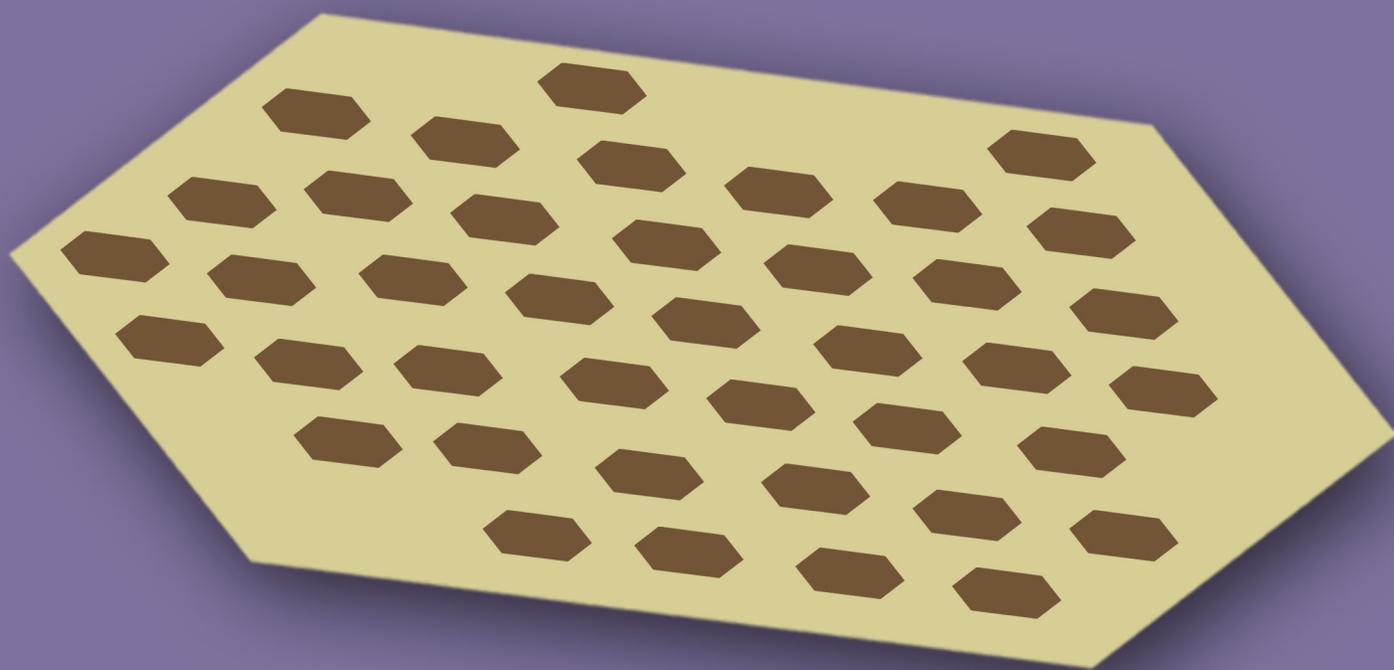


# Passover 2013

5773 פסח



# BBYO Passover Release

## What you can find in the BBYO Passover Resource:

- Simple Passover Story
- Program Ideas
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- Fun Passover Facts
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## Simple Passover Story

For a long time, Pharaoh's advisors had been warning him about the threat of the Jewish nation. His sorcerers had seen that a Jewish boy would be born who would grow up, overturn the entire Egyptian empire and lead his people to freedom. Thus, Pharaoh demanded that all Jews had to work from sunrise to sunset without pay performing strenuous work as slaves. Pharaoh's decree included that all Jewish baby boys had to be throw into the Nile.

However, a Jewish woman named Yocheved had a baby boy, and desperately hid him until he was three months old, then placed him in a basket down the Nile River. His sister Miriam watched this happen, and the basket was picked up by the Princess of Egypt, Batya, the Pharaoh's daughter! She named him Moses.

While Moses grew up in the palace, he could not bear to see the Jewish people suffer. One day he saw an Egyptian whipping a Jewish slave to death. Enraged, Moses cried out and retaliated to the extent that the Egyptian nearly died. Since he was certain that Pharaoh's officers would be after him, Moses fled to Midian. Moses lived their for many years as a shepherd for his father-in-law, and one day, a lamb ran away from the flock. Moses chased after it and saw a bush covered in fire, yet the bush was not being burnt! As Moses drew nearer he heard the voice of G-d speak to him, telling him to go down to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to "let my people go".

Moses had a stutter and was nervous to approach the ruler alone. G-d advised him to go with his brother, Aaron, and together they went before Pharaoh and shouted, "Let my people go". Yet, Pharaoh laughed it off as a joke, so they threatened Pharaoh with 10 plagues if he did not listen to G-d. Pharaoh, did not believe them. Plague after plague soon struck the Egyptians. After the worst plague, the death of the first born, Pharaoh had enough, and shouted through the streets that Moses could leave and take all of the Jews with him. Thus, Moses sent word to all the Jews to leave at once. They needed provisions

for the journey so they baked bread and took many possessions of the Egyptians. Afraid that they would not have enough time, the Israelites did not wait long, and left with bread that had not risen.

The Jews walked until they reached the sea, where they stopped. They realized that the Egyptian army had been chasing after them with their swords in their hands, attempting to recapture them. G-d protected the Israelites. To delay the Egyptians, he created a pillar of fire from the ground. Afterwards, G-d called down to Moses, telling him to stretch his arm and staff over the waters, which split the sea ahead of them. Yet- as soon as the Egyptians stepped into the sea, the split walls came crashing down on them. The Jews were now free in the desert.

## Program Ideas

*Here are some ideas for Passover programming on a chapter level! Fuse your favorite pieces to make an awesome program!*

### Icebreaker

Have everyone share their favorite family Passover traditions.

### The Exodus

Tell the Exodus story - you can find it in this resource!

### Hold a discussion about freedom.

What does freedom mean to you?

What in your life do you feel restricts your freedom?

What aspects of modern life do you feel are enslaving?

When do you feel that you have control over your life? When do you feel that you don't?

### Simulate a Seder

Hold a mock seder with a creative twist! Chocolate seders, with only chocolate ingredients, are always a lot of fun. Make sure you go through all steps of the seder, so that you can educate members on how a traditional seder is done!

### Hold a Kosher-for-Passover Cook-off

In a kosher-for-Passover kitchen, hold an iron chef competition between chapter members to see who can come up with the most creative and delicious Passover-friendly meal. Then, exchange Passover-friendly recipes to help each other get through a week free of leavened foods.

### Reenact the Exodus from Egypt

In a gym or room with a lot of open space, have chapter members perform a series of physical challenges to get from one side of the room to the other to symbolize them leaving Egypt and crossing

the Red Sea. Have some chapter members act as the Egyptians trying to hinder the Israelites from escaping Egypt.

### Have a Passover-Inspired Gardening Party

Passover is a celebration of new life and the coming of springtime. If you live in an area where this is possible, contact local organizations to have your chapter volunteer at a nearby community garden. Bring along some sunglasses, water bottles, and kosher-for-Passover snacks!

## D'var Torah

On the first nights of Pesach we have a commandment to retell the story of our exodus from Egypt. The Hagada is made in a special order to facilitate all the observances of the night. One thing which becomes clear from the outset is that we praise and thank G-d many times during the seder. It is an underlying theme throughout the seder to show our thanks to G-d for freeing us from the bondage of Egypt. Thankfulness is one of the goals of observing the seder.

The book Duties of the Heart (Rabbi Bachya Ibn Pekuda) discusses at length all of the wonderful things which G-d bestows to the human race. He follows that chapter with the discussion of serving G-d. His reasoning for juxtaposing those two chapters is that when someone contemplates the good which he receives, it behooves him to react with recognition and appreciation to the giver. When we realize the extent of what we receive from G-d in its full depth, logic dictates that we serve Him.

The term "bread of shame" is used in the Talmud, and has become a well-known term. As we know it is used to depict the feeling one has when receiving something he has not earned. A healthy person wishes to return in some measure the favor he has received. It is human nature. This is why G-d created good and evil in the world, and gave us the opportunity to choose between the two -- so we could earn the good which we receive in this world and the next. Interestingly, we can conclude that G-d puts up with all of the things in this world which occur against His will, just so we can work at doing right, and not receive bread of shame.

Similarly, on Passover, we read what is known as Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs). This is one of the most sensual, explicit works of all Jewish text. The protagonists are a man and a woman who communicate their love for each other. The man proclaims, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." The woman replies, "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." It is often said that this is a metaphorical representation of the love between God and the people of Israel. As this is read on Pesach, the holiday itself is often characterized by the feeling of love and security one has with God, a parent, a spouse, and any other close relative.

We recount the story of our exodus from Egypt and our birth as a nation of servants of G-d. We internalize the teachings of the seder, and we come to a greater clarity and commitment to show G-d

our recognition and appreciation in a tangible, ongoing fashion. We approach this time with a goal to enforce the loving relationship we have with our loved ones and recognize those who are important in our life.

## **Global Spin and Traditions**

*We all have our own family traditions when it comes to Pesach. It's celebrated differently for everybody. All around the world, there are different regions that actually change some parts of Pesach that you may consider fundamental. These foreign traditions may seem really odd from the outside, but just think about how others might think of your traditions. There are some pretty wacky traditions out there!*

### Afghanistan and Persia

Afghan and Persian Jews hit and whip each other with scallions, because it is believed that by doing this, it purifies them and relieves them of their sins. It was also meant to symbolize getting whipped by the slave-drivers in ancient Egypt.

### Iberian Peninsula

Starting in the early 14th century, the Jews of the Iberian peninsula and the surrounding countries began a small, simple tradition; tapping the heads of guests. The host would walk around the table three times, holding the seder plate, and they would just tap the heads of all the guests. The idea behind this tradition was to bless those who were tapped, as it is polite to treat the guests with the utmost respect.

### Syria

In Syria, it is customary to break up the matzah into the shape of Hebrew letters. The most common letters are daled (ד) and vav (ו) which (according to the alphabetic system of counting in Hebrew, called Gematria) add up to ten, which represents the ten holy aspects of G-d. This is also a common tradition in Saharan Africa, though they break the matzah into the letter hay (ה).

### Morocco

A lot of Hasidic and Moroccan Jews wear white during Pesach, possibly as a way to symbolize purity and joyfulness. Similarly, a lot of Jews wear white during the Jewish new year, Rosh Hashana, through to Yom Kippur.

Another tradition that Moroccan Jews celebrate their own holiday, called Mimouna. During Mimouna, the Moroccan Jews throw pebbles behind themselves into the ocean to ward off evil spirits. Mimouna is celebrated by having a huge feast of baked goods, fruit, and other really good food that is meant to symbolize fertility and wealth. This symbolizes that after the exodus from Egypt, the Jews prospered even until today.

## **Traditional Passover Seder Foods**

Matzoh - Three unleavened matzohs are placed within the folds of a napkin as a reminder of the haste with which the Israelites fled Egypt, leaving no time for dough to rise. Two are consumed during the service, and one (*the Afikomen*), is spirited away and hidden during the meal and story recitation to be later found as a prize to trade with the seder leader for desert.

Maror - Bitter herbs, usually horseradish or romaine lettuce, is used to symbolize the bitterness of slavery.

Charoset - A mixture of apples, nuts, wine and cinnamon, is used as a reminder of the mortar used by the Jews in the construction of buildings as slaves.

Beitzah - A roasted egg, as a symbol of the circle life and the perpetuation of existence.

Karpas - A vegetable, preferably parsley or celery, representing hope and redemption; served with a bowl of salted water to represent the tears shed. As well, Passover is "Chag Haaviv", the spring holiday, and greenery represents the spring.

Zeroah - Traditionally a piece of roasted lamb shank bone, symbolizing the paschal sacrificial offering and the strong arm (zeroah) of G-d that led the Israelites out of Egypt.

Wine - Four glasses of wine are consumed during the service to represent the four-fold promise of redemption, another special glass is left for our guest, Elijah the prophet.

## Fun Passover Facts

1. *The World's Largest Passover Seder Takes Place in Nepal, of All Places.*

Each year members of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement hold their "Seder on Top of the World" in Kathmandu for Jewish locals and travelers. Last year they had around 2,000 people attend the festivities.

2. *Abraham Lincoln Was Assassinated During Passover.*

Many Jews were in synagogue for the holiday when news of Lincoln's assassination broke. Altars in temples "were quickly draped in black and, instead of Passover melodies, the congregations chanted Yom Kippur hymns. Rabbis set aside their sermons and wept openly at their pulpits, as did their congregants."

3. *Coca-Cola Makes a Special Batch of Kosher Coke for Passover.*

While Coke is generally a kosher product, the dietary laws tighten during the Passover holiday making high-fructose corn syrup a no-no for observant Jews. In response, Coca-Cola pumps out a batch of limited edition Coke that uses *real* sugar instead of the *kitniyot* corn. Look for bottles with yellow caps on them to be sure you're getting the right one.

4. *The First American Edition of the Haggadah Was Published in 1837.*

The Haggadah is the book or text Jews read from during Passover. It tells the origins of the holiday and explains how the Seder is supposed to proceed. Solomon Henry Jackson, an English-born American Jew, published the first American edition of the Haggadah in 1837 in New York. Jackson had moved to the city in the 1820s to establish the first Hebrew printing press, and *The Jew*, a monthly newspaper and the first Jewish periodical in the United States.

5. *Manischewitz is a Brand, Not the Hebrew Word for Kosher Wine.*

Just as a Kleenex is really a "facial tissue," and Q-Tips are actually "cotton swabs," Manischewitz is a proprietary eponym. Founded in 1927 by Leo Star, the Manischewitz winery has basically cornered the kosher wine market here in the US with their sweet concord grape wine. Yet like Coca-Cola, Manischewitz uses corn syrup to sweeten things up a bit, so surprisingly not all Manischewitz is actually kosher for Passover.

## Passover Mini Quiz

1. What number appears most in the Haggadah?

- a) 4
- b) 15
- c) 600 000

2. The first time the Jews ate Matzah?

- a) After leaving Egypt with no time for the bread to rise.
- b) The night prior to leaving Egypt, at the first Passover seder.
- c) In 1888, when Manischewitz was created.

3. Of the four sons, who is the most problematic?

- a) The Wise son
- b) The Evil son
- c) The Simple son
- d) The son who does not know how to ask

4. What important figure is mentioned only tangentially in the Haggadah:

- a) Moses
- b) G-d
- c) Pharoah
- d) Mordechai

**Answers:**

1.) A. The number 4 is a recurring theme in the Haggadah: 4 questions, 4 sons, 4 cups of wine. The 4 cups of wine correspond to the 4 terms of redemption that God promised the Jews in Egypt: "I shall take you out... rescue you... redeem you... and take you" (Exodus 6:6-7).

2.) B. It is true that the dough did not have time to rise when the Jews left Egypt in a hurry (Exodus 12:34), but the **first** matzah was eaten before leaving Egypt, at the Passover Seder (Exodus 12:8).

3.) D. The son who doesn't know how to ask. In the Haggadah, this son is listed last, because he doesn't know and doesn't care. Apathy is one of the worst possible character traits. The opposite of love is not hate; it's apathy. Why isn't the evil son placed last? And why is he listed second, right after the wise son? Because even though the evil son is fighting, at least he's engaged in discussion and you've got somebody to talk to. He's alert and thinking. If you can turn him around, you've got another wise son! This lesson is born out through a fascinating Gematria (Jewish numerology): If you take an evil person (in Hebrew, *rasha* -- gematria 570) and as the Haggadah suggests, you subtract the rough, biting edge of "his teeth" (*shinav* -- 366), then you're left with 204, the Gematria of *tzaddik* -- a righteous person!

4.) A. Moses is mentioned only once in the Haggadah, where it says that "the people believed in God and Moses his servant." Moses is mentioned only in passing, and in the passive sense. The main lesson of the Exodus is that there is only one power in the entire universe: God. Thus it is crucial to remember that Moses, who led the Exodus, was only a messenger of God. As the Haggadah says: "God brought us out of Egypt -- not through an angel or a messenger, as the verse declares (Exodus 12:12): 'I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night'..." God expects us to make an effort, to partner with Him in bringing about the redemption. But we should never think that it was our power that brought about the results. By nearly omitting Moses' name from the Haggadah, the Sages were making it clear that Moses indeed was no more than a messenger.