

## Welcoming Klal Israel, Being Jewishly Warm and Relevant on Passover and on all other days

We traditionally speak at our Seder table about four sons: the wise, the wicked, the simple, and the one who does not know how to ask. Orthodox Jews customarily speak also of a fifth conspicuous Jewish child who has no interest in Yiddishkeit, and is thus absent from the Seder Service. The Lubavitcher Rebbe calls upon us Jews to bring forth this fifth child “for no Jewish child should be forgotten and given up.”

As progressive Jews, we, at Temple Beth David, value those Hasidic words, and extend upon them. Rabbi Alan Lachtman, teaches us to consider this fifth absent child, as symbolizing the absent children of *klal Israel*. This child is therefore also the sixth, seventh, and thousandth child, who has yet to find meaning in our customs, and join us.

Who is that 1000<sup>th</sup> child of klal Israel who is humbly celebrated at our Seder table? It is that child who chooses to walk through our open doors, not only on Passover, but throughout our engagement in Jewish customs and rituals. Male or Female, short or tall, Jew by choice, or Jew through legacy, every child, upon entering our divine space, to us, is a sacred Jew.

Why then should we extend our arms to klal Israel?

Rabbi Lachtman continues to supplement upon the Orthodox endeavor. Bringing that child to the seder table, and welcoming him to comfortably dine *bein yoshvim u ben mesubin* (sitting in a reclining position), complies only partially with our Judaic responsibilities. Teaching that child to live a *Jewishly Warm and Relevant* Life, before, during, and after the Seder’s late night hours will ensure that child will return to the Seder table, *Jewishly*. That is because Judaism does not start, end, or continue upon the night of the Seder. Not the first, nor the second. To us, Judaism is foremost the reaching out to those who need us, feeding them, clothing them, or providing them comfort in loneliness. That, to us, is the celebration of Passover’s liberation to freedom.

Wishing you, and your klal Israel a *Jewishly Warm and Relevant* season of Pessach that will enrich your family and our community,

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