

Tomchik-Litwin Family

Passover Haggadah



WELCOME TO OUR SEDER

Tonight we gather together to celebrate Passover, our holiday of freedom. We will tell the story of our ancestors' liberation from slavery. Tonight we celebrate their freedom and ours.

We began as slaves in the land of Egypt. Today we are free people.

We welcome our friends and family members from other backgrounds to reflect with us on the meaning of freedom in all our lives and histories.

Tonight we also remember all those of our generation who are not yet free. May this seder kindle in us the zeal to work for the freedom of all.

CANDLE LIGHTING

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו
במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של (שבת ו) יום טוב.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM A-SHER KI-DE-SHA-NU BE-MITZVO-TAV VE-TZI-VA-NU LE-HAD-LIK NER SHEL (SHABBAT VÖ) YOM TOV.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe who makes us holy with commandments and commands us to light the (Shabbat and) festival lights.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו
ההגיענו לזמן הזה.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM SHE-HE-CHE-YA-NU VE-KI-YEMA-NU VE-HIG-I-YA-NU LAZ-MAN HA-ZEH.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us and enabled us to celebrate this joyous occasion.

KIDDUSH (FIRST CUP OF WINE)

Tonight we will drink four cups of wine. While our tradition abounds with explanations of this custom, tonight we can think of the four cups as representing four types of freedom. The first cup represents physical freedom.

We dedicate the first cup of wine to all those who still seek their physical freedom. It is our responsibility to help them; this seder night we rededicate ourselves to that purpose.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM BO-RAY PE-RI HA-GA-FEN.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

MIRIAM'S CUP

Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a strong prophet who first saved Moses when he was a baby, then joined him to lead the Jewish people to freedom. We will fill Miriam's cup with water, rather than wine. Legend tells us that a miraculous well accompanied the Hebrews in their journey through the desert, providing them with water. This well was given to Miriam by God to honor her bravery and devotion to the Jewish people. Both Miriam and her well served as spiritual oasis in the desert, sources of sustenance and healing.

We now fill Miriam's cup with water to honor her role in ensuring the survival of the Jewish people. Let's now drink a cup of water as a symbol that our daughters may continue to draw from the strength and wisdom of their heritage.

We place Miriam's cup on our Seder table to honor the important role of women in our tradition and history. Their stories have been told too little.

KARPAS (GREEN VEGETABLE)

Now we take a vegetable, representing our joy and hope at the dawning of spring. We dip it into salt water, a symbol of the tears our ancestors shed as slaves. May we never be so comfortable that we become complacent, forgetting the pain of others.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM BO-RAY PE-RI HA-A-DA-MAH.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth.

AFIKOMEN

There are three matzot under the cloth on the matzah plate. We take half of the middle matzah to be the afikomen, which means "dessert." We will hide the afikomen (the person who finds it later will win a prize!). We will save the other half for the blessings later in our seder service.

This is the bread of suffering which our people ate when they were slaves in Egypt. We invite all who are hungry to join us. We pray that all who are slaves will soon be free.

FOUR QUESTIONS

Passover is a very special holiday. We do many things differently during Passover.

Why is this night different from all other nights?

1. On all other nights we eat both leavened bread and unleavened bread; why on this night do we eat only unleavened bread?
2. On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs; why on this night do we eat especially bitter herbs?
3. On all other nights we do not usually dip our foods even once; why on this night do we dip twice?
4. On all other nights we eat while sitting up straight or reclining; why on this night do we only recline?

To answer these questions, we must tell our story.

THE PASSOVER STORY

We retell this story each year to remind ourselves of the importance of human freedom. The story of our people's Exodus from Egypt reassures us that freedom is possible; deliverance can come; salvation is within our reach; the dream of redemption can become a reality.

Nearly 4000 years ago there was a famine in the Land of Israel. Our ancestor Jacob took his family and settled in Egypt, where there was plenty of food. The children of Jacob lived well in Egypt. They became a great nation, powerful and numerous.

Some time later, a new king came to the throne of Egypt. He feared the Israelites because there were so many of us. He said, "If there is

a war, they will join our enemies and fight against us.” So Pharaoh forced our people to become his slaves.

We cried out to God for help and God heard our plea, saw our suffering and responded to our oppression. Pharaoh refused to let us go free, so God brought Ten Plagues to the land of Egypt: blood, frogs, lice, insects, cattle disease, boils, hail, locusts, darkness and the slaying of the first-born sons of the Egyptians. When Pharaoh’s own son died he finally agreed to let us go.

The Jews left Egypt in such a hurry that they did not have time to let their bread dough rise. They baked it immediately and it came out flat and hard – the first matzah.

Our people escaped to the Red Sea with the Egyptians in hot pursuit, for Pharaoh had changed his mind about letting us go in peace. Upon reaching the Red Sea, God told Moses to hold up his wooden staff. The sea parted, allowing the Israelites to cross on dry land. When all of the Israelites were safely across, Moses again held up his staff, closing the waters around Pharaoh’s advancing soldiers.

From the Red Sea, our people traveled on to Mount Sinai where God gave them the Torah. At Sinai, we entered into our covenant with God which sustains us to this day and teaches us to cherish a vision of the world free of Pharaohs, slavery and plagues.

A full cup of wine symbolizes complete happiness. The triumph of Passover is diminished by the sacrifice of many human lives when plagues were visited upon the people of Egypt. We must express our sorrow over their suffering, for we cannot take joy in the suffering of others. Therefore, let us diminish the wine in our cups as we recall the ten plagues:

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|----|----------------|-----|------------------------|
| 1. | Blood | 6. | Boils |
| 2. | Frogs | 7. | Hail |
| 3. | Lice | 8. | Locusts |
| 4. | Insects | 9. | Darkness |
| 5. | Cattle Disease | 10. | Death of the Firstborn |

God did many wonderful things for us. God brought us out of Egypt, gave us the Shabbat, gave us the Torah, and brought us into the Land of Israel. Any one of these would have been enough. Therefore we recite *Dayenu* which means “it would have been enough for us”.

Had God only brought us out of Egypt, it would have been enough for us.

Had God only given us the Shabbat, it would have been enough for us.

Had God only given us the Torah, it would have been enough for us.

Our celebration today is also shadowed by our awareness of continuing sorrow and oppression in all parts of the world. Ancient plagues are mirrored in modern tragedies.

In our own time ordinary people suffer and die as a result of the tyrants who rule over them. While we may rejoice in the defeat of tyrants, we must also express our sorrow at the suffering of the many innocent people.

As the pain of others diminishes our joys, let us once more diminish our ceremonial drink as we together recite the names of these *modern* plagues:

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Hunger | 6. Injustice |
| 2. War | 7. Poverty |
| 3. Tyranny | 8. Ignorance |
| 4. Greed | 9. Pollution of the Earth |
| 5. Bigotry | 10. Indifference to
Suffering |

SECOND CUP OF WINE

Our second cup of wine symbolizes intellectual freedom – freedom of the mind. Closed minds lead to misunderstanding and human suffering. We need to open our minds to new ideas and try to understand the ideas and beliefs of others. Knowledge and understanding will lead to greater freedom for all in our world.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

BA-RUCH ATA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM BO-RAY PE-RI HA-GA-FEN.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Let us now explain some of the remaining symbols of Passover:

PESACH

The shankbone (or beet) is symbolic of the paschal lamb, sacrifice made for Pesach in the Temple in Jerusalem. The lamb was chosen for sacrifice because this is the animal that the Egyptians worshipped. The shankbone on our seder plate symbolizes our rejection of idolatry. Idolatry has taken a different form in every age. In our own time, we have witnessed the results of idolatry when people place complete, unquestioning faith in someone or something other than God. This occurred in Germany, where eleven million souls, including six million of our own people, were

tragically and cruelly lost. We are reminded now of our obligation to combat idolatry whenever and wherever we encounter it, in order to insure the spiritual freedom of all.

MATZAH

Matzah reminds us of the dough our people baked the night they left Egypt, when they didn't have time to allow it to rise.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LOECH HA-O-LAM A-SHER KI-DE-SHA-NU BE-MITZ-VO-TAV VE-TZI-VA-NU AL A-CHI-LAT MA-TZA.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes us holy with commandments and commands us to eat the matzah.

MAROR

The maror reminds us of the bitterness of slavery and the tears our people shed when they were enslaved in Egypt.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר.

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LOO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM A-SHER KI-DI-SHA-NU BE-MITZ-VO-TAV VE-TZI-VA-NIU AL A-CHI-LAT MA-ROR.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes us holy with commandments and commands us to eat Maror.

CHAROSES

The charoses is made to resemble the mortar used by the slaves for Pharaoh's buildings. However, it tastes sweet to remind us of the sweetness of our faith that sustained us through hard times.

It is now tradition to make a sandwich of *matzah* and *maror* with charoses. We eat the *maror* of slavery together with the *matzah* of freedom. In times of slavery there is always the hope of freedom. In times of freedom, there is always the memory of slavery.

BEITSAH - EGG

The egg is a symbol of life and of the rebirth that occurs each Spring. But the egg is also fragile and so it also represents potential that can be destroyed.

THIRD CUP OF WINE

The third cup of wine symbolizes spiritual freedom. Our people has known the need for spiritual resistance in many ages. Even in the worst of circumstances, we have maintained our dignity.

Let us seek the spiritual freedom that generations before us sacrificed to maintain.

ELIJAH'S CUP

Elijah's cup represents the promise of messianic freedom. It symbolizes a time which has not yet come, but for which we yearn and hope.

The Seder tradition is to pour a cup for the Hebrew prophet Elijah, that he may come and deliver this freedom to us. For millennia, Jews opened the door for him, inviting him to join their Seders, hoping that he would bring with him a messiah to save the world.

Yet the tasks of saving the world - once ascribed to prophets, messiahs and gods must be taken up by us mere mortals, by common people with shared goals. Working together for progressive change, we can bring about the improvement of the world, for justice and for peace.

FOURTH CUP OF WINE

As our seder draws to an end, we take up our cups one last time. Not everyone in our world is yet free. This fourth cup reminds us of our responsibility to help bring freedom to those enslaved, peace to those at war, food to those who hunger. May we live to fulfill it.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

BA-RUCH A-TA- A-DO-NAI E-LO-HAY-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM BO-RAY PE-RI HA-GA-FEN.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

CONCLUSION

Our seder service is now concluded, its purposes revealed. As we gathered together to celebrate this seder tonight, may we be worthy to celebrate again in freedom next year. Together, let us say:

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם

LE-SHA-NAH HA-BA-AH BI-RU-SHA-LA-YIM

Next year in Jerusalem!

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