

The Pesach Ten

פסח Pesach (Passover) has been read by mystics as a contraction of the words Pe פה and Sach פס - the mouth converses¹. It is one of the times when we are encouraged to speak and share many ideas.² And while the rituals of Pesach are the same, we are different, so in this short compilation of contemplations I share 10 ideas that were formulated to help you connect to Pesach in the here and now.

As always, I welcome any feedback or thoughts on social media @Rabbi Benji or through my website: www.RabbiBenji.com and wish you and your family a meaningful festival!

Chag Kasher V'Sameach,

Rabbi *Benji*

SOURCE

¹ Pri Eitz Chaim, Shaar Mikrah Kodesh, ch. 4

² Maimonides, Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive command 157

Spring clean your life

like you do your home.

If you clean well that is...

One of the biggest elements of Pesach happens before it begins.

While many of us end up cleaning everything,

the main objective is to **remove chametz**

- food forbidden on Pesach.

The word Chametz

חמץ

Is related to the word יתחמץ

- embitterment.¹

Some understand this connection as relating to the inclination towards negativity. Just as we are to rid our homes of Chametz,

we are to rid our hearts of embitterment and the evil inclination.²

Decluttering makes space.

Remove that which is unnecessary, feeding your evil inclination and slowing you down.

Let's clean.

Pick one thing from your heart or mind that you are holding onto.

Something that you know isn't good for you.

Clean it out and let *it* go.

Sources:

¹ Psalms 73:21

² Rabbeinu Bechaye, Kad HaKemach, Pesach 1

He came in during trying times
and his own father

wasn't exactly
the best role model.

Almost all superheroes have
an origin story:
a bedrock account of the
transformative events...¹

Pesach is the origin story of the
Jewish people: **The birth of a nation.**
Resulting in one of the greatest
Teshuva movements,

Thousands of years have passed...
where the people returned
to the best versions of themselves
Why is that important to us
today?
through remembering where they came from.

Most people have never heard of
King Josiah of Judah,
In a world that sometimes
asks us to be **more ish than Jew**
but he changed Jewry during his reign
(476-445 BCE)
Let us choose to be Jews.

and his superpower was...
Choose to be proud of
our origin story.

The Pesach story.² **The story that made makes**
us who we are.

**How can you convey your pride
in our origin story a little more?**

Sources:

¹ The Superhero Reader, eds. Charles Hatfield, Jeet Heer, and Dr. Kent Worcester

² II Kings 23:21-23

You are what you do.

While not always the best approach,

**there is truth
in the statement**

'fake it till you make it'.

**External actions have
a powerful effect on
our inner lives.**

It is for this reason that so many
actions we undertake at the Seder

are symbolic acts of free people

- like reclining.

Even if there is something 'enslaving'

us, we still act free.

Because acting free is a step in
the direction towards becoming free. ¹

Want to change your life?

Start with how you live it.

**What area of your life do you want to change?
Approach it with the confidence of someone
who embodies that change.**

Sources:

¹ Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzva 16

Wisdom - knowledge = EXPERIENCE

Everyone loves the Afikomen
– the piece of Matza that we
designate early on to be the
last thing we eat.

For some it's because it
symbolizes receiving gifts
and for others it is because
it is the last thing we eat.

– *for a reason.*

The taste is meant to *linger* in our mouth. ¹

It's not enough to connect with family,
appreciate freedom, empathize or
introspect within Pesach itself.

The lessons need to accompany us
even when we've eaten our

last piece
of Matza.

When we fail to apply what we learn
we lose out on the potential to **GROW**.

Pesach, with its myriad of lessons,
gives us chances
to become more of what we want
to become.

As the festival concludes, we need
to ask if anything else has
CHANGED *other than* our diet.

What lesson from the Seder
would you like to
linger on?

Source

¹ Mishna, Pesachim 10:8

The only time you ever own
is the
present.

It's human nature to focus on
the future
or past.

Anywhere but the **HERE AND NOW.**

We worry about things that may never happen
and things that we cannot change.

We forget that the only time we truly
have control over is the present.

Imagine thinking only of the
moment
you're in.

Being so focused on the here and now you enter
the *z o n e .*

In the Haggada we learn of the 5 Rabbis
who were so present in their Seder,

they had to be told it was time for the
morning prayers.

They truly entered the *z o n e .*

You choose where your focus lies.

Place it in the **one place** where action happens

– THE PRESENT.

Pick one relationship
you have.
Consciously be more
PRESENT
with that person.

You are the sum of your closest
friends

– so choose wisely.

Egypt may have been the greatest
civilization of the time.

But it had some of the
worst values imaginable.

And we were not immune to our
surroundings.¹

Some people think they can watch what they like,
eat what they like
and associate with whoever they feel like.
But these things INFLUENCE us.

The people you surround yourself
with can make you a BETTER person.

Or they can prevent you from
reaching your potential.

Choose wisely.

Consider the people you spend most of
your time with and how they make you a
BETTER PERSON.

Source

¹ Shenei Luchot HaBrit, Aseret HaDibrot, Pesachim, Matzah Shemurah 44

We *ran* out of Egypt.

And we did it so *fast*,
the dough didn't even have time to **rise**.¹

But when you are told to do something
and you do it *quickly*,
you don't always cultivate intrinsic **CHANGE**.

The Israelites were taken out of Egypt,
but Egypt was not yet taken out of the Israelites.

Real change requires work and to be truly
f r e e we need to do the work.

What can be achieved was revealed.
But they needed to **OWN IT**.

Pesach is an opportunity to remember
what we can achieve.

We then need to become what we
know is best for us.

And the Omer helps us do it one **step** ^{at a} **time**.

MAKE IT COUNT!

What element of **f r e e d o m**
do you need to work at?

Source
¹Haggada