

Hillel



Ohio University

HAGGADAH

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Ohio University Hillel Hagaddah

An Introduction to the Ohio University Hillel from Director Sarah Livingston

The Haggadah begins with a declaration inviting all those in need to join in for the Seder meal. This welcoming the stranger (hachnasat orchim) is not only a display of sensitivity, and welcoming the hungry is not simply an expression of charity. Regard for the vulnerable among us at the Seder is closely linked to the theme of the Passover holiday; the Exodus from Egypt.

“You shall not wrong a stranger, nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” This sentiment is repeated in the Bible not less than 36 times. In several passages, God makes it clear that God heeds the prayers of the stranger and similarly disadvantaged members of society, explicitly including the “widow” and the “orphan.” The biblical claim that the Jewish People are God’s “chosen” is as familiar as it is fraught. That God is the God of the oppressed is an equally familiar trope. Sadly, throughout much of our history there has been considerable overlap between the concepts of “God of the Jews” and “God of the oppressed.” Either way, our God has been God of the underdog. What if we are no longer the underdog?

Maimonides, the Rambam, (13th century) connected our regard for the vulnerable and our remembrance of Egyptian servitude in an innovative way. God rescued us from Egypt not so much because we were Hebrews who were enslaved but because we were enslaved and we happened to be Hebrews. The admonition is meant to warn us against indifference to the oppression of the weak by informing us that God’s solidarity is with them. Ultimately, God’s saving grace responds to powerlessness, not to privileged ancestry.

We come together, this passover, in a new way, isolated from others, and experiencing the world through the lens of a pandemic. It can be frightening, lonely, and sad. We hope that this celebration of Passover will bring a measure of joy as we relive the story of our ancestors and keep an ancient tradition alive.

I pray that it brings some comfort to those of you experiencing fear, sadness, or loneliness and that next year we will all be joyously together again.

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What is a Seder?

In Hebrew, Seder means "order." There are many siddurim in the Jewish world, but perhaps the most well known is our Passover Seder. Rather than calling our Passover celebration a meal or a prayer service, we call it a seder to reflect the ritual that goes along with our eating. Tonight we will move through our Haggadah (the book you're reading from now) and tell the story of Passover throughout history with food on our plates. Various foods hold special significance to the story, as we will all soon see. We also do not only tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt as told by the Torah, but instead strive to actually experience the lows and highs of the story ourselves.

Each year, we begin our Seder with a statement that is simply said, but not so easily experienced:

בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים

B'chol dor v'dor, chayev adam lirot et atzmo c'ilu hu yatza
mi-mitzrayim

In every generation a person is obligated to see themselves as if they left Egypt

Our Passover observance teaches us that empathy is a Jewish value: we not only are meant to remember our history, but also to physically experience our collective memory.

A Note on How to Use this Haggadah

A few notes to help clarify, hebrew text is indented, italics text suggests action

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Lighting the Candles

The seder officially begins with a physical act: lighting the candles. In Jewish tradition, lighting candles and saying a blessing over them marks a time of transition, from the day that is ending to the one that is beginning, from ordinary time to sacred time. Lighting the candles is an important part of our Passover celebration because their flickering light reminds us of the importance of keeping the fragile flame of freedom alive in the world.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us with laws and commanded us to light the festival lights.

As we light the festival candles, we acknowledge that as they brighten our Passover table, good thoughts, good words, and good deeds brighten our days.

Why Four Cups?

All Jewish celebrations, from holidays to weddings, include wine as a symbol of our joy – not to mention a practical way to increase that joy. The seder starts with wine and then gives us three more opportunities to refill our cup and drink.

The four cups of wine of the Passover Seder have been said to reflect a number of different elements of the world. They could be the four seasons, the four matriarchs, or the four verbs used by the Torah to describe the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. As with every symbol of the seder, we have multiple interpretations. Let's use this as an opportunity to give our own interpretations of our long-standing traditional symbols and try to see this celebration in a different light.

As we get to each cup of wine, we will take a moment to offer our own interpretation. Each cup will represent a different theme of our Passover story and provide us with an opportunity to connect our ancient legend to our contemporary reality.

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Kadesh

The First Cup: Bondage

We are taught that our ancestors were slaves to the Egyptians. In order to experience freedom, the Israelites needed to escape their bondage. For us to enjoy our own freedom today, we also need to acknowledge that we too may find ourselves in bondage.

As we fill our first cup of wine, discuss the following: What binds you? From what do you hope you might find freedom?

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who chose us from all peoples and languages, and sanctified us with commandments, and lovingly gave to us special times for happiness, holidays and this time of celebrating the Holiday of Matzah, the time of liberation, reading our sacred stories, and remembering the Exodus from Egypt. For you chose us and sanctified us among all peoples. And you have given us joyful holidays. We praise God, who sanctifies the people of Israel and the holidays.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁחֵיְיָנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-hechyanu v'key'manu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who has kept us alive, raised us up, and brought us to this happy moment.

Drink the first cup of wine!

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Urchatz

Slaves eat quickly, stopping neither to wash nor to reflect. Tonight, we are free. We wash and we express our reverence for the blessings that are ours.

We will wash our hands twice during our seder: now, with no blessing, to get us ready for the rituals to come; and then again later, we'll wash again with a blessing, preparing us for the meal, which Judaism thinks of as a ritual in itself.

Pass a bowl of water, a small cup and a towel around the table. Everyone pours three cupfuls over their fingers. There is no blessing over this washing.

Karpas

Passover, like many of our holidays, combines the celebration of an event from our Jewish memory with a recognition of the cycles of nature. As we remember the liberation from Egypt, we also recognize the stirrings of spring and rebirth happening in the world around us. The symbols on our table bring together elements of both kinds of celebration.

We now take a vegetable, representing our joy at the dawning of spring after our long, cold winter. Most families use a green vegetable, such as parsley or celery, but some families from Eastern Europe have a tradition of using a boiled potato since greens were hard to come by at Passover time. Whatever symbol of spring and sustenance we're using, we now dip it into salt water, a symbol of the tears our ancestors shed as slaves. Before we eat it, we recite a short blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree ha-adama.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruits of the earth.

Our Passover seder reminds us with green vegetables that winter is finally over and spring is here. What has this winter taught us? What might we plant this spring that will blossom in our future?

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Yachatz

Take the middle piece of matzah, hold it up, and read the following italics text:

Everyone read together:

This is the bread of affliction, that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All who are bent with hunger, come and eat, all who are in dire straits, come share Passover with us. This year we are here, next year we find ourselves in a better place. This year we are slaves, next year we are free.

The 20th century thinker Isaiah Berlin wrote that there are two kinds of freedom: “freedom from,” and “freedom to.” In the Passover story, when the Israelites left Egypt, they experienced *freedom from* bondage, but it was not until they received the Torah at Mt. Sinai that they received *freedom to* worship. Berlin concludes that both are necessary.

Maggid

Pour the second cup of wine for everyone.

The *maggid* section of the traditional seder frames the story of the Exodus from Egypt. It does this, however, in an odd way: rather than telling the full story from beginning to end, this section of the seder wants us to learn about the themes, ideas, and senses of the story so that we too can feel like we experienced the Exodus from Egypt. We may not tell the story in full but by the time our bellies are full of a festive meal, our heads should be full of questions and answers, and our hearts will be full of empathy for our historic ancestors.

Question for discussion:

What makes us feel connected to a story? How do we relate? What are the most important moments of a story? Is it the beginning? The arc? The climax? The conclusion?

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Arami Oved Avi

The story, maggid, begins not at the beginning of our story, but towards the end, with the phrase “Arami oved avi.” The phrase is taken from the ritual of the first fruits offering, laid out in Deuteronomy 26:5-8, a spring-time Temple sacrifice that occurred around this time of year, but became part of the Passover tradition after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. The phrase can be translated in two ways:

1. “My father was a wandering Aramean”
2. “An Aramean oppressed my father”

The text continues:

He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to the Eternal, the God of our ancestors, and the Eternal heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. The Eternal freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents, bringing us to this place and giving us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Questions for discussion: Which translation works better for you and why? Why do we begin our story here?

Four Questions

According to the Talmud, the compendium of Rabbinic discussion and law, the mitzvah (literally: commandment) of Passover is not to learn but to teach. In fact, parents are encouraged to give children food to play with so they can stay awake and ask questions of the adults. Without the children’s questions, the Passover obligation will not be fulfilled (Bavli Pesachim 109a).

We learn best when we teach. On Passover, it is vital for us to communicate the customs, obligations, and stories of our culture to a new generation. When we teach, we internalize the lessons of our people, helping us to find meaning in the world.

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Traditionally, the youngest person at the seder will chant the following, though in many households it is custom for everyone to participate:

מה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל הַלַּיְלוֹת

Ma nishtana halaila hazeh mikol haleilot?

Why is this night different from all other nights?

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין חֶמֶץ וּמֶצֶה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כֻּלּוֹ מֶצֶה

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin chameitz u-matzah. Halaila hazeh kulo matzah.

On all other nights we eat both leavened bread and matzah. Tonight we only eat matzah.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין שְׂאֵר יִרְקוֹת הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מָרוֹר

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin shi'ar yirakot haleila hazeh maror.

On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables, but tonight we eat bitter herbs.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אֵין אָנוּ מְטַבִּילִין אֶפְּלוֹ פַּעַם אַחַת הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה שְׁתֵּי פַּעֲמִים

Shebichol haleilot ain anu matbilin afilu pa-am echat. Halaila hazeh shtei pey-amim.

On all other nights we aren't expected to dip our vegetables one time. Tonight we do it twice.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבֵין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין. הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כָּלָנוּ מְסֻבִּין

Shebichol haleilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein m'subin. Halaila hazeh kulanu m'subin.

On all other nights we eat either sitting normally or reclining. Tonight we recline.

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Four Children

After asking and answering questions, our seder pushes us to consider the fundamental challenge of what it means to learn. As is oft-repeated tonight, Passover is a teaching holiday. As teachers, it is a priority to understand how people learn and think. Our traditional seder offers four examples, in the form of children, the questions they may ask, and how we might answer them:

What does the wise child say?

The wise child asks, *What are the testimonies and laws which God commanded you?*

You must teach this child the rules of observing the holiday of Passover.

What does the wicked child say?

The wicked child asks, *What does this service mean to you?*

To you and not to himself! Because he takes himself out of the community and misses the point, set this child's teeth on edge and say to him: "It is because of what God did for me in taking me out of Egypt."

Me, not him. Had that child been there, he would have been left behind.

What does the simple child say?

The simple child asks, *What is this?*

To this child, answer plainly: "With a strong hand God took us out of Egypt, where we were slaves."

What about the child who doesn't know how to ask a question?

Help this child ask.

Start telling the story: "It is because of what God did for me in taking me out of Egypt."

The description of these children can feel harsh. The secret of the four children is not that individuals fall into one of these four categories, but that at any given moment, we, ourselves, can be each or all of these children. As we continue with our seder, consider how we, as individuals, might learn best, and how we might be able to teach others effectively.

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Creative Addition: The Four Parents

Some scholars believe there are four kinds of parents as well.

The Wise Parent is an utter bore. “Listen closely, because you are younger than I am,” says the Wise parent, “and I will go on and on about Jewish history, based on some foggy memories of my own religious upbringing as well as an article in a Jewish journal I have recently skimmed. The wise parent must be faced with a small smile of dim interest.

The Wicked Parent tries to cram the story of our liberation into a set of narrow opinions about the world. “The Lord led us out of Egypt,” the Wicked Parent says, “which is why I support a bloodthirsty foreign policy and am tired of certain types of people causing problems.” The Wicked Parent should be told in a firm voice, “With a strong hand God rescued the Jews from bondage, but it was my own clumsy hand that spilled hot soup in your lap.”

The Simple Parent does not grasp the concept of freedom. “There will be no macaroons until you eat all of your brisket,” says the Simple Parent, at a dinner honoring the liberation of oppressed peoples. “Also stop slouching at the table.’ In answer to such statements, the Wise Child will roll his eyes in the direction of the ceiling and declare, “Let my people go!”

The Parent Who is Unable to Inquire has had too much wine and should be excused from the table.

--Lemony Snicket

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Telling our Story

We have already begun telling parts of the story of the Exodus, but now we tell the story in earnest. There are many ways to tell the Passover story, but tonight let's have a little fun. Unfortunately Dr. Seuss didn't actually write a version of the Exodus story, but if he did, this is probably what it would sound like this:

There arose in Egypt a Pharaoh new, he was mean and selfish and forgetful too. Of Joseph's greatness he knew not, so against our people he did plot.

This Pharaoh, he looked 'round and 'round and lots of Hebrews he sure found he devised a nasty and most devious plan to enslave each Hebrew, every child, woman and man.

The slaves endured the work and toil in the hot sun, they did broil, they had no peace; they had no choice; they thought that their voice would be heard by none.

Just when it seemed as though all was a loss, that Pharaoh forever would be their cruel boss, God heard the cry, the wail of the slaves and God is a caring Creator who saves.

And God set about to change Pharaoh's mind Sending messengers like Moses and Aaron to find ...To find out if perchance, Pharaoh might behave as a mensch and release all the Hebrews from servitude's clench.

But Pharaoh was nasty, he thought it was funny that a God yet unseen, a God without money could actually tell him what to do.

So Pharaoh laughed, and just wouldn't give, the slaves labored on, no live and let live.

Now God has love and God cares too, God certainly looks out for me and you, but God can sometimes get mad and Pharaoh ... he was worse than bad. God had to act with plagues, in fact, that would make all of Egypt feel sad.

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Ten Plagues

Dip a finger or a knife in your wine and place a drop on your plate with each plague read. While we are joyful that our ancestors survived the plagues and won their freedom, we also mourn the Egyptians who were killed. We learn that even in our happiest moment, we cannot have a full cup when we remember the suffering of others.

These are the ten plagues which God brought down on the Egyptians:

Blood | dam | דם

Frogs | tzfardeiya | צפרדע

Lice | kinim | כנים

Beasts | arov | ערוב

Cattle disease | dever | דבר

Boils | sh'chin | שחין

Hail | barad | ברד

Locusts | arbeh | ארבה

Darkness | choshech | חשך

Death of the Firstborn | makat b'chorot | מכת בכורות

Modern Plagues

Often when we discuss the biblical plagues we pause and take stock of some of the plagues of our contemporary society. We would be remiss in not mentioning that, as we read this, there is a literal plague sweeping the planet. As we reach the point in our seder when we recite the biblical plagues and mourn the deaths of those who perished, it is impossible to not empathize with our reading. Our experience today is all too similar to the account in the text.

This moment, this overwhelming anxiety that we feel, the dread we have about tomorrow, the fear that the world does not quite look the same as it once did, and the worry we have for our loved ones, all of these feelings that we have in this moment are why our people have celebrated Passover for millenia. We read our ancient text to learn something about our past. We experience our story as if we, ourselves were present. The emotions, the senses, the thoughts and ideas, we internalize all of them. Don't forget where you are right now. It is our story.

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We do the work today so that we can pass something along to our next generation.

We are experiencing a plague. It is neither biblical nor ancient; it is real and happening now. How will the plague of Coronavirus change you? How will you change the world?

Dayeinu

The song “Dayeinu” is centered around the phrase “it would have been enough.” Each time we sing this song, we relive the Exodus by remembering all of the opportunities the Israelites were given as they left Egypt. We sing this song precisely because no one thing that the Israelites received was actually enough.

If God had brought us out of Egypt,	Ilu hotzianu mimitzrayim,	אלו הוציאנו ממצרים
It would have been enough!	Dayeinu!	דיינו
If God had split the sea for us,	Ilu kara lanu et hayam,	אלו קרע לנו את הים
It would have been enough!	Dayeinu!	דיינו
If God had given us Shabbat,	Ilu natan lanu et hashabbat,	ולא נתן לנו את השבת
It would have been enough!	Dayeinu!	דיינו
If God had given us the Torah,	Ilu natan lanu et hatorah,	אלו נתן לנו את התורה
It would have been enough!	Dayeinu!	דיינו

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Passover Symbols

We have now told the story of Passover...but wait! We're not quite done. There are still some symbols on our seder plate we haven't talked about yet. Rabban Gamliel would say that whoever didn't explain the shank bone, matzah, and marror (or bitter herbs) hasn't done Passover justice (Mishnah).

The shank bone represents the Pesach, the special lamb sacrifice made in the days of the Temple for the Passover holiday. It is called the pesach, from the Hebrew word meaning "to pass over," because God passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt when visiting plagues upon our oppressors.

The matzah reminds us that when our ancestors were finally free to leave Egypt, there was no time to pack or prepare. Our ancestors grabbed whatever dough was made and set out on their journey, letting their dough bake into matzah as they fled.

The bitter herbs provide a visceral reminder of the bitterness of slavery, the life of hard labor our ancestors experienced in Egypt.

The egg, beitzah, represents the additional festival sacrifice that the Israelites would bring to the Temple in Jerusalem. Many today also see this egg as a symbol of spring and rebirth.

Charoset, the mixture of wine, apples, and nuts, represents the mortar that the Israelites used during their servitude to the Egyptians.

The Artichoke An artichoke has many petals, thistles and a heart. The thistles are on its outside, representing how many people still oppose and question interfaith marriages in many Jewish communities throughout the world. We remove those thistles tonight, only keeping the heart and surrounding petals, to represent the shedding of those prejudices, and emphasize that we don't need to all look the same on the outside or have the same belief system to love and respect one another: it's only what's in one's heart that is important.

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The Orange is described in Professor Susannah Heschel's own words, from an article that she wrote for The Jewish Daily Forward in 2013:

“At an early point in the seder... I asked each person to take a segment of the orange, make the blessing over fruit and eat the segment in recognition of gay and lesbian Jews and of widows, orphans, Jews who are adopted and all others who sometimes feel marginalized in the Jewish community. When we eat that orange segment, we spit out the seeds to repudiate homophobia and we recognize that in a whole orange, each segment sticks together. Oranges are sweet and juicy and remind us of the fruitfulness of gay and lesbian Jews and of the homosociality that has been such an important part of Jewish experience, whether of men in yeshivas or of women in the Ezrat Nashim. It is important to recognize how deep and strong patriarchy remains, and how important it is for us to celebrate the contributions of gay and lesbian Jews, and all those who need to be liberated from marginality to centrality. And Passover is the right moment to ensure freedom for all Jews.” – Susannah Heschel

We include the orange in order to accept and acknowledge freedom and diversity in our community. The Jewish people left Egypt with “a mixed multitude” of people attracted to a vision of social transformation. Just as the orange is naturally made up of many pieces -- none of which are identical to the other -- so, too, is the world made up of many different and unique people and cultures. This fruit serves as a new symbol of acceptance for all the races, cultures, creeds, genders and identities that surround us, both alike and different, and a symbol of equality for all men and women throughout the world. By welcoming others with our hearts and minds, we celebrate the liberty everyone everywhere deserves.

B'chol Dor v'Dor

Everyone reads together, first in the Hebrew and then in the English:

B'chol dor v'dor chayev adam lirot et atzmo c'ilu hu yatzah m'mitrayim.

In every generation each person is obligated to see that they themselves had left Egypt.

Haggadah means narration, and tonight's celebration insists on the moral seriousness of the stories that we tell about ourselves. Stories are easily dismissible as distractions, the make-believe we craved as children, losing ourselves in the sweet enchantment of “as if.” “As if”

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belongs to the imagination, that wild terrain governed by no obvious rules. But tonight we are asked to take this faculty of the mind so beloved by children and novelists, extremely seriously...It is not enough to merely tell the story, but we must live inside of it, blur the boundaries of our personal narrative so that we spill outward...

--Rebecca Newberger Goldstein

The Second Cup

Cup 2: Freedom to tell our story

The Passover seder is meant to ensure that our people's story of going from bondage to freedom will be passed from generation to generation. Those stories are kept alive by our actions in this world. What stories from your own life do you hope to keep alive? What are the ideas that exist in your imagination that you want to bring to reality?

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the second cup of wine!

Rachtzah

Hand washing rituals have been a part of Jewish practice for millenia. Even back to the Torah's description of Temple practice, cleanliness was emphasized as a way to achieve ritual purity. In those days, ritual purity was a necessity for communion with the deity.

During the Black Plague, some Medieval scholars attribute the relatively low mortality rate among Jews to hand washing rituals: a heightened sense of cleanliness may have led to a slower spread of disease in the Jewish community. Other scholars point out that Jews were ostracized from many European communities and forced into ghettos.

Though we might look around our world and become despondent in the face of global tragedy, we can take comfort in the fact that our tradition gives us the tools and values to be leaders in public health. Our people have had to

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experience what it means to be exiled from the community. In this moment, the exile is imposed due to public health measures rather than anti-semitism. Even in our quarantine, we rejoice in the freedom we have to connect with those in our community who may have different beliefs and opinions than us. Now more than ever, that community is necessary.

As we wash our hands this evening, we share a blessing for public health and for finding community even in the face of social distancing.

After you have poured the water over your hands, recite this short blessing.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו, וצונו על נטילת ידיים

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to wash our hands.

Motzi Matzah

The familiar hamotzi blessing marks the formal start of the meal. Because we are using matzah instead of bread, we add a blessing celebrating this mitzvah.

Take a piece of matzah and recite the following blessings before you eat them:

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who brings bread from the land.

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על אכילת מצה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat matzah.

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Maror

Take some of the bitter herbs, often horseradish, and put a little on a piece of matzah. Recite the following blessing before you eat:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַרּוֹר

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat bitter herbs.

Koreich

There is a legend that the great Rabbi Hillel read the commandment that we are meant to eat maror and matzah, but wasn't sure whether we were supposed to eat them together or separately. To make sure he covered his bases, he did both. Today, we honor his legacy by making a sandwich of matzah, maror, and charoset. Whether or not the story is true, the snack is tasty!

In addition to his sandwich, Hillel is also remembered for his famous teaching: "If I am not for myself, who am I? If I am for myself alone, what am I? And if not now, when?" As we eat the three ingredients in the Hillel sandwich, reflect on Hillel's three questions. He suggests that while we must never forget who we are, we also cannot be entirely self serving, and in our efforts to help make the world a better place, there is no time like the present!

Shulchan Oreich

The most important words of the seder:

The Festival Meal is Served

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Tzafun (The Search for the Afikomen)

I cannot help but glance around in this moment and wonder

“How?”

How can I find a place

Just a tiny space

To hide this piece

This piece of my story that has been told so long

That echoes from generation to generation

I know I must fulfill its ending

But this place that I live is just too small

Too cramped

Too known

Do hiding places exist here anymore?

I cannot help but glance around in this moment and wonder

“Where?”

Where is the place

A tiny nook

A little cranny

Where the last puzzle piece of my story is hidden

The joy in the fulfillment

Of a generations old obligation

This place that I live has become so small

So cramped

So known

Yet hiding places still exist.

The middle matzah that was hidden earlier in the seder has been found!

Afikomen in Greek means “that which comes after,” though in the context of a meal, we might call it dessert! We are taught that our very last taste of our meal should be matzah. Everyone should take a piece of the Afikomen. Though matzah may not be the most delectable dessert, the more we chew on it, the sweeter it becomes. Keep chewing your piece of matzah until you find that sweetness. Just as the matzah gets sweeter over time, so too does freedom.

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Bareich

The Third Cup: the Freedom of the Other

As we have seen, empathy and compassion are major parts of our Passover story. We are obligated to remember the hardship of those affected by our story, even if they are not our own people. As you pour the third cup of wine, discuss how you might help others find their stories. How can we empower others to break from bondage into freedom?

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the third cup of wine!

Hallel

Hallel is the time set aside for singing. Some of us might sing traditional prayers from the Book of Psalms. Others take this moment for favorites like Chad Gadya & Who Knows One, which you can find in the song appendix. To celebrate the theme of freedom, we might sing songs from the civil rights movement. Or perhaps your crazy Uncle Frank has some parody lyrics about Passover to the tunes from a musical. We're at least three cups of wine into the night, so just roll with it.

Fourth Glass of Wine

The Fourth Cup: Hope

As we come to the end of the seder, we drink one final cup of wine. With this cup of wine, we acknowledge that, though our seder is concluding, it is not the end to any of our stories. As we pour our last cup of wine, discuss your hope for the coming year. How do you want your story to continue?

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Drink the fourth and final cup of wine!

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Elijah's Cup

Elijah the prophet is a symbol of the hope to come. It is told that when he comes he will bring peace and spread love throughout the world.

We now raise Elijah's cup and open the front door to invite the prophet Elijah to join our seder as we sing:

אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּבִיאַ, אֱלֹהֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה

אֱלֹהֵי, אֱלֹהֵי, אֱלֹהֵי הַגְּלָעָדִי

בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֱלֵינוּ

עִם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד,

עִם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד

Eliyahu hanavi

Eliyahu hatishbi

Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu hagiladi

Bimheirah b'yameinu,

yavo eileinu

Im mashiach ben-David, Im mashiach ben-David

Elijah the prophet, the returning, the man of Gilad: return to us speedily, in our days with the messiah, son of David.

Miriam's Cup

At many seders, it is a custom to keep a second cup, filled with water, for Miriam the prophetess. Miriam, Moses' sister, is celebrated in the Torah as an important leader of the Israelites. After crossing the Sea of Reeds, we are told that Miriam led the Israelite women in song and dance to commemorate and celebrate their new-found freedom. Miriam and the rest of the women brought their musical instruments with them during the Exodus, from this we learn how important it is to plan for our most joyful moments.

Miriam is known in the Torah as a provider of water, an important role for people wandering in the desert. Though we have enjoyed four decadent cups of wine, we finish with a small sip of water. Sometimes we can take joy even in the simplest things in our lives. Sometimes, those simple things are the most important.

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Nirtzah

Nirtzah marks the conclusion of the seder. Our bellies are full, we have had several cup of wine, we have told stories and sung songs, and now it is time for the evening to come to a close. At the end of the seder, we honor the tradition of declaring, “Next year in Jerusalem!”

For some people, the recitation of this phrase expresses the anticipation of a rebuilt Jerusalem. For others, it is an affirmation of hope and of connectedness with *Klal Yisrael*, the whole of the Jewish community. Still others yearn for peace in Israel and for all those living in the Diaspora. Though it comes at the end of the seder, this moment also marks a beginning.

We are beginning the next season with a renewed awareness of the freedoms we enjoy and the obstacles we must still confront. We are looking forward to the time that we gather together again. Having retold stories of the Jewish people, recalled historic movements of liberation, and reflected on the struggles people still face for freedom and equality, we are ready to embark on a year that we hope will bring positive change in the world and freedom to people everywhere.

Our seder is over, according to Jewish tradition and law. As we had the pleasure to gather for a seder this year, we hope to once again have the opportunity in the years to come. As we say...

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם

L'shana haba-ah biy'rushalayim

NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!

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Song Appendix

Dayenu

English Translation	Transliteration	Hebrew
If He had brought us out from Egypt,	<i>Ilu hotzianu mimitzrayim,</i>	אלו הוציאנו ממצרים
and had not carried out judgments against them	<i>v'lo asah bahem sh'fatim,</i>	ולא עשה בהם שפטים
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had carried out judgments against them,	<i>Ilu asah bahem sh'fatim</i>	אלו עשה בהם שפטים
and not against their idols	<i>v'lo asah beloheihem,</i>	ולא עשה באלהיהם
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had destroyed their idols,	<i>Ilu asah beloheihem,</i>	אלו עשה באלהיהם
and had not smitten their first-born	<i>v'lo harag et b'choreihem,</i>	ולא הרג את בכוריהם
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had smitten their first-born,	<i>Ilu harag et b'choreihem,</i>	אלו הרג את בכוריהם
and had not given us their wealth	<i>v'lo natan lanu et mamonam,</i>	ולא נתן לנו את ממונם
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had given us their wealth,	<i>Ilu natan lanu et mamonam,</i>	אלו נתן לנו את ממונם
and had not split the sea for us	<i>v'lo kara lanu et hayam,</i>	ולא קרע לנו את הים
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had split the sea for us,	<i>Ilu kara lanu et hayam,</i>	אלו קרע לנו את הים
and had not taken us through it on dry land	<i>v'lo he'eviranu b'tocho becharavah,</i>	ולא העבירנו בתוכו בחרבה
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had taken us through the sea on dry land,	<i>Ilu he'eviranu b'tocho becharavah,</i>	אלו העבירנו בתוכו בחרבה
and had not drowned our oppressors in it	<i>v'lo shika tzareinu b'tocho,</i>	ולא שקע צרינו בתוכו
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דינו
If He had drowned our oppressors in it,	<i>Ilu shika tzareinu b'tocho,</i>	אלו שקע צרינו בתוכו
and had not supplied our	<i>v'lo sipeik tzorkeinu bamidbar</i>	ולא ספק צרכנו במדבר ארבעים

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needs in the desert for forty years	<i>arba'im shana,</i>	שָׁנָה
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had supplied our needs in the desert for forty years,	<i>Ilu sipeik tzorkeinu bamidbar</i>	אֱלֹהֵי סִפְקֵנוּ בְּמִדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה
and had not fed us the manna	<i>v'lo he'echilanu et haman,</i>	וְלֹא הֶאֱכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had fed us the manna,	<i>Ilu he'echilanu et haman,</i>	אֱלֹהֵי הֶאֱכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן
and had not given us the Shabbat	<i>v'lo natan lanu et hashabbat,</i>	וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had given us the Shabbat,	<i>Ilu natan lanu et hashabbat,</i>	אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת
and had not brought us before Mount Sinai	<i>v'lo keirvanu lifnei har sinai,</i>	וְלֹא קָרַבְנוּ לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had brought us before Mount Sinai,	<i>Ilu keirvanu lifnei har sinai,</i>	אֱלֹהֵי קָרַבְנוּ לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי
and had not given us the Torah	<i>v'lo natan lanu et hatorah,</i>	וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had given us the Torah,	<i>Ilu natan lanu et hatorah,</i>	אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה
and had not brought us into the land of Israel	<i>v'lo hichnisanu l'eretz yisra'eil,</i>	וְלֹא הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ
If He had brought us into the land of Israel,	<i>Ilu hichnisanu l'eretz yisra'eil,</i>	אֱלֹהֵי הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
and not built for us the Holy Temple	<i>v'lo vanah lanu et beit hamikdash,</i>	וְלֹא בָּנָה לָנוּ אֶת בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
— Dayenu, it would have been enough!	<i>dayeinu!</i>	דַּיְנוּ

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Chad Gadya

One little goat, one little goat That father bought for two cents. One little goat, one little goat.	Khad gadya, khad gadya D'zabin aba bitrey zuzei Khad Gadya, khad gadya	חד גדיא, חד גדיא דובין אבא בתרי זוני חד גדיא, חד גדיא
A cat came and ate the goat That father bought for two cents. One little goat, one little goat.	V'ata shunra v'akhla l'gadya D'zabin aba bitrei zuzei Khad gadya, khad gadya	ואתא שונרא ואכלה לגדיא דובין אבא בתרי זוני חד גדיא, חד גדיא
A dog came and bit the cat That ate the goat..	V'ata kalba v'nashakh l'shunra D'akhla l'gadya...	ואתא כלבא ונשך לשונרא דאכלה לגדיא...
A stick came and hit the dog That bit the cat...	V'ata khutra v'hikah l'kalba D'nashakh l'shunra...	ואתא חוטרא והכה לכלבא דנשך לשונרא...
A fire came and burnt the stick That hit the cat...	V'ata nura v'saraf l'khutra D'hikah l'kalba...	ואתא נורא ושרף לחוטרא דהכה לכלבא...
Water came and doused the fire That burned the stick...	V'ata maya v'khava l'nura D'saraf l'khutra...	ואתא מנא וכבה לנורא דשרף לחוטרא...
An ox came and drank the water That doused the fire...	V'ata tora v'shatah l'maya D'khaba l'nura...	ואתא תורא ושטה למנא דכבה לנורא
A butcher came and slaughtered the ox That drank the water...	V'ata ha-shokhet v'shakhat l'tora D'shakhat l'maya...	ואתא השוחט ושחט לתורא דשטה למנא...
The Angel of Death came and slew the butcher Who slaughtered the ox...	V'ata mal'akh ha-mavet v'shakhat l'shokheyt D'shakhat l'tora...	ואתא מלאך המות ושחט לשוחט דשחט לתורא...
The Holy One, Blessed Be He, came and killed the Angel of Death Who slew the butcher Who slaughtered the ox That drank the water That doused the fire That burned the stick that hit the dog That bit the cat That ate the goat That father got for two cents One little goat, one little goat	V'ata ha-kadosh barukh hu v'shakhat l'mal'akh hamavet D'shakhat l'shokheyt D'shakhat l'tora D'shatah l'maya D'khavah l'nura D'saraf l'khutra D'hikah l'kalba D'nashakh l'shunra D'akhlah l'gadya D'zabin aba bitrey zuzey Khad gadya, khad gadya	ואתא הקדוש ברוך הוא ושחט למלאך המות דשחט לשוחט דשחט לתורא דשטה למנא דכבה לנורא דשרף לחוטרא דהכה לכלבא דנשך לשונרא דאכלה לגדיא דובין אבא בתרי זוני חד גדיא, חד גדיא

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Who Knows One

Who knows One?

I know One!

One is Hashem! One is Hashem! One is Hashem! in the heaven and the earth!

Who knows Two?

I know two!

Two are the luchot habrit!

...

Three are the abbas!

...

Four are the Immas!

...

Five are the books of Torah!

...

Six are the books of Mishnah!

...

Seven are the days of the week!

...

Eight are the days to a brit milah!

...

Nine are the months until a baby is born!

...

Ten are the commandments!

...

Eleven are the stars in Joseph's dream!

...

Twelve are the tribes of Israel!

...

Thirteen are The attributes of God!