



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS NCSY ISRAEL



Yes, It Is Worth It!

A MESSAGE FROM NCSY ISRAEL SENIOR DIRECTORS



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We are living through extraordinary and historic days. On the one hand, these are challenging times for the Jewish people and for the State of Israel. The current war with Iran has brought moments of tension, uncertainty, and real danger. Sirens interrupt daily life. Families run to shelters. Parents comfort children while following the news with concern. It is not easy. And yet, alongside the challenge, we are witnessing something else as well, constant miracles. Again and again, we see threats intercepted before they reach their targets. We see enemies who rise against the Jewish people

only to see their plans crumble. We see the remarkable strength and resilience of a nation that continues to live, build, and move forward even under pressure. One of the spiritual dangers of living in such times is that we can begin to grow accustomed to these miracles. When extraordinary things happen repeatedly, there is a risk that we stop pausing to recognize them. But Jewish history teaches us that the survival and flourishing of our people has never been natural alone it has always carried the unmistakable imprint of Hashem's orchestration.

At moments like this, those of us who have made our homes here as olim may sometimes find ourselves asking the quiet questions: Couldn't life have been easier somewhere else? Couldn't we have avoided the missiles, the sirens, the running to shelters if we had simply remained in the United States, Canada, or England? The honest answer is that perhaps we could have. But the deeper answer, the Jewish answer, is far more powerful.

Yes, it is worth it!

Because our generation has been given something extraordinary: The opportunity not only to observe Jewish history, but to actively participate in it. For nearly two thousand years, Jews ended the Seder with the words לשנה הבאה בירושלים. For most of Jewish history, those words expressed longing from afar. They were dreams that spread across continents and centuries. Today, we are living in a time when that dream is being realized.

On the night of Pesach we drink four cups of wine corresponding to the four expressions of redemption in the Torah: "I will take you out... I will save you... I will redeem you... I will take you to Me as a nation." These promises appear in שמות ו:ח-ו:י. But the Torah actually records a fifth expression as well in שמות ו:ח: "והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ." I will bring you to the Land.

For generations we recognized this fifth expression but treated it differently. Some early authorities, including the Raavad, suggested that it should correspond to a fifth cup of wine. In practice, Jewish communities developed the custom of pouring that fifth cup but not drinking it. Over time it became associated with אליהו הנביא, symbolizing a stage of redemption that unfolds gradually across history.

The first four expressions describe the dramatic moment of leaving Egypt. The fifth describes the destination being brought into the Land of Israel and into the fuller destiny of the Jewish people. Drawing on classical sources such as the ספרי, this final stage connects redemption not only with freedom, but with returning home.

Building on this idea, Rabbi Yosef Zvi

Rimon explains that the fifth expression represents a process that unfolds over generations. Unlike the Exodus itself, which happened in a single moment, the promise of "והבאתי" develops slowly throughout Jewish history. And in our time, we are not only witnessing this process, we are helping bring it to life. Reflecting on the return of the Jewish people to their land, the great Torah scholar Rabbi Menachem Mendel Kasher wrote in *Haggadat Pesach Eretz Yisraelit*:

"In our times, when we have been privileged to see Gd's kindness and His rescue of us... and the fulfillment of the promise of 'I will bring you to the Land,' it is appropriate... to thank Gd for all the miracles and wonders."

This idea resonates even more deeply today. Yes, we are living through difficult days. Yes, there are sirens and shelters. Yes, there are moments of fear. But there is also something else. There is the incredible merit of living in the Land of Israel at a moment when Jewish history is unfolding before our eyes. There is the privilege of helping rebuild our national home. There is the opportunity to raise a new generation of Jews who experience Israel not as a

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distant idea, but as the center of their identity and future and... **Yes, it is worth it!**

Our generation is not simply watching redemption unfold. We are participating in it.

We are the generation that returned home. We are the generation building, strengthening, and defending that home. And we are the generation helping ensure that the next chapter of Jewish history is written here. This idea lies at the heart of the work we strive to do through NCSY Israel. When our teens in NCSY experience Israel firsthand, walking its streets, learning its history, connecting to its people—they begin to understand that the Jewish story did not end with leaving מצרים. It continues in every generation, and they themselves are part of its next chapter.

As we gather around our Seder tables

this year, surrounded by family, tradition, and memory, let us look at the quiet fifth cup on the table and see it in a new light. For centuries, it represented a promise waiting to be fulfilled. Today, it reminds us that we are living in the very chapter where that promise is becoming reality. May we continue to recognize the miracles around us, remain strong and united as a people, and merit to see the complete fulfillment of “והבאתי אתכם אל הארץ” עם ישראל.

חג כשר ושמח! ■

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