

A Message from NCSY Israel's Regional Directors

On Pesach night Jewish people from around the world will open up a special book called the Haggadah in which we will tell the story of our servitude, the miracles we experienced in Mitzrayim, and our redemption. Through the Haggadah we fulfill the Mitzvah of "סיפור יציאת מצרים" the telling over of our exodus from Egypt. Specifically this year, the Seder coincides with Shabbat. During Kiddush every Friday night we recall or "זכר" the leaving of Egypt. The Mitzvah of "זכר יציאת מצרים" is a Mitzvah for each day and each night throughout the whole year. What then is so special about the Seder and the Mitzvah to "tell" over the story of our departure from Egypt specifically on this night?

Many answers are given to this question. The Minchat Chinuch (1801-1874) explains that while on each night there is a commandment to remind oneself of our departure from Egypt, tonight we have an obligation to tell the children what happened. We are commanded to continue our story and pass it on to the next generation tonight. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik (1903-1993) suggests that it is specifically through telling the story that one is brought to a place where they thank Hashem for the miracles that He has performed for us, while merely recalling the story does not do that for the individual. Rav Kook (1865-1935) writes in his commentary on the siddur, Olat Re'iyah that the fundamental distinction between this night and every other night is that one must actually feel like they are leaving Egypt right now. On the Seder night one must describe their own departure from Mitzrayim as if they are being sent free themselves. The night of the Seder is the night in which we left Mitzrayim and that same influence and energy are recreated every single year at this time. Rav Kook takes this further and explains how it is from this special experience where the power of freedom is evoked in the world where we as a nation must return to our natural independence to fulfill our unique mission. Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon writes that what we experience on the Seder night is what we try to tap into each and every day. We find ourselves in a world where one can limit themselves and not actualize their full potential. Whether one is caught up being distracted by their smartphones, fixated on the news, or even worrying about the future. When one cannot be present on their today and tap into their unique independence they can't truly live and experience the world around them and everything they have to be thankful for.

Over 300 NCSYers are lucky to have the experience to connect to Hashem every day in the most natural way possible living in His Eretz Hakodesh. As we open our eyes daily and walk through the cities and streets of Eretz Yisrael we are experiencing the Geulah - redemption every single day.

We welcome you to experience the Seder together with us and to feel the Torah of Eretz Yisrael which embodies Hashem's presence in the here and now with NCSY Israel's third annual Torah 4 Teens by Teens Haggadah Companion. The 15 page packet is complete with original divrei Torah from the teens and staff of NCSY Israel and available for download at israel.ncsy.org/haggadah2022



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