

Haggadah Companion 2014

ת"ס



How to use this Haggadah Companion

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This Haggadah Companion has been designed to accompany the Haggadah that you read at the Seder. It has been written in the same order as the standard Haggadah making it easy to use throughout your Seder no matter which Haggadah you are using. It highlights certain moments during the Seder that are particularly relevant to social justice work today.

Our aims for this companion are to:

- encourage discussions around your Seder table
- help bring the story of our Exodus to life
- increase awareness about slavery and asylum and refugee issues
- make this year's Seder different from all other Seders.

Why use this Companion?

This Haggadah Companion relates the Haggadah to issues that are at the core of the Exodus story and which remain of great contemporary relevance: slavery, refugees, and human rights.

Let this be the year that we take a stand against modern slavery and let this Seder be the start of that. Passover and the story told during the Seder tell of our collective redemption and our entering the Land of Israel. It is a story of hope and freedom. Let us make this year the year of hope and freedom for all.

The Seder is intended as a place to discuss and bring to life our Exodus from slavery. We hope that this Companion will encourage that discussion and highlight the plight of millions in the ongoing struggle for freedom and justice.

DID YOU KNOW?

**There are
an estimated
29.8 million
illegal slaves in
the world today.**

1

Raise your glass

קידוש



Throughout the Seder it is customary to drink four cups of wine. These relate to the four ways that God promised to deliver the Hebrews from slavery (Exodus 6:6-7).

"I will bring out" "I will deliver"
"I will redeem" "I will take"

ACTION

What issue in particular are you passionate about? Would you like to see less rubbish in the streets? Would you like your friends to no longer use language that is hurtful to a certain group? **What can you do to make a change locally?**

For bigger issues, for example having more Fairtrade items stocked in your supermarket, try speaking to the manager or writing a letter to the branch. You will be surprised at how seriously they take your input. You are the customer and they want you to continue shopping at their store. Even better, ask a few friends in the neighbourhood to sign the letter with you or send their own. There is power in numbers.

On an even bigger scale, thinking outside your street or borough, you can make a difference in a similar manner. There are many small steps you can take that will get your voice heard.

QUESTION:

What local or global issue do you care passionately about?

Go around the Seder table and each mention one local or global issue you would like to do something about.

To learn more about a variety of issues affecting the world today:

- Apply for the **René Cassin Fellowship Programme** in human rights and Judaism, use one of our campaign toolkits or come to a Human Rights Speaker Series or Career event. See more information at www.renecassin.org
- Sign up to be trained in **Tzedek's 'Development Dilemmas'** sessions and help others learn more about global issues and what they can do to help. Email education@tzedek.org.uk for more information.
- Learn more about asylum and refugee issues through **JCORE's 'Making a Difference'** series, directed at pre-school, primary and secondary school children and on their website, www.jcore.org.uk

New North London synagogue drop in centre for destitute asylum seekers. Photo: JCORE



QUESTION:
How are you going to make an impact on that issue in the coming year?

As a group, decide on four global issues and dedicate a cup of wine to each. As you drink each new cup of wine, think about that issue and the people it affects.

2

Modern day slavery

עבדים היינו

Slavery is in our past as Jews. As we read in the Haggadah in the verse **עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים** – we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. However, we should remember that for many people slavery is still very much their present.

QUESTION:
Why does the Haggadah place so much emphasis on remembering our oppression along with our liberation?

Unlike slavery in the past, today's slaves are not usually bought and sold in public and they are rarely ever detained in chains. Modern slaves are forced to work without pay under the threat of violence, and cannot walk away from their situation. Slavery is not restricted to poor countries and occurs wherever there is a society that seeks cheap goods and labour but lacks sufficient safeguards against the exploitation of vulnerable people.

According to the Global Slavery Index 2013, there are an estimated 29.8 million people in slavery around the world. This is double the number of people taken into slavery from Africa during the transatlantic slave trade.



Tzedek funds projects, such as PARWD, to free bonded women.
Photo: Tzedek

There are many different types of slavery today:

Debt bondage This occurs when people are manipulated into taking a loan, and are forced to pay it back through labour. The terms of repayment are unlawfully low wages and high interest rates.

Human trafficking Involves the transport of any person from one area to another for the purpose of forcing them into slavery conditions. Individuals may be trafficked within a country but may also be forced into a foreign country to work as a slave where they have no protection under the law.

Child slavery Many child labourers work in dangerous or exploitative conditions. UNICEF estimates this figure to be around 150 million children aged 5 to 14. They are often kidnapped, bought, or trafficked into bonded labour or the sex industry.



SAVE beneficiaries
selling flowers.
Photo: Tzedek

Case study

Tzedek partners with SAVE Trust based in Tamil Nadu, India, to grant 25 women with a micro-credit loan to set up their own businesses. Typical businesses include food stalls, flower stalls, and garment-selling businesses.

SAVE bypasses the exorbitant charges of money lenders, normally the only option available to the women, and provides micro-credit loans with 1% interest rate. The money lenders would normally charge interest of 5%–10% per month, working out at 60%–120% per year. With figures

like that, it is impossible for these women to ever move out of poverty and they would be stuck in debt bondage with the money lender.

Through SAVE's programme, these 25 women have seen an increase in their disposable income which has enabled them to cover the expenses of school, medical needs and even save for emergencies. The money the women do repay to SAVE gets used again for the next group of women. This is funding that keeps giving, and making a difference.

Text study

Coercing your worker by withholding payment is another form of debt bondage. **Read the text below with your Seder table and then try to answer the following questions.**

לא תעשק שכיר עניו ואֶבְיֹון מֵאַחֶיךָ אוּ מִגֵּרְךָ
אֲשֶׁר בְּאַרְצְךָ בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ

"You shall not withhold the wages of a poor or destitute hired worker, of your brothers or of your strangers who are in your land within your cities."

Deuteronomy 24:14-15

The following is a commentary on the above text by Nachmanides, a leading Jewish scholar from 1194–1270.

שאם לא תפרענו בצאתו ממלאכתו מיד
הנה ילך לביתו וישאר שכרו אתך עד בקר
וימות הוא ברעב בלילה

"For if you do not immediately pay him as he leaves from his task, and he goes to his home, and his wage is with you until the morning... he will die from hunger during the night."

QUESTIONS:

- Why does the Torah stress that you should *"not withhold the wages of a poor or destitute hired worker"*?
- Are practices concerning the wages of the poor or destitute being highlighted specifically? Why do you think this might be?
- In what ways is this quote still relevant? Can you think of any situations in which wages may still be withheld?
- Do you think companies should by law be made to pay people a living wage?

3

Seeking refuge

ויוצאנו

To be read before or after the verse, "And God took us out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with signs and with wonders."

ויוצאנו ה' ממצרים ביד חזקה ובזרע נטויה
ובמרא גדל ובאותות ובמפתים

When the Hebrews left Egypt, the miracle was not only the signs and wonders provided by God, but also the knowledge they would be protected as they travelled across the desert, both at night and during the day. They also knew that they were going to the land of Canaan in which they could settle.

QUIZ: How much do we really know about asylum seekers and refugees?

(The answers appear at the bottom of this page)

- 1) How many refugees are there in the world?
a. 10 million b. 15 million c. 100 million
- 2) What percentage of the world's refugees lives in Britain?
a. 2% b. 10% c. 25%
- 3) Most of the world's refugees live in:
a. USA b. Australia c. Pakistan / Afghanistan
- 4) Destitute asylum seekers in the UK live on:
a. £10 per day b. £5 per day c. £2 per day

Who is a refugee?

The United Nations Refugee Convention (1951) defines a refugee as "a person who is outside his or her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution."

Who is an asylum seeker?

An asylum seeker is a person who has left their country, applied for protection as a refugee, and is waiting for a decision on their application. Asylum seekers coming to Britain do not have the right to work.

Our past

Many British Jews have descended from refugees and migrants who left their original homes across different parts of the world. The Jews who arrived in the UK often had to work in hard conditions in order to make a living and be accepted into British society; a similar experience to that which many refugees face today.



Photo: JCORE

QUOTE:

"To offer shelter to a refugee makes a difference to the refugee, but it makes a greater difference to the country offering them shelter."

Former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, speech at the House of Commons to mark JCORE's 2005 Refugee Week event

A Jewish human rights story

In the years leading up to WWII, Yonatan Glaser's family lived in Austria. Fearing the rise of the Nazi party, Glaser's grandfather tried to contact an uncle in Australia, Uncle Borer, in the hope that he would sponsor the otherwise trapped family to go to Australia. The sponsorship papers arrived, with a warm letter from Uncle Borer. Soon afterwards, a non-Jewish family friend warned the family that they were on a round up list. The friend said he had risked himself and had the family's name removed from the police list, but that removal from the Gestapo list was not possible. The next morning, Yonatan's grandparents took their 8-year-old son and their travel documents, and fled their home – for Australia.

It was only after the family arrived in Australia that they discovered that their letter never reached Uncle Borer. It had been delivered, rather, to 'The Borer and White Ant Extermination Company'! Although the proprietors of the company had no relationship to the Glaser family, they decided to sponsor the family to Australia nonetheless (and they wrote back as if they were Uncle Borer, to make Yonatan's grandparents feel safe). These two acts of moral bravery saved the Glasers from the Nazis.

Many years later, Yonatan moved to Israel and had a family. A few years ago, people fleeing violence in Africa came to Israel seeking asylum and a better life. Hearing about this, Yonatan went to the Wohl Rose garden near Jerusalem's Knesset (parliament) where they

were sleeping out with nowhere to go. Yonatan learned that these asylum seekers were about to be arrested. He drove home, where he, his wife and three children made the complicated decision to immediately help one family by inviting them to stay in the Glaser home.

The Glasers initially knew nothing specific about the family of six, but came to learn that they were from Darfur where they had suffered the murder of an older family member, repeated attacks on their village, and the father had been falsely imprisoned. The Glaser family welcomed the newcomers, and slowly the two families began sharing experiences, stories and recipes; they soon became very close. Eventually, the family from Darfur was able to rent an apartment, send their children to school and open a business. Yonatan became an activist to improve government policy towards asylum-seekers, and appeared on TV and in the newspapers.

René Cassin draws on Jewish experience like the Glaser family's, to campaign and educate on universal human rights issues such those affecting refugees and asylum seekers which remind us that many times throughout history Jewish people have sought refuge from persecution. Just as we have benefitted from the help of strangers, we believe that we should offer our help where and when we can, in our daily lives and through our communal activism.

QUESTIONS:

René Cassin is collecting human rights stories. **Do you have a story of migration from your family's history to share at the Seder table?**

- Why did your ancestors leave their country of origin?
- What challenges and opportunities did they face upon arrival in their new home?
- In what ways could their experience be said to be similar to that of refugees today?

Tell us about your family's story, and serve as inspiration for others – email us at info@renecassin.org

ACTION

JCORE has a People's charter against asylum destitution, which is part of their '**No way to live**' campaign. The charter aims to:

- introduce a single asylum support system, which will provide cash support to those who would otherwise be destitute while they are in the UK
- allow all asylum seekers access to free healthcare while they are in the UK
- grant asylum seekers permission to work if they have been waiting for more than six months for their case to be concluded.

Please visit www.jcore.org.uk and click on the 'No way to live' link on the homepage to sign the petition.

ACTION

In addition to signing the campaign, you can also get your hands dirty by volunteering for **The Bike Project**. Started in 2012, The Bike Project trains volunteers to repair bikes which are then given to destitute refugees and asylum seekers. Having a mode of free transportation to navigate the streets of London is invaluable and helps them to access some of the resources that are available.

Find out more at www.thebikeproject.co.uk

4

What difference would it make?

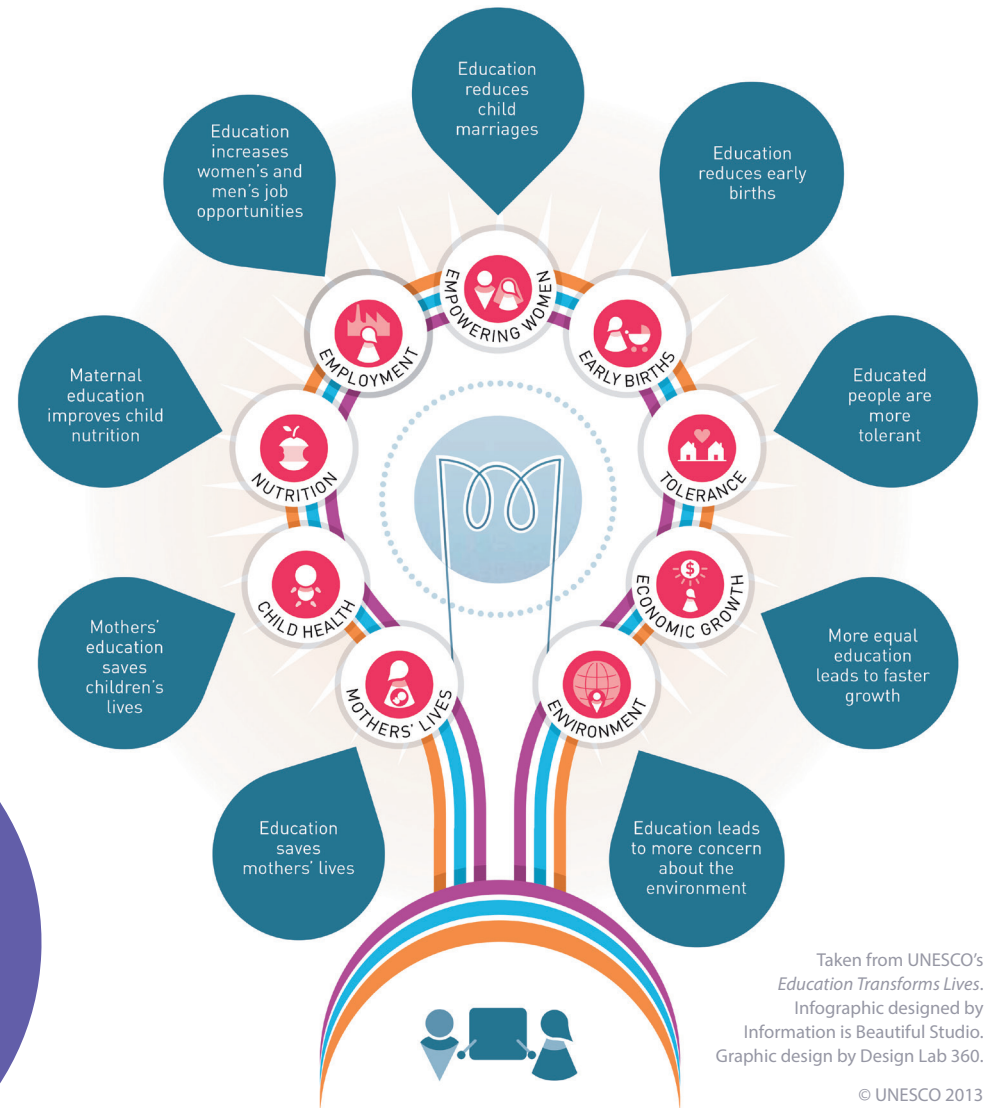
Ma Nishtana highlights the importance placed on education by Jewish tradition, showing that it is not necessarily the exact format of the questions which are important, but the idea that children should be naturally curious. Ma Nishtana and the rest of the Seder night are therefore seen as a perfect opportunity to fulfil the Torah's obligation of passing on stories and knowledge to one's children and peers.

Questions, curiosity and a willingness to learn are an integral part of a Jewish person's upbringing. Being aware of what is going on in the world is one step, having a connection to those people is another. The questions in Ma Nishtana are answered in the plural and present – “tonight, we dip twice” – and we need to be equally as engaged and present with the world around us.

The infographic opposite shows the impact that education can have. It's not just about getting a good job, it's about growing as a person, looking after yourself and your family, and building a stronger society.

QUESTIONS:
Can you
imagine a world
where education was
not possible?
What would you not
be able to do?
What knock-on
effects does
education have?

מה נשתנה



Taken from UNESCO's
Education Transforms Lives.
Infographic designed by
Information is Beautiful Studio.
Graphic design by Design Lab 360.

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- **Tzedek's School for Life** initiative in Northern Ghana is helping to make quality education a reality for all. By training teachers in 900 schools through better methods, teaching in mother tongue, and ensuring teachers have more support at all levels. School for Life has already recorded an 8% increase in exam results from students in the area.
- **René Cassin's Human Rights Speaker Series** and educational resources are the first step to campaigning against human rights abuses in the UK. Learn about the issues and help us create change.
- **JCORE's Journey to Safety project** draws on the experience of the Kindertransport to teach young people about refugees past and present. This projects brings them face and face with one another. See the interviews at www.journeytosafety.org.uk

The passion to learn is instinctive; we just have to create the opportunities. This Seder is an opportunity to learn about our past as Jews. What happens to the future is up to us.

Photo: Tzedek



HAGGADAH COMPANION 2014

ACTION

Schools often have to make choices about how and on what to spend their time and resources. This is especially true of schools in developing countries that are resource-poor.

If you were Head Teacher, how would you rank the following elements in your school?

1 is the highest, most important. 5 is the lowest and least important.

- a) Girls encouraged to stay in school
- b) Learning about global issues
- c) Well-trained teachers
- d) Fewer pupils in a classroom
- e) Free lunch provided to all pupils

After everyone has had a chance to rank the statements, ask for your guests' thoughts. **Was there consensus? What was the priority?**

Were there any choices you think didn't matter at all? Was it an easy or a difficult task?

L'shana ha'ba'a

לשנה הבאה

At the end of the Seder we sing L'shana ha'ba'a b'Yerushalayim – next year in Jerusalem. Our wish for the following year is that the Jewish people will be reunited in Israel with the coming of the Messiah.

We know that there is a lot to fix in the world before the Messiah's arrival. We hope that this Haggadah Companion has spurred interesting debate at your Seder table but we also hope that it will spur you into action.

QUESTION:
What are you going to do to make a change this year?

Who are we?



JCORE, the Jewish Council for Racial Equality, provides a leading Jewish voice on race and asylum.

www.jcore.org.uk



René Cassin is a human rights charity that draws on Jewish experience and values to campaign and educate internationally on universal human rights issues, such as discrimination, detention and genocide.

www.renecassin.org



Tzedek is the UK Jewish community's response to extreme poverty in the developing world. Tzedek works with partners, projects and communities abroad, regardless of their race or religion, providing direct support to help local people so they can help themselves.

www.tzedek.org.uk

The issues we work on – human rights, refugees and extreme poverty – are all highlighted in the Passover story.

JCORE, René Cassin and Tzedek are all members of the **Jewish Social Action Forum (JSAF)**. JSAF and its 20 member organisations aim to promote, develop and activate the Jewish community's pursuit of social action, to leave the world a better place than it was found. JSAF and its member organisations recognise that social action is a central component of contemporary Jewish identity and expression.

This companion was written by Shauna Leven, Edie Friedman and Ruth Newman with valuable input from interns, volunteers and fellow staff members. Thank you to everyone who has donated their time and ideas to this Companion and we hope it helps to enhance your Seder.

Front and back cover photos: Tzedek

