

# A Queer Liberation Haggadah

**5779/2019 edition**

This is a collaborative effort built by the Queer Jewish Community. Participants include:

Rabbah Rona Matlow

Martin Rawlings-Fein

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Rabbi Emily Aviva

Kapor-Mator

Lior Gross

Rabbi Debra Kolodny

Rabbi Mike Rothbaum

Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig

Ariel Ya'akov Berry

Anonymous contributors

This Haggadah contains content liberated from the Bronfman Haggadah, Mah Nishtana A Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Ally, Haggadah. the Velveteen Haggadah and the Supreme Court Haggadah. All are open source and allow for free copying. This work also contains original content, traditional content and other open source content from the internet. As an aggregate work, it is under our copyright. It is a work in progress, and all errors are ours. It is our prayer that in future years we will not need a Queer Liberation Haggadah, but at the present time, we need one more than ever.

In addition, the idea of a collaborative Haggadah is not new. The Velveteen Rabbi, Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, has been doing this for years

<https://velveteenrabbi.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/vrhaggadah>

[6.pdf](#). This Haggadah will feature some content from her seminal collective work.

The seder table is the ideal place to bring multiple identities together in that the struggles for those identities as individuals and as communities are so integral to one another. We do not remove one identity to dawn another: we are all of our identities at all times. Just as we read of our past and the Jewish struggle for redemption, we relate our modern Queer struggle for recognition, freedom, and acceptance. The seder is not something separate from our Queer identities, but something strongly integrated – that speaks to us as whole, multifaceted people, in a celebratory and safe environment.

Blessings in this work use different God language at different times, with different genders and forms expressed. This work also contains blessings from Rabbi Barenblat's seminal collective effort.

God transcends gender and form, but neither Hebrew nor English do. As queer people of many genders and forms we understand this. So to honor difference we will attempt to honor God with differing language through the night.

**In (any appropriate place), we acknowledge that we sit on Indigenous land wherever we recline.**

הִנֵּה מַה טוֹב וְיָמָּה נָעִים שֶׁבֶת כָּלָנוּ בְּיַחַד

Hinei mah tov umah na'im, shevet kulanu b'yahad.

Behold how good and wonderful it is that all of us are sitting together.

As we bathe in the light of these candles, we remember all the candles we've lit as Jews, as Queer people and allies, and as those who struggle for freedom. Shabbat candles. *Yahrtzeit* candles. Candles at AIDS vigils. And candles at Take Back the Night Marches.

As we share in the light of these candles, we rededicate the flame each of us carries within, that small reflection of the Creator's light that is ours to use as a beacon in our work of *tikkun olam*—repairing the world. We rededicate this small spark that we can use as a match to give light to the hopes and dreams of all people.

ברוכה את יה, שכינה, רוח חי העולמים, אשר קדשתנו במצותיה,  
וציותנו להדליק נר של (שבת ו) יום טוב.

Brukha At, Yah, Shekhina, Ruah Hay ha'olamim, asher  
kidashatnu b'mitzvotaha, v'tzivatnu l'hadlik ner shel (Shabbat v')  
Yom Tov.

Blessed are You Yah, Shekhina, The Spirit of all Creation, who  
Sanctified us with Her commandments, and commanded us to  
light the (Sabbath and) Holy Day lights.

Note that if the seder starts before sundown on Shabbat, the  
lighting of candles will be delayed until after dark, likely at the  
time of the third cup.

כּוֹס מִרְיָם

## MIRIAM'S CUP

ALL: We include on our seder table *kos Miryam*, Miriam's cup. Legend tells of a mysterious well filled with living waters that followed the Israelites through their wandering in the desert while Miriam was alive. This well also watered the flocks of our mothers Rebecca and Rachel.

*AS WE PASS AROUND MIRIAM'S CUP, EACH PERSON POURS SOME WATER FROM HIR OWN GLASS INTO THE CUP.*

READER: In every generation, we experience both oppression and liberation. In our wanderings, both as a people and as

individuals, Miriam's well still accompanies us as a sustaining presence in the desert, enabling us not just to survive, but to thrive.

READER: Miriam's well reminds us that our journey has both direction and destination—to a place where freedom is proclaimed for all. A land flowing with milk and honey.

*RAISE MIRIAM'S CUP.*

*ALL: Zot kos Miryam, kos mayim chayyim, zeikher litzi'at Mitzrayim.* This is the cup of Miriam, the cup of living waters, a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. May the cup of Miriam refresh and inspire us as we embark on our journey through the *Haggadah*.



## RUTH & ELIJAH'S CUP

ALL: At Passover we fill a cup with wine for Elijah and open the door to welcome them to our seder. Elijah symbolizes our hope for the Messianic age, when the world will be perfected, and all people will live in harmony and peace.

ALL: We also fill a cup of wine for Ruth, the first Jew by choice and great-grandparent of King David. We open the door to signify our welcome of Ruth and all who follow in their footsteps—those who become part of our people, part of our communal diversity.

*All rise, face the open door, and read together:*

ALL: We declare that we do not have to wait for the Messianic age to make sure that every Jew feels fully comfortable and embraced by our people, no matter who they are, what their parentage, what their skin, hair or eye color is; what their name sounds like; how they became Jewish, as a child or as an adult, Jewish by choice or chance.

*Close the door and be seated.*

## BLESSING DIFFERENCES

*Take a moment to introduce yourself to those around you. You might share one motivation that brought you to this seder table.*

*Or perhaps one ancestor or inspirational teacher whose memory you carry with you. Take a moment to share what distinguishes you from others.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם מְשַׁנֶּה הַבְּרִיּוֹת.

*Baruch Atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, meshaneh ha-briyot.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, sovereign of the universe, who has made all creatures different.

קדש

## KADEISH (SANCTIFICATION)

Tonight, our four cups are dedicated to *yetziah*—going forth, coming out.

We invite members of our community to share a story before dedicating each cup.

*A member of our community shares a coming-out story.*

We fill, lift, and dedicate the first of four cups of grape juice.

**In the spirit of liberation, for Kadeish, we will only use juice, as some of our community are maintaining their liberation from intoxicants. To bless over alcohol would put them at**

**risk. So as a community we celebrate their liberation together by blessing over non-alcoholic juice only.**

ברוכה את יה, שכינה, רוח חי העולמים בוראת פרי הגפן

*B'ruchah At, Yah, Shekhina Ruah Hay Ha'Olamim, boreit p'ri ha-gafen.*

Blessed are You Yah, Shekhina, the Spirit of all Creation, Who created the fruit of the vine.

ברוכה את יה, אלהינו רוח העולם, שֶׁחִיְתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ וְהִגִּיעַתָּנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה

B'ruchah At, Yah, Eloheinu Ruach ha-olam, shehecheyat'nu,  
v'kiy'mat'nu, v'higiyat'nu laz'man ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Spirit of the Universe, who  
enlivened us, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season

*We drink the cup while reclining!*

וּרְחַץ

## **URCHATZ (SYMBOLIC WASHING)**

In Hebrew, urchatz means “washing” or “cleansing.” In Aramaic, sister language to Hebrew, urchatz means “trusting.” As we wash each others’ hands, we reflect on this act of trust and welcoming, recalling the sources of hope and trust we want to bring into the world for ourselves and each other.

כרפס

## KARPAS (EATING GREENS)

We dip a vegetable grown on the ground in salt water. The salt water is symbolic of the tears of queer people who have been oppressed through our generations, in every land in which we have lived. As we are relatively free queer people here, we have ***fabulous*** vegetables to dip, rather than the usual boring parsley one usually sees at boring seders. Please take a piece of the ***rainbow*** vegetables and dip in salt water, and hold until we recite the blessing together, then eat:

נברך את עין החיים, בורא פרי האדמה

Nevareikh et 'Ayn HaHayyim, borei pri ha'adamah.

We bless The Source of all life, who brings forth the fruits of human labor (lit the earth).

After eating, we recite together:

**We know that this produce is grown through the backbreaking work primarily of the undocumented itinerant farm worker. We acknowledge their fragile plight and that this produce would not exist without their hard work.**

Fill your neighbors' cup with grape juice.



ינ'

## **YAHATZ (BREAKING THE MIDDLE MATZAH)**

We break the middle piece of matzah, setting it aside as the afikoman, the retrieval of which will end our seder. In a traditional seder, the children would hunt for the afikoman, and the one who finds it would be given a prize. Our prize is our sitting together and learning and celebrating our liberation. For this reason the afikoman is only set aside and not hidden. Just as we try to live openly and not closeted, our afikoman is not closeted tonight.

No prayer is recited before we break the middle matzah on our seder table. This is a silent act. We realize that, like the broken matzah, we are all incomplete, with prayers yet to be fulfilled, promises still to be redeemed.

**מגיד**

## **Telling the story**

The traditional Haggadah has a locked format, with Four Questions, asking why this night is different from other nights. But the Rabbis teach that if anyone asks a question about the Pesach process or observance the requirements are met.

The following is a very charged topic. Participants are asked to be respectful of boundaries if this paragraph is engaged:

Questions are powerful because they disrupt the status quo, they can give us a sense of wonder, and they can investigate superficial claims. So often, we see those who question in our world are suppressed, such as people who push back against the gender binary or Chelsea Manning, currently in solitary confinement for pushing back against the

complacent story the US government told. Does anyone have any questions - about Pesach or broader - that can lead us into a tone and space for inquiry, appreciation, and mobilization, for tonight and beyond? Note that we do not need to have the answers now, but the act of questioning itself is critical.

There is a telling of “Four Sons”, paraphrased from four different Torah verses of what your children might ask you about the Pesach sacrifice. In traditional seders, I always ask what you would say to the one who never got the chance to ask due to *Sin’at Hinam*, senseless hatred.

Here we are even more mindful of all the queer children who are unhoused because their parents would rather see them dead than queer. We are mindful of the queer kids who are

in institutions because their parents think conversion therapy can somehow “fix” them. We are mindful of the queer kids who are incarcerated because of the prison industrial complex, and we are most mindful of the queer kids who didn’t make it.

**Together: We pray for a day when all queer kids can live fulfilling lives to adulthood and move forward to improve and fix our broken world.**

Then there is a long recounting of stories from the Talmud.

This is a Queer Liberation Seder. So, rather than recounting the traditional stories and songs, which are foundational to us as Jews, but not as up front as the daily struggles we face as queers, we invite people to share their stories of liberation, or to share stories of people NEEDING liberation still.

**Together: While WE may be free, we know there are far too many queers, people of color, disabled people who are still bound.**

In the morning blessings that Jews recite we say that God is *Matir Assurim*, that God Frees the bound, and that God is *Zokeif Kefufim*, that God straightens the bent. Yet so many of us are still chained and so many of us still struggle with our physical, emotional and developmental struggles. And how many Trans people out there are prevented from transitioning due to ignorance, hatred, transphobia, religious intolerance? We also say in the morning blessings that God is *Pokeiach Ivrim* – that God opens the eyes.

**Together: We pray for the day when everyone's eyes are truly open. Then we may all be able to truly be free.**

Our Torah teaches us that we MUST love our neighbors as ourselves, and that we must not put stumbling blocks before the blind. Rashi, the ultimate commentator, teaches that this means we must not give bad advice. We pray for the day when all Jew follow these teachings. Every other religion has these teachings too.

**Together: We pray for the day when all people follow these teachings, and no longer literally put stumbling blocks in front of the blind and truly are accessible to all.**

**We raise the Matza and recite together:**

**This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are needy come join us in our Liberation Seder. Now we are bound by hate. Next year may we be free. Now we are here. Next year, may we live in any place we choose, free to live as we please, free to use public facilities without fear of harassment or arrest, or assault or humiliation.**

The following is a very charged topic. Participants are asked to be respectful of boundaries if this paragraph is engaged:

The traditional Haggadah recounts the plagues that God cast on Egypt in freeing the Israelite people from Egypt. We

are mindful of that. But at the same time, we are mindful that our planet is dying due to climate change due to the irresponsible actions of people, especially the fossil fuel industry and leaders who will not listen to their constituents and youth demanding action. We are mindful of the extractive and exploitative policies of Western imperial countries, that leave a legacy of poverty and continue to instigate instability to this day, and the intense suffering of people in Third World countries due to corrupt leadership. We are mindful of the suffering of Palestinians. No matter what one's feelings are of the existence of the State of Israel, the reality is that Israel, along with Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, are grossly abusing the Palestinian people, using them as political pawns.



Just as the political situation in the United States is fraught with risk for queer people, people of color, immigrants, disabled people, so is the situation in Israel. With the 2019 elections locking in a record fifth Netanyahu coalition, the situation for all marginalized people (read other than straight, white, religious Jews) became much more tricky. Because a Netanyahu coalition government depends on the cooperation of the religious parties, he must go out of his way to keep them satisfied. This has resulted in a number of recent decisions by the Rabbanut that portend trouble in the Land.

**We pray for a time when all those in all lands can live freely, as their true authentic selves, without fear that their own governments may be their worst enemies.**

**Together: We cannot be truly liberated while so many are suffering in the world. We cannot be truly liberated while our planet is dying. We pray for the day when wise political leadership rises to power so we can improve the political, socioeconomic and environmental conditions of the planet.**

**The Ten Plagues** (Adapted from the Supreme Court LGBTQ Seder, by Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig, updated by Rabbi Debra Kolodny)

We spill a drop of juice from our cup onto our plates for each of these plagues. We do not lick our fingers afterwards. The purpose is to reduce the joy of our freedom, recognizing there are those who are still chained. **Until all are truly free, none of us are!**

*Dam* (blood) – women arrested for wearing “men’s” pants

*Tz’fardea* (frogs) – men arrested for dancing together

*Kinim* (vermin) – being blackmailed

*Arov* (flies) – being hounded by the FBI, ICE, or other Homeland agencies

*Dever* (cattle disease) – losing one’s job

*Sh’hin* (boils) – losing custody of one’s children

*Barad* (hail) – being treated as dead by one’s family

*Arbeh* (locusts) – being subjected to electroshock aversion therapy

*Hoshech* (darkness) – being denied the right to adopt, or to use IVF

*Makat B’khorot* (death of the first born) – being treated as pariahs for having AIDS

## **Trans Lo Dayenu**

We were instrumental in the Compton Riots in San Francisco.

**It was not enough.**

We were leaders in the Stonewall Riots in New York.

**It was not enough.**

We supported our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters in the fight for gay & lesbian rights.

**It was not enough.**

We fought for equal marriage.

**It was not enough.**

We fought to be allowed to medically transition if we were not going to match stereotypes of what it means to be a man or woman.

**It was not enough.**

We fought to be allowed to remain married through our transition and not be forced to get a divorce.

**It was not enough.**

We fought to be allowed medical transition if we were not going to have genital surgery.

**It was not enough.**

We fought to be allowed medical transition if we were going to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

**It was not enough.**

We fought against gatekeeping and doctors, psychologists, and other health providers dictating what was best for us.

**It was not enough.**

We continue to fight against being portrayed as predators and pedophiles.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for access to employment.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for the right to exist without our identities being questioned by others.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for the right of trans children and youth to be able to be themselves without being punished and bullied.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for an end to the violence faced daily by trans people, particularly trans women of colour.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for representation and a say in our own health care and in educating health providers.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for an end to harassment of trans people by police, particularly trans women who engage in sex work, and trans women of colour.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for our voices to be heard when we express our needs, and not have cisgender people tell us what we need.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for adequate mental health care and supports to help those who may feel the need to self-harm or take their own lives.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for our voices to be heard in LGBT community and not be drowned out by the voices of gay and lesbian cis people.

**It is not enough.**

We fight for a day when people of all genders will be accepted, included, and affirmed as who they are and have access to the supports they need to be their true selves.

**Then it will be enough.**



## **Second Cup**

ברוכה את יה, שכינה, רוח העולם, בוראת פרי הגפן

Brucha At Yah, Shekhinah, ruach ha-olam, boreit pri hagafen.

Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Breath of Life, creator of the fruit of the vine. (VH)

## **The Orange on the Seder Plate**

In the early 1980s, the feminist scholar, Susannah Heschel, at a seder at Oberlin College, was introduced to the idea of a crust of bread on the seder plate for solidarity with Jewish lesbians. Recognizing that this was problematic as chameitz (leavened bread) she suggested the orange as a substitute. From MJL: She offered the orange as a symbol of the

fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life.

In addition, each orange segment had a few seeds that had to be spit out — a gesture of spitting out, repudiating the homophobia of Judaism.

So as queer Jews, we place the orange as a modern symbol of oppression on our seder plates.

**Together: We pray for a time when all symbols of oppression are purely historical, that all people are truly free to live their lives authentically.**

Rabban Gamliel used to say: Anyone who has not discussed these three things on Passover has not fulfilled their duty, namely:

Pesach, the Passover Offering;

Matzah, the Unleavened Bread;

Marror, the Bitter Herbs.

## Pesach

Why did our ancestors eat the Passover Offering during the period of the Temple? It is because the Holy Blessing One, passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt, as it is written: "You shall say: It is the Passover offering for the Adonay, who passed over the houses of the Israelites when God

smote the Egyptians and spared our houses. The people knelt and bowed down."

We still struggle to find loving protection for all queer folks. We pray that violence, inequality, and depression pass over our houses and hearts. We pray that this may come about without the spilling of blood.

One raises the Matzah and says:

Why do we eat this matzah? It is because the Supreme Being, the Holy one, revealed Herself to our ancestors and redeemed them before their dough had time to ferment, as it is written: "They baked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt into unleavened cakes; for they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provision for their journey."

We know that coming out from under oppression is both liberating and terrifying. We pray for sustenance and protection on our journeys.

One raises the Marror and says:

Why do we eat this bitter herb? It is because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt, as it is written: "They made life bitter for them with hard labor, with clay and bricks, and with all kinds of labor in the field; whatever work tasks they performed were backbreaking."

We know that some in this world want to break our backs, to humiliate and ultimately destroy us. Our ancestors' endurance inspires us to continue to struggle for a day when bitterness is replaced with sweetness and joy for all.

In our own times we face our own struggles, our own Mitzrayim (Hebrew for Egypt), literally doubled struggles. We are humiliated, and so the Matzah, the bread of affliction is fitting. We are embittered and so the bitter herb is fitting. We do not do Temple sacrificial rites in our time, but we DO acknowledge that far too many queers, especially queer/trans women of color, are sacrificed to *Sin'at Hinam*, to senseless hatred. On the *Seder* plate is a roasted root vegetable, the vegan substitute for the Pesach symbol, the lamb shank.

We renew our obligation to tell of our liberation every year and in every generation:

בְּכָל־דּוֹר וְדּוֹר חַיִּיב אָדָם לִרְאוֹת אֶת־עַצְמוֹ, כְּאִלוּ הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם,  
שְׁנֹאֲמַר: וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר: בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה יי לִי, בְּצֵאתִי  
מִמִּצְרַיִם. לֹא אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלֹבֶד, גָּאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, אֲלֵא אִף אֲבוֹתֵנוּ  
גָּאֵל עַמָּהֶם, שְׁנֹאֲמַר: וְאֲבוֹתֵנוּ הוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם, לְמַעַן הָבִיא אֲתָנוּ, לָתֵת לָנוּ  
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ.

In every generation it is each person's duty to regard themselves as though as if they had come out of Egypt, as it is written: "You shall tell your son on that day: This is on account of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt." It was not only our ancestors whom the Holy One redeemed from slavery; we, too, were redeemed with them, as it is written: "God took us out from there so that God might take us to the land which God had sworn to our ancestors."

When LGBTQ people were viewed by others as deviants, as perverts, as despicable, as disgusting, as criminal, as unstable, as unworthy, as threatening, thank god, there were those who *viewed themselves* as good and loving and productive and worthy of respect. It was not only they who, in their minds, escaped Egypt, but they led the way for us as well.

## רחצה

### **Rahtza: Washing the hands with blessing**

Before eating bread we traditionally wash our hands by pouring water over each hand three times from a cup. Each person is invited as able, to go to the kitchen sink to wash and then we will recite the blessing together. It is customary, once one has



washed, to not talk again, until after we have made the blessings over the Matza and eaten some.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת  
יָדַיִם:

Barukh Atah, Adonay, Elohainu Melekh Ha-olam, asher  
kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

Blessed are You, Source of all Being, who sanctifies us with  
Your commandments, and commands us to wash our  
hands.(VH)

## מוציא מצה

### **Motzi Matzah: Bringing forth Matzah/Bread to eat:**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

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

Baruch atah, Adonai eloheinu, melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz. Baruch atah, Adonai eloheinu, melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.

Blessed are you, Adonai, Breath of Life, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Blessed are you, Adonai, Breath of Life, who sanctifies us with the commandment to eat matzah.(VH)

We now eat the Matzah.

**מרור**

### **Maror: The Bitter Herb**

Just as the Israelites lives were embittered in Egypt, our lives as queer people have been embittered throughout the ages. We eat the bitter herb to remind us of this travail. We add the haroset, which is symbolic of the mortar used in the bricks in Egypt, and of the backbreaking labor so many disadvantaged people among us must do just to survive. Yet we know there is some sweetness in our lives too. Thus the haroset is made with honey and wine/grape juice to give it sweetness, in order to celebrate our relative freedom today, in the land where we recline.

We now eat the Maror and the Haroset together reciting the following Blessing first:

נברִיךְ אֶת עֵין הַחַיִּים, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ, וְצִוְּתָנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר.

Nevareikh et 'ayn hehhayim, asher kidishatnu b'mitzvot<sup>h</sup>eha, v'tziv<sup>h</sup>at'nu al akhilat maror.

We bless the Source of All Life, who has sanctified us with Her Commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of the bitter herbs.

## כּוּרֶךְ

### **Koreikh: The Hillel Sandwich**

The great sage Hillel instituted the practice of eating matzah and maror together, combining the bread of liberation with the bitter herb of slavery, in order to recognize our travails and our

freedom. We now take some bitter herb and Matzah and eat them together without additional blessing.

שלחן עורך

### **Shulhan Oreikh - The Festive Meal**

It's now the time most people look forward to, the festive meal. While during the Kadesh, we only used grape juice, for those who wish, there is wine available during the meal. Please drink in moderation, and be safe.

B'teivon - Enjoy!

## **Tzafun: The Afikoman**

Tzafun means hidden. Earlier we stated that traditionally the Afikoman is hidden and then the youngest participants search for it and whoever finds it is given a reward. We have elected to not hide the Afikoman, but keep it out, symbolic of our no longer being closeted as queers and Jews.

The Afikoman itself ends the meal, and is symbolic of a final animal that was sacrificed in Temple times and served as “dessert”, after which no more was eaten. In our times, the Temple no longer stands, and we have many signs of affliction in our lives. So we eat one more piece of Matzah instead, symbolic of all the travail in our lives.

We now pass the Afikoman around and everyone takes a piece from it and eats.

ברך

## **Bareikh: Blessings after eating**

We now fill our neighbors' cup with grape juice.

It is customary in Jewish practice to recite blessings before and after eating. According to the Talmud, the following is the briefest blessing one may recite to fulfill the obligation of Grace After Meals:

ברוך רַחֲמָנָה מַלְכָּא דְּעַלְמֵי מַרְי דְּהָא פְּתָא.

Brikh rah̄amana, malka d'alma, marei d'hai pita.

You are the source of life for all that is and your blessings flow through me. (VH)

[לשבת הַרְחֻמָּנָה, היא תִּנְחִילֵנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוּ שַׁבָּת.]

[L'Shabbat: HaRaḥamana, Hi Tanhileinu yom shekulo Shabbat.

We ask the Merciful One that She cause us to inherit the day which will be all Shabbat.]

הַרְחֻמָּנָה, היא תִּנְחִילֵנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוּ טוֹב.

HaRaḥamana, Hi Tanhileinu yom shekulo tov.

We ask the Merciful One that She cause us to inherit the day of total goodness.



## **The Third Cup:**

ברוכה את יה, שכינה, בוראת פרי הגפן.

B'rukha At, Yah, Shekhina, boreit p'ri hagafen.

We bless you, Yah, Shekhina, who created the fruit of the vine.

We drink the third cup, reclining.

We now pour the Cup for Elijah the Prophet, and open the door to welcome him. Those who are able, please stand.

Traditionally the paragraph “Sh’fokh Hamatkha, pour out Your Anger, is read. We recite the following instead:

**Pour out Your love** on the nations who have known You and on the kingdoms who call upon Your name. For they show loving-kindness to the seed of Jacob, *Rachel, Leah, Zilpah and Bilhah*, and they defend Your people. May they live to see the sukkah of peace spread over all *people and to participate in the joy of all nations*. (Haggadah: A Different Night, Noam Zion and David Dishon. Jerusalem: Shalom Hartman Institute. 1997. p. 142. Adapted)

*Eliyahu ha-navi, Eliyahu ha-Tishbi, Eliyahu (3x) ha-Giladi.*

*Bimheirah v'yameinu, yavo ei-leinu im Mashiach ben David (2x)*

*Miriam ha-n'vi'ah oz v'zimrah b'yadah. Miriam tirkod itanu l'taken  
et ha-olam. Bimheirah v'yameinu hi t'vi'einu El mei ha-y'shuah;  
el mei ha-y'shuah!*

Elijah, the prophet; Elijah, the Tishbite; Elijah, of Gilead! Come  
quickly in our days with the Messiah from the line of David

Miriam the prophet, strength and song in her hand; Miriam,  
dance with us in order to increase the song of the world! Miriam,  
dance with us in order to repair the world. Soon she will bring us  
to the waters of redemption! (VH)

The door is closed. We are seated.

Fill your neighbors' cup with grape juice.

הלל

## **Hallel: Praise**

Blessing:

ברוך אתה יי א-להינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו ויצונו לקרא את  
ההלל.

Barukh Atah Adonay, Eloheinu Melekh Ha'Olam, Asher  
Kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, vitzivanu likro et hehallel

Blessed are You, Eternal One, Sovereign of the universe, Who  
has made us holy with Your mitzvot and has commanded us to  
declare praise.

### *Ps. 113*

Hallelu-Yah! Children of the Eternal One, give praise. Blessed be the name of our G-d, Who raised us like the sun and sustains us. Who raised us above our oppressors, those who speak and do evil. Who keeps watch over us, raising us from a low and narrow place, placing us among the righteous of the people. Who makes those who cry out against injustice stand upright, free. Hallelu-Yah!

### *Ps. 114*

When we came out from the closets, from the shadows, we became free, proud. Those who hate us flee, those who spurn us became silent. Our loved ones rejoiced, our chosen families sang gaily. Why is it that they fled, why they became silent?

Why is it that they rejoiced, why they sang gaily? It was our might, our resilience, our beauty that broke down the doors and illuminated the shadows.

*Ps 115:1-11*

Not for us, not for us. But for all do we strive. Why should those who hate us say, “they are an abomination, a toveah”. They are mistaken, ignorant to the truth. They open their mouth and speak words of hatred, their eyes are blinded to our love. They ignore our words and refuse to acknowledge us. Yet, we trust in ourselves. For the Compassionate One is our help and our shield.

### *Ps 115:12-18*

We shall be remembered and we shall be praised. Both us, our ancestors, and those yet to come. We shall continue to grow, to spread love and peace. Those who came before us are gone, yet their memories are still with us. They will never be silenced, their struggle is ours.

### *Ps 116:1-11*

The cry of the downtrodden reaches up to the Heavens, it is heard on high. Though my oppressors held me down, I cried out. From a lowly place, I rose up. I am at peace within myself. Though the days to come may be overwhelming, I shall continue on my path. Even when afflicted beyond bounds, I held fast to myself.

### *Ps 116:12-19*

I give thanks to all those before me, raising my cup and blessing their names. I will give honour to those, who made it possible for me to stand up today. Though their loss pains me, their work and words lives on. I am the descendant of those who came before me, who fought in their days. I will give honour to those who came before me, in the presence of my community.

### *Ps 117*

Let us give thanks, for the love and faithfulness we share. May it endure forever, Hallelu-Yah!



## *Ps 118:1-20*

Shout out! For our love endures forever.

Shout out all those marginalized even among us, for our love endures forever.

Shout out trans, enby, and GNC alike, for our love endures forever.

Shout out all queer people, for our love endures forever.

In my darkness I cried out, even when I was alone, I knew that I was not without family. For they are with me. I have faith in myself that I shall persist. However that may be, I shall persist. Though they surround me like bees, I shall overcome. I shall find my strength, my might, and be my own deliverance. I shall not fail but shall overcome. The bright future awaits us, a future of love and peace.

*Ps 118:21-29*

The child, once rejected is now praised. Let us celebrate them!  
We shall be delivered, we shall prosper.

Let us praise those who join our fight, those who were caste aside. You are my people, whom I chose among the world.

May we all join together, give praise to each other, support each other.

ברוך אתה יי מלך מהלל בתשבחות.

Barukh Atah Adonay, Melekh mehullal b'tishbhot.

Blessed are You, oh All Loving One, Who is acclaimed in praise.

## The Fourth Cup:

בְּהִתְעֵסֶף לְהַדוּר הַיּוֹם, מְתִיקוֹת פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן מְבוֹרָכֶת.

B'hit-a-seif la-hi-dur ha-yom, m'ti-kut pri hagafen m'vo-ra-khet.

Our coming together in celebration blesses the sweetness of the fruit of the vine.

נרצח

## Nirtzah: Conclusion

Tonight we have completed a radical new work. We have told the story of our liberations and our doubled struggles as Jews and queers. We have talked, we have learned, we have questioned, we have eaten, and we have sung. We have

grappled with difficult questions, and we know that these questions will continue to exist, thus we will continue to work on the ***Queer Liberation Haggadah*** in years to come, ensuring it stays a living breathing effort.

Traditionally the Seder closes with the wish that next year we be in Jerusalem, but we know that is not the desire of everyone here. For us the wish is more:

**Next year may we live authentic, free, fulfilled lives along with all others on this planet.**

## **Seder Song**

Traditional Haggadot have songs such as Had Gadya (one goat) which builds up to the mightiness of God, and other such songs. We know that we are not truly liberated yet, as we have

seen through our discussions today. Thus it is appropriate to end with just one song:

**We shall overcome**, we shall overcome

We shall overcome some day

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe

We shall overcome some day

The Lord will see us through, the Lord will see us through

The lord will see us through some day

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe

The Lord will see us some day

We're on to victory, we're on to victory

We're on to victory some day

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe

We're on to victory some day

We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand

We'll walk hand in hand some day

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe

We'll walk hand in hand some day

We are not afraid, we are not afraid

We are not afraid today

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe

We are not afraid today

The truth shall make us free, the truth shall make us free  
The truth shall make us free some day  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
The truth shall make us free some day

We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace  
We shall live in peace some day  
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe  
We shall live in peace some day

[https://www.negrospirituals.com/songs/we\\_shall\\_overcome.htm](https://www.negrospirituals.com/songs/we_shall_overcome.htm)