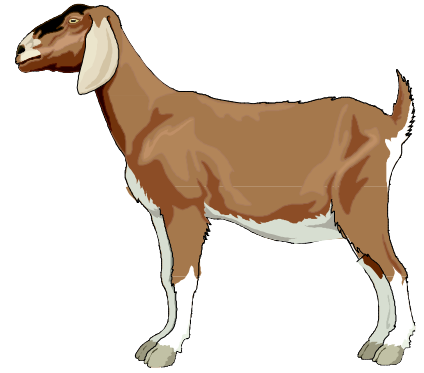


# Kidstuff

No Kidding!



## The seder is over.

You are about to settle back into your chair, when suddenly you are roused from your wine-induced reverie by everyone launching into the traditional rendering of *Chad Gadya*. "What are we doing singing nursery rhymes at a time like this?" — You think to yourself. "Here we all are energetically belting out a song that everyone sings, and no-one has the slightest idea of what it's got to do with Pesach! Is *Chad Gadya* no more than what 'I know an old lady who swallowed a fly' would have sounded like if Burl Ives had been Jewish? Is it no more than a harmless ditty to amuse the children? Or does *Chad Gadya* have a secret meaning? A hidden depth of allusion beneath the surface...

Let's look at the surface a second. *Chad Gadya* has ten stanzas. It goes like this:

1. *One kid*. One kid. That daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid.
2. And came *the cat* and ate the kid that daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid.
3. And came *the dog* and bit the cat that ate the kid etc.
4. And came *the stick* and hit the dog etc.
5. And came *the fire* and burned the stick etc.
6. And came *the water* and doused the fire etc.
7. And came *the ox* and drank the water etc.
8. And came *the slaughterer* and killed the ox etc.
9. And came *the angel of death* and killed the slaughterer etc.
10. And came *The Holy One Blessed be He* and killed the angel of death that killed the slaughterer that killed the ox that drank the water that doused the fire that hit the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid.

"One kid. One kid. That daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid"

Before the beginning of all things, Hashem reigned alone. His is the first Kingdom. Avraham Avinu is the *gadya* that 'Daddy'(Hashem) 'bought' for two zuzim. When you buy something it implies that the money you give is equal the acquisition that you receive. Avraham Avinu is weighed against the two gold zuzim of heaven and earth - the entire creation - because it was Avraham who first recognized his Creator. Avraham thus became both the foundation of creation and its purpose — that man should recognize his Creator.

*The ten stanzas of Chad Gadya correspond to the ten kingdoms that will rule from before the beginning of time until the end of the world.*

They are:

1. Hashem alone before the creation.
2. The Babylon of Nimrod
3. Egypt
4. Yisrael until the destruction of the first Temple
5. The Babylon of Nebuchadnezar
6. Persia and Media
7. Greece and Macedonia
8. Rome
9. Mashiach
10. Hashem alone

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*"And came the cat and ate the kid that daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid."*

Then came *the cat* - the *shunra*. The second kingdom is Babylon. Nimrod's capital where he built the tower of Babylon was in the valley of *shinar*'. The motivation for that tower came from a *sonah ra* 'an evil hater'- Nimrod who hated Hashem and his representative on this world Avraham Avinu. Nimrod came and 'ate' *thegadya* - Avraham Avinu. He threw him into the consuming fire of a fiery furnace. When Avraham miraculously emerged, he emerged as a new creation.

*"And came the dog and bit the cat that ate the kid etc."*

*"As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool to his folly."* There can be no greater example of a fool returning to his folly than Pharaoh, King of Egypt. Despite all the plagues of Egypt, Pharaoh repeated his mistake over and over again. *Thecalba* - the dog is the symbol of the third kingdom, the kingdom of Egypt which 'bit' the cat of Babylon. It overshadowed and outshone the kingdom of Babylon, even though there was never a direct military confrontation. Thus it only 'bit' but didn't 'eat'.

*"And came the stick and hit the dog etc."*

The stick is the staff of Hashem that Moshe used to 'hit' the Egyptians. This was the staff turned that into a snake and ate all the staffs of the Egyptian sorcerers. This was the staff that was raised of over the Nile and turned it to blood and it was this staff that vanquished the might of Pharaoh. The staff symbolizes the fourth kingdom - the kingdom of Yisrael. Yisrael achieved tranquility with the building of the first Beis Hamikdash, when the staff - the scepter - of Yehuda held sway. Then came the fire...

*"And came the fire and burned the stick etc."*

When the Jewish People turned aside from the Torah and began to sin, *fire* was dispatched out of Heaven. A lion of fire appeared to blaze through the *Paroches* - the curtain that divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies in the Temple. This lion of fire, in terrestrial form, took the shape of the Babylonian kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar which 'burned the staff' of Yisrael. Nebuchadnezzar became the instrument of Heavenly justice to punish The Jewish People. Nebuchadnezzar razed Zion. The Temple was burned to the ground and Yisrael was lead into slavery. But fire can be doused by water...

*"And came the water and doused the fire etc."*

The sixth kingdom is that of Persia and Media, whose fortunes swelled like the *waters* of the sea, extinguishing the might of Babylon. "Their voices will roar like the sea." Said the prophet Yirmiyahu, describing the torrent that was to be Media.

*"And came the ox and drank the water etc."*

Taurus the *bull* is the astrological force appointed by Hashem to steer the fortunes of Greece. In Jewish thought, Greece is associated with spiritual darkness "And the earth was empty and void and darkness on the face of the deep." (Bereishis 1:2) The Greeks tried to darken the eyes of the Jewish People, claiming that they had forfeited their unique connection to Hashem as a result of the incident of the golden *calf*. They said "Write upon the horn of *abull* that you have no portion in the G-d of Israel. This *bull* of Macedonian Greece came and licked up the *water* that was Media.

*"And came the slaughterer and killed the ox etc."*

The *bull* of Macedonia met its demise at the hands of the *slaughterer* of Rome. No other nation is stained so red with blood as Rome. Ruled by the warlike planet Mars, the kingdom of Romulus is the spiritual descendent of Esav, who was born covered in a mantle of red hair.

*"And came the angel of death and killed the slaughterer etc."*

Rome stands for the power of the material world. He encapsulates everything physical and 'this-worldly'. We are still under the sway of Rome in the guise of its current cultural heirs.

Immediately prior to the coming of Mashiach, there will be a tremendous confusion in the world. Everything will seem to have gone haywire. The natural order will be turned on its head: Age will bow to youth. Ugliness will be trumpeted as beauty, and what is beautiful will be disparaged as unattractive. Barbarism will be lauded as culture. And culture will be dismissed as worthless. The hunger of consumerism and the lust for material wealth will grow more and more, and it will find less and less to satisfy its voracity.

Eventually Esav/Rome/Materialism will grow so rapacious that it will become its own *angel of death*. It will literally consume itself and regurgitate itself back out. But from this decay, the line of David will sprout, like a plant that springs forth from no more than dirt and earth. There will be three wars of confusion, and then the penultimate kingdom will rule — the kingdom of Mashiach.

*"And came The Holy One Blessed be He and killed the angel of death that killed the slaughterer that killed the ox that drank the water that doused the fire that hit the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that daddy bought for two zuzim. One kid. One kid."*

In the final chapter of world history, Hashem will remove the pall of spiritual poison from the world completely. He will take the 'negative drive' alias *the angel of death*, and slaughter it. Then Hashem will wipe the tear from every face, and He will return the Kingship to Himself. The circle will be complete. And then joy and simcha will reign as a mother rejoices over her children.

*Chad Gadya*. Just an innocuous nursery rhyme to send you off to sleep at the end of the Seder. Just a little nursery rhyme...which just happens to encapsulate *the whole panorama of world history from before the beginning of time...*