

PESACH TO GO 5766

Interactive Family Seder Programs

To help you inspire and enrich Pesach for your children and grandchildren

Sefirah Chart

~

כל דכפין: Pesach Hospitality

~

Red Sea Split

~

Pesach Profiles:

Passover Personalities Plays

Teach Your Children Well: The Mitzvah of Maggid

Of all the mitzvot of the Pesach Seder the hardest one to do well is teaching the story of Yitziyat Mitzrayim (Exodus). After all, the only real challenge to eating matzah and marror (bitter herbs) and drinking wine, is ingesting the requisite amounts in a short period of time- chew, slurp, swallow, and you're done. But how does one fulfill the mitzvah of Maggid (telling and relating story of the Exodus)? Is it sufficient to read the Haggadah text? Is success measured by managing to say every word before the family rebels and demands a little food? Parents whose kids receive a Jewish education are faced with an additional hurdle: how can they teach their children about Pesach when the little ones have been learning about the holiday in school since Purim? On this website we'll provide suggestions for how to observe this mitzvah and at the same time help Pesach celebrants fulfill the Mishnah's instruction:

בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים

In every generation the individual has the obligation of feeling that he himself left Egypt (Mishnah Pesachim 10:5).

I have been running interactive Pesach sedarim for eight years and I've established two rules for achieving a successful Maggid. Firstly, cater the lessons and activities to the ages and personalities of the participants at the seder. As a parent, you know exactly what the midrash of the four sons is talking about: each child is different and requires a distinct message; each child responds to a different approach. My first recommendation for building an interesting seder, therefore, is know your audience. What works for my 11 and 9 year olds might not work for your 6 or 16 year olds. Secondly, use what you have and what you know. Although the traditional seder is conducted around the dining room table, there's no reason why you shouldn't use your home's other rooms, hallways - even the bathroom! in the service of telling the Pesach story. If you have a porch, a backyard, a stairway- get your family and guests off their chairs and moving around the house- moving them will engage them. Use objects in your house, and most importantly use the people who will be at your seder. The only one who gets to relax at the seder is the one who's spent the day cooking. Everybody else, including guests, can be put to work discussing, acting and thinking.

On this website you will find a range of developed ideas which you can use or adapt for your own seder. There are also plenty of little things you can do to enrich the seder: make מן (manna) out of meringues, spread them on a bath-towel on the floor and invite the kids to collect them; sing דִּינֵי in stages: as you move around the house doing different activities, sing the appropriate lines of the song; when talking about Egypt have the kids change out of their festival clothes into raggedy ones (or pajamas) and have them sit on the floor- this works to tremendous effect. The "Sefirah Chart" described here is not intended for the actual seder. As well, you will find on this website a shiur about the Haggadah, "Pesach Hospitality", to help you teach the text at the seder.

Finally, recognize that a good seder requires planning and preparation. Don't wait until the last minute, but put together your props, plays and ideas days in advance. With a little effort and imagination you can have a meaningful and memorable seder. Your kids will be involved and challenged, and they'll forget to ask "is it time for dinner yet?"

Rabbi Jonathan Mishkin is a teacher and writer living in Alon Shvut, Israel. Questions and feedback can be sent to tgoldfis@yu.edu

Sefirah Chart

A Sefirah chart hung in a prominent spot is a useful tool for remembering to count Sefirat HaOmer (Counting of the Omer). Making an elaborate one is also a good activity for erev Pesach (Passover eve). Here are two ideas for making a chart.

Firstly, use large numbers that the kids can color in during the daily count - the kids can take turns and alternate colors.

Secondly, add a little text to the boxes. Since Sefirah leads to the holiday of Shavuot, prepare for Matan Torah (Receiving of the Torah) every night by learning about what it takes to be a Torah scholar. The Mishnah in the sixth chapter of Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) lists 48 attributes necessary to mastering Torah. Every night of Sefirah count as a family, and then sit down and learn about one of those qualities. There are plenty of commentaries on Pirkei Avot to assist you.

Of course, you'll have to find something additional to learn on the 49th night - try Rabbi Yose ben Kisma's declaration about living in a place of Torah, from the same chapter in Avot.

Best of all, if you count with your family - you'll never forget Sefirah, the one whose turn it is to color will certainly remember!

		
עריכת שפתים	שמיעת האוזן	בתלמוד

כל דכפין

Pesach Hospitality

Every Jewish holiday has its themes, ideas that are emphasized at a specific time in the calendar but are in fact relevant throughout the entire year. The call to repentance is sounded on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, but surely refraining from sin is encouraged at any time. Shavuot commemorates the receiving of the Torah. Nevertheless, Jews study Torah every single day. Hospitality is an age old Jewish practice, yet it only finds formal expression on Pesach. At the beginning of the seder we read these sentences. What place does this invitation have at the Pesach seder?

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים. כל דכפין ייתי
 ויכל, כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח. השתא הכא לשנה הבאה בארעא
 דישראל, השתא עבדי לשנה הבאה בני חורין.

This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are in need come and observe the Pesach. This year we are here - next year in land of Israel. This year we are slaves - next year we'll be free men.

On Sukkot, when the family is all seated comfortably in the Sukkah, we don't open the door and declare that anyone without their own booth can enter ours. On Rosh HaShanah, as the holiday begins we do not state "We're about to dip our apples into honey- whoever can't afford this treat can come on in!" And at no Shabbat meal do we officially invite those who might be alone to join us at our table. What is the particular connection between the holiday of Pesach and the generosity of hospitality?

Here is a statement about hospitality appearing in the Gemara, which appears to be the source of the Haggadah's invitation but which does not make any reference to our holiday.

תענית כ: כי הוה (רב הונא) כרך ריפתא הוה פתח לבביה ואמר:
 "כל מאן דצריך ליתי וליכול!"

When he (Rav Huna) had a meal, he would open his door wide and declare, "Whoever is in need let him come and eat."

I will suggest three answers to our question. The first one explains that Pesach is a celebration of freedom and luxury. The idea is explored by Rav Soloveitchik of the 20th century.

ר' יוסף דוב הלוי סאלאווייציק מהגדה של פסח : שיח הגרי"ד יש לעיין למה מתחילים את ההגדה בהא לחמא עניא העוסקת בהכנסת אורחים דזה ודאי דמצות הכנסת אורחים מצוה גדולה היא אבל לכאורה אין לה ענין להגדה... ונראה לומר דהנה עבד אינו יכול להכניס אורחים דהא קי"ל (פסחים פ"ח:) מה שקנה העבד קנה רבו, ואין לעבד נכסים וגם אין לו בית, ולכן מתחילים את ההגדה בהכנסת אורחים ואומרים כל דכפין ייתי ויכול דזהו דרך חירות, להראות שאין אנו עבדים אלא בני חורין, שאנו מכניסים אורחים.

We should consider why we start the Haggadah with "This is the bread of affliction" which deals with hospitality. After all, the mitzvah of hospitality is very great but does not appear to have any connection to the Haggadah... We might say that a slave cannot host guests as the Talmud establishes (Pesachim 88b): whatever a slave acquires belongs to his master. A slave has no possessions or even a house. We therefore begin the Haggadah by inviting guests to illustrate that we are not slaves but free men who can welcome guests.

We could add that a slave is too poor to share his meager meals with others. We however who are free have plenty of wealth to spread around. A second approach to this question relates to the Biblical way of celebrating this holiday which was to bring a special sacrifice and to partake of its meat. This ritual was known as "Korban Pesach" - the Pesach sacrifice, and all Jews were required to participate in this holiday meal which was the main part of the Pesach celebration. In fact, the Torah goes so far as to say that he who does not join in this mitzvah will be "cut off" from the nation (Bemidbar 9:13). This emphasis is due to the fact that the holiday of Pesach is critical to Jewish identity as it marks the start of Israel's relationship to God. People who neglect this mitzvah are separating themselves from the nation. Perhaps the desire to see all members of Israel included in the mitzvah of Korban Pesach, led to the invitation for anybody without a place to come commemorate the salvation with other Jews.

A third answer to the presence of hospitality addresses a major theme of this holiday. The Torah refers to the exodus from Egypt time and again when warning Israel not to take advantage of the foreigner. Here are two of these statements.

שמות כב: כ וגר ל א תונה ול א תלחצנו פי גרים הייתם בארץ
מצרים :

You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

שמות כג: ט וגר לא תלחץ ואתם ידעתם את נפש הגר כי גרים
הייתם בארץ מצרים :

You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

With these instructions the Torah is telling us more than simply reminding us of the value of empathy - be nice because you would have appreciated a little kindness when you were in Egypt. The Torah is teaching us to be God-like: God stood up for Israel in the face of Egyptian oppression, similarly - you take care of the disadvantaged. Make sure not to abuse the weak. This is connected to a broader theme within Judaism: human beings should learn morality from the way that God interacts with the world, and imitate Him. Imitatio dei is the classical term for this.

סוטה יד. אמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא, מאי דכתיב: (דברים יג)
אחרי ה' אלקיכם תלכו? וכי אפשר לו לאדם להלך אחר שכינה?
והלא כבר נאמר: (דברים ד) כי ה' אלקיך אש אוכלה הוא! אלא
להלך אחר מדותיו של הקב"ה, מה הוא מלביש ערומים, דכתיב:
(בראשית ג) ויעש ה' אלקים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם,
אף אתה הלבש ערומים; הקב"ה ביקר חולים, דכתיב: (בראשית
יח) וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא, אף אתה בקר חולים; הקב"ה
ניחם אבלים, דכתיב: (בראשית כה) ויהי אחרי מות אברהם ויברך
אלקים את יצחק בנו, אף אתה נחם אבלים; הקב"ה קבר מתים,
דכתיב: (דברים לד) ויקבר אותו בגיא, אף אתה קבור מתים.

Rabbi Hama son Rav Hanina said: What does the text mean by "You shall walk after the Lord your God?"(Devarim 13:5) Is it, then possible for a human being to walk after the Shechinah; for has it not been said "For the Lord your God is a devouring fire?" (Devarim 4:24) But the meaning is to walk after the attributes of the Holy One blessed be He. As He clothes the naked, for it is written "And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them" (Bereishit 3:21) so do you also clothe the naked. The Holy One blessed be He visited the sick, for it is written, "And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre" (Bereishit 18:1) so do you also visit the sick. The Holy One blessed be He, comforted mourners, for it is written, "And it

came to pass after the death of Avraham, that God blessed Yitzchak his son" (Bereishit 25:11), so do you also comfort mourners. The Holy One blessed be He, buried the dead, for it is written, "And he buried him in the valley" (Devarim 34:6), so you also bury the dead.

The Egyptian experience teaches us that God looks after the under-dog, so on the holiday commemorating those events we invite people who may be lacking means or opportunity to have their own seder.

All three approaches to the question of hospitality on Pesach contribute to the overall messages of the holiday: as free men we can afford to have guests; every Jewish household should make sure that no lonely person is left out of this important ceremony; being God-like means providing for the people who might not have their own place to celebrate Pesach. Yet what emerges from this analysis is that the theme of hospitality provides meaning exclusively for the host and not for the guest. While the host is giving and imitating God, the guest is receiving and not being God-like at all. Does Pesach hold an equally important message for the takers?

Indeed it does: the message of gratitude. A substantial part of the Pesach Haggadah is concerned with thanking God for the grace He extended to our ancestors in Egypt. From the early part of the seder when we declare "Had God not brought our fathers out of Egypt, we would still be subjects there", to "Blessed is He who keeps His promise to Israel" and the blessing before the second cup of wine: "It is our duty to thank, to praise, to pay tribute, to glorify, to exalt, to acclaim, to bless, to esteem, and to honor the one who did all these miracles for our fathers and for us," the Haggadah provides a lesson in saying thank-you. The songs of 'Dayeinu' and 'Hallel' contribute to the demand that we not take for granted God's salvation of the Jews.

There is another remarkable example of gratitude connected to the Pesach story which appears in Sefer Devarim (Deuteronomy).

דברים כג: ח לא תתעב אדמי כי אחיך הוא לא תתעב מצרי כי גר
היית בארצו :

You shall not abhor the Edomite for he is your brother; you shall not abhor an Egyptian because you were strangers in his land.

What is the Torah talking about here? Jewish culture spends an inordinate amount of time recalling the slavery in Egypt. We mention the redemption every single day in morning prayers, in the Kiddush of Shabbat and holidays, and of course on the Pesach holiday. The Egyptians enslaved Israel for over 200 years - of course we were

strangers in their land! Why is this a reason not to hate them? Rashi, the 11th century commentator, explains:

מצרי לא תתעב רש"י (ר' שלמה בן יצחק מאה ה' 11) לדברים כג: ח
מכל וכל, אף על פי שזרקו זכוריהם ליאור. מה טעם, שהיו לכם
אכסניא בשעת הדחק.

You shall not abhor the Egyptian at all even though they cast your male infants into the Nile. What is the reason? For they were your hosts in a time of need.

Rashi is referring to the story of Ya'akov and Yosef which comprises the last third of Sefer Bereishit. Due to a famine in the land of Canaan, the entire family of Ya'akov descended to Egypt and were given refuge there. What the Torah is telling us here is nothing short of astounding - despite the fact that the Egyptians oppressed Israel, beat and killed them, we must not forget that they were also hospitable to us at one point. And clearly, if we must be grateful to the Egyptians in spite of their later behavior, gratitude towards other less abusive people, and certainly towards God, should be more forthcoming. This is the message for the guest on Pesach, one who might view himself as a taker: saying thank-you is not an easy task, but recognizing the good somebody does is no less important than actually doing that good.

Finally, here are some words of advice from the Gemara about being a guest.

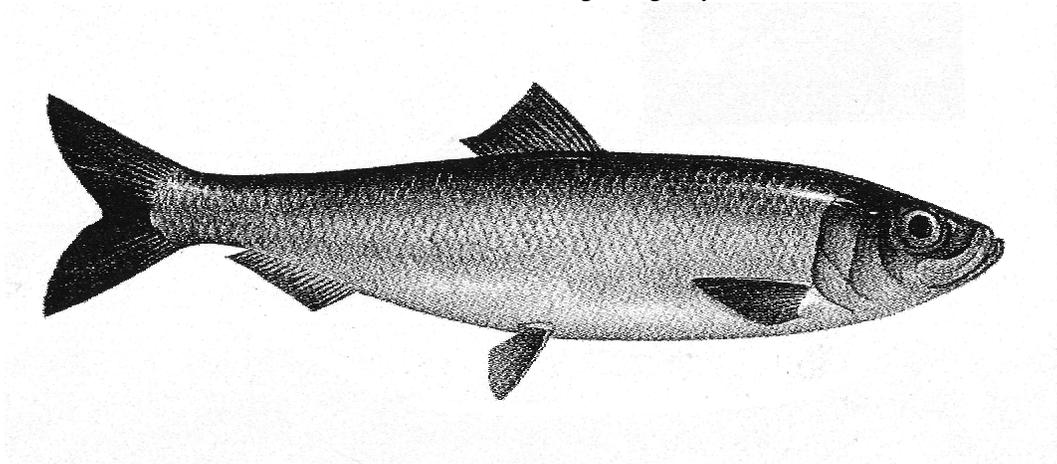
ברכות נח. אורח טוב מהו אומר - כמה טרחות טרח בעל הבית
בשבילי, כמה בשר הביא לפני, כמה יין הביא לפני, כמה גלוסקאות
הביא לפני, וכל מה שטרח - לא טרח אלא בשבילי. אבל אורח רע
מהו אומר - מה טורח טרח בעל הבית זה? פת אחת אכלתי, חתיכה
אחת אכלתי, כוס אחד שתיתי, כל טורח שטרח בעל הבית זה - לא
טרח אלא בשביל אשתו ובניו.

What does a good guest say? "How much trouble my host has taken for me! How much meat he has set before me! How much wine he has set before me! How many cakes he has set before me! And all the trouble he has taken was only for my sake!" But what does a bad guest say? "How much after all has my host put himself out? I have eaten one piece of bread, I have eaten one slice of meat, I have drunk one cup of wine! All the trouble which my host has taken was only for the sake of his wife and his children!"

People say that it is harder to receive than to give and that may be so, but Pesach teaches that whatever side one finds oneself on, the holiday has a poignant message to offer.

Red Sea Split

The most dramatic detail of the Pesach story is of course, the splitting of Yam Suf (the Red Sea). You can act this out in your house with minimal preparation. The best place to recreate the splitting of the sea is in a narrow area like a stairway or a corridor (a doorway will work too). At one end of this space hang the sea in a way that it can be moved aside for your Israelites to pass through. Tie a string across the space and hang a blue tablecloth, bed sheet or long flowing scarves on the string. Use hooks or safety pins so that the cloth can be pulled aside easily. Before you hang it up, decorate your blue background with pictures of fish and other sea animals. Place the sea-scape at the end of the hall or at the top of the stairs (not the bottom- you'll want to descend into the sea) and cover the walls with more fish, octopi, toy boats or whatever you happen to have in the house that seems sea or beach-like. If you're not artistic, download pictures of fish from the internet. Here's a herring to get you started.



Really do it up- hang things from the ceiling: one year I blew up a bunch of blue balloons and drew fish on them. Cover light bulbs with blue plastic to get an eerie effect. We got lucky years ago and found a shower curtain with a sea scene on it, so we hang that at the top of our stairs.

Position your family at the near end of the sea and talk about ים סוף (the Red Sea). Why does God create such a miracle for B'nei Yisrael - wouldn't it have been easier simply to bring boats to get them across the water? Why doesn't God pick up the nation and place them on the other shore to get them away from the Egyptians, that way He wouldn't have to drown them? Read the midrash about the angels singing and discuss its philosophical implications- don't we sing and dance on Purim and celebrate the downfall of Haman? What does the verse from Mishlei (Proverbs) mean about not rejoicing when an enemy suffers?

ילקוט שמעוני תורה פרשת בשלח רמז רלג אמר רבי שמואל בר
נחמני מאי דכתיב ולא קרב זה אל זה כל הלילה בקשו מלאכי השרת
לומר שירה לפני הקב"ה אמר להם הקב"ה מעשה ידי טובעים בים
ואתם אומרים שירה לפני :

משלי כד : יז בנפל אויבך אל תשמח ובפשלו אל יגל לבך :



Pull the sea aside and enter the sea. My oldest son always complains that our sea is inaccurate because the water parted in the middle and our sea all goes to one side, more like Joshua splitting the Jordan. So, if you want to be more accurate - hang your sea in two parts and go between them. When you're in the sea sing the two lines of Dayeinu relating to the experience. What does the song mean that it would have been enough had God split the sea but hadn't taken the nation through on dry land? What would have been the point of that? Sing and discuss (שירת הים Song of the Sea).

Take your family through the sea and have them discover gold and other treasures that have washed up on the opposite shore from the Egyptian cavalry. Leave the fish decorations up for the whole holiday - why not?



Pesach Profiles: Passover Personalities Plays

To liven up the seder try putting on a play. I prefer to work out a script before hand, but improvisation also has its merits. You can decide whether to employ your children as actors or to let them be members of the audience, if you feel they'll be too self conscious to perform. Recognize that kids will pay much greater attention to a play or a puppet show than to the sounds of adults reading from a Haggadah. This is a good opportunity to press your adult guests into service. Speak with them before the seder about participating and show them their lines - the number and intensity of rehearsals is up to you. Provide costumes and props. Have fun. The two scenes I present here involved four guests who were at last year's seder - luckily, they were all game (one of them affected a Yiddish accent for his role). At the end of each scene I involved the children by inviting them to interact with the characters.

Where Are They Now?

Pesach Profiles

by Jonathan Mishkin

Act I: Shifra and Puah. Set up your living room like a television studio talk show: desk and chair for the host, two chairs for your guests, glasses of water on a low table, fake cameras in the corners.

Douglas: Hello, good evening and welcome to the show "Where Are They Now?" I'm your host Moishe Douglas and we're devoting tonight's show to Pesach people. These are people you read about in the **הומש** who participated in the story of **יציאת מצרים** years ago in some small way but are now largely neglected. Well, we intend to find out "Where Are They Now" and in the process find out a little inside information on their role in Jewish history. So now, please welcome our first guests: **שפרה** and **פועה**.

שפרה: Hello, Moishe

פועה: Yes, hello.

Douglas: **שפרה**, **פועה** we thank you for joining us on our show. Why don't we begin by discussing your connection to the Pesach story?

שפרה: Well, you see, פועה and I were midwives in גושן, that's in Egypt you know.

Douglas: Midwives?

שפרה: Yes, you know, we helped women to have babies.

פועה: This is in the days before major hospitals, no anesthetics, no epidurals.

Douglas: And what exactly was your job?

פועה: Mainly to yell "Push!" I can yell "Push" in three different languages.

Douglas: Go on.

שפרה: Well, when we started our career, it was pretty easy going. Sure, we'd get called out in the middle of the night, or wherever we'd happen to be. One time I was at a play - Anthony and Cleopatra - and the usher came up in the middle of the first act and told me there was a nervous husband in the lobby.

פועה: But we didn't mind, you know. Really it was the best possible job you could have.

Douglas: Really? What made it so special?

פועה: Every day, we witnessed the miracle of childbirth. Every day we helped little babies into the world and taught them to breathe their first breath. Can you think of anything more wonderful than that?

שפרה: But the good times didn't last long.

Douglas: How so?

שפרה: One day we came to work and there was a notice that the king wanted to see us at the palace.

פועה: We were very nervous, you know, because we had never been to the Egyptian side of town before.

Douglas: What do you mean?

שפרה: Well, we were only midwives for the Jewish women and not for the Egyptian women. It was a whole union thing. We got lower wages of course, because the Jewish women were slaves and they didn't have a lot of money to pay us.

פועה: Also, we were trained differently. For example, when our women were in pain, we helped them pray to אלהים, the true God of אברהם, יצחק and יעקב. Whereas the Egyptian women prayed to Ra or Ishtar or somebody. And of course, I would never be much use to Egyptian women.

Douglas: Why's that?

פועה: Because I don't know how to say "Push" in hieroglyphic.

Douglas: Let's get back to the story. Why did פרעה want to see you?

שפרה: He was a very bad man, that פרעה. I knew it was going to be trouble as soon as we entered the room. He had a mustache which he kept twirling. Then he commands us to kneel before him, which we did, and he says in a big booming voice (I think he was acting): "I am now commanding you something very important which is for the benefit of the state!"

פועה: We weren't stupid. We knew that that meant, for his benefit, and not for ours or our people.

שפרה: Right, so he tells us that every time we help a Jewish woman have a baby, we have to kill the baby if it's a boy, and let the child live if it's a girl. Can you imagine such a thing?

פועה: He was really a fool, you know, because here he's talking to two women whose whole lives are the celebration of life and he's telling us to now become killers.

שפרה: Yeah, if he was smart he would have sent some of his soldiers to accompany us every time we went to a home birth (of course in those days there was only home births) and to order them to kill the boys.

פועה: I know why he didn't do that.

שפרה: You do?

פועה: Sure, it's because men always faint if they're in the same room as a woman giving birth.

Douglas: What did you tell פרעה ?

שפרה: What could we tell him? We nodded dumbly and said we would do whatever he said.

פועה: It's okay to lie in such a circumstance.

Douglas: But what did you actually do?

פועה: Nothing. We continued to do our jobs the same way as before. We were a little more cautious. Sometimes when we went to do a delivery we wore disguises. I used to dress up like **שר האופים** - you know, with baskets on my head.

Douglas: Did you ever get caught?

שפרה: I'll tell you one terrible story that happened when I was on duty. I got called late one night to help a woman with her baby. I knew this woman, already - she'd already had four children that I'd delivered - all girls. I was somewhat conflicted when I came up to their hut. On the one hand, I wanted them to have a boy, you know - to carry on the family name; but on the other hand, I knew that baby boys were in great danger. Sure enough it was a little baby boy. And it was the strangest thing - this baby didn't cry at all when he was born - just looked straight up at me when I was cleaning him off. At first I checked to make sure he was breathing OK, and he was, and of course I knew that he wasn't really looking at me. But it was the lack of crying that I didn't understand. I handed the baby to his father, a man with an unusual name - **אליועני** which means "God is my eyes" and the father was so happy to have a son. Just then the door burst open and two of **פרעה**'s storm troopers burst in. The mother started screaming and **אליועני** did, I guess, the first thing that came into his head - he jumped up on the table, holding the baby close to his chest. One of the soldiers reached down and grabbed the leg of the table and flipped it over. **אליועני** fell down and that tiny baby landed on the floor. The other soldier picked it up like a doll and they left. The parents never saw the child again. And you know something - during the whole time, that baby (who never got a name) didn't cry. Not once.

Douglas: My goodness, that is one horrible story. But tell me something: how did the soldiers know there was a new baby in the house if didn't cry?

שפרה: [pause] This is something that has haunted me all of these years. I keep asking myself if perhaps they followed me from my house because they knew that usually when I went out - it was to help a mother.

פועה: No, dear - you can't blame yourself. We all know who the evil ones were and who the good ones were.

שפרה: We were good, weren't we?

פועה: Are you kidding, we were the best!

Douglas: Well, I'm sure that many Jewish boys owe their lives to you two.

פועה: Yes, I don't like to brag. But every year we have a reunion of all the boys I saved. Last year there were 316 boys - well, they're not boys anymore - they're men. And they came with their wives and their children and many of them had grandchildren and even great-grandchildren. One of my boys even brought his pet parrot, although I can't take credit for his life. So you see, we are responsible for thousands and thousands of Jewish lives.

שפרה: For all the thousands of Jewish lives that פרעה took, we gave back thousands to the Jewish people.

Douglas: I'm not surprised that all your boys keep in touch with you. Just one more question before we go to a commercial break. What are you two women doing now?

שפרה: Well, I'm retired. So mostly I crochet, and recently I've gotten into Sudoku.

Douglas: And how about you, פועה, are you still a midwife?

פועה: No, I gave that up years ago and went to medical school. After seven years of training and thousands of dollars in medical school costs, I'm now an obstetrician.

Douglas: Ladies, I thank you very much for being on our show. But before we say goodbye - are there any questions for our guests from the studio audience?

Act II: Amram and Yocheved

Douglas: Welcome back to the show. We'd like to introduce you to our next guests. You know sometimes, a person's fame is derived not from anything that he has done in his life, but because he's related to somebody famous. For example, nobody knows who "נון" is, but if you say, "I'd like you to meet נון, he's יהושע's father" then it becomes clear. Well, the two people who are coming out now are somewhat like that. They're a married couple who are best known as somebody's parents. Please, give a warm "Where Are They Now?" welcome to עמרם and יוכבד.

עמרם : Thank-you, thank-you very much.

יוכבד : We're certainly overjoyed to be here.

עמרם : Yeah, you know, we don't get a lot of attention, ourselves. It's always the kids that people want to talk to.

יוכבד : Don't get us wrong, we're very proud of our kids: **משה**, **אהרן** and **מרים**. It's just that whenever a reporter comes by the house or the phone rings, it's always for one of the kids.

עמרם : It's nice to get a little attention of our own, that's all we're saying.

יוכבד: You know, Moishe - Oh! Moishe! Just like my boy! He was the first one to have that name, you know. Anyway, it's no big universal secret that Jewish mothers are proud of their kids. My three could have turned out to be a butcher, a baker and a candle stick maker and that would have been fine with me. The fact that my **משה** spent 40 years talking with God, and my **אהרן** was the **כהן גדול** and my **מרים** - really a lovely girl, you know- a prophetess and a musician. I've been the envy of Jewish mothers everywhere. But, still, I try to be humble.

עמרם : Let me tell you something about raising kids. You got kids, Moishe?
Douglas: Uh, yes, I have kids.

עמרם : Let me tell you something about raising kids. It's all about discipline. You want your kids to turn out good? - You got to make sure they behave, do their homework on time, clean up after themselves. Take my boy **משה**, for example - do you think he would have been able to keep up with all the dictation from God and all the studying if he hadn't learned discipline in the home?

Douglas: Well surely **משה** left home when he was only 3 months old?!

עמרם : Even as a baby, a boy has to be taught - go to sleep on time, don't cry too much. But that's not even the point here. See, **משה** wasn't in our house much, it's true - but during his formative years he was under the tutelage of his brother **אהרן** - and **אהרן**, that was a son who learned well at his father's knee.

Douglas: Yes, why don't we talk about **אהרן** for a minute? Is it true that he was a pacifist, always trying to avoid a fight?

יוכבד : Oh, yes that's quite true. In fact, dear - do you mind if I tell them about THE fight that we had?

עמרם : Oh, why not?

יוכבד : Well, you all know about how I put משה in the little תיבה and put him in the river. But nobody knows about the quarrels עמרם and I had over doing that.

Douglas: I don't understand... עמרם - you're not mentioned anywhere in the story about the תיבה?

עמרם : That's right! Because I didn't want any part of it. I was opposed to the whole thing. It was daft, I tell you! Daft!

יוכבד : It's three thousand years later, and he still can't admit that he was wrong. Go ahead, tell them what you wanted to do.

עמרם : So, you all know the beginning of the story - משה was just a baby then. Of course, we didn't call him משה - that was the name that בת פרעה gave him.

Douglas: What did you call him?

יוכבד : We called him Yekutiel. Anyway, after פרעה's decree came out ordering all new born boys to be thrown into the river I knew what we had to do. We had to pass him off as an Egyptian baby in order to save his life. If the soldiers thought he was Egyptian, they wouldn't kill him. I wanted to sneak over to the Egyptian neighborhood late one night and leave him in their orphanage. Some nice Egyptian couple would adopt him and he would at least live a life of privilege.

עמרם : It would have been better to teach him how to swim! That way - when they threw him into the Nile he would have been OK - not like making him a cursed Egyptian.

Douglas: I'm not sure I understand - עמרם, why exactly were you against יוכבד's plan to save משה's life?

עמרם : Are you serious? Look, do I have to spell it out for you? We Jews are a holy nation! The descendants of prophets - אברהם, יצחק and יעקב aren't just names to us you know - these are people who walked with God, who talked with God. We have a holy mission in this world - to teach everybody that there is just one God and He cares about us and what we do here on earth. Now how can you take a holy Jewish baby and take all that away from him? And just let those Egyptians turn him into a polytheist - they believe the river is a god, the sun is a god, they probably believe a chocolate chip cookie is a god! It's criminal!

Douglas: What then was your plan to save משה?

יוכבד: He wanted to fight them.

Douglas: To fight them? To fight whom?

יוכבד : He wanted to fight the Egyptian soldiers.

Douglas: All of them?

עמרם : No, not all of them! Just the ones who came to the house. I'd seen too many Jews just give in to the Egyptians, practically give up their kids without a peep. Well, I stockpiled a whole lot of weapons - swords, knives, rocks, and I got my brothers **חברון** and **עזיאל** to help me too (**יצהר** was too sickly). Bring 'em on, I said - let them try to take my son - I'd show them a thing or two about Jewish pride.

יוכבד : Well, naturally, I couldn't allow this kind of thing. I had two other kids to think of also. And I knew that if **עמרם** succeeded in killing a few Egyptians, they'd just send others and then we'd really get it. We fought and fought over the matter. And then one night as we were arguing, little **אהרן**, all of three years old says "**אבא**, Mommy - I have an idea - why don't we compromise? I know a way that we can hide baby Yekutiel and still keep him from the Egyptians." See, he came up with the whole **תיבה** idea - little **אהרן** figured out how to save my son.

עמרם : Of course, the boy still ended up being raised an Egyptian - by the top Egyptian family, no less!

יוכבד : Oh, hush! He turned out alright - wouldn't you say? Naturally, our daughter **מרים** wanted to participate too, so we thought of a job for her to do. All in all, it was a real family experience.

עמרם : It was the scariest thing that ever happened to us, is what it was!

יוכבד : What about being chased by the Egyptian army?

עמרם : Yeah, that was scary too. But like I said before, it all boils down to discipline. I taught **אהרן** to think methodically and rationally, like that. In a way, you could say that the **תיבה** plan was kind of my idea...

יוכבד : Sure it was, dear... we'll let you have all the credit.

Douglas: Well, folks this certainly has been quite enlightening. But before we go, let's just open this up to the audience and see if there are any questions for our guests.