



**BRUCE LICHT**

**FOUNDER OF *MY ELEVATOR PITCH FOR GOD*, ENTREPRENEUR, AND AUTHOR**

Bruce grew up in Lafayette, California and received a BA in Political Science from UCLA as well as a Graduate Gemologist degree from the Gemological Institute of America. After graduating, Bruce operated his family's 100 year-old retail fine jewelry business for twenty-two years. Bruce had a passion for computers and graphic arts, so he changed careers and joined his best friend at a national technical publishing company for seventeen-years as the company's Publisher, where they invented the modern labor law poster industry, including the first "All- On-One Labor Law Poster" and "Labor Law Poster Compliance Plan."

Aside from being the Founder of this website, *My Elevator Pitch for God*, Bruce was the co-editor of the book titled, *Elevator Pitches For God: Volume 1*, and author of the cookbook titled, *Immediate Chef: No Previous Experience Required*.

Bruce's goals for this website are: To introduce more people all around the world to God and strengthen the faith of those who already believe in a non-political and non-religious way, to bring people together, find common ground between different faiths, create meaning in people's lives, and start to move the world in a better direction.

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# There IS Only One God... But We Don't Believe in Him!

BRUCE LICHT

Like most things in life, people's belief in God falls along a continuum—from ardent atheists to fervent believers.

One of the three major Jewish festivals mentioned in the Torah is *Passover*.<sup>1</sup> Every year, Jews congregate to participate in a long ceremonial meal called a *Seder*. They read through a book called a *Haggadah*, which retells the story<sup>2</sup> of when they were slaves in Egypt and their miraculous redemption in 1312 BCE.<sup>3</sup>

Now, preparing for a *Seder* is not an easy undertaking. There are so many specific symbolic recipes with hard-to-find ingredients, and the dining table is no easy task to set up, with multiple plates, bowls, glassware, presentation plates, silverware, candles, etc. It is a dishwasher's nightmare! And it's not like the food is everyone's favorite, with gefilte fish, unleavened bread called *Matzah*, parsley, and more.

Yet, it is interesting that this is one of the most followed traditions in Judaism, by people at every point along the religious spectrum. Even Jews who are not remotely religious, or don't even believe in God, for unknown reasons often seek out a *Seder* meal every year. Why is this so well attended by a considerable percentage of people who could not care less? Wouldn't it be much easier for them to just have some of their family and friends over for take-out pizza and casually mention in passing, "*You know... we were once slaves in Egypt... now can you pass me another slice of pepperoni?*"

The same could be said about people and traditions of other religions. Why do a number of cultural Christians, who do not really believe in God and merely use the name "Christian," choose to baptize their children, take communion, and get married or have a funeral in a church?

Are many of these non-believing, non-observant people just hedging their bets, along the lines of "*Pascal's Wager*"?<sup>4</sup>

It reminds me of a joke: There was this very assimilated, secular Jewish family. One day, the father picked up his child from school and asked, "*What did you learn today?*" The child said, "*We learned about the Holy Trinity.*" The father was furious. He grabbed his child's shoulder and sternly said, "*Now listen to me and listen very closely. There is one God and one God only. Do you understand? Oh—and one more thing... we don't believe in Him.*"<sup>5</sup>

Beyond the humor, the enduring observance of religious traditions—even among highly secular people—raises an important question: Why do rituals that supposedly require belief still persist so strongly among those who claim not to believe?

At the very least, this widespread irrational participation suggests that more than mere habit is at work. It may point to an inner, intuitive awareness that life is not purely material—that there is something transcendent pulling at people, even when their stated beliefs deny it. In other words, these rituals may reveal a kind of spiritual gravity—an unseen, undeniable "*tug*" toward the sacred, even when people insist that they don't believe.

## Footnotes:

- 1) The three "Major Festivals" listed in the Torah are:
  - A) Passover (Pesach): Commemorates the Exodus from Egypt
  - B) Shavuot: Commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and the Harvest
  - C) Sukkot: Commemorates the 40 years that the Israelites wandered in the desert after leaving Egypt, living in temporary shelters, and the autumn harvest in Israel

Note: In America, for some odd reason, it seems the three "major" Jewish festivals celebrated are:

- A) Pesach (Passover)
- B) Hanukah (actually considered a minor festival)
- C) Yom Kippur (actually considered a minor festival)

*Festivals* are mentioned three times in the Torah:

In Exodus / Parshas Mishpatim / Chapter 23 / Verses 14-17, it says:

*"Three pilgrimages festivals shall you celebrate for Me during the year. You shall observe the Festival of Matzos (Passover/Pesach), seven days shall you eat matzos, as I have commanded you, at the appointed time of the month of springtime, for in it you left Egypt; you shall not be seen before Me empty-handed. And the Festival of the Harvest (Shavuot) of the first fruits of your labor that you sow in the field; and the Festival of the Ingathering (Sukkot) at the close of the year, when you gather in your work from the field. Three times during the year shall all your menfolk appear before the Lord, HASHEM."*

In Exodus / Parshas Ki Sasa / Chapter 34 / Verses 18-23, it says:

*"You shall observe the Festival of Matzos: For a seven day period you shall eat matzos, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of spring, for in the month of spring you went forth from Egypt. Every first issue of a womb is Mine; as well as any of your livestock that produces a male, the first issue of an ox or a sheep. The first issue of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb or kid, and if you do not redeem it you shall axe the back of your neck. You shall redeem every first born of your sons. They shall not appear before me empty-handed. Six days shall you work and on the seventh day you shall desist; you shall desist from ploughing and harvesting. You shall make the Festival of Weeks with the first offspring of the wheat harvest; and the Festival of the Harvest shall be at the changing of the year. Three times a year (you) shall appear before the Lord HASHEM, the God of Israel."*

In Deuteronomy/ Parshas Re'Eh / Chapter 16 / Verses 16-17, it says:

*"Three times a year (you) should appear before HASHEM, your God, in the place He will choose; on the Festival of Matzos, the Festival of Shavuot, and the Festival of Sukkot, and he shall not appear before HASHEM empty-handed, everyone according to what he can give, according to the blessing that HASHEM, your God, has given to you."*

- 2) The Hebrew word "*Haggadah*" means "*to tell, to transmit, to teach.*" A Haggadah is the essential guidebook read during the Jewish Passover Seder, providing the script, prayers,

songs, stories, and symbolic foods to recount the liberation story of the Israelites from Egypt, fulfilling the biblical commandment to *"tell"* the story each year at the *"designated time."* The commandment to tell the story comes from: Exodus / Parshas Bo / Chapter 13 / Verses 8-10, where it says:

*"And you shall **tell** your children on that day saying, 'it is because of this that HASHEM acted on my behalf (for me) when I left Egypt' and it shall be for you a sign on your arm and a reminder between your eyes – so that HASHEM's Torah may be in your mouth – for with a strong hand HASHEM removed you from Egypt. **You shall observe this decree at the designated time from year to year.**"*

- 3) Having a Seder is so important that it is actually a Commandment. Of the 613 Commandments in the Torah, the 157th one is to tell the story of Passover and the Exodus from Egypt, where they were once slaves over 3,300 years ago. Presently, we are the 132nd generation to remember, honor and re-live the liberation of the Jewish people by God, where Jews went from being the lowest and most animalistic of human slaves to as promised, *"a kingdom of nobles and priests - A Holy kingdom."*

The Seder ceremony talks about how the Jew's luck all of a sudden changed and they were redeemed. In the words of the Torah, God plucked "one nation from amidst a nation," through the course of 10 plagues (or 10 miracles, depending on which side you were on).

Today, one has to go to museums or the Internet to learn about most ancient civilizations. But not the Jews. Jews are the oldest surviving people on earth. There are countless civilizations and empires that have tried to destroy the Jewish people:

- The Maniotes didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Moabites didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Greeks didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Assyrians didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Byzantine Empire didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Babylonian Empire didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Romans didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Egyptians didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Persians didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Philistines didn't eliminate the Jews
- The Spanish Empire didn't eliminate the Jews
- China hasn't eliminated the Jews
- Stalin didn't eliminate the Jews
- Hitler and the Holocaust didn't eliminate the Jews
- Iran hasn't eliminated the Jews

Despite them all, Jews are still standing. Jews are like a Timex watch—They take a licking and keep on ticking. Jews are the smallest of nations, but obviously have a close "friend" in the highest of places.

Slavery has always existed in human history and sadly, still exists all around the world today. But at no other time has an entire slave population, in this case over 3 million Jews, ever been liberated at the same time by God, to serve Him. Passover marks the most unprecedented, transformational spiritual turnaround in history. Jews went from the pit of existence to the apex of the human experience.

In the Jewish people's long history, they have had horrible things happen to them, but they have had incredible things occur immediately afterwards. They were slaves in Egypt for 210 years and then were miraculously freed. They had the destruction of the Second Temple and went into exile in 70 AD, and afterwards, sages came together and formed the body of what we call the "Oral Law" in the writing of the Talmud. They had the Holocaust, and then, as was prophesized in the Torah, they received their homeland back—this time for the third time. Something that has never happened once before in recorded history. In 1900, .5% of the world's Jews lived in Israel. Now, it is just over 50%.

Passover is the template for personal and spiritual redemption—growth. One of the central themes of the ceremony is that it be very personal. A person has to view themselves as if they had just left Egypt. The Hebrew word for Egypt is "*Mitzriam*." That word also translates to "*boundaries*" and "*limitations*." Whatever is limiting you from becoming great—that is said to be your "*personal Egypt*."

What is holding you back in life? What are the boundaries that limit your ability to reach your best potential? Let Passover be the day you alter the trajectory of your life. The Torah says, "*Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation*." What path will you take? A hard path—a path like Pharaoh's with plagues? Or an easy path—a path like the Jews with miracles? On Passover, jump, leap, catapult all the levels that you need to "*pass over*" to get where you need to be.

The real question is: "*Why are Jews so lucky to still be here?*" There are over 8 billion people in the world, but only 13.5 million of them are Jews. Jews are just .0017% of the world's population. If Jewish history were not full of one persecution after another, estimates are that the Jewish people's population should be about 400-750 million people. After China and India, Jews should be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest demographic on earth, but they sadly remain small in number, (like a rounding error) as was prophesized in the Torah.

Over 300 years ago King Louis XIV of France (the man who built Versailles) asked Blaise Pascal, the great French mathematician/philosopher during the age of enlightenment, to give him "*proof of the supernatural*." Pascal answered, "*Why, the Jews, your Majesty—the Jewish People*." Why are Jews as a people so fortunate to still be here? Maybe it is because they were so often told in the Torah that they will be an "*eternal*" nation? Meaning, they are always going to be around. And what is the Jew's single, greatest Jewish contribution to the world? The belief in One God—brought to you by the Jewish people, through Abraham.

One of the central parts of the Seder ceremony is the asking of the "*Four Questions*." The purpose of the Four Questions is to express our sense of wonder over the Exodus story, the unusual customs and different foods eaten on this festive occasion. Why are there four questions? Because there are all kinds of people and you have to know how best to talk to each of them to be as effective as possible. Some people are young, some are immature, some are simple and don't know what to ask, and some are wicked. Traditionally, the youngest person present starts out saying:

**"Why is this night different from all other nights?"**

**Question #1:** *On all other nights we eat leavened bread. Why, on this night, do we eat only unleavened matzah?*

**Answer:** Matzah is a crisp, unleavened flatbread that is central to the Jewish Passover holiday. Matzah is the symbol of Jew's affliction and their freedom. When Moses and his 3 million plus followers hastily fled Egypt, they moved so quickly that the bread they baked did not have time to rise. Matzah, made simply from wheat flour and water, is eaten during the Seder and throughout the seven day Passover holiday, as a reminder of the Jewish people's liberation from slavery and subsequent journey through the desert.

**Question #2:** *On all other nights we eat herbs of any kind. Why, on this night, do we eat only bitter herbs?*

**Answer:** This root, horseradish, is to remind us of the time of our slavery. We force ourselves to taste pain so that we remember our harsh time as slaves and value pleasure and our freedom.

**Question #3:** *On all other nights, we do not dip our herbs even once. Why, on this night, do we dip them twice in salt water?*

**Answer:** The first time, the salty taste reminds us of the tears we cried when we were slaves. The second time, the salt water and the green help us to remember the ocean, green plants, and the Earth, from which we get air, water, and food that enable us to live.

**Question #4:** *On all other nights, we eat either sitting or leaning. Why, on this night, do we eat while leaning?*

**Answer:** In ancient times in Rome, it was the custom for rich people to eat while lying on a couch leaning on one elbow as their slaves and servants fed them. The Jewish people thought of this relaxed type of eating as a sign of freedom and prosperity, so they eat leaning to one side at the Seder to symbolize their freedom.

4) Explanation of Pascal's Famous Wager

<https://www.myelevatorpitchforgod.com/all-authors/bruce...jos...licht>

5) The joke is a widely circulated anecdotal piece of cultural humor, having no single, definitive, traceable source or author. It is often used to illustrate the concept of secular or cultural Jewish identity. The exact joke you provided has been recounted in various forms in different contexts:

The line has been associated with anecdotes about real people. One source mentions a writer for *The New Yorker* telling a version of the joke during a dinner conversation. In that version, the punchline is the same, but the setup involves the son learning about different gods from a Christian minister.