

Young Israel Synagogue Of Las Vegas News

By Jessica Stockman

You've heard of the four questions? Well, here are "the twenty four questions ... Guidelines to a Meaningful Pesach," by Rabbi Yitzhak Wyne.

1) *Why do we celebrate Pesach?* - Not because the Jewish people left Egypt 3300 years ago, but because G-d created an opportunity called "Freedom." The best time for one to take advantage of this opportunity to achieve "personal freedom" is every year at Pesach time. (The ultimate manifestation of this conception on a national level was when the Jewish people left Egypt.)

2) *What are we trying to become free from?* - Any one of our hang-ups that are holding us back from reaching our potential (i.e. our egos, arrogance, compulsion, laziness, fear of failure or fear of success).

3) *What Don't we eat on Pesach?* - Chometz - any one of the 5 special grains (wheat, barley, oats, spelt or rye), left with water, unmanipulated for 18 minutes.

4) *Why Don't we eat Chometz?* - Being pompous, with air and insubstantial, it looks impressive but yields no nourishment. chometz is symbolic of ego. Ego is a facade without substance, skin deep power. If we want to be free, we have to leave our egos behind, get out of ourselves and address the needs of other.

5) *What do we eat instead and why?* - Matzo - this is just flour and water baked fast. Matzo tells us to get back to basics, not ego. Understand what is really important in life and redirect our focus in life to address those needs.

6) *What is the point of "Kadesh"?* - To dedicate ourselves to the goal of the day - personal freedom.

7) *Why is the concept of "G-d took the Jewish people out of Egypt" so central in Judaism?* - This teaches us that G--d is involved with our lives on a personal level and that He cares enough to redeem us. We must realize that we can only become free with the Almighty's help.

7) *How many cups of wine do we drink during the Seder?* - Four, each cup corresponding to another verse in the Torah about redemption.

8) *How much of the cup do we drink?* -

Preferably the whole cup (3.3 ounces), but if that is difficult, then at least half of the cup (while leaning to your left).

10) *Why wine?* - It is the drink of kings. Wine also gets us a little high so we can lose our inhibitions.

11) *Why do we begin the Magid by inviting people to our Seder?* - If we want to be free, we have to get out of ourselves and seek to help others.

12) *How many questions in the four questions?* - One question, four answers, each corresponding to the four sons.

13) *Why do we keep bringing in and taking out the Seder plate?* - When the Haggadah speaks of freedom, we remove the Seder plate and cover the Matzo. When the Haggadah speaks of slavery, we return the Seder plate and uncover the Matzo.

14) *Why do we have to speak at length about the exodus even if we already know the story?* - To imprint the concepts of freedom into our hearts.

15) *Who are the four sons?* - Each son is a part of us.

I. Part of us is wise - searching for meaning, so we respond to that part with explanations of Jewish law.

II. Part of us is wicked - That is the part that is caught up in ourselves and mocks Judaism, so we respond to that part in a harsh manner, explaining that one who mocks Judaism, so we respond to that part in a harsh manner, explaining that one who mocks Judaism will never be free and will eventually cease to be Jewish.

III. Part of us is simple - That is the part that needs to be woken up, so we respond with an emotional response with the hope of tickling some interest in Torah.

IV. Part of us is too comatose to ask a question - To that part we respond the same as to the wicked son, sending the message that if one remains ignorant, eventually he will begin to mock and separate himself from the community.

16) *What is the message of dayenu?* - The more details we can appreciate in what G-d has done for us, the more sense of gratitude we can develop and we need gratitude to free ourselves.

17) *What are the most important concepts to discuss at the Seder?* - Pesach, Matzo and

Maror.

18) *What was the Pesach offering?* - It was a lamb that we slaughtered, roasted and then ate. The lamb was the god of the Egyptians. What is our idol? What do we ascribe power to other than G-d? The Pesach tells us to slaughter it, burn it up and realize that our idols are so insignificant that we could eat them up and digest them.

19) *We eat matzo, remembering that G-d took us out of Egypt in haste. Why didn't G-d give us more time to leave in comfort?* - Freedom, like all opportunities, comes and goes quickly. IF we have the chance to leave a negative trait behind us, grab the opportunity of the moment.

20) *What is the message of Maror?* - As long as we aren't free, our lives will be a little bitter. What are the bitter things we are forced to eat and how can we free ourselves from them?

21) *How much matzo must we eat to fulfill the Torah commandment of eating matzo on Seder night?* - 2/3 of the machine made matzo (the square ones) or 1/2 of the Shmura matzo (the round ones), all eaten in less than 9 minutes (preferably under 2 minutes) reclining to the left.

22) *How much maror must we eat?* - If using ground horseradish, a little more than 3 level tablespoons. If using romaine lettuce stalks - sufficient quantity to cover an area of 3"x5'.

23) *What does the afikoman represent?* - The Korban Pesach (the Pascal offering).

24) *What are the last words of the Seder?* - "Next year in Jerusalem!" - If we want to be free, we have to keep focus and look forward with optimism to the ultimate national redemption.

Have A Wonderful Passover!

The Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce will offer monthly briefings for chamber members and other business people interested in knowing what the chamber has to offer. The briefings are scheduled for Thursday, Apr. 18 (noon), Tuesday, Apr. 23 (5:30 p.m.) and Thursday, May 2 (8 a.m.) at the chamber offices, 711 E. Desert Inn Rd.

The monthly briefings are free of charge and no RSVP is necessary. For more information call 641-5822.

Happy Passover

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