

A Unified People

We start off the *Seder* night with two intriguing statements. All who are hungry come and eat. All who are needy come and make *Pesach* with us. An obvious question arises. At this point in time, after all the shopping is done and the food is prepared, are we really inviting people into our homes? Are we being sincere about this invitation? Furthermore, what does this have to do with the story of our exodus from Egypt that these statements should be at the beginning of the *Haggadah*?

These statements set the tone for the evening. Perhaps, we are not actually inviting people to be our guests, but instead we are making a declaration that every Jew should feel comfortable with any Jew sitting at one's *Seder* table. Since the *Seder* night is the event that unified us as an eternal nation, to recognize and mark this significance the *Seder* begins with these statements. As we look forward to the day when there will be a final redemption from this long and bitter exile, we need to understand the vehicle that will lead us there. We must realize the necessity of being a unified people who respect one another and one's differences.

Interestingly enough, if we take a close look at the part of the *Haggadah* that discusses the four sons, it is obvious that although each one is very different from the other, they are all sitting around the same table together when asking their questions. Let us all take this message to heart, and as we sit at our individual Seders with our families, stress the importance of respecting each other to achieve our final redemption.