

## QUESTIONS TO ASK AT YOUR SEDER

### לפני סדר

1. Why do the adult men have a minhag (Ashkenazim) wear a kittel by the seder?

### קדש

2. Why are there so many mitzvos that are ליציאת מצרים like for example kiddush tonight?

### ורחץ

3. Why do we wash our hands now early on in the seder way before we will eat bread?

### יתץ

4. Why do we keep the smaller half at the table and hide away the bigger piece for the אפיקומן.

### מגיד- הא לחמא עניא

5. Why is הא לחמא עניא said in Aramaic and not in לשון קודש like the rest of the הגדה?

### מה נשתנה

6. Why does it say we eat other vegetables on other nights and tonight we eat מרור? People eat מרור on other nights also and they eat regular vegetables tonight as well. So what exactly is the question.

### עבדים היינו

7. Why would we still be slaves to פרעה in מצרים today if Hashem had not taken us out when he did? Didn't he promise אברהם אבינו that the slavery would not be more than 400 years? So maybe we would have stayed longer but why would we be there now?

### מעשה ברבי אליעזר

8. Why would they continue after its light in the morning anyways isn't the mitzvah to talk about yitzyas mitzrayim only at night?

### ארבעה בנים

9. Why does the Haggadah say the word אחד before the name of each of the sons when listing them? Why not just say חכם, רשע....?

### חכם

10. What exactly is the chacham asking? His question seems so general and its not clear exactly what he is asking?

### תם

11. What type of son exactly is the תם?

### מתחלה עובדי עבודה זרה

12. Why are we talking about the fact that we used to do avodah zara at the seder. Isn't that a bad thing?

### והיא שעמדה

13. Why do we hold the כוס by והיא שעמדה?

### ארמי אובד אבי

14. Why do we say ארמי אובד אבי in present tense? This is referring to לבן who tried to destroy Yaakov over 3000 years ago?

### ויהי שם לגוי...מצוינים שם

15. What does it mean we were מצוינים in mitzrayim? Does it mean we got a good grade on Rabbi Munks tests?:)

## **ANSWERS TO SEDER QUESTIONS**

1. There are two primary reasons mentioned for why we wear a kittel by the seder. One is on the seder night we are bnei melachim, children of the king and we dress as such like the malachim who serve before Hashem. The second reason is that the kittel is like burial shrouds and it is meant to be a reminder of death. Specifically, on a night filled with such a feeling of royalty and elevation we need to mix in a reminder of the fragility of life and that one day we will all stand before Hashem to be judged.
2. The entire purpose of יציאת מצרים and the slavery that preceded it is to serve as a learning experience. If we do not have many mitzvos to remind us of it the entire purpose of the experience would be lost.
3. The primary answer given is that it is a זכר to when we use to eat all food in a state of purity and therefore washed our hands even before eating vegetables, or any food for that matter, when dipping it in liquid (which can easily become impure). Another answer given is that we are preparing to do an עבודה, the עבודה of the seder night. Just like the כהנים in the בית המקדש washed their hands in the כיוור before doing עבודה we do ורחץ before beginning the עבודה of the סדר. (This idea is given by also as a reason for נטילת ידים in the morning when we rise to a new day of עבודת ה')
4. the bigger piece of matzah represents the olam habah while the small piece represents olam hazeh. We want to show that that which is coming later, olam habah is the “bigger” and more desired piece of life. This is why we have the children search for it to show that it is something that we should try to pursue like olam habah.
5. simply because at the time it was written it was the spoken language of the common jew. The purpose of ha lachma anya is to invite in anyone who has nowhere to spend the seder and thus should be said in a language understood by the common man.
6. rashi answers that tonight whatever vegetable we eat there is an element that connects back to marror and the bitterness of the slavery in mitzrayim. On the flip side on all other nights even when we eat marror it is meant to be eaten in a way that is not focused on its bitterness but rather to compliment some other food. The ritva answers that the question is simply why are we starting with bitter vegetables when normally we start with a sweet pleasant tasting vegetable in order to help our appetite.
7. we have a concept from the gemara (b.m 85a) that if a family has three generations of torah in it the torah will always remain with that family. Like all things that Hashem creates there is an opposite to that concept. If the torah is gone for three generations than it can be lost forever. The Jews in mitzrayim had been doing avodah zara already three generations in mitzrayim and were now beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> generation. Indeed despite Hashem’s promise to Avraham He could have said that now that they have become idol worshippers I am not obligated to take them out as I had said I would. Only through his great kindness did he fulfill his promise.
8. That is perhaps the biggest lesson within the story! If not for the fact that a passing mitzvah was coming (kriyas shema) they would have continued into the day even though no particular mitzvah exists to do so. That is how precious the discussion of yitzyas mitzrayim was to them.

9. One possible answer offered is that in truth each of us has elements of each of the four sons within each one of us. The word אהד placed before the name of each of the four sons shows us that in a way they are all אהד in this sense that traits of each of them lay within each of us.
10. There are many explanations as to what the chacham is actually asking. One explanation given by Rashi is that he is asking about the order in which we eat the korbonos. He is confused why we eat the chagigah first and then the Pesach. If the Pesach is the primary mitzvah shouldn't it go first? We answer him that we have a rule that we do not eat anything after the Pesach (afikomen) in order that its taste should remain in our mouths. The reason for this is so that we continue to think about the Pesach throughout the night and therefore talk more and more about yitzyas mitzrayim.
11. Most of the earlier commentators understood the תם to literally mean a simple son. His not as smart as the chacham but not bad like the rasha and yet is still more capable than the ano yodeyah lishol. However, the Gra and other more recent commentators understand the תם to be the most exceptional of all the sons. He is simple in his faith and follows Hashem without excessive questions. This can be considered an admirable trait. Even though asking questions is important ultimately in the fundamentals of faith we need to be prepared to follow Hashem, totally and with question. The תם has the trait of תמימות that Yaakov avinu is praised for having. It is indeed an even more admirable quality than wisdom.
12. Chazal are teaching us that to understand how we became who we are today as a nation we have to understand where we started from. It is also a reminder that even if we stray, we can always once again rediscover Hashem and become close to him like our forefathers. While wanting to hide the bad of our past may sometimes seem tempting as long as we are reflecting on it to be better people today it is something, we should do rather than live in denial about who we were.
13. One explanation is that the כוסות we drink are sign of the fact that we will continue to survive on no matter what. This is similar to the cups of wine in the dream of the שר המשקים. In his dream the holding of the cup was the sign that he would live (the baker who was not directly holding the bread did not survive). Therefore, as we say והיא שעמדה which is all about our survival through the generations no matter who stands against us, we hold the cup of wine as a symbol of that survival.
14. This is telling us that in every generation there will be someone like לבן looking to destroy us. His name keeps changing whether it be Pharaoh, Haman or Hitler but he will always be there and only with Hashem's help will we Baruch Hashem always triumph.
15. There are a few explanations as to what this is referring to. Some say it means we were all living together in one place and thus easy to find making us "outstanding". Others say it refers to the fact we did not change our clothes, language and names also making us stand out. Others say it means we were outstanding in the mitzvah of having children as the Jews had many children while in mitzrayim.