



THE PASSOVER LAMB

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In Judaism, preserving life is a very important Jewish value called Pikuach Nefesh, which literally means “to save a soul.” This action is considered to be so important that it takes precedence over even observing Shabbat. While Pikuach Nefesh does not extend to animals, it is an important Jewish tenet to care for all God’s creatures, including a baby lamb named Moses!

Passover commemorates the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt after 400 years of slavery. It is celebrated during the Hebrew month of Nisan, which falls in the early spring. Referred to as *Pesach* in Hebrew, this holiday is a joyous celebration of our freedom.

Passover is a time of family togetherness, and the *seder* (in Hebrew, “order”) engages everyone around the table in a “talking feast.” Using a *hagaddah*, the text and commentary that provide the ritual’s script, Jews take part in a re-enactment of the escape from slavery. The youngest present traditionally recites the “Four Questions,” which help explain customs unique to Passover. The questions also remind us of the Jewish imperative to ask even the most difficult questions.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN READING

- In the book, Miriam found a way to save the baby lamb and celebrate Passover with her family. What would you have done if you were in Miriam’s position?
- Have you ever stopped what you were doing to help a person or an animal in need? How did it feel?
- If you were in charge of creating a “Fifth Question,” what would it be?

The Four Questions begin with one question: “Why is this night different from all other nights?” Consider creating a “My Four Questions Book” with your family, providing an opportunity for your children to create their unique interpretation for each question.

You can also choose to include in this book other ways that the holiday of Passover stands apart. Your newly created book can be a great tool to practice reading and singing each of the Four Questions for years to come. We suggest beginning a project like this early enough to not feel rushed and to use at