

A Seder Reading Affirming Freedom of Expression

Passover is the holiday of freedom when we mark the Jewish people's liberation from Egyptian bondage.

Freedom from slavery is not the only form of liberation we practice, experience, expect and demand. Such freedoms include freedom of speech, religion, press, and assembly. These freedoms are not just a matter of law but integral to who we are as Jews and as Americans (Or Canadians, Britons, etc.).

While we may take these freedoms for granted, on Passover we reaffirm our commitment to them. As Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks said: "the battle for freedom is never finally won, but must be fought in every generation." And, we add, at every Passover Seder.

On this Passover, we remind ourselves of our commitment to Freedom of Expression and of the Jewish value of *Makhloket L'shem Shemayim*, Arguments for the Sake of Heaven.

At the Seder table, all questions are welcomed. None are out of bounds.

The Haggadah names four children--the wise, wicked, simple and the one who does not know how to ask. Even the wicked child, who separates himself from the community, has a place at the table.

Freedom of expression means that we consider and engage with opinions with which we disagree. It means that we uphold the rights of others to express their opinions even—especially—when we differ. The Seder reminds us of our diverse voices. There is room for each of us at the table.

May the Jewish people and all society live out the value of Freedom of Expression on this Passover and year-round.

