



Jewish Veg Haggadah Supplement

This supplement can be used either after lighting the candles or after asking The Four Questions during your Passover seder.

At Passover, we celebrate our freedom, our deliverance from slavery.

It seems like a good time to abstain from meat, dairy and eggs, since the animals from which those products are derived are treated like slaves, or worse.

Actually, anthropologically speaking, the very motif of slavery comes from animal agriculture.

Simply put: Buying and selling living beings, binding them with chains, and branding them with hot irons are all actions that we associate with slavery. And these are all actions that originated in animal agriculture.

In modern factory farming, what animals experience is even worse than slavery. We can spare you the details this time around. But suffice it to say, during Passover, it would be a little hypocritical to celebrate our freedom while participating in the confinement, mutilation and killing of other sentient, soulful beings.

At Passover, we seek to free ourselves from our own personal mitzrayim, our bad habits.

And meat-eating is a very bad habit. Bad for your health. Bad for the planet. And very bad for the animal involved.

Pesach provides the perfect opportunity to make changes in our lives. Reducing or eliminating animal products from your diet is one of the best changes you can make.

Humility.

Why do we eat matzah, the bread of affliction?

It's not because we enjoy the feeling of constipation. (A feeling vegans rarely get, by the way.)

It's because, spiritually, matzah is humble. It is unleavened. It has not risen.

We rid our homes of chametz and we eat matzah to remind ourselves to remain humble.

The whole concept of killing animals for food is based on the misguided notion that we are far superior to our furry and feathered friends.

The rabbis of the Talmud realized that humans would have a tendency to be anthropocentric. Yes, anthropocentric. (Translation: Believing humans are the center of the universe.)

Those rabbis found many ways to make the point that if human beings are superior to animals, it's not by much. Take, for instance, the mitzvah of feeding your animals before you feed yourself. That's humility.

With all this in mind, Passover is the perfect holiday to (re)dedicate ourselves to the Jewish ideals we should all strive to uphold all year long:

- Compassion for animals
- Concern for our health
- Care for the environment

Jewish Veg encourages you and your loved ones to go animal-product free and plant-strong at your Seder this Pesach.

If we take the spiritual significance of Passover seriously, then we must consider going veg.



Discussion Questions

1. Which of the above points do you find most persuasive and why?
2. How do we reconcile the Passover story of the paschal lamb with Judaism's many beautiful teachings about how we're supposed to treat animals?
3. What are your favorite plant-based Passover dishes?
4. What do you use as a substitute for the egg on the Seder plate if you're vegan?
5. What bad habits would you like to free yourself from this Passover?