



Haggadah Shel Pesach: The Fifth Son - Worksheet

Four seems to be the “magic” number of the *Seder* night. We have four questions, four glasses of wine, four sons, and four expressions of redemption. In this lesson, we will see that “five” is the real magic number of the *Seder* night. We will discover the fifth question, the person identified with the fifth glass of wine, the fifth expression of redemption, and ask the identity of the fifth son. We will then examine the theme of five to understand why the fifth was left out and examine whether it should be re-inserted.

Therefore, your objectives for this session are to:

- a) Find out what the fifth question is.
- b) Find out what happened to the fifth glass of wine.
- c) Find out the fifth expression of redemption.
- d) Postulate as to who the fifth son might be.
- e) Examine the common theme in all these categories.
- f) Question whether the fifth category should be inserted.

Complete the following questions:

1. The Gemara in [Messechet Pesachim 117b](#) records: “Hallel Hagadol is said on the fourth (glass of wine)...” The Vilna Shas, which was printed around 1880 and based on the Bomberg printing of 1530, writes: “The text should say ‘fourth (glass)’ and not the ‘fifth (glass)’.”

a) What conclusion can we draw from Tosaphot’s statement?

b) Why do you think Tosaphot insists that the Talmud editions that write “fourth” are correct? Explain your answer.



2. Nevertheless, Rambam writes in [Hilkhot Chametz U'Matsah Chapter 8](#): "One should pour a fifth glass and recite on it 'Hallel Hagadol'... but this glass is not obligatory (to drink) like the (other) four glasses."

a) Explain the conclusions that we can draw from Rambam's statement.

b) Explain the questions that arise from Rambam's ruling.

3. *Chazal* instituted the four glasses of wine because of the four expressions that God used to describe how He would redeem us.

Read the text below and highlight the appropriate expressions:

[Shemot 6:6-8](#): "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel: I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments; and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning which I lifted up My hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for a heritage: I am the LORD."

4. Write the expressions below, in both Hebrew and English:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____



5. There are five expressions of redemption. How does the fifth expression differ from the other four? Why do you think the fifth language of redemption does not correspond to drinking a fifth cup? Explain your answers.

6. Using this information, explain Rambam's ruling about the fifth cup.

7. Examine the following *mishnah* ([Pesachim 10:4](#)): "We begin with the negative points and end with the positive. We say *derashot* (analyze and explain)—from 'An Aramite tried to kill my father' ([Devarim 26:5](#))—until the end of the *parasha*." Explain what we are meant to do on *Seder* night according to this *mishnah*.

8. Examine [Devarim 26:5](#).

a) Where does the *parasha* end?

b) Which verses do we say *derashot* about on the *Seder* night? Use a [Haggadah](#) for reference.

c) What is the content of the verses that we do not say *derashot* about? Explain.



9. Read the following Mishna (ibid.) and answer the question and answer the question below:

“Why is night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we eat *chametz* and matzah. On this night we only eat matzah. On all other nights, we eat other vegetables, on this night we eat maror? On all other nights, we eat roasted, fried cooked, and boiled meat, on this night we only eat roasted meat. On all other nights, we dip (our food) once, and on this night twice.”

a) Which question do we not ask anymore?

b) Why do you think this is the case? Explain your answer.

c) Which question have we “added” so that there are still four questions? Why do you think the *Chazal* composed that question specifically?

d) How do you think that this change connects to the “missing” fifth cup?

e) In the time of the third *Beit Hamikdash*, do you think that the text of the *Haggadah* will change back to the original in the *Mishnah*, or will actually have five questions? Explain your opinion.

10. We have seen that “five” was intended to be the key number of the original *Haggadah*, but because of the exile from the Land of Israel, the fifth component of each point was removed. If that is the case:



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a) Since there is somewhat of a tension between fours and fives in the *Haggadah*, why do you think there are only four “sons”? Should there be a fifth? Where is that child?

b) Do you think that today, with the re-establishment of the State of Israel, we should actually drink the fifth glass of wine? Explain your answer.

11) If you were to add a fifth son, who/what would that be? Explain your reasoning.
