

OUT OF ORDER

by Rabbi Label Lam

1-Kadesh -the recitation of Kiddush. 2-Urchatz -washing the hands. 3-Karpas -eating a vegetable dipped in salt-water. 4-Yachatz -breaking of the middle Matza. 5-Maggid -the recitation of the Haggada. 6-Rachtzah -washing of the hands a second time. 7-Motzi -reciting the blessing Hamotzi. 8- Matzah -reciting of the blessing al Achilas Matzo, eating the Matza. 9-Marror -eating the bitter herbs. 10-Korech -eating a sandwich of Matza and bitter herbs. 11-Shulchan Oruch -eating the festive meal. 12-Tzafun -eating the Afikomen. 13-Barech -the recitation of Birchas HaMazon. 14-Hallel -the recitation of Hallel -songs of praise. 15-Nirtzah -our prayer that G-d accepts our service.

These are the fifteen steps of the Pesach Seder which are sung or recited aloud at the beginning of the Seder. Why do we recite the steps ahead of time? There is a very obvious pedagogical reason.

Pesach night we have a sacred obligation to relate the experience of the Exodus to each and every one of our children. We don't want this holy opportunity to relapse into an "amateur hour".

Admittedly, many of us may lack the skill and training to manage the task of teaching a wide variety of interests and intellectual capacities with the same lesson. Teaching is hard. Not everybody is up to the task. Even if we think we are, it's not always easy to be the lecturer to our own children. They are just too familiar with us and we know what that familiarity breeds- contempt if not boredom. They know all of our speeches already. So we have to do something different to grab and hold their attention. That's the challenge of the night.

Boruch HASHEM we have the Haggada, which is not less than the greatest and most successful lesson plan of all time. The sages understood the nature of the beast. A good lesson plans needs a hook- an anticipatory set and an objective.

It should employ a multitude of modalities, using many senses and in various combinations. Since every child present is presumed to be different we need a plan with differentiated instruction and accommodation for those who are just not "getting it". The Haggada has all this and more. We need the children to stay awake, so we have a raffle, of sorts in the beginning with a chance for big prizes in the end, namely the Afikomen. Most important, to keep kids awake and attentive even, is to announce in the beginning that we know where we are headed and we have signs along the way to indicate we are making progress. Nothing is more painful than an enduring a lecture of any length, if there is no pre-set time for conclusion or indicators that the end is in sight.

When settling onto a plane, the pilot always announces the schedule, the Seder, of what will unfold,

from the take-off, to the climbing to a certain height, to the showing of a movie, and serving of the meal and finally the time of arrival and the all-important port of destination. We too look forward with anticipation to arriving in or taking one giant step closer to Jerusalem by the conclusion of the Seder. We know where we are going and how we are going to get there. There will be entertainment and food and song along the way. It's not an endless journey into the unknown. The main and comforting message at the beginning is that all is in order- HaKol B'Seder.

Recently I took note of the sign on the copy machine in school. It wasn't good news. The sign read, "out of order". This time it caught my attention in a new way. When something does not work we call it "out of order". The conventional wisdom, though, is, "If it ain't broke don't fix it!" At the Pesach Seder, all we have to do is buckle in and follow the program so no-thing and no-body is **out of order**

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