

2020

Preface: Passover During COVID-19

Years ago, I put together an earlier version of this Haggadah for my family, trying to make the story and traditions of Passover a bit more kid-friendly. Some of the graphic parts found in a standard Haggadah are either toned down or omitted in this one. What I wanted to highlight are both the story—Exodus—and the theme—freedom.

Not one of us feels free right now. Schools are closed, games are cancelled, many workers cannot work, and children can't play with their friends—at least not in person. Many of us are not able to share our meal with various family members and friends—*anyone* we usually see during this holiday.

Because of this most unusual circumstance—one that might well feel like a biblical plague itself—I have updated a few things for the sake of health and safety. That said, please feel free to make any changes that might be a better fit for you and yours. After all, this Haggadah is for you. (FYI: tips and shortcuts for preparing and proceeding with the meal are on the last page. Quickly reading through the whole Haggadah beforehand will help, too.)

No doubt that during Passover 2020, when we're trying to keep ourselves and others safe, the seder will be quieter than usual. Wait. Actually, if you're using any social apps to connect with friends and family during the seder (such as WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Hangouts, or FaceTime), it might well be far noisier!

Either way, it may be hard. Just know that, as one of my sons wisely said, we take precautions today for freedom tomorrow—ours, and everyone's.

Shalom!
Hope Lourie Killcoyne
April 8, 2020

Imagine a world without freedom. Doing so this year is no doubt easier than we ever could have thought possible.

Many times in history, the Jewish people have lived without freedom. The Haggadah tells the story of one of those times.

The Haggadah tells about how our people were slaves and then became free.

In the Bible, one of the most important ideas is freedom.

Freedom means different things to different people.

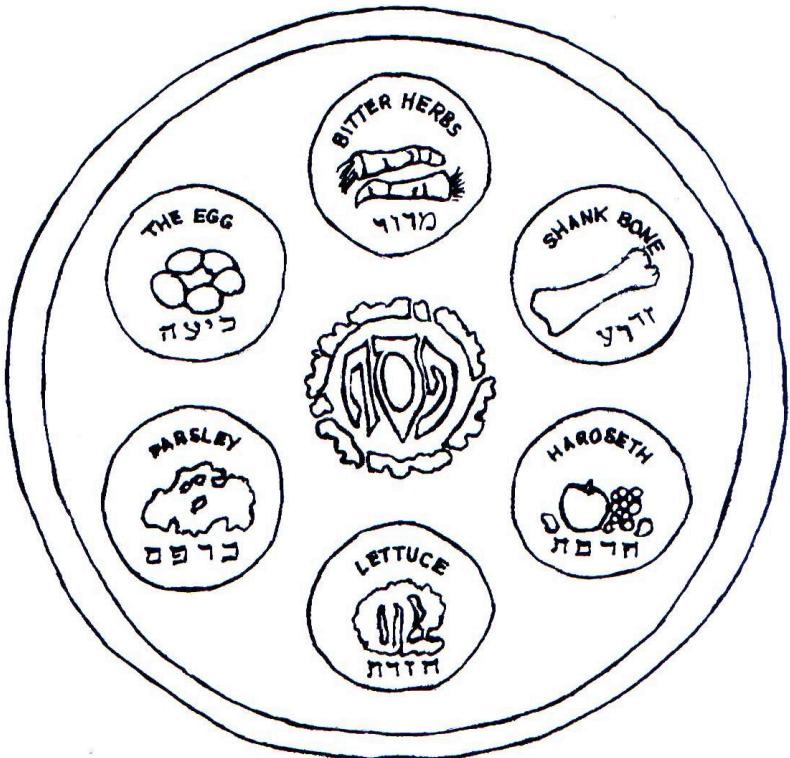
Boys and girls who are free have the right to enjoy schools, movies, acting, vacations, walks in the park, soccer, lacrosse, and basketball.



We are free to choose our friends, and when we grow up, choose whom we want to marry. We celebrate a variety of holidays. Tonight, we're going to celebrate one of the most important Jewish ones—Passover.

We are going to tell how the Jewish people were freed from slavery in Egypt more than three thousand years ago. We call the journey they took to their homeland the Exodus.

The special meal for *Pesach*—the Hebrew word for Passover—is called the seder. The word seder means order. There is a set order for all the things we do during our seder—things that remind us of the Exodus from Egypt.



On the table is a seder plate with the following foods:

A roasted lamb bone (also called a shank bone), *Z'roa*, reminds us of the very first Passover, when the Jews ate roast lamb.

A roasted egg, *Beitsa*, stands for special gifts that ancient Hebrews used to bring to the Temple.

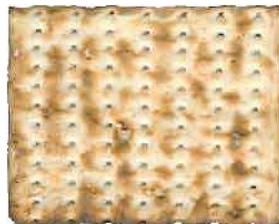
Karpas, a green vegetable such as parsley or celery, reminds us that Passover occurs during the spring, when new life brings a feeling of hope. Some seder plates also have a spot for lettuce.

Charoset, a mixture of fruits and juice, represents the clay our ancestors used to make bricks for the Pharaoh in Egypt.

Bitter herbs, such as a radish or horseradish, called *maror*, symbolize the bitterness of slavery in Egypt.

On the seder table we also find:

Matzah, the crispy sun-baked bread the Hebrews ate as they left Egypt. We have our own pieces, in addition to the three ceremonial pieces near the seder plate, under a cloth. The middle piece is for the afikomen, which will be explained in a little while.



Salt water, to remind us of the sad and bitter tears shed by the Hebrews when they were slaves. We will dip our greens in the salt water.



On each person's plate, a hard-boiled egg, symbolizing life and new birth.



A chair, a plate, and a special cup filled with wine—all for the prophet Elijah. He was a wise teacher who lived many, *many* years ago. There is a legend that he visits every seder, wishing everyone peace and freedom.



At each place setting, a cup for wine or juice.

The stage has been set. Now for the service.

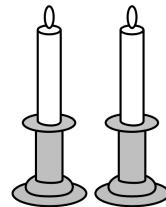
THE PASSOVER SERVICE

KADEISH קדש

Being Holy: Sanctification

As our Passover begins, we are thankful for this festival of freedom, this time with family and friends—if not at our sides, then in our hearts. We begin this seder by lighting the festival candles.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu, b'nitsvotav v'tsivanu, l'hadlik neir shel Yom Tov.



We praise You, God, who makes us holy with commandments, so we light the holiday candles. May these candles remind us that we must help and not hurt, cause joy and not sorrow, create and not destroy, and help all to be free. We praise God for the gift of life.

KOS KIDDUSH סוכת קדש

The First Cup of Wine

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam borei p'ri hagafen.



We give thanks for the fruit that grows on the vine.

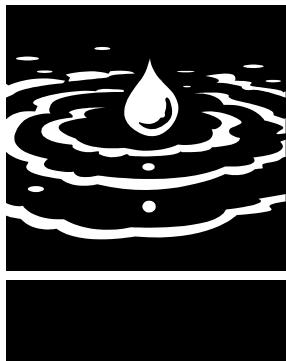
(Each person drinks first cup of wine or juice.)

URCHATZ עירחאת

We Wash Our Hands

This ancient awareness of cleanliness is especially meaningful today, when we are all trying to keep dirt and infections as far away as possible.

(A member of the seder passes around a pitcher of water and a bowl to catch the water. Each person washes his/her hands.)



KARPAS ספראם

As we say a blessing and eat a green herb or vegetable, we remember that it was springtime when the first Passover took place. Dipping the greens in salt water, we think about the freshness of spring and the tears of slavery.

(Each person takes some greens and dips them in salt water.)



*Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam,
borei p'ri ha-adama.*

*We give thanks for the food
that grows from the earth.*



YACHATS 'צָה'

A Time for Sharing

The middle matzah has already been broken into bits and hidden for the afikomen. (Afikomen means dessert in Greek.) At the end of the meal, each child will have his or her own piece to find, with a bit of colored paper attached that matches the color of paper under your plate. When you find your piece, bring it back and share it at dessert. Then you'll get a prize.

(Grown-ups hide [or already have hidden] the afikomen pieces.)



Now, let's listen to the story of Passover.

Thousands of years ago, ancient Egypt was a powerful country with many big beautiful buildings, palaces, and pyramids. Among the Egyptians lived the Jewish people, the Hebrews. At first, they all lived together happily. But then the king, the Pharaoh, decided that the Hebrews had to be slaves. He made them pull heavy stones and make clay bricks for all his monuments.



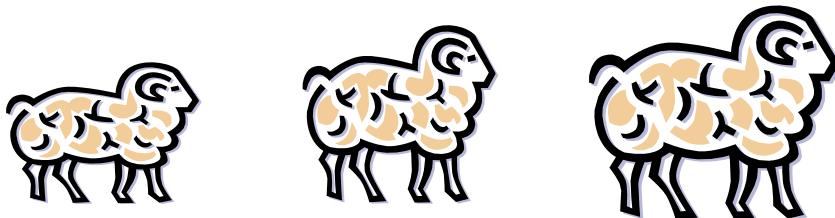
One day, it was foretold that the leader of the Hebrews would rise up and overthrow the Pharaoh. Pharaoh was scared. A Hebrew would take away his empire? Who? The prophecy frightened him. He feared that even the littlest child could one day grow up and threaten his kingdom. So he told the Hebrews that they had to throw all of their boy babies in the river.

One mother tried to save her baby, Moses. When he was three months old, she put him in a basket and sent it floating down the Nile River. He was saved, by the Pharaoh's *own daughter*, the princess. When the princess found out who Moses' mother really was, she decided to raise him as her own, *but*, with Moses' mother helping out.



That way, Moses was raised in an Egyptian household, but he learned all about his religion. Pharaoh, however, never knew that Moses was really a Hebrew, and the two became good friends. When Moses grew up, he became Pharaoh's helper.

One day, Moses was watching the construction of a new city, when he saw an Egyptian guard treating a Hebrew slave poorly. He got into a fight with the guard and injured him. The rest of the Hebrews told Moses that he would get in serious trouble with the Pharaoh for hurting an Egyptian, *especially* while defending a Hebrew slave. Moses realized they might be right, so he ran far away to another city, where he became a shepherd.



Then, a long, *long* time after he had run away from Egypt, Moses was walking with his sheep in the countryside when he saw the most amazing thing. Just before him was a bush, completely on fire, but with not a single leaf burning. What's more, a voice came out of the bush! It told Moses that he had to return to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to stop making his people—the Hebrews—slaves. Moses knew that it was the voice of God.

However, Moses was afraid of going back to Egypt, of seeing the Pharaoh. He *did* know, though, how important it was that his people go free. Plus, God had told him to go. So back he went. Moses walked right up to Pharaoh and said quite simply, “Let my people go.”



Pharaoh's response? Laughter—laughter that made Moses so angry, he threw down his staff. When it hit the ground, it turned into a snake. Pharaoh did get a *little* scared, but not enough to let the Hebrews go free.

Moses knew that God would cause terrible things to happen in Egypt if the Hebrews were not released. He warned the Pharaoh of this, but Pharaoh did not listen. So he and all the Egyptians suffered. Not one Hebrew suffered these punishments, as their homes were *passed over*.



God then caused ten punishments, known as plagues, to befall the Egyptians. After the plague where the people were covered with sores known as boils, Pharaoh said that the Hebrews could leave. And of course, soon after that, he went back on his word, yet again refusing to let the Hebrews go.

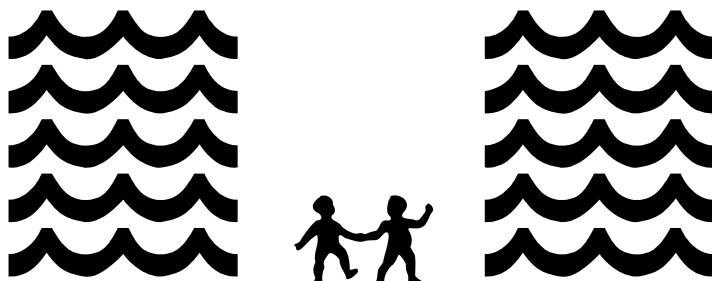
Finally, after more and more plagues, Moses returned to the now-fully frightened Pharaoh. Moses said that unless his people were freed, something *really* bad would happen: the death of every first-born Egyptian child. That's the tenth and last plague. That night, all the Hebrew households put a mark on their doorposts, so that the plague would *pass over* their homes.

At long last, Pharaoh became deep-down frightened enough to really agree to let the Hebrews go.

Thing is, the Hebrews didn't totally trust Pharaoh—after all, he had changed his mind before. So they got their belongings together very quickly. They didn't even put all the usual ingredients into their bread; nor did they bake it over a fire. Instead, they wound up with flat, crispy, sun-baked bread—matzah.

The Hebrews then began their long walk out of Egypt. After centuries of slavery, they were finally free. Or so they thought.

Days passed. Egypt had no more workers—no one to do all the jobs that everyone had become used to having the Hebrews do—building, cooking, cleaning. It didn't take long for Pharaoh to plot a way to get them back. He sent 600 warriors on chariots after them. Riding on fast horses, the soldiers nearly caught them. Just as the chariots were closing in, the Hebrews were faced with a big sea in front of them. They were trapped! Then, something amazing happened.



The sea parted. Walls of water stood high on either side, and the Hebrews walked right through the middle. The Egyptians drove their chariots after them, but when the very last Hebrew child had made it to the other side, the walls of water fell back down, drowning the Pharaoh's *entire* army.

And that's how the Hebrews escaped from Egypt.



QUESTION TIME

Passover comes with questions—four questions—about why this night is different from all other nights. The youngest child (or children) will now ask those questions.

Grown-ups' Sheet of the Four Questions (Kids: see next page.)

1st Question*: Why is this night different from all other nights?

Mah nishtana halayla hazeh meekol halaylot?

Why do we eat matzah? *Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin chametz u'matzah. Halailah hazeh kulo matzah.*

Answer: We eat matzah to help us remember that the Jewish children and their parents left Egypt in a hurry. The sun baked the dough into hard crackers called matzah. You may hunt for the hidden matzah—the afikomen—after dinner.

2nd Question: Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?

Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin sh'ar yerakot. Halailah hazeh maror.

Answer: Bitter herbs help us remember the bitter, miserable lives of the Jewish children and grown-ups who were slaves of the wicked Pharaoh. Let's make a sandwich of two small pieces of matzah, some bitter herbs, and some *charoset*. The matzah of freedom, together with the *charoset* and *maror* of slavery, remind us to be thankful for our freedom—but also to remember the past.

3rd Question: Why on this night do we dip our food?

Shebechol halaylot ain anu matbilin afilu pa'am echat. Halailah hazeh sh'tay f'ahmim.

Answer: We dip herbs—radish or horseradish—into the *charoset*, to remember how hard the children and grown-ups worked in making bricks and building cities. Earlier we dipped the parsley into salt water to remember their tears. (*Dip radish or horseradish*)

4th Question: Why are we leaning back?

Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin bayn yoshvin u'vayn misubin. Halailah hazeh kulanu misubin?

Answer: In ancient days, the Hebrew children and their families used to have to eat standing up; people who enjoyed freedom would lounge around the table. Now, we too, sit comfortably.

*Actually, the first one is two questions.

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

1. Why is this night different from all other nights?
Mah nishtana halayla hazeh meekol halaylot?

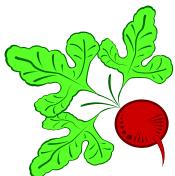


Why do we eat matzah?
Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin chametz u'matzah. Halailah
hazeh kulo matzah.

(Wait for answer.)

2. Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?
Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin sh'ar yerakot. Halailah
hazeh maror.

(Wait for answer.)



3. Why on this night do we dip our food?
Shebechol halaylot ain anu matbilin afilu pa'am echat.
Halailah hazeh sh'tay f'ahmim.

(Wait for answer.)

4. Why are we leaning back?
Shebechol halaylot anu oaklin bayn yoshvin u'vayn
misubin. Halailah hazeh kulanu misubin?

(Wait for answer.)

Why *IS* this night different?

Why are we reading at dinner and eating special foods?

We do it to use our sense of smell and taste so that we can more fully feel and remember that the Jewish people were once slaves in Egypt.



And how, with the strength of independence, they formed both a new nation *and* a new way to be. We now have that urge for freedom, too, especially this year, because our own is being challenged.

Just remember: we are closed in today for freedom tomorrow—ours, and everyone's.

Let us now give thanks that God helped our ancestors to go free.

הלוואג סוכ Kos G'ULA

THE SECOND CUP



With this second cup of wine we recall the second promise God made to the Jewish people: “I will deliver you from slavery.”

We learn that people should not make other people slaves.

God wants us to be free. And us means *all* of us.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam Borei p'ri hagafen.

*We give thanks for the fruit that grows on the vine.
(Each person drinks second cup of wine or juice.)*

The eggs on our plates represent life and new birth. Let us eat our egg.

It is now time to open the door a bit, crack open a window, or perhaps simply wish for Elijah to *feel* that we're thinking of him.

Let's all sing *Dayeinu*, and eat!



Dayeinu!

*Ilu hotsi, hotsianu,
hotsianu mimitsrayim,
hotsianu mimitsrayim,
Dayeinu!*



*Da, dayeinu! (3X)
Dayeinu! Dayeinu!*

*Ilu natan, natan lanu,
natan lanu et hatorah,
natan lanu et hatorah,
Dayeinu!*

*Ilu natan, natan lanu,
natan lanu et hashabbat,
natan lanu et hashabbat!
Dayeinu!*

*Da, dayeinu! (3X)
Dayeinu! Dayeinu!
Dayeinu!*

*Da, dayeinu! (3X)
Dayeinu! Dayeinu!
Dayeinu!*

(*Dayeinu* means “It would have been enough,” and is a repetitive, joyful song of gratitude to God for all he did for us.)

Tips and Such

Here is how we Killcoynes get ready for and participate in the Seder, with special 2020 tweaks added:

1. Boil as many eggs as needed, plus another one for roasting. Those to be eaten are peeled ahead of time and put on each plate. The other one stays in its shell after boiling and is roasted in the oven. Then it goes onto the Seder plate.
2. Seeing as how a shank bone may not be readily available this year, get creative! Make one out of clay or cardboard. After all, this holiday is all about representation: we ain't eating actual mortar, y'all. And speaking of *charoset*...
3. There are a gazillion recipes for *charoset*, so you can make up your own. The main thing is to include fruit, juice, and nuts. (Obviously, omit the nuts if allergies are [or might be] a problem.)
4. If several children are in attendance, we use the colored paper under each plate and the corresponding color attached to pieces of hidden matzah to avoid any rancor or rumblings. Different shapes work, too. But you do you.
5. A few shallow bowls of salt water should be enough, *unless* it seems more prudent health-wise to have one per person.
6. For the lounging/leaning at the table part, if there's room, you may want to put pillows at each place.
7. Have matches handy for the candles.

We either print out a copy for each person (or every two) at the table. Taking turns, you may want to have each person read anything from a paragraph to a page. Then, the person sitting at the next place over will give it a go, and so on. Grouped words in italics are meant to be said or sung together...

We are all in this together, so peace be upon you—and *everyone*—in the whole wide world.

Peace out!