the hard-boiled egg: This represents the korban hagigah, sacrifice given in the Beit Hamikdash each year to commemorate the holiday celebration. It is round(ish) in shape to remind us that the year has no real beginning or end but flows from one day and month to the next.

**The Zeroah:** the roasted bone: Typically, this is a lamb shank, but it can be any type of bone, even a chicken bone. It represents the korban Pesach, the sacrifice that was brought to the Beit Hamikdash each year the day before Pesach, and was eaten by every family at the Seder the first korban Pesach was sacrificed in Mitzrayim, Egypt, before the Jews left, and the blood was put on the doors of the Jewish homes to show Hashem that Jews lived in these houses Hashem then knew not to kill the first born sons during the last plague, makat bechorot. The first korban Pesach in Mitzrayim was a lamb and therefore future korbanot were also lambs we use the lamb bone on our Seder plate to remind us of this korban.

**The Marror:** the bitter herbs: There are many different customs of what is used for Marror at the Seder. People use fresh pieces of horseradish, chopped white horseradish, romaine lettuce, and scallions. (what does your family use?) The Marror reminds us of our bitter lives while we were slaves in Mitzrayim. It is supposed to bring tears to our eyes when we eat it because we, the Jewish slaves, cried when we were slaves in Egypt.

**The Karpas:** the vegetable: Again, there are different customs of what people use for karpas during the Seder. You might use celery, parsley, or potatoes. The karpas represents a few things: first the Springtime and that the holiday of Pesach takes place in the Spring when the Earth is green. Another reason that we have a vegetable on the Seder plate is that in Mitzrayim the Jews did not have the laws of kashrut yet. The rabbis teach us that they only ate fruit and vegetables while they were slaves (the korban Pesach was the first time they were told how to make an animal kosher to eat). The karpas reminds us of this. We also dip the karpas in saltwater (some have the minhag to dip in lemon juice as salt was not available in parts of the Middle East years ago). This again is to remind us of the tears that the Jewish people shed when they were slaves in Mitzrayim.

**The Haroset:** There is no actual English translation for this word. It is the food that looks like the material that bricks are made from. It is typically made of apples, nuts, wine, and cinnamon. Some people add dates to it as well; some make it just from pure date juice and nuts. Whatever your recipe (please share) the mixture is supposed to look like brick mortar. It is to remind us of the bricks that the Jewish slaves were forced to make in order to build the cities in Mitzrayim. Originally the slaves were given the bricks, but later Pharaoh decreed that they would have to make the bricks from straw themselves in order to harshen their work.

**The 3 Matzot:** At the Seder we have three Matzot on the table. This differs from a typical Shabbat and Yom Tov where we usually have just two. The main reason that we have three is that at the beginning of the Seder we take the middle matzah and break it in

half (we hide half as the afikomen). We still need two full Matzot to make hamotzi during the Seder. The rabbis also teach us that the three Matzot represent the three parts of the nation of Israel, the Kohanim, Leviim, and Yisraelim. We want to show that each section of Bnei Yisroel was taken out of Mitzrayim and the three Matzot represent this.

**The 4 Cups of Wine:** During the Seder we drink four cups of wine, the first one is drunk when we say the Kiddush at the start of the Seder. Each cup marks the beginning or end of a new section of the Seder. When we drink each cup, we lean to the left to show that even though we were once slaves in Mitzrayim, we are now free people and similar to kings and queens who lean when they eat (some have the minhag to lean on a pillow during the Seder.) The Torah describes the redemption from Mitzrayim with four different verbs at the beginning of Parshat Vaeira: V'hotzati- and I will take you out from under the burden that the Mitzrim put on you; V' Heytzalti- and I will rescue you from the slavery; V'gaalti- and I will redeem you with an outstretched hand ; V'lakachti- and I will take you as a people and be your G-d.

**Haggadah:** The story of Pesach book that we read at the Seder. This book starts with kiddush and gives us the order of how to run the meal the night of Pesach. The story of the Jews enslavement in Mitzrayim, the makot (plagues), and their redemption is told. The book also includes rituals of what and how we eat the Seder items, stories of how past rabbis celebrated the Seder, and songs of praise to Hashem. The Haggadah ends with our wish to rebuild the Beit Hamikdash and once again return to Jerusalem.

## B. Cooking Project: Making Haroset

### **Ashkenazic Recipe**

#### Ingredients:

- a. 4 apples finely chopped
- b. 1 bag finely chopped nuts (usually walnuts) we like to chop ourselves in which case use 6-8 shelled walnuts
- c. 1 8-ounce bottle concord wine (or grape juice)
- d. 1 Tsp cinnamon (add more to taste)

#### Directions:

- a. Mix all together in a bowl and chill. It should be thick and have the consistency of mortar for bricks.

### **Sephardic Haroset Recipe**

#### Ingredients:

- a. ½ cup diced pitted dates
- b. 1 cup chopped raisins
- c. ½ cup chopped walnuts or almonds
- d. ½ tsp ginger
- e. 1 tsp cinnamon
- f. ½ cup red wine or grape juice

Directions:

- a. Mix all together and chill.

**Iraqi Halek (Haroset)**

Ingredients:

- a. 1 cup pure date juice
  - a. ½ cup chopped walnuts
  - b. ½ cup chopped almonds

Directions:

- a. Pure date juice can be bought (it is often sold as Silan) or made over night by boiling and mix together. It will be thick and very sweet. Do not chill. Make just before the start of the Seder.

Crafts Project:

**Lego and felt Seder Table:**

Supplies:

- a. long flat square of Lego or 3 long rectangle pieces (for tabletop)
- b. 12 small squares (for table legs-3 each)
- c. 6 people to sit around
- d. 1 bunch flowers

Directions:

- a. Cut out from felt: 3 brown round Matzot, 1 Kiddush cup, 1 Seder plate, 1haggadah.
- b. Use as centerpiece at your family Seder.

**Napkin Rings:**

Supplies:

- a. 1 pipe cleaner for each person coming to your Seder
- b. Pink tissues for each person coming to your Seder
- c. Yellow tissues for each person coming to your Seder

Directions:

- a. Place pipe cleaner flat on the table.
- b. Alternate the tissues starting with the yellow (yellow, pink, yellow, pink, yellow).
- c. Accordion style fold them, using the pipe cleaner as the center base.
- d. Then gently open-up each layer of the tissue towards the top of the pipe cleaner (leaving the long stem of it hanging empty below) so that the tissue forms the petals of the flower.
- e. Take the pipe cleaner stem and form a circle, close and you now have a napkin ring for each person at your Seder.