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Please share at your Passover Seder

Zecher L'yetziat Mitzrayim – Lessons of Leaving Egypt

Tonight is *leil shimurim*-A night of watching. On this night our ancient ancestors watched for the sign that the liberation from Egypt was about to take place. With that moment of liberation, our ancestors began the process of transforming the oppression of the Egyptian taskmasters into the dignity which comes through the gift of freedom.

Until this very day, we infuse that moment of transformation, zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim, into all we do, with the hope to see its fulfillment fully achieved in our generation. Indeed each and every Shabbat we recall with pride the responsibility that comes from remembering the Exodus from Egypt and the meaning of this moment. We not only remember the Exodus from Egypt, we accept the imperative which it demands.

Some will believe they have fulfilled their obligation by telling the story, drinking four glasses of wine, eating matza and concluding the seder with the words, "Next Year in Jerusalem." But *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim* means that the seder does not end when we close the Haggadah. For us, the test of Pesach is whether or not we internalize the meaning of *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim* and understand the demands it places upon us. Tonight, and every tomorrow, we are enjoined to seek a world where we work to transform oppression into liberation and infuse every human being with the inherent dignity with which we are to live, *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim*.

Three times the Torah tells us not to boil a kid in its mother's milk. Six times we are told to cleanse our homes of hametz, and to eat matza on Pesach. Yet, thirty-six times the Torah reminds us to protect the "stranger for we were once strangers in a strange land." Thirty-six times the Torah demands we understand that our story is not over as long as anyone still faces the oppression which we once tasted, which we once felt, which we once knew, zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim.

While our homes are filled with the symbolic foods of our tradition, that alone does not satisfy the demands of our tradition. We must be able to proclaim that we remember the Exodus from Egypt and with its remembrance commit ourselves to seek its fulfillment, *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim*.

We will work to seek a Jewish world that is as concerned about a food worker's safety as it is about the smoothness of a cow's lung, zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim.

We will seek a Jewish world where in the manufacturing of kosher food, exemplary business practices define the culture of the company which produces it, *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim*.

Zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim means that we seek a Jewish world where in the production of kosher food, environmental stewardship is practiced and is celebrated.

From this day forward the tables at which we eat will be tables where both the ritual rigor and ethical edicts of our tradition will be present in the food which we consume, *zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim*.

The Magen Tzedek represents the means by which we come to understand that the telling of the story of leaving Egypt, zecher l'yetziat mitzrayim, can be realized each and every day by the food which we eat and the commitments which we make. We will work to ensure that kosher food producers avail themselves of its standards, and that the food which we eat meets the ritual and ethical demands of our tradition.

Rabbi Morris Allen

Rabbi Paul Drazen

Pesach 5772



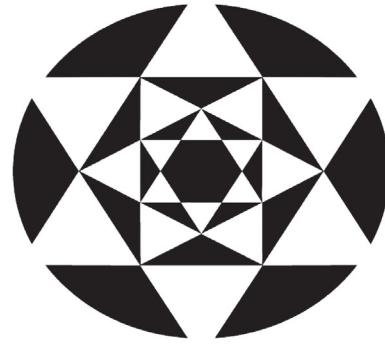
workers



animals



earth



MAGEN TZEDEK

An Ethical Certification for Kosher Food

The much anticipated Magen Tzedek Certification program is officially
“Open for Business”

Manufacturers of kosher foods can now show that their products meet or exceed industry best practices for workers rights, animal welfare, corporate transparency and environmental impact by qualifying for the Magen Tzedek Shield of Justice seal.

Mission

The mission of the Magen Tzedek Commission is to bring the Jewish commitment to ethics and social justice directly into the marketplace. The Commission’s seal of approval will help assure consumers that kosher food products were produced in keeping with the highest possible Jewish ethical values and ideals for social justice.

The Standard

Developed by the Magen Tzedek Commission, the cornerstone of the program is the Magen Tzedek Standard, a proprietary set of principles that details the criteria a food manufacturer must meet to achieve certification. The Standard and application for certification are available at www.magentzedek.org



TZEDEK

Kashrut. Justice. Judaism.

Join the conversation.

Brand Enhancement

The Magen Tzedek seal complements traditional kosher seals to enhance a brand’s reputation. The seal can be placed on a wide range of grocery products including meat/poultry, dairy, dry grocery, canned/bottled goods, refrigerated/frozen products and baked goods.

If Not Now, When?

An ever-increasing number of food producers are adding socially responsible practices to help differentiate their brands with measurable results. Consumer satisfaction now embraces intangible benefits beyond intrinsic values. Magen Tzedek synthesizes the aspirations of a burgeoning international movement for sustainable, responsible consumption and promotes increased sensitivity to the vast and complex web of global relationships that bring food to our tables.

To learn more and to support Magen Tzedek, go to www.magentzedek.org