MOTZI MATZA: BLESS ON/EAT MATZA

MATZA: WHY

Matza: Meaning

Matza represents:

- Food of poor people, and

- The unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when leaving Egypt.

NOTE A pun reflects this dual meaning of poor bread plus the story of leaving Egypt, since "*lechem oni*" may mean "bread of poor people" or "bread of (many) answers."

MATZA: WHAT KIND

When Shmura Matza Is Necessary

The only time you must use *shmura matza* is for the four commandments of *motzi*, *matza*, *koreich, and afikoman*.

NOTE You may use any other *kosher* for *Passover matza,* even for the rest of *seder*. There is no need for using *shmura matza* for the other days of *Passover*.

Hand Shmura Matza or Machine Shmura Matza

Hand *shmura matza* has some advantage in that it was made with the intention of being for a *mitzva,* but machine *shmura matza* has the advantage of being less likely to become *chametz* since it is automated and not touched by human hands.

MATZA: HOW MUCH

How Much Matza To Eat

Motzi, Matza

For *motzi* and *matza* together, you must eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of *matza* within a 4-minute period from when you begin eating.

Afikoman

For *afikoman*, you must eat another 1.9 fl. oz of *matza*; *b'di'avad*, at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) is sufficient.

NOTE This amount is about 1/2 of a machine *shmura matza,* or 1/3 of a hand *shmura matza*.

NOTE If your mouth is too dry to eat that quickly, you may drink water with the *matza*.

MOTZI/MATZA: BLESSINGS

Why Two Blessings over Matza

We say two blessings over the *matza*: *ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz* and *al achilat matza.*

REASON The blessing on *motzi* is one of enjoyment (*nehenin*); the blessing on *matza* is a blessing on a commandment (*mitzva*).

How To Do Motzi and Matza

The *seder* leader says the blessing "*ha'motzi*" while holding the three (which are now 2 1/2) *shmura* matzas, drops the bottom one, and says the next blessing, *al achilat matza*. Everyone takes a small piece from the two top matzas and eats it, along with enough additional *shmura matza* to fulfill the minimum requirement.