

Haggadah For Passover Seder
Center for Spiritual Living, Davis
Assembled by Rev. Sara S. Nichols

Before We Begin

Imagine your life without freedom. Many people throughout history have lived without freedom.

The Haggadah tells the story of one of the times the Jewish people lived without freedom.

The Haggadah tells how the Jewish people once were slaves and then became free.

The story has provided inspiration over the years for many people working for freedom, in this country of course particularly in the struggle of African-Americans for freedom from slavery and then the long road to full civil rights and social equality, which we are still trudging.

Tonight is special, because we are learning and re-learning this powerful story of freedom and because we remind ourselves that starting today, it is a new world in which ALL IS WELL.

No matter what chains have bound us or our imagination before, we have no limitations. We can re-create and co-create a world that works for everyone with the Great Creative Spirit.

Kadeish

As our Pesach holiday begins, We praise God for our festival of freedom, a time with family and friends.

Baruch ata Adonia eloheinu Melech ha-aloam asher kid'shanu b'mitsvotav v'tisvanu l'hadlik near shel (Shabbat v'shel) Yorn tov.

We praise you, God, with whom we are aligned in integrity of thought, word and deed as we begin this holiday celebration.

May this celebration remind us that we must help and not hurt, cause joy and not sorrow, create and not destroy, and help all to be free.

We praise God for the gift of life and this happy time.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam shehecheyano v'kiy'manu v'higi-anu laz'man hazeh

This type of prayer simply tells the truth—isn't it amazing that with all our different backgrounds, life stories and paths, we are all here together celebrating this time?



Blessing over the first Cup of Wine

Fill the first cup of wine or juice (there is grape juice or sugar free grape juice on every table)

In a traditional Seder, we bless and drink four cups of wine. Tonight the four cups will provide the structure for our Seder; as we bless each cup, we will move forward in our journey from learning into creating the freedom we want in life. Tonight each of the cups will symbolize our collective journey towards full consciousness of our own Divinity which brings true freedom.

The first cup is the cup of awakening. The first step in our day and the first step in our life is waking up. We may begin our Seder without much knowledge of ourselves, or of Passover Seders, or both. We dedicate this cup of wine to awakening ourselves to greater awareness.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagofen

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine.

Drink the first cup of wine

Karpas/greens

Take a piece of the parsely and dip it in salt water.

On the Seder table, the green of the karpas, or green vegetable serves as a reminder that the season of our liberation is the season of the spring harvest. We dip the greens in salt water to remind us of the tears of our ancestors who suffered cruel slavery. As we taste greens and salt water together, we think about the freshness of spring and the tears of slavery.

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

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe,

Creator of the Fruit of the Earth. Eat the greens dipped in salt water.

Yachats: breaking the middle Matzo: A Time for Sharing

Take a middle piece of the Matzo on the table and break it in half.

Now we break the middle Matzo and share a taste of it. This reminds us that long ago the special gifts brought to the Temple in Jerusalem were shared. No matter where people live, sharing bread is way of saying, "we are one." It is also a way of sharing what we have others who may not have as much.

Other unleavened breads widely used in the world and eaten by people who may not have much else include tortillas and pita bread.

On this night of Pesach we say to the poor and hungry:

"Let all who are hungry come and eat." This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat with us. Let us all feed the strangers who need feeding at this Seder.

As we celebrate here, we think of all oppressed people everywhere. This year all people are not yet free. Let us all share with us the hope and freedom of Pesach: next year all shall be free (and we are all free in our minds).

Wrap the larger half of the middle Matzo in a napkin and set it aside.

Oh Freedom (traditional spiritual)

O Freedom. O Freedom.

O Freedom over me.

And before I'll be a slave. I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free.

There'll be justice. There'll be

justice. There'll be justice over me.

And before I'll be a slave. I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free.

Peace and plenty. Peace and plenty.

Peace and plenty over me.

And before I'll be a slave. I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free.

O Freedom. O Freedom.

O Freedom over me. And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free.

The Four Questions

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we dip one food in another, but tonight we must dip twice. First, we dip karpas in salt water and then we dip maror in charoset.

On all other nights we sit straight in our chairs, but tonight we lean to one side.

On all other nights we can eat either leavened bread or Matzo, but tonight, only Matzo. On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables, but tonight we also eat a bitter herb maror.

This night is different in order to remind us that the Jewish people were once slaves in Egypt. God, with great strength, set them free. God has set other slaves free and we are free in God.



The Second Cup of Wine: Waiting and Working

Blessing over the Second Cup of Wine fill the second cup of wine (or juice)

This is the cup of waiting. You are awakened. You are ready to change, but the change has not come. You are waiting.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagofen

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine.

Drink the second cup of wine.

The Story

Jewish history began a long time ago and is part of all our history. As we tell the story, we'll ask periodic questions to help you apply the story to your own life and history.

In the time of this story, the Hebrew people were enslaved by the Pharoah. They were forced to work day and night to make bricks and build cities. It was a terrible time for the Jewish people.

Question: Where have you acted out of fear? Where have you put limitations on yourself or other people because you are afraid?

Still the Israelites increased in numbers and the rulers of Egypt commanded that all Jewish boy babies were to be killed. Yocheved, Miriam's daughter, became pregnant. Miriam, already a prophet, predicted that a son would be born would survive and become a great leader. To save him from death, she wove a basket of reeds, put the tiny baby in it and set him a float on the Nile River near the spot where Pharaoh's daughter usually bathed.

Sure enough, the princess heard the crying baby and loved him immediately. She spoke aloud: "I will raise you, but how can I possibly feed you?" Miriam, who was hiding in the reeds, popped up and said, "I know a good woman, Yocheved, who can nurse him!" And so Pharaoh's daughter raised the boy she called Moses as her own son in the palace, with his own mother as his nursemaid.

Question: Where can you or have you defied the odds in your life and survived?

Moses grew up to be a compassionate person. He saw the way the Israelites were treated as they worked to make the Pharaoh's bricks and mortar. One day, Moses saw a taskmaster mercilessly beating a slave; furious and confused, Moses killed the taskmaster and was exiled from Egypt. While tending sheep in the land of Midian, he saw a vision of a bush which burned but was not consumed by the fire and heard the voice of God. God taught him to listen to his own heart and to help his own people struggle for freedom.

Question: What is your "burning bush" in your life? Something crying for attention in your life telling you to change your ways, leading you to greatness?

Moses returned to Egypt and, working with the Power of God that he now knew was available to him at all times, went to the Pharaoh and demanded freedom for the Jews, "Great suffering will come to your land. One plague at a time we will bring you, and each time we will say again, 'Let my people go!'"

Question: What is it going to take for you to change? How many plagues will you have to suffer before you let your ideas about what works go?

Go Down, Moses (traditional)

When Israel was in Egypt Land,
Let my People go.
Oppressed so hard they could not stand
Let my people go.

(chorus)

Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt Land,
Tell ol' Pharoah
Let my people go.

Thus said the Lord, bold Moses said,
Let my people go.
If not I'll smite your first-born dead.
Let my people go.

(Chorus)

As Israel stood by the waterside,
Let my people go.
By God's command it did divide,
Let my people go.

(Chorus)

THE TEN PLAGUES

As we read together, dip your finger in your cup and "diminish" the wine by putting a drop of wine on your plate—a drop for each plague. In this way we symbolically acknowledge that whenever anyone is suffering, we are diminished.

The Israelites living in Egypt cried to God. They wanted to be free!

God heard their cries and made the Egyptians suffer with terrible punishments called plagues.

We read the name of each plague aloud together. As each plague is named, remove a drop of wine or juice from your glass with a finger or spoon.

1. Blood.
2. Frogs.
3. Lice.
4. Wild Beasts.
5. Diseases.
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death!

Finally, the Pharaoh was convinced that the Hebrew people had to be freed from slavery and he allowed them to leave Egypt.

But after they left Egypt, the Pharaoh changed his mind.

Question: Where has this happened to you? Just as you're about to cross into freedom, do you ever sabotage yourself?

The armies of Egypt were behind them and the great Red Sea was in front of them. God worked through Moses, who raised his staff and the Red Sea parted. The Jewish people passed through on dry land and then the waters came crashing down on the chariots and armies of the Pharaoh.

On the Seder Table we find Special foods

We now describe some of the other objects on our Seder plate, the Pesach or beet, more about the Matzo, or unleavened bread, and the maror, or bitter herb, and the orange, not traditionally found on a Seder plate.

Point to or raise the beet

(Pesach) On the night before they were to leave Egypt, the Israelites were told to slaughter a lamb and paint their doorposts with its blood, a sign to the destroying angel not to take the first born in those homes. Today we no longer sacrifice an animal, but we do remember that night of terror and hope, a prelude to change and freedom. The Pesach is a reminder that freedom begins when we mark our doors, when we take the risk of speaking up and standing out. Saying no to oppression, being open and proud of our heritage and who we are, daring to believe that things will be different—that is how we mark ourselves as a free people

Point to or raise the Matzo

(Matzo/Unleavened Bread)

When the Israelites heard they were going to be allowed to leave their slavery in Egypt, they rushed to make their liberation a reality, fearful that Pharaoh's heart would harden and they would miss their chance at freedom. In their hurry, they did not have time to let their bread rise. Matzo represents the unleavened bread that baked on their backs, as they hastened to meet the promise of life as a free people.

Pass the Matzo around so that everyone can take a piece.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the Earth.

Eat the Matzo.

Point to or raise the maror/horseradish:

The (Maror) Bitter herbs, such as horseradish, remind us of the bitterness of slavery or any oppression.

We eat this maror with the prayer that all bitterness be turned to joy, oppression into rights, slavery into freedom.

Pass the maror around so that everyone may take some.

Point to or raise the Charoset:

(Charoset) A mixture of nuts, apples and wine reminds us of the clay our ancestors used to make bricks for the Pharaoh in Egypt.

Pass the Charoset around so that everyone may take some. Put the Maror and the Charoset together with a Matzo for a delicious sandwich.

Point to or raise the egg:

(Beitsa) Roasted Egg. On ancient Jewish festival days, ancestors would bring an offering to the Temple to be roasted in honor of the holiday. The roasted egg reminds us of that sacrifice.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror, Charoset, Beitsa.

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, who has sanctified us through the commandments and instructed us concerning the eating of all these foods.

Eat the Matzo and the maror together.

Point to or raise the orange:

(Orange) The traditional Seder plate does not contain an orange. It is foreign and out of place on the plate. In recent decades, Rabbi Heschel 's daughter, a prominent lesbian and professor of Jewish Studies, began adding an orange to the Seder plate to symbolize the fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men contribute and are active members of Jewish Life. As we eat a section of the orange, we spit out the seeds to spit out the idea hatred or prejudice.

Peel the orange and give each person a section to eat.



The Third Cup of Wine: Surrender

Blessing over the Third Cup of Wine fill the third cup of wine or juice

You have waited enough. You realize that your old self cannot change your life alone. You are ready to call upon your higher self, your higher power, your God.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagofen

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine.

Drink the third cup of wine.

Dayeinu

A new and happy time began for the Israelites. As they stood on the other side of the sea they sang "Who is like you, Oh God? You are the Eternal One, the One who saved us!"

Pesach is a time to thank god for making our lives and our world better. We are grateful for everything! We recognize that God has already done God's job. God has already given us everything, all the bounties of the universe are ours.

After each statement, please join together in saying in unison "Dayeinu" which means, "it is enough."

If God had only created the world and not brought us out of Egypt, it would have been enough. *Dayeinu.*

If God had only brought us out of Egypt but not divided the sea.
Dayeinu.

If God had only divided the sea but not helped us cross on dry land.
Dayeinu.

If God had only helped us cross on dry land but had not given us the Sabbath.
Dayeinu.

If God had only given us the United States of America.
Dayeinu.

If God had only given us the Center for Spiritual Awareness.
Dayeinu.

If God had only given us the first church building.
Dayeinu.

If God had only given us this Haggadah but with no dinner afterwards.
Dayeinu.

God is enough. Each of us is enough.
All is well.



The Fourth Cup of Wine: Freedom to Change

Blessing over the Fourth Cup of Wine fill the fourth cup of wine or juice

With this cup, we transition from learning and seeing to action. This fourth cup is the cup of our future, which is now. We do not need to wait. We can be the change now. With hope in our hearts we drink.

Baruch attach adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagofen

Blessed are You, Source of All Life, Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine.

Drink the fourth cup of wine.

Elijah's Cup

It is said that Elijah the Prophet visits each home on the night of the Passover Seder, as a foreshadowing of this time when he will arrive to announce the coming of the Messiah, and a

healed world. Traditionally, we fill a cup of wine for Elijah to welcome him to our Seder. In many traditions, the front doors of Jewish homes are also opened, to welcome the prophet into our midst.

Elijah is also a fixture in Jewish folklore, often appearing disguised as a poor traveler or begger in need.

He rewards those who help him through generosity and compassion.

This tradition reminds us to honor all people, from family to strangers, from neighbors to wanderers. The stories of Elijah insist that our generosity and compassion, our "open doors," must extend to all people if we hope to usher in an era of true justice.

Miriam's Cup

Tradition tells us that God gave Miriam, sister of Moses, a miraculous well that followed the Israelites through the desert. Her well provided water for all who were thirsty. In some communities, a cup of water is filled at the Passover Seder to recall Miriam's care for the Israelites as they wandered.

The Meal is Served–

Please wait until you are called to get food

As the Meal Ends

Our Seder is now ending. We have said special words and eaten different foods. We know that once we were slaves but now we are free. Not all people are able to perceive their freedom.

There are also people who are hungry today. On this Passover we promise to help all people who are hungry and in need. There is freedom and peace for us! There is freedom and peace available for everyone. This is our hope and prayer.

Please stand and join us in singing This Little Light of Mine, a traditional civil rights song which is also the last song in our service typically here at the Center for Spiritual Living, Davis

This Little Light of Mine

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine (3x)

As I work each day, I'm gonna let it
shine (3x)
Let it shine (3x)

All in this place, I'm gonna let it
shine (3x) Let it shine (3x)

As I'm cleaning up, I'm gonna let it
shine (3x) Let it shine (3x)

On the journey home, I'm gonna
let it shine (3x) Let it shine (3x)

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine (3x)
Let it shine (3x)