



TAO – The South Florida
Center for Jewish Renewal

Pesach Seder

The Holy Field of Apples

www.TAOcenter.net

8-5 Under the apple tree
I awakened...

2-3 Like an apple in the tree
of the forest so is my love...

Song of Songs

The Holy Field of Apples

Passover is a celebration of our freedom from slavery. As slaves, we were so overwhelmed with the tasks of slavery that we made no space or time for Intimacy with Each other, Ourselves, or God.

With effort and the help of the heroines of that time we began to recapture a level of intimate existence. Our sages (Rashi-Exodus) teach that every time there was an attempt at intimacy an apple tree grew in the desert.

These trees became known to the Kabbalists as Chakal Tapuchin Kadishin- The Holy Field of Apples

1. Kadiesh is Kiddush

The sanctification of ...

Sometimes the most difficult task of the living is to love who we are without rejecting our selves or railing God for making us so.

The Essence of Kiddush is that we are created perfect and divine. As we say during the Kiddush *‘Vatitein Lanu Hashem- Eternal One, You gave us Godliness - You've 'Godded' us.’*

From here we can open to intimacy with everyone and everything for we now recognize the divine current running through us and connecting us.

2. Urchatz

Wash your hands of all expectations, concerns and preconceptions of tonight.

Free yourself to experience the intimacy of the moment.

3. Carpas

What's different about this meal?

Most meals we eat hurriedly, hardly chewing, in front of the TV or in the car, because meals are a functional necessity we cram between the to do's of our lives.

This meal, we savor the food and the company. We relish both - symbolized by immersing the food in flavorful dips.

The carpas is an hors d'oeuvre, a luxury; the average meal doesn't include luxuries. We might say true luxury is taking time for intimacy as we do tonight - to 'dip' and immerse into each other, our selves and God.

4. Yachatz

If the highest form of spiritual practice is love and acceptance of the Divine being you are, then the deepest form of enslavement is Hiding your Divine Self.

The Divine Self is the creative spiritual contour of yourself. It is the Expression of God through you. It is what allows you to live Intimately with God and those around you.

The Divine Self is the Larger part of you.

4. Yachatz

This large, creative, Divine self inspired us as children. As we aged for varying reasons we gradually hid our Divine Self. We are left broken because our larger self is hidden.

So in breaking the middle matzah, we symbolize this tear in the self. We hide the larger part, because it is this larger self that is hidden. We ask our children to find it, because it was lost for us as children.

Tonight we find our larger pieces, our Divine Selves. So together tonight we say “I free my divine self.” And once again, You are free...

5. Magid

The gravest difficulty with slavery is that you don't have the language with which to talk about freedom.

Tonight you have a language, gestures, clear declarations and understandings of freedom and a renewed intimacy with the Divine.

The 4 Questions of Peh-Sach

The Mouth that Speaks

The mouth that speaks: Peh - Sach

The child within, whose first craving was for intimacy, we urge him/her to emerge tonight. Tonight, we teach the child to ask, to speak and to dialogue.

The Second Child

The Second child says “Mah” - as Jacob did when he said “*Mah Norah Hamakom Hazeh*” (*How awesome is this place.*) *Mah* in this sense means ‘*Oh My God... How Holy.*’ The second child looks at his/her community and says *Mah Haavodah Hazot lachem* - *How can ‘you’ be so holy?*

In the presence of true holiness, loving community and open hearts, s/he feels strangely alienated, detached and lonely. The second child says ‘I could never feel this way. I could never trust this way. I will never be included. Community and intimacy are words in your vocabulary not mine.’

The beginning of intimacy beckons you to believe you are worthy of it. So we say ‘*How awesome is this... Mah Norah Ha Makom Hazeh.*’ If you see it around you, it emanates from you.

The Ten Plagues

Even the chaos in our lives serves a purpose.

Quantum physicists call it chaos theory: “Beneath any chaotic appearance lies order and harmony.”

The Second Cup of Wine

2nd Kiddush / Sanctification

I don't have to hide my Self. The whole idea of the Hagaddah/Retelling is: We don't have to hide our stories.

Our sages (Gemorah Shabbas) say:

“Zachreihu al Hayayin - Remember it over wine”

Share with each other stories about how you lost and/or regained your Divine Self.

6. Rachtzah

Everything that requires your hands as well requires your willingness to make, do, receive and contribute with holy intimacy.

Wash your hands and purify yourself with this intention.

7. Motzi

8. Matzoh

“Don't damage the millstones for you would be damaging the soul.”

Deuteronomy 24-6

There is no clearer metaphor for intimacy than two millstones that circle together in closeness to create sustenance for the world.

As long as the upper and lower matzoh are intact, the piece between may be broken, but the millstones will take that brokenness, and make flour to nourish us.

9. Maror - a patient journey

Anyone engaged in a long term relationship of any kind agrees patience is vital to enduring intimacy.

The Maror, according to the Kabbalah, represents the letter Yud י, the letter connected to infinity. The tip of the Yud is where God's Infinite light emerges. It leads to the vastest infinite light, and at the same time, is the most infinitely small point. If we chew Maror long enough, it sweetens.

We eat Maror to teach us patience. Whatever seems infinitely large and overwhelming is really only infinitely small, and the only way to see that is through patience.

10. Korech

Hillel wraps it together

Korech means to wrap. The Torah tells us that when we eat the Korban Peisach, eat it with Matzoh and maror. So Hillel wrapped it in a sandwich that Reb David Wolf Blanke z"l referred to as the "sandwich of both sides" - both sides of life are represented by the bitter and the sweet of the Maror and eaten with the humility of the Matzoh.

The whole point to Korech is to mix Matzah and Maror
Matzoh = humility Maror = bitterness

Humility is understanding that everything, the bitter and the sweet, is a spiritual discovery of God's true compassion.

11. Shluchan Orech

- ❖ Orange - We add an Orange to the Seder plate to acknowledge that Intimacy must include everyone.
- ❖ Egg- The Aramaic word for egg is Bei'ah (meaning to ask.) For the first step to intimacy is acknowledging the need for it – “asking”.
- ❖ Shulchan Orech: We eat the meal. This is, of course, symbolic of having our needs met.

12. Tzaphun 13. Barech

The Afikoman is found. Tzaphun means Hidden. The Divine Self, that has been hidden away, is found.

We Give Thanks to God.

14. Hallel 15. Nirtzah

Hallel - We sing to God with Joy.

Nirtzah - For Intimacy has been our souls true longing.

May we Be Blessed to know the soul's true longing.

Amen.

Join Us

Friday Nights – First and Third of each month after High Holy Days through May

Saturday Mornings – Third Saturday of each month

Wisdom Class – Wednesdays after High Holy Days through May

Some exceptions apply, so check “Events” on website:
www.TAOcenter.net