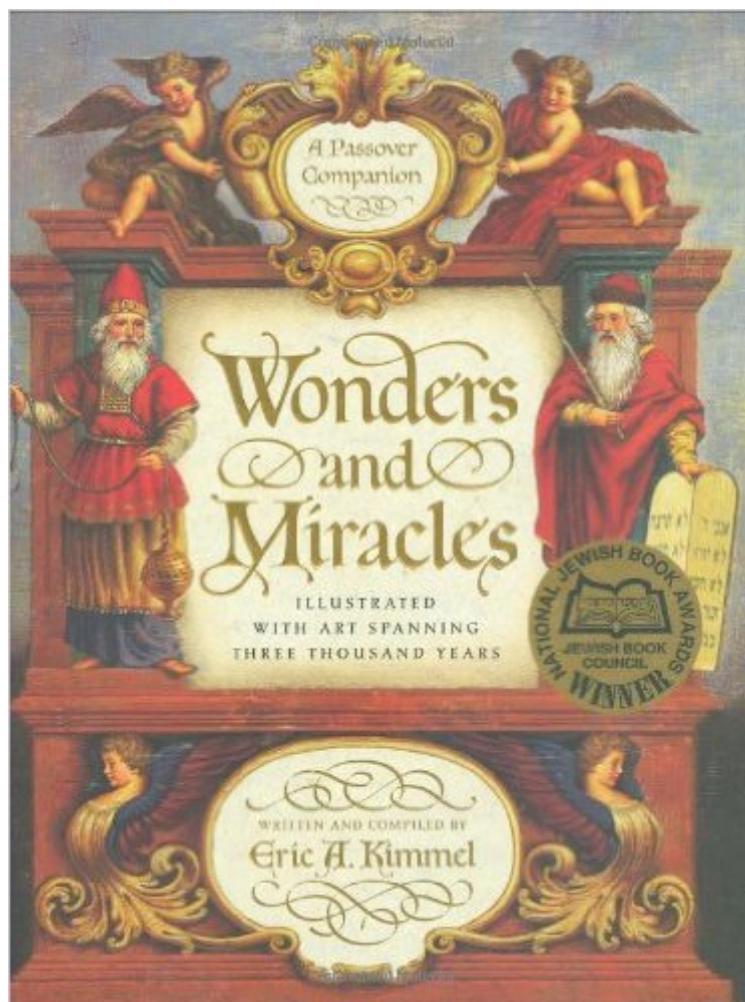


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Wonders And Miracles: A Passover Companion



Synopsis

Eric A. Kimmel, America's foremost author of children's Judaica has drawn together Passover stories, commentary, poetry, music, art, and prayers that span four continents and 3000 years! In this rich and fascinating compilation, beloved storyteller Eric A. Kimmel presents every element--from beginning to end -- of this ancient holiday through stories, songs, poems, prayers and art. Reflecting three millenniums of Jewish life around the world, the book will not only make this multi-layered holiday accessible to people of every background. But it will also make this timeless-ever changing holiday relevant to today's readers.(continued on next page.....)

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #624,730 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Jewish

Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 5 - 8

Customer Reviews

This book won the National Jewish Book Award from the Jewish Book Council and was named a Sydney Taylor Honor Book by the Association of Jewish Libraries in 2004. In addition, Eric Kimmel was named the 2004 Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award winner for his overall contributions to Judaic children's literature. This "Passover companion" follows the order of the seder but inserts explanations, background information, interpretations, and illustrative stories that flesh out the meaning of each traditional step. The book provides a very complete package, and the author explains that it should be read before the holiday and used as a resource during the seder, as it is too long to be used as a haggadah. The reader is immediately struck by the sumptuousness of the

illustrations, which are reproduced in vibrant color from many sources. We see details from medieval haggadot, photographs of Judaic ritual objects, paintings, and even a few modern book illustrations. Captions tell us the source of each illustration and explain the significance of the objects or actions depicted. The book's design includes thick paper, plenty of white space, and decorative elements in gold. Most spreads include an illustration, but there are a few that are somewhat text-heavy. Some of the longer sections, especially those that retell the stories of Joseph and Moses, are a bit dry. The text is clearly written but frequently employs sophisticated vocabulary; the book is aimed at families rather than at child-readers. Older children and teens (and adults) will come away from this book with a deeper understanding of Passover and its rituals.

This beautiful and unique guide to the Passover Seder, and winner of the National Jewish Book Award, will enchant anyone who sees it. It is a compendium of stories, songs, poems, prayers and commentaries on the ancient Jewish festival of freedom that will surely make its way into the homes of Jews and Gentiles alike. Jewish families will happily use it annually at their Seders, relishing in the lush detail, simple explanations, and outstanding artwork, while others will enjoy it for the beautiful compilation of story, song and historical art that spans three thousand years. "Seder" means "order" in Hebrew and, as anyone who has ever participated in one knows, the order of the prayers, songs and stories recited there are prescribed in the book called the "Haggadah," which means, "The Telling." There are dozens of different styles of Haggadahs, but all of them follow the same order. However, not all Haggadahs (especially ones used by families with small children) come with clear explanations and commentaries on the various rituals associated with the holiday. Kimmel understands this perennial situation and it is here where this book truly shines. Kimmel spent seven years compiling this book. He has illuminated each aspect of the ritual Seder with a poem here, an explanation there, and glowing throughout the text, gorgeous paintings or illuminated manuscript reproductions that have been chosen with perfection. Short stories or songs by noted authors and musicians are included, and will surely be a welcome addition to any Seder where squirmy children are in attendance. The book's opening entices the reader with Kimmel's original prose poem entitled, "Night Journey". Get ready. We are going on a journey. It will last only one night, but it will take us a long, long way. We will travel from slavery to freedom. From sorrow to joy. From a country not our own to the land given to God to our ancestors. For this is the night of Passover, the night when our ancestors left Egypt, the House of Slavery. They left on foot in haste, carrying their belongings on their backs, driving their flocks and herds before them. We are going with them. Our journey is called the Seder. Our guide is a special book called the Haggadah. It tells

the Passover story. Get ready. We are leaving soon. Our journey is about to begin. Child or adult, who can resist that opening? This is a book destined to become a classic of Jewish children's literature.

I'm a Christian homeschooler and got this book as part of our Ancient Israel study on Jewish holidays. It came highly recommended and, if nothing else, the book is beautiful to look at. The Jewish art and captions throughout are a real treat. The information included is good too, as it explains each step very slowly, in little bites, until you're all the way through the seder. And it explains the reasoning behind each step. I liked, for example, the explanation of the ten plagues and how they each corresponded to hardships the Egyptians inflicted upon the Hebrews. Elsewhere I had learned that the plagues corresponded to judgment on particular Egyptian god/goddesses, so this little revelation was new and helpful for me and my kids. I also liked how it included an Elijah story to help explain why the children open the door for Elijah on Pesach. I had been looking for this in other Passover resources with no luck. I also appreciated the emphasis on pursuing justice on behalf of the disadvantaged in the world. I was not so happy with the brief editorial about global warming that was made, but that's just me. I don't think we're bringing "plagues" upon ourselves in the same way that God brought plagues on the Egyptians, as Kimmel says. Sowing and reaping is important for children to understand, I think the analogy is a bad one.

I love this book! I'm not sure how useful it will be as a Haggadah for pesach since it is a big heavy hardcover. However, it is an absolute pleasure to look through for its gorgeous illustrations from Jewish art of the past three thousand years. I adore illuminations from the Haggadot and this book certainly renders much of Jewish art very well. Along with the old traditions the author has sprinkled in gems from contemporary Judaism as well. Miriam's cup has its own section and story, Debbie Friedman's songs The Promise and I am the Afikoman are in here. There's a tiny recipe section for Charoset, Tzimmes, a couple of kugels and macaroons. Stories from the Midrash and stories from History are scattered throughout the book. I don't see this book being used at the actual seder table but it will definitely be put out around Passover time for the kids and family to look through and enjoy.

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