

4 Questions at Passover Freedom to Ask A Jewish Celebration

Characters:

4 adult figures

3 child figures

1 smaller child figure (Sarah)

Props:

Square of cloth for table (50cm)

Copy of the Haggadah

Box of Matzo

Bowl of herbs or sprig of parsley

Pronunciations:

Haggadah (huh-GAH-duh)

Seder (SAY-d'r)

Matzo (mat-SUH)

Today I'd like to share how Jewish people celebrate the festival of Passover.

Display Jewish Symbol (Star of David/ Torah/ Seder plate)

At passover Jewish people remember when their ancestors escaped from slavery to become a free people. Imagine what it must have been like to always be told what to do and then to be free to choose and think for yourself.

At Passover a Jewish family gathers for a special meal called a Seder.

Spread square of cloth before you.

Place figures around the cloth as you introduce them.

On Passover night, in a Jewish family, Mum and Dad may be there.

Grandma and Grandad might be there.

All the children will be there, from the oldest to the youngest.

Place smallest child last.

Because this is a special celebration, there might be other friends at the Seder too.

On the first night of Passover, the Seder is read from a book called the Haggadah.

All the people at the Seder take their part in reading parts of the Haggadah.

Place Haggadah at one side.

But one person is very important at the Seder. I wonder who you think it might be?

(Give children a chance to reflect and share who might be the important person and why.)

Let's find out who the important person is.

Point to the youngest child.

It is the job of the youngest person at the Seder to ask four questions. Let's call her Sarah.

Hold up 4 fingers.

These questions are all about why this night is different from other nights.

Point to youngest child while she speaks.

The first question Sarah asks is:

"On other nights we eat all kinds of bread; why on Passover do we only eat Matzo?"

Place box of Matzo on the cloth.

(Matzo is a special flat bread that has not risen.)

Point to Dad while he speaks.

Sarah's Dad answers the question: "Because when our ancestors left Egypt, they left in such a hurry they did not have time for the dough on their bread to rise."

Point to the youngest child while she speaks.

The second question Sarah asks is:

"Why, on this night, do we only eat bitter herbs when on all other nights we eat many herbs?"

Place dish of herbs or bunch of parsley on cloth.

Point to Mum while she speaks.

Sarah's Mum answers: "This helps us to remember the bitterness of our ancestor's bondage in Egypt."

The bitter taste, reminds them of the terrible times when the Jewish people were slaves.

Point to the youngest child as she speaks.

The third question Sarah asks is:

"Why do we dip our food twice on this night when we don't dip it even once on other nights?"

Point to Grandma as she speaks.

Sarah's Grandma answers: "The salt water into which we dip the karpas (a green vegetable) symbolises the tears of our ancestors when they were slaves in Egypt."

Point to the youngest child as she speaks.

The fourth and final question Sarah asks is:

"Why on this night do we eat while reclining, when on other nights we may sit in any position?"

Point to Grandad figure.

Sarah's Grandad answers: "Because free people reclined in ancient times, and our ancestors became free on this night."

Slaves never had a chance to rest, so at Passover, leaning on a cushion is a symbol of relaxation, real freedom.

Point to Sarah.

The family love that everyone takes part in the Seder together. Sarah likes asking questions that everyone answers and also thinking about the answers.

Wondering Questions:

I wonder why children ask these questions as part of a Seder celebration?

I wonder what you think it means to be a slave?

I wonder if a slave has the freedom to ask questions?

I wonder why it is important to ask these questions on this night?

I wonder why is it important for a Jewish person, old or young, to ask questions about their faith?

I wonder how a child learns how to ask questions?

I wonder, when do you ask questions?

I wonder, who helps you to find answers in life?

I wonder, do you think you are free? Why?