

Yachatz • יָחַצ • Breaking the Middle Matzah

Take the middle matzah and break it into two, one piece larger than the other.

The larger piece is set aside to serve as the *afikoman*. The smaller piece is put back between the two matzot.



Yachatz

At the beginning of the Seder we break the matzah and hide a piece away for the *afikoman* at the end of the Seder. We start the Seder with brokenness, with a piece missing. We are never really ready to begin our journey. There is always some brokenness; there is always a piece missing. It is risky to venture into the unknown without assurances that everything will work out. There are always good reasons for staying put.

Right after *yachatz* we say, “*Ha lachma onya*.” “Now we are here, next year may we observe Passover in the land of Israel; this year many are still enslaved, next year may we all be free people.” We have a vision. We have a mission. Despite the good reasons for staying put, the brokenness, and the pieces missing, we begin our journey. It is an act of defiant courage.

At every stage in our lives we can choose between remaining stuck and risking moving ahead.

What was the risk you took in the past year (or years) on your journey? What was the missing piece you found for last year’s journey? What is risky about the next step on your journey?

Maggid • מַגִּיד • Retelling the Passover Story

Uncover the matzot, raise the Seder plate, and say:

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אַבְרָהָמָא בְּאַרְעָא
 דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכָפִין יִיתִי וְיִיכַל, כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יִיתִי
 וְיִפְסַח. הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא, לְשָׁנָה הַבְּאָה בְּאַרְעָא
 דִּישְׂרָאֵל. הַשְׁתָּא עַבְדֵּי, לְשָׁנָה הַבְּאָה בְּנֵי חוּרִין.

This is the bread of poverty that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Anyone who is hungry should come and eat; all who are needy should come and celebrate Passover with us. Now we are here, next year may we observe Passover in the land of Israel; this year many are still enslaved, next year may we all be free people.

The tray with the matzot is moved aside, and the second cup is poured. (Do not drink it yet.)



Kol Dichfin (anyone who is hungry): Who would you want to invite to your Seder?