

Educating about Moshiach

Q. Young children are unfamiliar with the deeper teachings of the Torah, and thus cannot adequately understand the idea of Geulah. In which way, therefore, should we educate children about the coming of Moshiach?

A. The word Chinuch typically conjures images of a parent or an educator teaching children.

We are the children of Hashem and we can look at Him as the ultimate model of a Mechanech, beginning with the birth and infancy of Bnei Yisroel as a nation.

On the first Pesach, in the year 2448, we were chosen as Hashem's people from among the other nations; that Pesach became known as "*Leidas am Yisroel*" [birth of am Yisroel] and the beginning of our Chinuch. [The ensuing forty days, in which the Yidden spent journeying to Har Sinai, preparing for Matan Torah, represent the second phase of our early Chinuch.]

The Yom-Tov of Pesach that we celebrate today is therefore centered on the Mitzva of "*V'higadita L'bincha*" ("You should impart it to your children"), and the Sedorim play a key role in this process of Chinuch –

teaching the children about the Geulah from Mitzrayim.

Step after step, the Seder aims at inspiring the children's curiosity and encouraging their participation. The Haggadah focuses on the child's need to ask questions

(the Mah Nishtana) and then presents answers that are relative to each child (the four sons). Similarly, many of the night's Minhogim are simply to ensure the children don't doze, and even just to teach etiquette to the children.¹

The entire Pesach (even after the two Sedorim), is centrally themed around

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Chinuch.

[Unlike Sukkos, which has two separate Yomim Tovim (the first days and the latter days of Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah), the eight days of Pesach are one uninterrupted Yom Tov – to the extent that if one forgets to make a Shehechyanu during the first days he can compensate by saying it on Shvii shel Pesach.

This illustrates how the message of Chinuch carries over from the beginning of Pesach until its conclusion.]

During Shvii shel Pesach we read from the Torah about the Yidden's miraculous passage through the Yam



עצת המומחה



Suf, in which the Torah vividly describes the wonders that took place. The following day, Acharon shel Pesach, focuses on the ultimate Geulah with the coming of Moshiach, and the day's Haftorah depicts the miracles that will occur then. The Rebbeim stressed the theme of Geulah on the last day of Pesach by holding a Seudas Moshiach (and instructing Chassidim to do so as well), in which the day's spiritual messages would be manifested through eating and drinking.²

Hence, Pesach is structured as though it were a curriculum: in the seder we visit the suffering of Golus Mitzrayim and then see hope with Hashem's commitment to redeem B'nei Yisroel, ending with praising Hashem for the miracles that accompanied the birth of our nation. Shvii shel Pesach is then dedicated to the miracles of Krias Yam Suf and the conclusion of Geulas Mitzrayim. And only then does Pesach lead into its final day, which focuses on the Geula Ho'asida.

This structure demonstrates Torah's perspective of how we should educate children regarding Moshiach – in order for a child to truly internalize the reality of Moshiach we must first familiarize him with past Geulos of our people. Once a child comprehends the suffering his forefathers endured, and how Hashem liberated Klal Yisroel in an extraordinary manner, he is then able to understand that such a Geula can happen imminently.³ ■

1. This point is referring to the numerous times throughout the seder we are instructed to cover/uncover the Matzos and even to remove them from the table.

2. Seudas Moshiach shares a special bond with Bochorim, because the Rebbe Rashab initially established the minhag of drinking arba kosos at Seudas Moshiach for the Bochorim of Tomechei Temimim. The Rebbe Rashab explained that Temimim are the true "Chayolei Beis Dovid" which will wage a battle against those who are upholding the Geulah. See more in the Sicha of Simchas Torah 5661.

3. This explanation is primarily adapted from Sichas Acharon shel Pesach 5747.

בטח שמעה ע"ד מענה כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע לאחד, שלאחר ששאל אצלו במסחר שלו מסחר העצים וקבל מענה מכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר וסיים המענה בהצעה בנוגע לקיום מצות מעשיות בהידור וכו', והשואל התחיל להשתמט באמתלאות שונות, כיון שלא רצה להשיב פני כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר ריקם, ואמר לו כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר, ראה זה פלא, בודאי גם לדעתך הנני מומחה גדול יותר בעניני יהדות תורה ומצות מאשר במסחר עצים, ובפרט שידוע לכל שלעניני תומ"צ ואורח חיים ישראלי הקדשתי כמה מימי שנות חיי, ובזה התעסקו אבותי ואבות אבותי, כל משך ימי חייהם, ובכל זה פשוט הוא בעיניך לשאול אצלי בהנוגע למסחר עצים ותיכף ומיד קבלת עצה שלי, ע"מ להביאה בפועל, ודוקא בהנוגע לאותו הענין שבזה הנני לדעתך מומחה גדול ומומחה בן מומחה, הרי לא זה בלבד שלא שאלת אותי אתה במקצוע זה, אלא שגם לאחר שאמרתי לך הוראה ברורה ובהסברה שזהו טובתך האמיתית, לא רק ברוחניות אלא גם בגשמיות, פשוט בעיניך שאין אתה מקבלת ורק שמחפש אתה ביטוים מנומסים איך להשתמט מכל הדבר.

הנמשל מכל האמור בטח מובן ואין צורך להאריך בו...

(י"ט סין תשט"ז)