Haggadah B’chol Dor Va-Dor
A Haggadah for all Generations

Edited by
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Designed by
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Dedicated to
Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto
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Introduction

Pesach

The origins of Pesach are to be found far back in antiquity, in two separate but connected spring festivals: a pastoral celebration by shepherds of the lambing season, and an agricultural celebration by farmers of the year’s first grain harvest. This dual connection with nature is reflected in the festival’s two earliest names: Chag ha-Pesach – the Festival of the Paschal Lamb, and Chag ha-Matzot – the Festival of Unleavened Bread.

Some time after the Exodus from Egypt, which most scholars date in the 13th century BCE, these two nature celebrations were unified in a single festival and their meaning reinterpreted religiously, in the light of the most significant event in Jewish history, the Exodus. Thus the word Pesach (its root comes from the verb ‘to skip’, as in the gambolling of new-born lambs) was explained by reference to the last of the Ten Plagues when God ‘passed over’ (pasach) and spared the houses of the Israelites (Exodus 12:23); and the unleavened bread was attributed to the haste of their departure from Egypt (Exodus 12:39). This combined festival, henceforth always called Pesach, invariably has the words z’man cheiruteinu – The Season of our Freedom – appended to it in all prayers and blessings.

Over the course of the centuries, the observance of Pesach developed four complementary strands of meaning. First, it celebrates the springtime re-awakening of nature; second, it commemorates the momentous deliverance that gave birth to the Israelite people; third, it proclaims freedom as a supreme Jewish value; and finally, it looks forward to the Messianic Age of redemption, when all who are oppressed will know freedom.

The Seder

From earliest times, Pesach was an occasion not only for public worship, but also for a more intimate celebration by families or groups of families and friends. This took the form of a festive meal in which a lamb was eaten together with bitter herbs and unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8). After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE the lamb was omitted, but the meal continued and other foods added, as well as the four cups of wine, each one given a symbolic meaning. However, food was not the primary purpose of the celebration. It was to help each generation experience the foundational event of Jewish history and to understand its implications for Jews in every generation, and above all, to teach the children about the Exodus. This is already emphasised in the Torah: ‘You shall tell your child (v’haggad’ta ivírcha) on

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Our thanks are also due to the numerous contributors to this Haggadah for their artwork, poetry and other material. Full details can be found in the notes on the Liberal Judaism website (www.liberaljudaism.org/haggadah).

We would particularly like to thank Joe Buchwald Gelles at haggadahsrus.com and Noam Zion of Zion Holiday Publications inc. from whose concept of telling the story of Pesach ever anew, Haggadah B’chol Dor Va-Dor draws its own inspiration. Every effort was made to gain permission to use the variety of material such Haggadot depend on to represent and transmit the breadth of Jewish experience of Pesach; if we have failed, it was not through lack of effort; please do contact us and we shall be pleased to set matters right.

And finally we would like to thank our wives, Sharon and Robbie, for their patience with us during the lengthy gestation process of this Haggadah, during which our respective homes were cluttered with numerous Haggadot over which we pored for many hours and days.

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein and Rabbi Pete Tobias

Thanks to the following whose contributions in memory of Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto have helped to defray the cost of the publication of this Haggadah:

This Haggadah

This is the fourth Haggadah produced by the Liberal Jewish movement in Britain, and the first to include full transliteration.

A much shortened text appeared in 1918 with an amplified version produced in 1962 (republished with illustrations by Jacob Shacham in 1968). A third Haggadah appeared in 1981 with a fuller, more traditional text although with minor alterations to the order of passages to facilitate a more logical sequence of themes. It was the work of Rabbi John D Rayner (in collaboration with Rabbi Chaim Stern and Rabbi Julia Neuberger). Illustrations were chosen from a variety of medieval Haggadot by Nurit Beeri and Rabbi Lawrence Rigal. The English was modernised: no more ‘thees’ and ‘thous’ in line with the then current ULPS prayerbooks. A further modernisation of the English text by Rabbi Jonathan Keren Black appeared in 1990. In line with the current Liberal Jewish liturgy, it introduced gender-neutral language, neither God nor humans being addressed in male terminology, with ‘king’ becoming ‘ruler’ and ‘Lord’ becoming ‘Eternal One’.

This Haggadah largely follows the 1981 Hebrew text of Rabbi Rayner and the English of Rabbi Keren Black. However, it does attempt to answer two conflicting needs that have become apparent to the editors in recent times: the need to include innovative readings and yet the desire by many to shorten the time spent on the basic text of the Seder. Therefore, for the first half of the Seder, (i.e. up to the meal on page 21a) the essential text of the Haggadah is printed on the right-hand pages (with suffix ‘a’), with the facing page (suffix ‘b’) containing additional material: explanations, songs and reflective passages. The leader of the Seder can choose to read only the right-hand pages, or include material from the left-hand pages to suit the wishes of the gathering. The pages of the second half of the Seder are numbered sequentially, though some elements can be omitted at the discretion of the leader.

that day...’ (Exodus 13:8). This telling and celebration became known as Seder Haggadah, the ‘Order of Narration’. In time, it became customary for Ashkenazi Jews to use the term Seder for the celebration and rituals of the first eve of Pesach and Haggadah for the book containing the text of the celebration.

The Haggadah

As with all Jewish liturgy, the initial transmission of the ‘text’ of the Haggadah was oral, gradually becoming fixed around the 9th century CE. In the ensuing period countless manuscript editions were produced, some richly illustrated and belonging to the masterpieces of Jewish religious art. Since the invention of printing, several thousand different Haggadot have been published, with an increasing number each year (nowadays appearing on the internet, as well as in hard copy). Although they maintain essentially the same structure, there are many variations, based on local custom, differences of theological emphasis or the social environment in which they were produced. Of the making of Haggadot there is no end!
As an alternative, a child-friendly Seder can be conducted by using this book from the English-opening end and working towards the centre. This short Seder could be augmented with sections from the main text as deemed appropriate (page references are incorporated to assist with this). Full details of this family-oriented version of the Seder and guidance for its use can be found at the other end of the book.

Illustrations

We have chosen illustrations from a selection of Haggadot to show the variety of settings in which the Seder has been celebrated historically. The sources of these illustrations and full notes on the origins of the written text can be found on the following website address: www.liberaljudaism.org/haggadah. In time this website will also include additional material to supplement the ‘b’ pages of this Haggadah. The website will also carry guidelines regarding preparations for Pesach, the setting up of the Seder table and suggestions of how to lead the Seder.

We hope that this Haggadah will inspire a new generation of Jews to enliven their Seder, be it held at home or communally, and that it will enable a wide range of Sedarim to be easily conducted from the same book.

Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein and Rabbi Pete Tobias
January 2010/Sh’vat 5770
Seder checklist

The following order of the Seder, slightly different from the traditional version, is offered as a guide to set out the various stages of the Seder that follows. It is intended to be recited as a rhyme and also serves as a ‘checklist’ for the elements that should be included.

Neirot Lighting the Candles נורת
Kaddish Making Kiddush קדיש
Karpas Green herbs קורס
Lachma Bread of Affliction לאחמה
Arba'ah Four Questions, Four Children ארבעה
Haggadah Telling the Story נגידה
Pesach Pesach – Passover sacrifice פסח
Matzah Matzah – Unleavened Bread מצה
Maror Maror – Bitter Herbs ממרור
Koreich The Hillel Sandwich הפרור
Shulchan Oreich The Meal שולחן עץ
Tzafun The Afikoman עימוץ
Bareich Thanksgiving for the Meal ברכה
Hallel Praise הלהל
Nirtzah Conclusion נרצה

Opening prayer

Long ago, at this season, on a night such as this, a people – our people – set out on a journey.

All but crushed by their enslavement, they yet recalled the far-off memory of a happier past,

And heard the voice of their ancestral God, bidding them summon up the courage to be free.

Bravely, they went forth from Egypt, crossed the sea, and headed through the desert for the Promised Land.

What they experienced, they remembered, and told their children, and they to theirs.

From generation to generation, the story was retold, and we are here to tell it yet again.

We too give thanks for Israel’s liberation; we too remember what it means to be a slave.

And so we pray for all who are still fettered, still denied their human rights.

Let all God’s children sit at the table of the Eternal One, drink the wine of deliverance, eat the bread of freedom:

freedom from bondage and freedom from oppression
freedom from hunger and freedom from want
freedom from hatred and freedom from fear
freedom to think and freedom to speak
freedom to learn and freedom to love
freedom to hope and freedom to rejoice
soon, in our days. Amen.

(John D Rayner)
Opening prayers

Sharing Seder with Family

We thank You, O God, for our family and for what we mean and bring to one another. We are grateful for the bonds of loyalty and affection which sustain us and which keep us close to one another no matter how far apart we may be.

We thank You for implanting within us the capacity to love and to care.

Help us to be modest in our demands of one another, but generous in our giving to each other. May we never measure how much love or encouragement we offer; or count the number of times we forgive. Rather, may we always be grateful that we have one another and that we are able to express our love in acts of kindness.

Bless our family with health, happiness, and contentment. Above all, grant us the wisdom to build a joyous and peaceful home in which Your spirit will always abide.

Sharing Seder with Friends and/or Community

We are grateful, O God, for the inspiration and joy of this Festival of Pesach and for the companionship of those who sit around this table on this sacred night. May this Seder strengthen the bond of friendship amongst us and help us to value the support we give each other. May our celebrations deepen our commitment to the Jewish heritage and encourage us to seek the wellbeing of our people wherever they may live. May the story we now tell inspire us to seek the freedom of all who are enslaved, of all who live in darkness and oppression.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments and enjoin us to kindle the (Sabbath and) festival lights.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivvanu l’hadlik neir shel (shabbat v’shel) yom tov.

A blessing for all who are gathered to celebrate the Seder:

May God bless you and keep you.
May God look kindly upon you and be gracious to you. May God reach out to you in tenderness and give you peace.

Y'varech'cha Adonai v'yishm'recha.
Yis'ear Adonai panav eilecha viy'chunneka.
Yissa Adonai panav eilecha v'yaseim l'cha shalom.
Why do we drink four glasses of wine?

There are many ways of interpreting the four glasses of wine. Some say they represent the ‘four corners of the earth’, for freedom must reign everywhere, the four seasons of the year, for freedom must be guarded at all times, the ‘four empires’ (Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome) that oppressed the Jews in days of old, for all tyranny must pass away before all the world is free.

Above all, they represent the four promises of redemption in the biblical account of the escape from Egypt:

Say to the Israelite people: ‘I am the Eternal One and I will release you from Egyptian oppression and I will deliver you from serving them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgement and I will take you to be My people and I will be your God; that you might know that I am the Eternal One, your God, who will bring you out from Egyptian oppression.’

(Exodus 6:6-7)
Water at the Seder: the role of Miriam

There is a tradition that, prior to the Karpas (green herb) the hands are washed without saying a blessing. Water plays a prominent part in the story of the Exodus and, on each occasion, Miriam is involved. (This theme will be followed at various stages of our Haggadah.) The story of redemption begins when Moses is saved from the River Nile while Miriam watches over him:

When Moses’ mother could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. Then Pharaoh’s daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it.

(Exodus 2:3-5)

I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery.
I sent Moses, Aaron and Miriam to lead you. (Micah 6:4)

On Saturday night, continue with Havdalah, looking at the festival candles while reading the following:

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the lights of fire. We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, for You have taught us to distinguish between holy and mundane, light and darkness, between the seventh day and the six days of work, between the holiness of the Sabbath and the holiness of the festivals. We praise You O God, for teaching us to distinguish between holy and holy.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei m’orei ha-esh
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu ha-mavdil bein kodesh l’kodesh
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam bein kodesh l’chol, bein or likdushat yom tov hivdalta.
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-mavdil bein kodesh l’cheshech, bein yom ha-sh’vi’i l’sheishet y’mei ha-ma’aseh, bein k’dushat shabbat likdushat yom tov hivdalta.
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-mavdil bein kodesh l’kodesh.

We thank God for enabling us to share Seder by reciting together:

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, that You enabled us to reach this season.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam she-hecheyanu v’kiy’manu v’higiy’anu la-z’man ha-zeh.

Lean to the left and drink the first glass of wine.
How astonishing… is the growth of foods from seeds. A single grain that has been saved from mishaps produces a thousand grains and more. It has even been said that out of one grain of wheat, as many as three hundred (stalks) will spring up, each containing over twenty grains. We also come across gigantic trees whose roots have sprung out of a single seed or a single shoot… Praised be the All-Wise and Gracious One who brings into existence such vast effects from causes so small and weak.

Bachya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda (c.1050-1120)

Four explanations for the Karpas and dipping in salt water:
1. It is springtime, therefore we acknowledge that the world is turning green after winter.
2. The Seder emulates a Roman banquet and Karpas is intended as an hors-d’oeuvres.
3. It reminds us of the hyssop that was dipped in the lamb’s blood which was painted on the doorposts of the Hebrews in Egypt at the time of the Exodus (Exodus 12:22).
4. As with other elements of the Seder, it arouses children’s curiosity, reminding them of the salty water of the Sea of Reeds or the sweat and tears of the Hebrew slaves.

The Song of Songs is traditionally recited at Pesach because of its references to Spring

Dodi li

My beloved is mine and I am his who pastures among the lilies. Who is she that comes out of the desert, perfumed with myrrh and incense? Who is she? You have taken my heart, my sister, my bride; you have taken my heart.

Rise up O North wind, and come, O South wind.

(Song of Songs 2:16; 3:6; 4:9, 16)

Dodi li va-ani lo ha-ro’eh ba-shoshannim. Mi zot olah min ha-midbar, mi zot olah? Mi kutteret mor, mor u-Vnonah. Libbavtini achoti challah, libbavtini challah Uri tzafon u-vo’i teiman, uri tzafon u-vo’i teiman.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-adamah.

The Karpas is dipped in salt water and eaten

Kumi lach ra’yati yafati u-l’chi lach. Ki hinneih ha-stav avar ha-geshem chalaf halach lo. Ha-nitzanim nir’u va-aretz eit ha-zamir higgi’a v’kol ha-tor nishma b’artzeinu.

We too may this be a season of renewal of life and growth, of hope and love.

(John D Rayner)

Rise up my love, my fair one, come away! For lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the song of the dove is heard in our land.

(Song of Songs 2:10-12)

Karpas

Green Herbs

When earth is freed from winter’s yoke, when lambs are born and trees turn green, then we recall our liberation from Egypt’s bondage one such springtime, long ago. For us too may this be a season of renewal of life and growth, of hope and love.

(John D Rayner)
‘This year here, next year in the land of Israel...’ ‘Here’ is wherever any human beings are still enslaved, or deprived of their rights; ‘the Land of Israel’ is the symbol of the hope of redemption. The journey of our ancestors is the journey of every people, and of every generation, until the Promised Land is reached by all, and freedom becomes the heritage of all God’s children. (John D Rayner)

Slavery

A question to ask before the traditional four questions: Why is this night no different from all other nights? Because on this night, millions of human beings around the world are still enslaved, or deprived of their rights, just as they are on all other nights. As we celebrate our freedom tonight, we remember them.

The children and adults who work in sweatshops of the developing world to produce the cheap clothes wealthier consumers are eager to buy.

The adults or children sold into a lifetime of slavery to pay a debt, or those captured in war by slave traders, even in the modern world.

The women and men from Eastern Europe and elsewhere traded into a life of degradation as sex slaves in the West.

The men, women and children forced to live in abject poverty by the lack of care by many nations’ leaders and insensitive citizens.

May the message of this Festival of Pesach be clear to us and all the world: we cannot celebrate it properly unless we commit ourselves to working for the liberty of all who are enslaved. The symbols on the Seder table, the unleavened bread we shall eat for the next seven days, are to remind us that there is still oppression in our world and that we are obliged to work to remove it from society.

Breaking the Matzah: traditionally the larger piece is put away for the Afikoman. Once Menachem of Lubavitch observed a guest carefully measuring the two pieces. The rebbe remarked, ‘When greatness has to be measured in millimetres, it is not greatness at all. In such instances the lesser may be greater.’ At the Seder we are all equal, the poor and the rich, the powerful and the weak: all are God’s children. The Seder should remind us that we are all equal in God’s eyes and therefore we should treat all human beings with respect.
The role of children in the Seder

The celebration of the Seder has been designed especially for teaching children, as it is written: ‘and you shall tell your child on that day… and when your children ask you, you shall tell them.’ (Exodus 13:8, 14)

Rabbi Yehudah says that parched grain and nuts should be given to children on Erev Pesach to encourage them to stay awake and ask questions about the Seder.

You are free to ask, you are free to question, free to learn the answers of tradition, free to add answers of your own!

(Rabbi Chaim Stern)

The four questions have been a feature of the Seder for so many generations and in so many places. In recognition of this, here are the same questions in Ladino and in Yiddish:

**Ladino**

Kuanto fue mud’a a la noce la esta, mas ke toda las noces.

Ke en tod’a las noces nos komientes levdo o sesenia, i la noce la esta tod’a el sesenia.

Ke en tod’a las noces nos komientes resto de ved’ruras, i la noce la esta licu.

Ke en tod’a las noces, non nos enintines aflu ves una, i la noce la esta dos vezes.

Ke en tod’a las noches nos komientes i beviendo, tanto asenitat’as tanto areskovdad’as, i la noce la esta tod’a nos areskovdad’as.

**Yiddish**

Tate, Ich vil dir fregen di fier kashes:

Vee aza iz di nacht fun Pesach anders fun alle notch fun a gantz yor?

In alle notch fun a gantz yor, esn mir chometz un matzo. Ober di nacht fun Pesach esn mir nor matzo.

In alle notch fun a gantz yor, esn mir alerley grinsn. Ober di nacht fun Pesach esn mir nor bitere grinsn.

In alle notch fun a gantz yor, tunken mir nit ayn, ofiku eyn mol nit. Ober di nacht fun Pesach, tunken mir ayn, tsvey mol – eyn mol chreyin in charoyse, un dos tsveyte mol a tsibele in salts-vaser

In alle notch fun a gantz yor, esn mir say zitsindik un say ongelt. Ober di nacht fun Pesach, esn mir alle ongelt.

**Arba’ah**

The four questions

It is traditional for the youngest person present to ask these four questions:

How different is this night from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat either

leavened or unleavened bread; why

only unleavened bread tonight?

On all other nights we eat different

types of herbs and vegetables; why

bitter herbs tonight?

On all other nights we do not

even dip once; why do we dip

twice tonight?

On all other nights we eat either

sitting or leaning; why do we all

lean tonight?

Mah nishtanah ha-lailah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-leilot!

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin chameitz u-matzah, ha-lailah ha-zeh kullo matzah?

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin sh’ar y’rakot, ha-lailah ha-zeh maror?

She-b’chol ha-leilot ein anu matblin ofiku pa’am echad, ha-lailah ha-zeh sh’tei amim?

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin u-vein m’subin, ha-lailah ha-zeh kullanu m’subin?

The glasses are filled

Paul Solomon, 2010
We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Eternal One our God led us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, ever to be praised, had not led our ancestors out of Egypt, we and our children and children’s children would have remained slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. Therefore, even if we were all wise and discerning, all scholars and experts in Torah, it would still be our duty to retell the story of the Exodus; and those who linger over the telling are worthy of praise.

There is a story about Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Joshua, Rabbi Eleazar son of Azariah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon. They once held a Seder in B’nei Brak. They went on talking about the Exodus from Egypt all that night, until finally their pupils came and said to them: ‘Masters, it is now time to recite the morning Sh’ma!’
As we celebrate this holiday of freedom, the ending of slavery, we ask ‘Who am I when I hear of human rights abuses? Who will I choose to be when I know others are suffering?’

Will I be one who does not ask? Will I close the newspaper or turn off the television so that I do not hear? Will I turn my head and my heart away?

Will I ask only simple questions? ‘What is this?’ Will I ask ‘what’, but never ‘why’?

Will I let the evil impulse, my yetzer ha-ra, ask: ‘What has this to do with me?’ Will I let the problem belong only to the victims or the do-gooders? Will I distance myself from those in need?

Or will I strive to act in wisdom, to ask: ‘What are the underlying causes of the problem and what needs to be done to stop the abuse and free the oppressed? What are the laws and what does God expect of me?’

May God open the eyes of those who do not see, the mouths of those who do not ask, and grant us the wisdom to open our hands to our fellow humans when they are in need – the hand of generosity, the hand of support, the hand of peace and friendship.

**The ballad of the four children**

Said the parents to the children: ‘At the Seder you will dine; You will eat your fill of Matzah, You will drink four cups of wine.’

Now these parents had two daughters With two sons they numbered four, One was wise and one was wicked, One was simple, filled with awe.

And the fourth was sweet and winsome, He was young and he was small, While the others asked the questions, He could scarcely speak at all.

Said the wise one to the parents ‘Would you please explain the laws Of the customs of the Seder? Will you please explain the cause?’

And the parents proudly answered: ‘Our ancestors ate in speed, Ate the Paschal lamb ere midnight And from slavery were freed.

‘So we follow their example, And by midnight must complete All the Seder, and we should not After twelve remain to eat.’

Then did sneer the one so wicked: ‘What does all this mean to you?’ And the parents’ voice was bitter As their grief and anger grew.

‘If yourself you don’t consider As a child of Israel Then for you this has no meaning You could be a slave as well.’

Then the simple one said simply, ‘What is this?’ and quietly, The good parents told their offspring, ‘We were freed from slavery.’

But the youngest one was silent For he could not ask at all, And his eyes were bright with wonder As his parents told him all.

Now dear children, heed the lesson And remember evermore, What the parents told their children: Sons and daughters numbered four.

‘Our ancestors ate in speed, Ate the Paschal lamb ere midnight And from slavery were freed.

And we follow their example, And by midnight must complete All the Seder, and we should not After twelve remain to eat.’

The Torah alludes to four types of child:

One who is wise, one who is wicked, one who is simple and one who does not know how to ask.

What does the wise one say? ‘What are the duties, laws and precepts which the Eternal God has commanded us?’ To this child, teach all the laws of Pesach, even this difficult one, that ‘one does not conclude this service to you?’ To you but not to me!

If some should cut themselves off from our community and scorn our faith, make them eat their words, saying ‘I do this because of what God did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ For me but not for you! For had you been there, you would not have been redeemed.

What does the simple one say? ‘What is this service to you?’ To you but not to me! If some should cut themselves off from our community and scorn our faith, make them eat their words, saying ‘I do this because of what God did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ For me but not for you! For had you been there, you would not have been redeemed.

What does the wicked one say? ‘What is this? And you shall answer: ‘With a mighty hand God led us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.’

And with the one who does not know how to ask, you must take the first step, as it is said: ‘You shall tell your child on that day, “This is what God did for me when bringing me out of Egypt.”’
Where does the story of the Jewish people begin?

The Mishnah (Pesachim 10:4) prescribes that the narrative of the Haggadah should ‘begin with degradation and end with glory.’ The Gemara (Pesachim 116a) asks ‘what degradation?’ – where is the real beginning of the story? Two great Babylonian sages of the 3rd century offer different answers. Shmuel, renowned for his practical expertise, sees it politically: ‘We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt.’ True degradation is physical slavery; true glory is liberation. Rav, the spiritual authority, places the beginning of the story earlier: ‘In the beginning our ancestors were idol worshippers.’ Real degradation is the spiritual darkness of idolatry, real freedom is found in the enlightenment of faith in one God. Jewish tradition, always respectful of different opinions, includes both these answers in the Haggadah.

(Rabbi Mark Solomon)

The Ethiopian Journey to the Land of Israel

The moon is watching from above
On my back is a light bag of food
The desert beneath me has no end ahead
And my mother promises my little brothers
‘A little bit more, a little more
lift up your legs, a last push
towards Jerusalem.’

The moonlight stood fast
Our bag of food was lost.
The endless desert
Cries of jackals
And my mother comforts my little brothers
‘A little bit more, a little more
soon we’ll be redeemed
we won’t stop going
to the Land of Israel.’

And at night bandits attacked
With a knife and sharp sword
In the desert, the blood of my mother
The moon is my witness and
I promise my brothers
‘A little bit more, a little more
The dream will be fulfilled
One last effort before we get to Jerusalem.’

(Salomon Gronich and the Sheba Choir. Words by Chaim Idissis)

A response to the four children: our story continues…

In the beginning our ancestors were idol worshippers, but now we have learnt to worship the true God, as it is said: ‘Then Joshua spoke to all the people: Thus says the Eternal One, the God of Israel: Long ago in the days of Terach, the father of Abraham and Nachor, your ancestors lived beyond the River and worshipped other gods. Then I took your forefather Abraham from beyond the River and led him all over the land of Canaan. I blessed him with many descendants, for I gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau; and I let Esau take possession of Mount Se’ir. But Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.’ (Joshua 24:2 ff.)

Praised be the One whose promise to Israel never fails, praised be the Eternal.

Baruch shomeir havtachato l’yisra’el baruch hu.

The glasses are raised

God’s promise has sustained our ancestors and it sustains us still. For not one enemy alone has sought to destroy us but in every generation enemies seek to destroy us, but the Eternal One, ever to be praised, delivers us from their power.

V’hi she-amdeh la-avoteinu v’lanu she-lo echad bilvad amad aleinu l’challoteinu ella she-b’chol dor ve-dor omdim aleinu l’challoteinu, v’ha-kadosh baruch hu matzileinu mi-yadam.

The glasses are lowered
The following verses have been extracted from the biblical version of the Exodus story. They may be read responsively.

There arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, ‘The Israelites have become too numerous for us. We must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous.’

So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labour, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

They made their lives bitter with hard labour in brick and mortar. The king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah.

Pharaoh said: ‘When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth, if it is a boy, kill him.’ The midwives, however, feared God and they let the boys live.

Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: ‘Every boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.’

Now a man of the house of Levi married a Levite woman, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months.

Continue on page 12b
Telling the story the biblical way – 2

Continued from page 11b

But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him. Placing the child in it, she put the basket among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Then Pharaoh’s daughter went down to the Nile to bathe. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it. ‘This is one of the Hebrew babies,’ she said.

Then his sister asked Pharaoh’s daughter, ‘Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?’ ‘Yes, go,’ she answered. And the girl went and got the baby’s mother.

When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, ‘I drew him out of the water.’

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labour. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people… (he killed him and had to flee).

During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God.

Continue on page 13b

Telling the story the rabbinic way – 2

Continued from page 11a

And sojourned there with few numbers. As it is written, ‘Your ancestors went down to Egypt, seventy persons in total.’ You might have thought that they would assimilate among the Egyptians, but the verse continues ‘and now the Eternal One your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.’ (Deut. 10:22)

But there he became a great nation. mighty and numerous. This teaches that the Israelites distinguished themselves in Egypt. They became unique through the miztvot, until they were recognised and acknowledged as a separate nation. For they were not suspected of sexual immorality or of slander, nor did they change their names or their language.

The Egyptians dealt harshly with us. They were ungrateful, for they paid back in evil the kindnesses that Joseph had done for them, as it is written, ‘A new king arose over Egypt who knew not Joseph.’ (Exodus 1:8). He pretended that he did not know Joseph.

And they imposed hard labour on us. The Egyptians would place a heavy burden on the weak, and a light burden on the strong; the burden of the old on the young, and the burden of the young on the old. This was work without end and done for no purpose, for the Egyptians wanted not only to enslave them but also to break their spirit.

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Continued from page 12b

God heard their groaning and remembered the covenant. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

There the angel of the Eternal One appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

When the Eternal One saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, ‘Moses! Moses!’ And Moses said, ‘Here I am.’

Then the Eternal One said, ‘I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered My covenant.’

Therefore, say to the Israelite people: ‘I am the Eternal One and I will release you from Egyptian oppression and I will deliver you from serving them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts and I will take you to be My people and I will be your God that you might know that I am the Eternal One, your God, who will bring you out from Egyptian oppression.’

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Exodus chapter 1: verse(s) 8-9, 11, 14, 15-17, 22; 2: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 10, 11, 23, 24-25; 3: 1, 2, 4, 6; 6: 5, 6-7

Continued from page 12a

And saw. What did the Eternal One see? God saw that the Israelites had compassion for each other, whoever was the first to complete his quota of bricks would then help the others.

Our plight. This is the enforced separation of husbands and wives. The Egyptians decreed that the men should sleep in the fields and the women in the cities in order to decrease their offspring. But the Israelite women would warm up food and bring it to their husbands. They would comfort their husbands by saying ‘We shall not be enslaved forever; the Holy One will free us.’ Then they would come together and have children. Thus our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt due to the merit of the righteous women in that generation.

So the Eternal One brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. Thus taught Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensik: ‘At the announcement of laws, the Holy Scripture always makes mention of the Exodus from Egypt, and never of the Creation of the world. Why is this? Was not the Creation out of a void a greater miracle than the Exodus? Understand, then, that the Creation, properly speaking, was not a miracle. All nature is in, and subject to, God, and whatever sprang into being at God’s behest did so in a natural way. But the Exodus was a wonder, for to deal with the Egyptians according to their merits, it was necessary for the divine aspect of goodness to be suspended in order for evil temporarily to prevail.

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Telling the story the rabbinic way – 3

Telling the story the biblical way – 3
Sadly we recall that, as we celebrate our freedom, we do so in a world that is still blighted by many modern plagues. Today we give different names to the plagues that destroy our environment, our quality of life, our dignity, our very lives. Some are new plagues; others have been with us since the beginning of time. Some are external — AIDS and other diseases, tribal hatreds that have escalated into mass killings; acts of terrorism; floods and earthquakes, drought and famine. Others are inside us — plagues of thought and action that we can seek to control or correct.

These are some of the imperfections that trouble our world:

Ignorance that deceives us into hating what we do not understand.

Cynicism that impels us to mock and debase what others hold dear.

Indifference that leads us to neglect and abuse the environment.

Arrogance that inures us to the needs of others.

Insecurity that makes us cowards in the face of criticism.

Envy that narrows our horizons and poisons our relationships with others.

Deceit that causes us to disappoint those who trust us most.

Dogmatism that blinds us to the reality of alternative and sincerely held points of view.

Bigotry that drives us to define people by what they are rather than who they are, leading us to deny equality, respect and opportunity on the basis of superficial differences.

Hardness of heart that condemns us to ignore the feelings and needs of those closest to us.

May we have the strength of mind and body to put an end to the plagues that threaten our lives and endanger our souls.

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The plagues

After recounting the story of the Exodus from Egypt, resume here:

No liberation is easy. As evil takes its toll, so does the fight against it. As tyranny brings death and terror to its victims, so the struggle to overthrow it claims its casualties. In the upheaval, persecuted and persecutor, innocent and guilty, all will suffer. There is no redemption without pain.

Our rejoicing at the liberation of our ancestors from Egyptian bondage should be tempered by the memory, not only of their own suffering, but also of that of their oppressors. As we tell the story of the Ten Plagues, each one of them diminishes our cup of joy.

It is customary, at the mention of each plague, to spill one drop of wine.

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<td>Flies</td>
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<td>Cattle disease</td>
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<td>Darkness</td>
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<td>Death of the firstborn</td>
<td>Makkat b'chorot</td>
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And Miriam the prophet, the sister of Aaron, took her timbrel in her hand and she went out. The women followed after her with cymbals and they danced. And Miriam said to them: ‘Sing to the Eternal One who has triumphed greatly – horse and rider have been hurled into the sea.’ (Exodus 15:19-21)

Miriam’s Song
Miriam was a weaver of unique variety, The tapestry she wove was one which sang our history. With every strand and every thread she crafted her delight, A woman touched with spirit, she danced towards the light.

Chorus  And the women dancing with their timbrels, Followed Miriam as she sang her song: ‘Sing a song to the One whom we’ve exalted!’ Miriam and the women danced, they danced the whole night long.

When Miriam stood upon the shores and gazed across the sea, The wonder of this miracle she soon came to believe. ‘Whoever thought the sea would part with an outstretched hand And we would pass to freedom and march to the promised land?’ (Chorus)

And Miriam the prophet took her timbrel in her hand, And all the women followed her, just as she had planned. Miriam raised her voice in song, she sang with praise and might, ‘We’ve just lived through a miracle, we’re going to dance all night!’ (Chorus)

When the cup of suffering had run over, Egypt’s grip was loosened. On that day, Israel went forth to freedom. They made their way to the Sea of Reeds. Cloud by day, fire by night; God’s Presence went before them. But Pharaoh’s heart changed yet again – for the oppressors’ fury grows as their grip begins to weaken, and in their rage they pursue their victims even to their own destruction. In swift pursuit Pharaoh’s troops caught up with the fleeing slaves. Israel stood uncertain: before them the Sea, behind them Egypt’s host.

When Israel stood at the edge of the sea, each one said: ‘I will not be the first to enter…’ While they stood there deliberating, Nachshon ben Amminadav leapt first into the Sea and plunged into its waves. (Mechilta to Exodus 14:22)

The Sea did not part for them until they had waded into it up to their noses; only then did it become dry land. (Exodus Rabbah 21:10)

The people overcame their fear, as all must in every generation who would be free, trusting in the power of right to conquer might, as it is said: ‘Have no fear, for I shall redeem you. I have called you by name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.’ (Isaiah 13:1)

At that time the ministering angels wanted to sing a song of praise to the Holy One, ever to be blessed: but God restrained them, saying ‘My creatures are drowning in the sea, and you would sing before Me!’ (Sanhedrin 39b)

O God, teach us to rejoice in freedom, but not in its cost for us and our enemies. Let there come a day when violence is no more, and we shall be free to rejoice without sadness, to sing without tears.

That day is not yet. Since the Exodus we have known many oppressions and many deliverances. Often we have suffered, often triumphed – and always, as a people, survived. For God, who redeemed Jacob from the hand of one stronger than himself, has been our never-failing strength: as it is said:

‘Have no fear, for I am with you; do not despair, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, and help you; I will uphold you with My victorious right hand.’ (Isaiah 41:10)
They laugh with all their might;  
Donna donna donna donna,

Chorus

Donna, Donna

On a wagon, bound for market,  
There’s a calf with a mournful eye.  
High above him flies a swallow,  
Winging freely through the sky.

Chorus

How the winds are laughing,  
They laugh with all their might;  
Laugh and laugh the whole day through,  
And half the summer’s night.  
Donna donna donna donna,  
Donna donna donna donna.

It would have been enough

How many benefits the Eternal One has granted us!

Had God brought us out of Egypt and not supported us in the wilderness –  
*It would have been enough – Dayyeinu!*

Had God supported us in the wilderness and not given us Shabbat –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God given us Shabbat and not given us the Torah –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God given us the Torah and not brought us to the land of Israel –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God brought us to the land of Israel and not sent us the prophets –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God sent us the prophets and not called us to be a light to nations –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God called us to be a light to nations and not sustained us in all the lands of our dispersion –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God sustained us in all the lands of our dispersion and not enabled us to return to the land of our ancestors –  
*Dayyeinu!

Had God enabled us to return to the land of our ancestors and not enjoined us to perfect the world –  
*Dayyeinu!

The Hebrew for freedom is *תְּרוּםָה* which also means ‘a swallow’.

Dayyeinu!

Trieste, 1864
The Hebrew word for Egypt, mitzrayim, means a tight spot or a narrow strait where we feel ‘boxed in’.

‘One day, a few days after the liberation, I walked through the country past flowering meadows, for miles and miles, toward the market town near the camp. Larks rose to the sky and I could hear their joyous song. There was no one to be seen for miles around, there was nothing but the wide earth and sky and the larks’ jubilation and the freedom of space. I stopped, looked around, and up to the sky – and then I went down on my knees. At that moment there was very little I knew of myself or the world – I had but one sentence in mind – always the same: ‘I called to the Eternal One from my prison and God answered me in the freedom of space.’ (Psalm 118:5)

How long I knelt there and repeated this sentence, memory can no longer recall. But I know that on that day, in that hour, my new life started. Step for step I progressed, until I again became a human being.’

Viktor Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning. Lessons from a Concentration Camp

How much more should we be thankful for the countless benefits God has given us! For God brought us out of Egypt, supported us in the wilderness, gave us the Sabbath, gave us the Torah, brought us to the land of Israel, sent us the prophets, called us to be a light to nations, sustained us in all the lands of our dispersion, enabled us to return to the land of our ancestors and enjoined us to perfect the world.

Therefore we should thank, bless and praise beyond measure the One who performed all these wonders for our ancestors and for us; who led us from oppression to freedom, from sadness to joy, from grieving to celebration, from darkness to light, from slavery to redemption. Let us therefore sing a new song to God: Halleluyah!

Anon.

We were strangers in Egypt and Kiev, we were foreigners in Babylon and Berlin. We were outsiders and wanderers in Spain and Poland and France. We looked at the citizens of those lands with the dark, pleading eyes of the alien, Our hearts beat the hesitant beat of those without rights, fearful and uncertain. And so we pray, help us to remember the heart of the stranger when we walk in freedom. Help us to be fair and upright in all our dealings with all people. Oh burn and brand the lesson of all the years and all the lands in our hearts. Eternal One, make us forever strangers to discrimination and injustice.

Anon.
Why do we recite Hallel in two parts – the first part (Psalm 113 and 114) before the meal and the second (Psalm 117 and 118) after it? The first half is about the Exodus from Egypt and the past. The second is about the future of the Jewish people and the world. (The pity is that many Jews end their Seder with the meal, happily celebrating our past, but with no time to express hope for our future.)

Let us give praise – let every soul praise the Eternal One – Halleluyah!

(From Psalm 150)
God of might
(To the tune of Addir Hu)

God of might, God of right
Rock of our salvation
Unto You still we do
Offer adoration.
Since Your hand from
Egypt’s land
Led Your chosen nation.

God of all, when we call,
On Your love unending
Save and hear, O be near,
Unto us extending
Power benign, grace divine
In our hearts descending.

Mighty God, by Your word
Freedom first was given.
Now as then, let again
Bonds and chains be riven.
You we trust, wise and just,
God of earth and heaven.

Psalm 114

When Israel went forth from Egypt
The house of Jacob from an alien people,
Judah became God’s sanctuary
Israel accepted God’s rule.
The sea looked and fled
The Jordan turned back on its course.
The mountains skipped like rams
The hills like young lambs.
What makes you flee, O sea?
Why do you turn back, O Jordan?
O mountains, why do you skip like rams
You hills, like young lambs?
Tremble, O earth, before the Eternal One,
Before the God of Jacob,
Who turns the rock into a pool of water
The flinty rock into a fountain.

B’tzeit yisra’el mi-mitzrayim beit ya’akov me’am lo’eiz
hay’ah y’huadah l’kodsho l’khashlo’at
ha-yam ra’ah vayanos ha-yardein yissav l’achor
he-harim rakdu che’ilim g’va’ot kiv/nei tzon.

Mah l’cha ha-yam ki tanus ha-yardein tissov l’achor?
he-harim terik du che’ilim g’va’ot kiv/nei tzon?
im-lifnei adon chali aretz, im-lifnei elo’ah ya’akov
ha-hofchi ha-tzur agam mayim challamish l’may’ah no mayim.
The courage to let go of the door, the handle.
The courage to shed the familiar walls whose very stains and leaks are comfortable as the little moles of the upper arm, stains that recall a feast, a child’s naughtiness, a loud blistering storm that slapped the roof hard, pouring through.

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill, the small bones of children and the brittle bones of the old whose narrow hunger had stolen, the courage to desert the tree planted and only begun to bear, the riverside where promises were shaped, the street where their empty pots were broken.

The courage to leave the place whose language you learned as early as your own, whose customs however dangerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter as early as your own, whose customs however dangerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter, whose customs however dangerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter.

The courage to walk out of the pain that is known and gave birth to children who could look down on them standing on their shoulders for having been slaves. We honor those who let go of everything but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought, who became other by saving themselves.

The courage to walk out of the pain that cannot be imagined, to walk out of the pain that cannot be imagined, to walk out of the pain that cannot be imagined, to walk out of the pain that cannot be imagined.

The courage to walk out of the place whose language you learned and gave birth to children who could look down on them standing on their shoulders for having been slaves. We honor those who let go of everything but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought, who became other by saving themselves.

Marge Piercy

In every generation… Here is the essential purpose of this night: to experience the Seder as though it were happening to us and to tell it to the next generation:

In each generation we should all imagine that we ourselves came out of Egypt, as we read: ‘You shall tell your child on that day: It is in commemoration of what the Eternal One did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ For the Holy One, ever to be praised, redeemed not only our ancestors, but us along with them.

In each generation we should all imagine that we ourselves came out of Egypt, as we read: ‘You shall tell your child on that day: It is in commemoration of what the Eternal One did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ For the Holy One, ever to be praised, redeemed not only our ancestors, but us along with them.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who have redeemed us and our ancestors from Egypt, and enabled us to reach this night, to celebrate our freedom by eating Matzah and Maror. Grant, Eternal God and God of our ancestors, that we may reach yet other holy days and festivals, living in peace, building Your City in gladness, and serving You in joy. Then we shall sing to You a new song of praise for our redemption from oppression and for our inner freedom.

We praise You, O God, Redeemer of Israel. We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher g’alanu v’ga’al et avoteinu
mi-mitzrayim, v’higgi’anu la-lailah ha-zeh, le’echol bo matzah u-maror. Kein Adonai
eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen. Lean to the left and drink the second glass of wine
At this point, prior to eating Matzah, it is traditional at some Sedarim to bring water for the washing of the hands.

We praise you, Eternal God, Sovereign of the Universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments and enjoin us to wash our hands.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al n’tilat yadayim.

Our re-telling of the Exodus story has brought us from slavery to freedom, but it has also brought us into the wilderness, a dry and dangerous place with no water.

1. In the first month, the whole congregation of the children of Israel came to the wilderness of Zin. The people dwelt in Kadesh. Miriam died and was buried there.
2. And there was no water for the community and the people gathered against Moses and Aaron. (Numbers 20:1-2)

Jewish tradition combined these two verses to create the story of Miriam’s Well.

The fact that the Israelites were without water as soon as Miriam died led the sages to conclude that Miriam had been responsible for providing water for them during their journey through the wilderness.

This story teaches that Miriam played a vital role in sustaining our ancestors as they left Egypt and travelled to freedom. Therefore it is appropriate to fill a cup with water and place Miriam’s Cup (cos shel Mir’yam) alongside that which awaits Elijah.
Passover Night 1942
not a crumb of leavened
or unleavened bread
and no manna fell
no water sprang out
of the bunker’s wall
the last potato was gone
we sat and munched
chunks of potato peel
more bitter than herbs
we didn’t dare to sing
and open the door
for Elijah
we huddled and prayed
while pillars of cloud
massed over our heads
and pillars of fire
loomed like blazing traps
Yala Korwin

Pesach 1944
The Jewish inmates of the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen did not have Matzah
for the observance of Passover in 1944. Although pious Jews in the camp had
decided to fast on the festival, the rabbis who were among them decreed that the
eating of leaven would be permissible, provided the following prayer be recited
before meals:

‘Our Father in heaven, behold it is evident and known to Thee that it is our desire
to do Thy will and to celebrate the festival of Passover by eating Matzah and by
observing the prohibition of Chameitz. But our heart is pained that the enslavement
prevents us and we are in danger of our lives. Behold we are prepared and ready to
fulfil Thy commandment ‘And ye shall live by them, and not die by them’. Therefore
our prayer to Thee is that Thou mayest keep us alive and preserve us and
redeem us speedily so that we may observe Thy statutes and do Thy will and serve
Thee with a perfect heart. Amen.’

Unleavened Bread
The leader holds up the Matzah

Why do we eat this unleavened bread? Because our ancestors did not have time
to let their dough ferment before the true Ruler, the Holy One, ever to be blessed,
was revealed to them and redeemed them, as it is said: ‘They baked the dough
they had brought out of Egypt into cakes of unleavened bread, for they were
driven out of Egypt so that they could not delay to prepare food for
themselves.’

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You cause the earth to
bring forth bread.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your
commandments and enjoin us to eat unleavened bread.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’nitzvotav v’tzivvanu
al achilat matzah.

All take a piece of Matzah and, leaning to the left, eat it
Questions & answers

Why are the following part of our Seder?

THE BONE: ‘When the Temple still stood…’ Almost two thousand years have passed since sacrifices were offered in Jerusalem. The bone on the Seder plate recalls this ancient form of worship, reminding us of our connection with our biblical ancestors and our recognition that, although the outward form of our worship may have changed, the values which underpin our religious heritage remain the same, then as now: the quest for freedom and justice.

THE EGG: Pesach is a springtime festival and the egg is a symbol of this time of year. Traditionally, the egg represents the priests’ festival offering, but it is also a sign of rebirth. The Korpas brought to mind the manifestations of spring around us, let the new life represented by the egg awaken within us new strength, new hope, new joy.

SALT WATER: The salt water, in which the parsley has already been dipped, symbolises the sweat and tears of the Israelites as they suffered under Egyptian bondage. At many Sederim, the custom is to begin the meal with egg in salt water. This is most likely to have originated in our ancestors’ wish not to waste food, so having served their symbolic purpose, these items would be eaten!

CHAROSET: This sweet paste reminds us by its appearance of the clay and straw with which our ancestors were forced to make bricks for Pharaoh’s building projects in Egypt. By its sweet taste, it softens, but does not remove, the bitter memory of their slavery.

LEANING: With the custom of leaning at the Seder, we are emulating the Romans, who ruled Judea at the time the idea of the Seder was being developed. At their banquets, they would recline on couches, leaning on their left arms to keep their right hands free for food. So our leaning is a way of celebrating our freedom.

Afikoman

The Afikoman is best known as the piece of Matzah that is hidden (tzafun) and searched for by the children. Perhaps this is another device to sustain the children’s interest, for the finder is usually awarded a prize.

The Afikoman is a source of speculation. The answer to the wise child was that ‘one does not conclude the meal with the Afikoman.’ But what exactly did that law forbid? Was it to move on from one Seder to another, or to some kind of after-dinner entertainment? Was it to end the Seder meal with a dessert or savoury which would take away the lingering flavour of the symbolic dishes, especially the Matzah?

Whatever may be the true origin of the word, it came to be applied to a piece of Matzah that is eaten – as a substitute for the forbidden food or action. It is eaten at the very end of the meal, so that the flavour, like our yearning for freedom, may linger in our mouths when the Seder is over.

Now the Seder moves from telling the story of liberation from Egypt towards our hope and search for redemption in the future. But first we must give thanks for the meal we have just eaten.
Full Thanksgiving for the Meal

The complete version of the Thanksgiving for the Meal begins here

A Song of Degrees.
When God restored the exiles to Zion, it was like a dream. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with joyful song. Then they said among the nations: ‘God has done great things for them.’ God has done great things for us, and we rejoice. Restore our fortune, O God, as streams revive the desert. Then those who have sown in tears shall reap in joy. Those who go forth weeping, carrying bags of seeds, shall come home with shouts, laden with sheaves. (Psalm 126)

When God restored the exiles to Zion, it was like a dream. Then our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with joyful song. Then they said among the nations: ‘God has done great things for them.’ God has done great things for us, and we rejoice. Restore our fortune, O God, as streams revive the desert. Then those who have sown in tears shall reap in joy. Those who go forth weeping, carrying bags of seeds, shall come home with shouts, laden with sheaves. (Psalm 126)

Prayed be the name of God, now and for ever.

The glasses are refilled

The Thanksgiving for the Meal can take a number of forms. Following the version offered on this page, continue on page 30. Alternatively, the complete Thanksgiving for the Meal begins on page 25 and also ends on page 30.

Shorter version:

We praise You, Eternal One, our God, Sovereign of the universe, whose goodness sustains the whole world. With grace, love and compassion You provide food for all Your creatures, for Your love is everlasting. Through Your great goodness we have never lacked our daily bread; may we always have sufficient, for Your great name’s sake. Your goodness is the source of sustenance for all who live. We praise You, O God, Provider of food for all.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-zan et ha-olam kulbo b’tuvo b’che’en b’chesed u-v’rachamim hu notein lechem l’chol basar ki l’olam chasdo u-v’tuvo ha-gadol. Baruch atah Adonai ha-zan et ha-kol.

Or this Ladino version:

We have eaten and drunk; let us thank the holy God, ever to be praised, who gives us bread to eat, and clothes to wear, and years to live. May things always get better, never worse, and may the Creator’s goodness towards us never cease.

Ya comimos y bevimos, y al Dio santo Baruk Hu u-Baruk Shemo bendishimos; que mas diio y mas dara pan para comer y panyos para vestir, y anyos para bivir. Siempre mejor, nunca peor; nunca mas manke la mesa del Creador.

Bareich

Thanksgiving for the Meal

From this point onwards, the pages of the Haggadah run in consecutive numerical sequence.

The glasses are refilled

The Thanksgiving for the Meal can take a number of forms. Following the version offered on this page, continue on page 30. Alternatively, the complete Thanksgiving for the Meal begins on page 25 and also ends on page 30.

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Ya comimos y bevimos, y al Dio santo Baruk Hu u-Baruk Shemo bendishimos; que mas diio y mas dara pan para comer y panyos para vestir, y anyos para bivir. Siempre mejor, nunca peor; nunca mas manke la mesa del Creador.

Continue on page 30
We praise You, Eternal One, our God, Sovereign of the universe, whose goodness sustains the whole world. With grace, love and compassion You provide food for all Your creatures, for Your love is everlasting. Through Your great goodness we have never lacked our daily bread; may we always have sufficient, for Your great name’s sake. Your goodness is the source of sustenance for all who live.

We praise You, O God, Provider of food for all.

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We thank You, Eternal God, for the pleasant, good and spacious land You gave our ancestors; for leading us out of Egypt, and redeeming us from the house of bondage; for the covenant You have sealed into our hearts; for the Torah You gave our ancestors; for leading us out of pleasant, good and spacious land You gave to Your people Israel and all the inhabitants of Your world. Guide and sustain us, grant us prosperity and liberty, and may we soon be freed from all our troubles.

Let us not be in need of gifts or loans, but dependent only on Your generous providence, so that we may never be embarrassed or put to shame.

Racheim Adonai eloheinu al Yisra’el amnecha, v’al kol yoshvei teiveil arzecha. Eloheinu avinu r’einu zuneinu fam’seenu v’chak’leinu v’havrecheinu v’havvach lanu Adonai eloheinu m’leirah mi-kol zaroteinu, v’na al tatztircheinu Adonai eloheinu lo lidey matnat basar va-dam v’lo lidei ha-yav’atam ki im lyad’cha ha-m’leirah ha-p’tuschah ha-k’doshah v’ha-r’chavah she-lo neivosh v’lo nikkelehim l’olam va-ed.

We praise You, Eternal One, who has given you this good earth.’

For all these things we thank and praise You. May Your name be praised continually by all who live, as it is written, ‘When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Eternal One your God who has given you this good earth.’

We praise You, O God, for the earth and its sustenance.

V’al ha-kol Adonai eloheinu onenchu modim lach u-m’tzavecha et Adonai elohecha al ha-aretz ha-tovah asher natan lach. Baruch atah Adonai al ha-aretz v’al ha-mazon.

On Shabbat:

Eternal God, strengthen our resolve to observe Your precepts, and especially the precept of the seventh day, the great and holy Sabbath, that we may lovingly rest on it and be refreshed by it, according to Your will.

R’tzei v’hachalzeitenu, Adonai eloheinu, b’mitzvotenu u-v’mitzvot yom ha-shvi’i, ha-shabbat ha-gadol v’ha-kadosh ha-zeh, ishbotu lo v’kara’ach ba’b’ishvah k’mitzvav r’zonecha.

Have compassion, Eternal God, on Your people Israel and all the inhabitants of Your world. Guide and sustain us, grant us prosperity and liberty, and may we soon be freed from all our troubles.

Let us not be in need of gifts or loans, but dependent only on Your generous providence, so that we may never be embarrassed or put to shame.

Racheim Adonai eloheinu al Yisra’el amnecha, v’al kol yoshvei teiveil arzecha. Eloheinu avinu r’einu zuneinu fam’seenu v’chak’leinu v’havrecheinu v’havvach lanu Adonai eloheinu m’leirah mi-kol zaroteinu, v’na al tatztircheinu Adonai eloheinu lo lidey matnat basar va-dam v’lo lidei ha-yav’atam ki im lyad’cha ha-m’leirah ha-p’tuschah ha-k’doshah v’ha-r’chavah she-lo neivosh v’lo nikkelehim l’olam va-ed.
May the Merciful One rule over us for ever.
May the Merciful One be praised in heaven and on earth.
May the Merciful One be praised by every generation, extolled and glorified by us for ever.
May the Merciful One bless this house, and this table which we have eaten.
May the Merciful One send us Elijah the Prophet with good tidings of deliverance and consolation.
Merciful One, bless us and all our dear ones. As you blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah; in every way, ones. As you blessed our ancestors and consolation.

Avraham, Yitzchak v’Ya’akov, v'imoteinu Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Le'ah ba-kol mi-kol Ha-rachaman hu y'vareich otanu v'et kol asher lanu k'mo she-nitbar'chu avoteinu Ha-rachaman hu yishlach lanu et Eliyahu ha-navi zachur la-tov viyvaseir lanu b'sorot v'yithaddar banu la'ad u-l'olmei olamim.

May the Merciful One permit us to see a

v'shalom v'chol tov u-mi-kol tov al y'chassreinu.

Ha-rachamn hu yimloch aleinu l'olam va-ed.
Ha-rachamn hu yitbarach ba-shamayim u-va-aretz.
Ha-rachamn hu yishtabbach l'dor dorim v'yitpa'ar banu l'neitzach n'tzachim v'yithadar banu la'ad u-l'molmi olamim.
Ha-rachamn hu yishlich b'raachah m'rabbah ba-bayit ha-zeh v'al shukhzen zekh she-a'chalu alav.
Ha-rachamn hu yishlich lanu et Eliyahu ha-navi zarchur la-tov v'yivaseir lanu b'sorot tovot y'sh'olot v'yecham.
Ha-rachamn hu y'vareich otanu v'et kol asher lanu k'mo she-nitbar'chu avoteinu Avraham, Yitzchak v'Yakov; v'imoteinu Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Le'ah ba-kol mi-kol kol, kein v'y'vareich otanu kulanu yachad bi-v'raachah she'keimah u'nomar Amen.

(On Shabbat: 
May the Merciful One grant us perfect Shabbat rest and peace in the life of eternity)

May the Merciful One permit us to see a
time that is all good.
May the Merciful One make us worthy to witness the time of redemption.

Our God and God of our ancestors, be mindful of us and all Your people of the House of Israel. Grant us well-being and blessing, life and peace, on this Festival of Unleavened bread.
Remember us this day for well-being. Amen. Bless us this day with Your presence. Amen. Grant us this day continued life. Amen.


And let the vision of Jerusalem, the holy city, be fulfilled in our time.
We praise You, compassionate God, Builder of Jerusalem. Amen.

U-v'neih y'rushalayim ir ha-kodesh bimheirah v'yameinu. Baruch atah Adonai she-keinu bo l'tovah. Amen.


Remember us this day for well-being. Amen.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-eil avinu malkeinu adoleinu bo'elenu ganeinu zochreienu kadosheinu k'dosha Yisra'el. Abney ro'eh Yisra'el ha-melech ha-tov v'hameitiv la-kol she-b'chol yom va-yom. Hu heitiv hu meitiv hu yeitiv lanu ha-gmeulunu hu gomeinu hu yigmaru kein l'lech meir u-l'chesed u-v'rachamim v'nesher v'ta'alah v'hatzalah b'raachah v'hashamirah parrasah v'yechalitah, v'rachamim v'chayim v'khol tov u-nisi-kol tov v'al y'chassreinu.

Nishmat Shabbat. Amen.

(On Shabbat: 
May we never lack what we need for our good.


Nishmat Shabbat. Amen.

Avraham, Yitzchak v’Ya’akov, v'imoteinu Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Le'ah ba-kol mi-kol Ha-rachaman hu y'vareich otanu v'et kol asher lanu k'mo she-nitbar'chu avoteinu Ha-rachaman hu yishlach lanu et Eliyahu ha-navi zachur la-tov viyvaseir lanu b'sorot v'yithaddar banu la'ad u-l'olmei olamim.

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Ha-rachamn hu yishlich b'raachah m'rabbah ba-bayit ha-zeh v'al shukhzen zekh she-a'chalu alav.
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And let the vision of Jerusalem, the holy city, be fulfilled in our time.
We praise You, compassionate God, Builder of Jerusalem. Amen.

U-v'neih y'rushalayim ir ha-kodesh bimheirah v'yameinu. Baruch atah Adonai bonei v'rachamim y'rushalayim. Amen.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, our Creator and Redeemer, the Holy One of Jacob and the Shepherd of Israel, good and beneficent to all. You have shown us love and kindness always; day by day You grant us grace and compassion, deliverance and freedom, prosperity and blessing, life and peace.
May we never lack what we need for our good.


Nishmat Shabbat. Amen.
God’s wrath – or God’s love?

This is the point of the Seder at which we begin to look to the future and remind ourselves that this festival is concerned not only with an account of past oppression and redemption, but also with the future of humanity.

Before doing that, the traditional Haggadah, which was often read in times of great oppression and danger, acknowledged the persecutions of the past with these harsh and bitter words:

Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You and upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name for they have devoured Jacob and destroyed his home. (Psalm 79:6-7)

But throughout the ages there were those who protected the Jews and respected their customs and traditions. The following passage recognises that, in our day, we acknowledge the goodwill of so many towards us, and this is our Passover prayer for the future:

Pour out Your love on the nations who have known You and on the kingdoms who call upon Your name. For they have shown kindness to the descendants of Jacob and protected the people of Israel from their persecutors. May their reward be to see Israel at peace, and may they share in the joy of all Your nations.

We praise You, Eternal One our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Praised are You, Eternal One our God, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity.

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity.

Eternal God, grant strength to Your people. Eternal God, bless Your people with peace.

Adonai az l’ammo yitein Adonai y’vareich et ammo va-shalom.

The third glass

We raise our glasses in acknowledgement of the third of God’s promises:

I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgement.

We praise You, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen.

Lean to the left and drink the third glass of wine

(And those of Elijah and Miriam, if this has not already been done)
Open for me the gates of righteousness, let me enter them and give thanks to God. This is the gate of the Eternal One, the righteous shall enter it.

I thank You for You have answered me and become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the work of the Eternal One, it is marvellous in our sight. This is the day that God has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Eternal God, deliver us! Eternal God, prosper us!

Blessed are you who come in God's name, here, in God's house, may you be blessed.

You are my God and I thank You, You are my God and I exalt You.

Give thanks to the Eternal One who is good, whose love endures for ever.

Praise the Eternal One, all you nations! Extol God, all you peoples! For great is God's love for us; God's faithfulness endures for ever. Hallelulya!

Hallelu! et Adonai kol gayim shabb'chu'hu kol ha-ummim
Ki gavur aleinu chasdo ve-emet Adonai Yolam – Hallelulya!

Psalms 117

Psalm 118

Give thanks to the Eternal One, who is good whose love endures for ever.
Let Israel declare:
God's love endures for ever.
Let the House of Aaron declare:
God's love endures for ever.
Let all God-fearing people declare:
God's love endures for ever.

Hodu l'Adonai ki tov – ki Yolam chasdo! Yomar na Yisra-el – ki Yolam chasdo, Yomru na veit Aharon – ki Yolam chasdo, Yomru na yir'ei Adonai – ki Yolam chasdo.

In my distress I called out to God Who answered me and set me free. God is with me, I am not afraid What can mere mortals do to me? With God as my helper I can face any foe. It is better to take refuge in God than to rely on human beings. It is better to take refuge in God than to rely on those in power. God is my strength and my shield and has become my salvation. Hear! Glad songs of triumph in the tents of the righteous! The Eternal One does mighty deeds I shall not die but live to tell of God's deeds.
Blessing of Song

Nishmat

Let all the living give praise to Your name, our Eternal God. Let every human spirit acclaim Your majesty for ever. Through all eternity You are God, we have no Ruler but You, no other Helper or Redeemer to sustain and pity us in time of trouble and distress.

From Egypt until now You redeemed us, Eternal God, and from the house of bondage You released us. In times of famine You have sustained us. From the sword You have delivered us, from plagues and diseases rescued us.

Until this day, Your mercy has upheld us, Your love has never failed us. Do not forsake us, Eternal God: remain our help forever.

Therefore we praise You, proclaim Your glory and bless Your holy name, as it is said: ‘Bless the Eternal One my soul; let all that is within me bless God’s holy name.’

Yishubboch

O great and holy God and Ruler, Your name be praised for ever more in heaven and on earth. To You, our God and God of our ancestors, let hymns and psalms be sung unceasingly. All might and majesty, all victory and greatness, all glory, holiness and sovereignty are Yours. To You all thanks are due, all praise belongs, from now until the end of time.

We praise You, our Eternal God and Ruler: may our songs of praise, gratitude and reverence be acceptable to You, Author of wonders, Source of the life of all worlds.

From Psalm 136

Give thanks to the Eternal One who is good:
God’s love endures for ever.

Give thanks to the God above all gods:
God’s love endures for ever.

Give thanks to the Power above all powers:
God’s love endures for ever.

To the One who alone performs great wonders:
Whose love endures for ever.

Who in wisdom made the heavens:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who spread forth the earth above the waters:
God’s love endures for ever.

The sun to rule by day:
God’s love endures for ever.

The moon and stars to rule by night:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who brought Israel out of Egypt:
God’s love endures for ever.

With mighty hand and outstretched arm:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who divided the Sea of Reeds in two:
God’s love endures for ever.

And enabled Israel to pass through it:
God’s love endures for ever.

And led the people through the wilderness:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who remembered us in our deep distress:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who delivered us from our enemies:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who gave food for all creatures:
God’s love endures for ever.

Who gives food for all creatures:
God’s love endures for ever.

O give thanks to the God of heaven:
God’s love endures for ever.
Then everyone shall sit under their vines and under their fig trees, and none shall make them afraid.

The old shall dream dreams, and the young shall see visions and shall prophesy.

And then it shall come to pass that your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your elders shall dream visions in sleep, and your young men shall prophesy in visions of the night.

He will turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents.

And I will bring you to the land which I promised to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...

The sages of old could not decide whether to drink a fifth cup at the Seder, for there is a fifth promise in the Torah: ‘And I will bring you to the land which I promised to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...’

And I will bring you to the land which I promised to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...

The sages of old could not decide whether to drink a fifth cup at the Seder, for there is a fifth promise in the Torah: ‘And I will bring you to the land which I promised to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...’

As we open the door to welcome Elijah, we seek to understand the message of our past, and our duty to the present. We too can play our part in sustaining and nurturing our faith and our hope, as it is said:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Eternal One.

He will turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents.

And then it shall come to pass that your sons and daughters shall prophesy.

The old shall dream dreams, and the young shall see visions.

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and never again shall they learn to make war.

Then everyone shall sit under their vines and under their fig trees, and none shall make them afraid.

Quickly, in our days. Amen.

Bimheirah v’yameinu. Amen.

The Seder can continue with a number of songs. The Seder concludes on page 50.

The fourth glass

We raise our glasses in acknowledgement of the fourth of God’s promises:

I will take you to be My people and I will be your God.

Praised are You, Eternal One our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen.

Lean to the left and drink the fourth glass of wine

The counting of the Omer

The following may be read when a Seder is held on the second night of Pesach

The second day of Pesach sees the beginning of the counting of the Omer, a seven-week period that will conclude with the festival of Shavu’ot. It is regarded by the rabbis as representing the time it took our ancestors to journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai, where they received the Ten Commandments.

Let this journey of our ancestors from the fetters of slavery, through a wilderness of uncertainty, to a place where they found guidance in God’s teaching symbolise a similar journey for us: may we too learn the lessons of this Seder: to strive for the knowledge and understanding to liberate ourselves from whatever holds us enslaved.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You sanctify us by Your commandments and enjoin us to count the days of the Omer.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’yizkoru al sfarat ha-omer.

Today is the first day of the Omer.

Ha-yom yom echad la-omer.
Ki lo na'eh

Addir bi-m'luchah, bachur ka-halachah, g'dudav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Dagul bi-m'luchah, hadur ka-halachah, vatikav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Zakkai bi-m'luchah, chasin ka-halachah, taf's'rvav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Yachid bi-m'luchah, kabbir ka-halachah, l'mimudav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Mosheil bi-m'luchah, norah ka-halachah, s'vivav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Anav bi-m'luchah, podéh ka-halachah, tzaddikav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Kadosh bi-m'luchah, rachum ka-halachah, shin'annav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

Takkif bi-m'luchah, tomeich ka-halachah, t'mimav yom'tu lo. L'cha u-Ycha l'cha ki l'cha, l'cha of l'cha, l'cha Adonai ha-mamlachah, ki lo na'eh, ki lo ya'eh.

To God praise belongs, to God praise is due. Almighty in sovereignty, beloved by right, Your chosen ones sing to You: Yours only, Yours solely, Yours alone Eternal One is the dominion. To God praise belongs, to God praise is due.

Dominant in sovereignty, Excelling by right, Your Faithful ones sing to You. Glorious in sovereignty, Hallowed by right, Your Just ones sing to You.

Kindly in sovereignty, Lawgiver by right, Your Ministers sing to You. None like You in sovereignty, Omnipotent by right, Your People sing to You. Resplendent in sovereignty, Sovereign by right, Your Thankful ones sing to You.

Worthy of sovereignty, Wonderful by right, Your Worshippers sing to You. Yours only, Yours solely, Yours alone Eternal One is the dominion. To God praise belongs, to God praise is due.

The Seder concludes on page 50
Addir hu

Addir hu yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Bachur hu, gadol hu, dogal hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Hadur hu, vatik hu, zakkai hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Chasid hu, tahor hu, yachid hu yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Kabbir hu, lamud hu, melech hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Nora hu, saggiv hu, izzuz hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Podeh hu, tzaddik hu, kadosh hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

Rachum hu, shaddai hu, takkif hu, yig’aleinu b’karov bim’heirah bim’heirah b’yameinu b’karov, eil p’deih, eil p’deih, p’deih annamcha b’karov.

The Seder concludes on page 50

Ancient are You, soon may You redeem us, speedily, soon within our lifetime, O God, save; O God, save; save Your people speedily. Blessed are You, Caring are You, Divine are You, Endless are You, Faithful are You, Holy are You, Infinite are You, Just are You, Kind are You, Loving are You, Mighty are You, Noble are You, One are You, Perfect are You, Righteous are You, Shepherd are You, Teacher are You, Unique are You, Valiant are You, Wise are You, soon may You redeem us, speedily, soon within our lifetime, O God, save; O God, save; save Your people speedily, soon within our lifetime.

Siegmund Forst, 1959
Echad mi yode'a?

Sh'monah mi yode'a? Sh'monah ani yode'a. Sh'monah y'mei milah, shiv'ah y'mei shabbata, shishah sidrei mishnah, chamishah chumshei Torah, arba immahot, sh'loshah avot, sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Tish'ah mi yode'a? Tish'ah ani yode'a. Tish'ah yarchei leidah, sh'monah y'mei milah, shiv'ah y'mei shabbata, shishah sidrei mishnah, chamishah chumshei Torah, arba immahot, sh'loshah avot, sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Asarah mi yode'a? Asarah ani yode'a. Asarah dibraya, tish'ah yarchei leidah, sh'monah y'mei milah, shiv'ah y'mei shabbata, shishah sidrei mishnah, chamishah chumshei Torah, arba immahot, sh'loshah avot, sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Acharon mi yode'a? Acharon ani yode'a. Acharon dibraya, tish'ah yarchei leidah, sh'monah y'mei milah, shiv'ah y'mei shabbata, shishah sidrei mishnah, chamishah chumshei Torah, arba immahot, sh'loshah avot, sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Sh'monah y'mei milah, shiv'ah y'mei shabbata, shishah sidrei mishnah, chamishah chumshei Torah, arba immahot, sh'loshah avot, sh'nei luchot ha-b'rit, echad eloheinu she-ba-shamayim u-va'aretz.

Who knows one? I know one…

One is our God in heaven and on earth, Two Tablets of the Law, Three Patriarchs, Four Matriarchs, Five Books of Torah, Six Orders of the Mishnah, Seven days of the week. Eight days to circumcision, Nine months to childbirth, Ten Commandments, Eleven stars in Joseph's dream, Twelve Tribes of Israel, Thirteen Attributes of God.
I’ll sing you seven-o – Sh’loshah mi yode’a? What is your seven-o?

Seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you eight-o – Sh’monah mi yode’a? What is your eight-o?

Eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you nine-o – Tish’ah mi yode’a? What is your nine-o?

Nine for the nine months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you ten-o – Assarah mi yode’a? What is your ten-o?

Ten for the Ten Commandments, nine for the months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you eleven-o – Sh’nayim mi yode’a? What is your eleven-o?

Eleven for the stars in Joseph’s dream, ten for the Ten Commandments, nine for the months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you twelve-o – Sh’neim mi yode’a? What is your twelve-o?

Twelve for the tribes of Israel, eleven for the stars in Joseph’s dream, ten for the Ten Commandments, nine for the months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you thirteen-o – Sh’loshah asar mi yode’a? What is your thirteen-o?

Thirteen attributes of God, twelve for the tribes of Israel, eleven for the stars in Joseph’s dream, ten for the Ten Commandments, nine for the months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

The Seder concludes on page 50

Sh’loshah asar mi yode’a? Shishah mi yode’a?
Sh’neim asar mi yode’a? Sh’monah mi yode’a?
Assarah mi yode’a? Sh’nayim mi yode’a?

I’ll sing you thirteen-o – Sh’loshah asar mi yode’a? What is your thirteen-o?

Thirteen attributes of God, twelve for the tribes of Israel, eleven for the stars in Joseph’s dream, ten for the Ten Commandments, nine for the months to childbirth, eight days to circumcision, seven for the seven days of the week, six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

An alternative version

(To the tune of ‘Green Grow the Rushes-o’)

I’ll sing you one-o – Echad mi yode’a? What is your one-o?

One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you two-o – Sh’neim mi yode’a? What is your two-o?

Two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you three-o – Sh’loshah mi yode’a? What is your three-o?

Three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you four-o – Arba mi yode’a? What is your four-o?

Four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you five-o – Chamishah mi yode’a? What is your five-o?

Five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.

I’ll sing you six-o – Shishah mi yode’a? What is your six-o?

Six orders of the Mishnah, five for the Books of Torah, four for the Mothers of Israel, three, three the Patriarchs, two Tablets of the Law, we’ll keep them for evermore, One is God in heaven and earth and ever more shall be so.
Chad gadya

Then came an ox and drank the water that quenched the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. Chad gadya, chad gadya.

Then came a dog and bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. One kid, one kid.

Then fire came and burnt the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. Chad gadya, chad gadya.

Then came a stick and beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. Chad gadya, chad gadya.

Then fire came and burnt the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. Chad gadya, chad gadya.

Then water came and quenched the fire that burnt the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzim. Chad gadya, chad gadya.
Tell me: how is this night different
From all other nights?
How, tell me, is this Passover
Different from other Passovers?
Light the lamp, open the door wide
So the pilgrim can come in,
Gentile, or Jew;
Under the rags perhaps the prophet is concealed.
Let him enter and sit down with us;
Let him listen, drink, sing and celebrate Passover;
Let him consume the bread of affliction,
The Paschal Lamb, sweet mortar and bitter herbs.
This is the night of differences
In which you lean your elbow on the table,
Since the forbidden becomes prescribed,
Evil is translated into good.
We spent the night recounting
Far-off events full of wonder,
And because of all the wine
The mountains will skip like rams.
Tonight they exchange questions:
The wise, the godless, the simple-minded and the child.
And time reverses its course,
Today flowing back into yesterday,
Like a river enclosed at its mouth.
Each of us has been a slave in Egypt,
Soaked straw and clay with sweat,
And crossed the sea dry-footed.
You too, stranger.
This year in fear and shame,
Next year in virtue and justice.

Primo Levi

Un cavritico

This is a Ladino version of Chad Gadya

I vino el buey y bevio el agua, que apago el fuego, que quemo el palo, que mordio el gato, que compro mi padre por dos levanim, por dos levanim.

I vino el gato y comio al cavritico, que compro mi padre por dos levanim, por dos levanim.

I vino el perro y mordio el gato, y comio al cavritico, que compro mi padre por dos levanim, por dos levanim.

I vino el palo y pego al perro, que mordio el gato, y comio al cavritico, que compro mi padre por dos levanim, por dos levanim.

This is a Ladino version of Chad Gadya, Ben Shahn
Leader:
Now we have reached the end of our Seder. Our thoughts turn for one final time to our ancestors who left Egypt on this night hundreds of years ago. We can now go to sleep peacefully in warmth and safety. For them, the terrifying journey to freedom continued. Let us promise to remember their journey as we celebrate Pesach and to do whatever we can in our lives to make sure that no person anywhere in the world is treated like a slave.

All:
We will leave here and remember what our ancestors did and carry the message of freedom for ourselves and future generations.

Chasal siddur pesach k'hilchato
K'chol mishpato v'chukkato
Ka'asher zachinu l'saddei oto
Kein nizkeh l'yesach le-atid lavo.

Our Seder is now completed: we have followed the order, told the story, performed the rites, prayed the prayers and sung the songs. Let us pray for the Passover of the future, when all humanity will live in harmony and peace.

La-shanah ha-ba'ah bi-y'rushalayim!
Next year in Jerusalem!
La-shanah ha-ba'ah kol chai nig'al!
Next year in a world where all are free!
Elijah’s Cup, Miriam’s Cup

Leader:
One day all people will live in freedom. Just before that day, Elijah the prophet will arrive to tell us it is coming. Let’s see if he is here tonight to drink from his cup:

The door is opened

Eliyahu ha-navi, Eliyahu ha-tishbi
Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-gil’adi.
Bim’heirah v’yameinu yavo eleinu
Im b’sorot tovot, y’shu’ot v’nechamot.

Miriyam ha-n’vi’ah oz v’zimrah b’yadah
Miriyam tirkod ittanu, l’hagdil zimrat olam.
Bim’herah v’yameinu hi t’vi’enu
El mei ha-y’shu’ah, el mei ha-y’shu’ah

Elijah the prophet, the Tishbite from Gile’ad,
May he come to us soon, in our lifetime,
With tidings of good, of salvation and comfort.

Leader:
May peace and freedom come to our world soon.

All:
Amen.

The door is closed

The Seder concludes with the reading on the next page; some songs from pages 38 to 48 may be sung before concluding.

Now that we have given our thanks to God for saving our people from slavery in the past and for giving us freedom in our lives, it is time to look to the future, when all people will live in freedom.

That time is not here yet. According to Jewish tradition, the prophet Elijah will come and tell us when the perfect age of peace and freedom will be here for all humanity. And Miriam the prophet, who guided our people through the wilderness and helped them to find water to keep them alive every day, will give us life and strength to work for the day when Elijah will come to bring that future of perfect peace.

We open the door to welcome Elijah into our Seder and into our hearts, and we look for Miriam’s support in our everyday lives in the hope that the ideal future we long for will soon be with us.

The door is opened

Miriym ha-n’vi’ah oz v’zimrah b’yadah
Miriyam tirkod ittanu, l’hagdil zimrat olam.
Bim’herah v’yameinu hi t’vi’enu
El mei ha-y’shu’ah, el mei ha-y’shu’ah

Miriam the prophet, strength and song are in her hand.
Miriam will dance with us to strengthen the world’s song.
Soon, and in our time, she will lead us to the waters of salvation.

Leader:
May peace and freedom come to our world soon.

All:
Amen.

The door is closed

The Seder concludes with the reading on the next page; some songs from pages 38 to 48 may be sung before concluding.

(page 37)
Thanksgiving for the Meal

Afikoman

During the meal, the children can look for the Afikoman.

Refill the glasses with wine or grape juice

Leader:
Let us thank God for the meal we have just eaten. When we finish, we’ll have another drink to help us to give thanks.

Baruch eloheinu she-achalnu mi-shelo u-v’tuvo chayyinu. Baruch hu u-varuch sh’mo.

We thank You God for giving us food to eat which keeps us alive. Let God be praised.

Leader:
We are lucky that we have enough food to eat.

All:
We promise to remember those in our world who are hungry and try to share God’s gifts equally.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen.

We thank You God, for making the fruit of the vine.

The third glass of wine or grape juice is drunk, leaning to the left

Leader:
Now we’re going to give our thanks to God for one final time by singing or shouting out the word that praises God! Then we’ll have our final drink of the Seder in celebration of our freedom.

Halleluyah!

Repeat the blessing for wine, then drink the fourth glass of wine or grape juice, leaning to the left

We thank You, Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, for making the fruit of the vine.

The third glass of wine or grape juice is drunk, leaning to the left

Refill the glasses – including Elijah’s – with wine or grape juice. A cup of water for Miriam may also be filled at this point.

Once more we give our thanks to God for bringing our ancestors to freedom. As we say a final halleluyah, let us recognise that the best way to show how grateful we are is to do whatever we can to help those who still live in slavery.

We have eaten and been satisfied. Help us to be responsive to the needs of others and to listen to their cry for food. Open our eyes and our hearts, so that we may share Your gifts, and help to remove hunger and want from our world.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya’aseh shalom aleinu v’al kol Yisra’el v’al kol b’nei adam.

May the Most High, Source of perfect peace, grant peace to us, to all Israel, and to all humanity.
Leader: There are lots of things on the Seder table to make us ask questions about Pesach. We should try to find answers to help us remember how our people left Egypt and how important it is that all people can enjoy freedom.

Karpas – parsley
We have already eaten this but it’s another reminder of spring – and the salt water that we dip it in makes us think of our people’s tears when they were made to work as slaves.

Pesach
The bone and the egg remind us of the spring sacrifices our people used to take to the Temple in Jerusalem at this time of year.

Matzah
This unleavened bread that we eat for the next seven days reminds us that our people had to leave Egypt in a hurry.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz
We thank You, God, for letting the earth give us bread.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al achilat Matzah.
We thank You God, for Your rules that make us special and for asking us to eat Matzah.

Lean to the left and eat a piece of Matzah

Maror
The bitter herbs make us think of the bitter times our people had when they were slaves in Egypt. We take some bitter herbs and dip them in Charoset, the sweet paste that reminds us of the bricks our people made.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al achilat Maror.
We thank You God, for Your rules that make us special and for asking us to eat Maror.

Maror – bitter herbs
We eat the Maror to make us realise how bitter the lives of our people were when the Egyptians made them work so hard as slaves. It should also remind us how important it is that we do whatever we can to make sure that there are no slaves in our world. Let’s take some bitter herbs along with some charoset and get ready to eat them.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al achilat Maror.
We thank You, God, for Your commandments make us special and You ask us to eat bitter herbs.

All eat a piece of Maror – Now it’s time to eat real food!

Pesach, Matzah, Maror

Rabban Gamliel used to say, ‘If on the Passover, you do not explain these three things, you have not fulfilled your obligation: Pesach, Matzah and Maror.’

Pesach – the Passover sacrifice
The bone on the Seder plate reminds us of the lamb that our ancestors would offer to God at this time of the year. Pesach is a spring festival and a lamb is a symbol of the spring. Because animal sacrifice ended when the Temple was destroyed, we just have the bone to remind us of this ancient practice.

Matzah – unleavened bread
According to the story in the Bible, the people leaving Egypt were in a hurry and did not have time to wait for the dough to rise before making bread - so when they baked it, they made Matzah. Eating Matzah during Pesach is another way of remembering the experiences of the people who left Egypt.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam Malkhut shel Mitzvot u’Makor Einai.
We praise You, Eternal God, Ruler of the Universe: You cause wheat to grow from the earth to enable us to make bread.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha’olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav, v’tziv’u al achilat Matzah.
We praise You, Eternal God, Ruler of the universe: Your commandments make us special and You ask us to eat Matzah.

Lean to the left and eat a piece of Matzah

Maror – bitter herbs
We eat the Maror to make us realise how bitter the lives of our people were when the Egyptians made them work so hard as slaves. It should also remind us how important it is that we do whatever we can to make sure that there are no slaves in our world. Let’s take some bitter herbs along with some charoset and get ready to eat them.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha’olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav, v’tziv’u al achilat Maror.
We praise You, Eternal God, Ruler of the universe: Your commandments make us special and You ask us to eat bitter herbs.

All eat a piece of Maror – Now it’s time to eat our meal!
God has led us: from slavery to freedom; from sadness to joy; from mourning to celebration; from darkness to light; Let us sing a new song to God: Halleluyah!

How grateful we are, then, that God has given us all these things – and so many more! We give thanks to God who did all these wonderful things for our ancestors and for us.

God has led us:
- from slavery to freedom;
- from sadness to joy;
- from mourning to celebration;
- from darkness to light;
Let us sing a new song to God: Halleluyah!

Leader:
Our people were free! They were so happy, they sang songs of praise to God who had saved them. One of the Hebrew words for praising God is Halleluyah!

Hallelu hallelu hallelu, hallelu, halleluyah!
Kol ha-n’shamah t’hallel yah, hallelu halleluyah!
Let us give praise – Let us all praise God. Halleluyah!

All:
Let’s have our second drink to show how happy we are for the things God did for our people and for us:

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen.
We thank You God, for making the fruit of the vine.

The second glass of wine or grape juice is drunk, leaning to the left

We give our thanks to God by drinking our second glass of wine or grape juice:

ברוך אתה אלוהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגן.
We thank You, Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, for making the fruit of the vine.

The second glass of wine or grape juice is drunk, leaning to the left
We are happy that our people escaped from the cruel Egyptians. But in order for this to happen, the Egyptians experienced terrible plagues. As we say each of the plagues, we spill a drop of wine, because even though we are celebrating our people’s freedom, we are sorry that others had to suffer.

**Dayyeinu**

Leader:
The Bible tells the story of how ten terrible things, called plagues, struck the Egyptians and made them let our people go free. Let’s say those plagues out loud and spill a drop of our drink for each one, like a tear for the suffering caused by these plagues:

1. Blood
2. Frogs
3. Lice
4. Flies
5. Cattle disease
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death of the firstborn

Leader:
How lucky we are that God did all these things to save us! And after that, God gave us Shabbat, the Torah, the Prophets and then told us that we should make the world a better place. Even one of those gifts would have been enough...

All:
**Dayyeinu!**

Many are the things that God did for our ancestors! Even if God had done only one of these things, it would still have been enough – דָּנַי

If God had brought us out of Egypt and not given us Shabbat – דָּני

If God had given us Shabbat and not given us the Torah – דָּני

If God had given us the Torah and not encouraged us to perfect the world – דָּני

(pages 14, 15, 16, 17)
We are here to remember our ancestors who left Egypt on this night hundreds of years ago. That is the answer to the children’s questions in the Mah Nishtanah, that is the whole point of this Seder and this festival. Here’s a poem that tells us what happened in Egypt all those years ago...

On a night just like this in a dark distant land
A people – our people – did what God had planned.
Men, women and children, all of them so brave:
Each knew that no longer would they be a slave.

For so many years they had worked without end
And Pharaoh’s taskmasters whipped them again and again.
They built cities for Pharaoh, using bricks without straw
And knew that they couldn’t take this any more.

Then Moses showed up with God’s sign for the Jews
That came from a bush to Moses with no shoes.
God’s message was clear; Moses went to Pharaoh
And told him directly: ‘Let my people go!’

Pharaoh flatly refused – which is hardly surprising,
He would never put up with Israel’s uprising.
So Moses responded by doing God’s bidding
Promised terrible plagues – and he sure wasn’t kidding!

Now the Israelites watched these events with great awe
They had never seen anything like it before
Blood, frogs and darkness, a fiery hail shower –
They knew they were witnessing God’s mighty power!

Moses made one final call to the palace front door
And said to Pharaoh ‘You won’t see me any more:
We’ll be leaving when darkness descends at midnight
And when you awake, you will get a big fright’

The Egyptians awoke and they wailed and they cried
To discover that all of their firstborn had died.
The Israelites packed up, made Matzah and left
And Pharaoh just sat there, alone and bereft!

And on this special day we have gathered to tell
The Haggadah’s story that we know so well,
The words of our history. And why do we read them?
To recall how our ancestors discovered freedom.

Telling the story

Leader: Who has questions about any of the other the things on the table or what’s happening tonight? All these things on the table, this special meal and this festival are meant to help us think about what happened to our people hundreds of years ago when they were slaves in Egypt. Who knows the story of what happened?

Reader 1: Our people were slaves in Egypt.

Reader 2: The Egyptians made them work hard.

Reader 3: Our people were treated very badly and were miserable.

Reader 4: The Egyptians were cruel to them and beat them.

Reader 5: God does not like people to be cruel to other people.

Reader 6: So God decided to rescue our people from Egypt.

Reader 7: God forced Pharaoh the king of Egypt to let the people go.

Reader 8: And so we left Egypt and discovered freedom.

All: That’s why we celebrate this festival of Pesach!
…from all other nights?

Remember that the whole point of the Seder is to teach the children about what happened at Pesach – “You shall tell your child on that day…” On the table there are many unusual things, to encourage the children to ask questions all the way through the Seder. Just to start them off, here are four questions about this meal. These are traditionally read or sung by the youngest person at the table who is able to do so.

Mah nishtanah ha-lailah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-leilot!

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin sh’ar y’rakot, ha-lailah ha-zeh maror?

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin chinam bein yoshvin u-vein m’subin, ha-lailah ha-zeh kullanu m’subin?

On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread…
On all other nights we eat different types of herbs and vegetables…
On all other nights we do not even dip once…
On all other nights we eat either sitting or leaning…

Why is this night different…

Leader:
Mah nishtanah ha-lailah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-leilot!

How different this night is from all other nights!
So many special things on our Seder table! All these things are here to make us ask questions. Here are some questions to ask:

Mah nishtanah ha-lailah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-leilot!

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin chameitz u-matzah, ha-lailah ha-zeh kulo matzah?

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin sh’ar y’rakot, ha-lailah ha-zeh maror?

She-b’chol ha-leilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa’am achat, ha-lailah ha-zeh sh’tei f’amim?

She-b’chol ha-leilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin u-vein m’subin, ha-lailah ha-zeh kullanu m’subin?

On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread…
On all other nights we eat different types of herbs and vegetables…
On all other nights we do not even dip once…
On all other nights we eat either sitting or leaning…
Lachma

Refill the glasses with wine or grape juice

Leader:
This is Matzah. It is a special type of bread. We eat it at Pesach to remind us of how our people suffered when they were slaves in Egypt.

At this point, the leader holds up the three Matzot. The middle one is broken in two and the larger piece is the Afikoman, which will later be hidden to allow the children to search for it.

All:
This is Matzah. When we eat it let us remember how lucky we are not to be slaves and promise to help the poor people in our world.

Another name for Pesach is chag ha-matzot – the festival of unleavened bread. Matzah is known as lachma anya – the ‘bread of suffering’ – so we eat Matzah during Pesach to remind us of how hard life was for our ancestors when they were slaves.

This traditional reading reminds us that we should always care for those less fortunate than ourselves and share whatever we have with those who need it.

The middle Matzah is broken in two; the larger piece will be hidden as the Afikoman. The smaller piece is replaced and the Matzot are lifted as we read:

Ha lachma anya di achalu
av’hatana b’ar’ah d’mitzrayim.
Kol dich’fin ye’y’tei v’y’erchul.
Kol ditz’niy ye’y’tei v’yif’asach.
Ha-shata hachay
l’shata d’ayya b’ar’ah d’yisra’el.
Ha-shata avdei
l’shata d’ayya b’nei chorin.

This is the bread of affliction our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are in need come and share our Passover. This year here, next year in the land of Israel; this year oppressed, next year free.
Another name for Pesach is *chag ha-aviv* – the spring festival. All around us we see the world coming back to life after the winter. Hundreds of years ago, our ancestors did not have warm homes. Winter was a difficult time for them. So they were very pleased when the first signs of spring appeared – and when the first full moon of the spring was in the sky, they held a spring festival.

To remember this, and to give our thanks for the world coming back to life at this time of year, we eat Karpas, some green herbs.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-adamah.

We thank You God, for making food grow from the ground.

All take a piece of parsley, dip it in salt water and eat it.

Leader:
To help us remember this special day, we have many different things on the table.

Let’s begin with the Karpas, parsley, a green herb which tells us that spring is here.

*Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-adamah.*

We thank You God, for making food grow from the ground.

All take a piece of parsley, dip it in salt water and eat it.
Leader:
Welcome to our Seder. This celebration is to remind us that our people were slaves in Egypt but they became free. It is a special day for us and we start our special day by lighting candles and making Kiddush.

All: We welcome this festival by lighting candles:

The candles are lit

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kidd’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzviyanu l’hadlik ner shel (shabbat v’shel) yom tov.

We thank You God, for Your rules that make us special and for asking us to light the (Sabbath and) festival candles.

All: We welcome this festival by drinking wine or grape juice and giving thanks to God for bringing us joy:

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p’ri ha-gafen.

We thank You God, for making the fruit of the vine.

All: We give thanks to God for letting us share this special time together.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam she-hecheyanu v’kiyyamanu v’higgay’anu la-z’man ha-zeh.

We thank You God, for keeping us alive, looking after us, and letting us share this special time.

The first glass of wine or grape juice is drunk, leaning to the left

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kadosh b’mikdashenu.

The candles are lit

ברוך אתה אלוהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשך במקדשנו

As well as lighting candles, we also drink wine or grape juice. This is another way of reminding ourselves that this is a special day – grapes and the drinks that are made from them have always been used for celebrating times of joy. At our Seder, we will drink four glasses. We use the first to welcome this festival:

ברוך אתה אלוהינו מלך העולם. ברך פרי הטעם.

The Seder meal we share to welcome this festival of Pesach is an occasion for families to be together. As we look around the table at the people sharing this special time, let us give thanks to God for enabling us to be together:

ברוך אתה אלוהינו מלך העולם. שחרורנו וקצופנו והגינוו

We praise You, Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, for keeping us alive, sustaining us, and enabling us to reach this season.
Introduction

A Children’s Seder

The Pesach Seder fulfils a simple yet profound biblical instruction. In Exodus chapter 13, we read:

And you shall tell your child on that day: ‘This is what the Eternal One did for me when bringing me out of Egypt.’

This emphasizes the two most important elements of the Seder. Firstly, it is meant to be told to our children. As such, it is important that it is presented to them in a way that is memorable, and encourages them to consider the significance of the events that led to our ancestors gaining their freedom from slavery in Egypt.

Secondly, this verse reminds us that the struggle for freedom is an ongoing task that is the responsibility of every generation of Jews. The statement ‘This is what the Eternal One did for me’ makes clear that this is not some ancient event from which we are separated by many centuries but a challenge and a responsibility to be faced by every generation of Jews. A Seder is not a successful or even a legitimate Seder if it does not speak to the next generation and remind them of their duty to remember their ancestors and to carry the Pesach message of liberty for all in their consciousness as bearers of the message of Judaism.

In order to ensure that the lessons of the Seder are made accessible to our children, the following pages are offered as an alternative Haggadah. On the left-hand pages are readings that will hopefully be suitable for those children who are just learning to read. The right-hand pages are for more advanced readers. The subject matter on each facing page is the same, meaning that the two pages can be read in tandem by readers of differing ages and abilities. At the foot of each right-hand page is a reference to the pages in the main Haggadah that deal with similar material so it is possible to incorporate the different versions of this Haggadah in a single Seder. At all stages of the Seder, children – and indeed all participants – should be encouraged to discuss and ask questions about what is happening.

As a rough estimate, reading the left-hand pages of this children’s Haggadah will take around twenty minutes; the right-hand pages perhaps half an hour. If, in that time, the participants gain an awareness of the experiences and the courage of their ancestors, their duty to recall those experiences and to spread the message of liberty that was learned from them, then you will have fulfilled your responsibility to pass the message of Pesach to the next generation.

Have a happy Pesach!

Our Seder starts here

Remember...

...that more than three thousand years ago, on this very night, some brave people – our people decided to escape from years of slavery. They wanted to end the suffering they had experienced, they wanted a better future for their children. For longer than they could remember, they had been slaves, as had their parents and grandparents. But now, suddenly, they had a chance to escape.

What lay ahead of them was a wilderness, a frightening place. But it was also the way to freedom. If they did not take this opportunity to run from this place of oppression, they, and those who came after them, would be slaves for ever.

So they left. Taking with them what little food they could carry, they gathered up their children and led them into the desert. Behind them was a life of slavery and suffering. In front of them, a wilderness and a future of freedom. When they left, they did not know if they would live or die. They did not know that they were actually the first generation of what history would eventually call the Jewish people. They did not know that what they were doing would be written in a book that would be called the Torah, would be remembered and recalled in every generation at this season, with this ceremony, this meal we call the Seder.

That is why we are here this evening. To remember the courage of our people who left Egypt on this night hundreds of years ago. To remember the people who have remembered throughout the generations as we do tonight. To understand our connection with our past and our responsibility to our future.

Illustrations in this children’s Haggadah were created by Otto Geismar, for his 1928 Haggadah, and appear here by kind permission of his great-granddaughter.
… and you shall tell it to your children