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The New American Haggadah: Haggadah Shel Pesah



Synopsis

Whether at a model seder, a community seder, or a family seder, The New American Haggadah will inspire and delight participants of all ages. First developed as The New Haggadah, this Passover classic has been revised to reflect the experiences of our generation and the contributions it has made to the holiday's message of universal freedom. The New American Haggadah presents the Passover service, filtered through the richness of the American Jewish experience. The moving text and traditional Passover songs are supplemented with illuminating commentaries. Highlights include: An Ethiopian Jew's account of "Operation Moses," her own modern-day exodus from poverty and oppression, the memoir of a Union soldier celebrating Passover during the Civil War, and illustrations reflecting the diverse ways American Jews have enriched the Passover message of liberation. Includes songs by Debbie Friedman and Linda Hirschhorn. Riddles to entertain children and adults alike. Gender-sensitive language with elegant translation, transliteration of the original Hebrew text, music, and instructions for the leader combine to offer an accessible--and uniquely American--Passover seder.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Hebrew

This year, we decided to switch to a new Haggadah since we have evolved and there would be several among us at our Seder who are not Jewish. So we bought several low cost (\$10 or less) Haggadah books for examination purposes - low cost so we could buy 15 copies so everyone could

have one during the Seder. This Haggadah was the winner largely because it gets to the point of the holiday without all the confusing fluff in the old-fashioned Haggadah. Perhaps even more importantly, the translation, side stories, and original commentaries explain the holiday, its symbolism in its foods, and its overall meaning/message/relationship to the issues facing civilizations in contemporary times far more clearly and directly than any others I have ever seen. (The explanations are so good that I would say they are "brilliantly eloquent.") A nice bonus is that several key blessings are transliterated so those who don't read Hebrew can participate more fully in the Seder experience. This is a Reconstructionist Movement version Haggadah based on the efforts of several rabbis, including the Reconstructionist Movement's founder Mordecai Kaplan, and so the translation is gender neutral reflecting the Reconstructionist core view/value of gender equality in all aspects of religious rights and life. So if you are one of those Jews who insist upon the male-centric orientation of religious observance and Jewish liturgy of the more conservative Movements in Judaism, don't bother giving this Haggadah a look. The reason I did not award this Haggadah a 5 star rating is because of failures to provide comprehensive coverage rather than dissatisfaction with anything that is there. Parts of the traditional Haggadah - both in Hebrew and in English translation - are omitted completely or have been too greatly abridged for my taste and this was a disappointment because some of these parts have become traditional "fun parts" in my family's Seder ritual. (Two examples: (1) The Hallel Songs of Praise before the meal is very much shortened and some of the songs we sing are missing; (2) The Hebrew and translation about rabbinical commentary on the 10 plagues being 40-fold, 50-fold, 200-fold, and 250-fold in nature - what we in our family have lovingly referred to as the "Creative Math Part" - is omitted.) But, if you have such family traditions, these things can be added in with your own supplements. Also, I would like to see more transliteration of some of the songs after the meal - again, so more can participate. An expanded version of this Haggadah would be wonderful. I would like to see it redone with full inclusion of the traditional Hebrew text, with the now omitted portions featured and presented as being optional or supplementary in nature. (Bring back the Creative Math Part!) I would also like to see all songs include English versions and transliterations. Finally, I would like to see more songs shown embedded in the sheet music as now appears for Eliyahu Havnavi and Echad Mi Yodei-a. This would empower those at the Seder who are not familiar with the tunes to participate more fully.

I own dozens of haggadot, from my childhood hardcover book with the intense drawings of the plagues (and my wine stains) to traditional, all-text with rabbinic commentary, to the most out-there

versions (including a feminist Haggadah and a hippie Haggadah). My feeling had been that using a variety allowed people to include interesting tidbits that they could then share at the seder. But it became easier and more pleasant to have everyone on the same page. This Haggadah was my choice because it is traditional (with omissions of the whole "50 plagues, no 100, no 250" distraction) yet has progressive and contemporary readings. It worked very well at our seder. I keep the text part to 75 minutes so there is reading, discovery and conversation, at which point people do get antsy (11th plague?) and we head into the Motsi Matzah part (i.e., the meal).

Used this haggadah for Passover this year. The table consensus was to use it again next year - and they're a tough crowd. It has a strong social justice theme woven in well. All the traditional prayers are included. Plenty of transliteration.

This Haggadah is well done, thoughtful, and egalitarian. Recommended for all who wish to modernize their seders or add to their seders and recommended as well for those who wish to continue learning.

Not colorful, nothing special. Prefer Ben Shahn's, or or Elie Weisel's.. Unless you can still get them for free at the grocery store

This book arrived in beautiful condition. I have not started to read it yet. But with Passover arriving soon I need to start. I heard the author interviewed on Bob Edwards on NPR. He was very articulate & informative on his history

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