

Six Lessons of Passover

1. Learn how to ask.

Most great achievements in life begin with a question. Be curious. Speak up. Ask! Ask me about the salt water and the parsley. About the matzah and the pillows on our chairs. Ask about the Seder plate with the bitter herbs that bring tears to my eyes. All of this is here because I want you to ask me why.

2. Responsibility for each other.

We invite all who are hungry to come and eat because we are responsible for one another. Some people are hungry for food, while others are hungry for wisdom. Whatever we have we should share as much as we can.

3. Embrace challenges.

On our table is salt water which represents our tears. And there are bitter herbs that we will eat to remember the suffering we endured. We speak of our challenges and remember our tears because we can see now how they transformed us, how they moved us, how they taught us how to yearn for freedom. Embrace challenges. Learn from them. Remember them. They brought us to this place today.

4. Act.

Thinking and preparing for change are important steps but what matters in the end is following through with our actions. Matzah teaches us the importance of acting quickly when we know something is the right thing to do. We didn't wait for the bread to rise. Instead we grabbed the matzah and ran. Act whenever you can and as soon as you can. The world is full of great ideas that have never been realized. Matzah teaches us to move, to do, to run towards our goal.

5. Practice Jewish gratitude.

Tonight, we sing Dayenu. It would have been enough for us if all we did was wake up this morning, but You gave us water. And that would have been enough but in Your great kindness You gave us food, and sight and hearing and legs and hands. This is the kind of gratitude that teaches us during the hardest of days that we have so much to be thankful for. That all of life is an undeserved, precious gift.

6. The meaning of freedom.

Some people think freedom means being able to do what we want whenever we want to. But the Jewish definition of freedom is the ability to create a meaningful life with authentic values and to create a close connection with our Creator. Freedom is living a life of constant growth and striving to live up to our potential.