

## Passover Haggadah

In loving memory of my paternal Oma who hosted my fond childhood family memories of our traditional, and yet respectfully abbreviated, Jewish Passover Seders, and my father who added the authentic Jewish style and flair to the evolving Passover Seders of my adulthood and parenthood. This honoring remembrance would not be complete without acknowledgment of the important presence of my Aunt Rose, Uncle Igo, Uncle Kurt, Aunt Helga, and of course my mother.

The word "Haggadah" is derived from the Hebrew root "nagad," which means "to declare, make known, expound." The Haggadah is a book that provides the order and script for the Passover Seder, a ritual meal based on the book of Exodus in the Bible, that commemorates the Jews' liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt.

There is generally one leader of the Seder service, with each participant, as they are willing or able, taking some readings. The Seder as the means to retell the event at the start of what is biblically a seven-day holiday, was a purposeful man-made adjustment begun around the destruction of the second temple in the year 70, as without that Temple, fulfilling the prescribed biblical requirement of sacrifice was not possible. The Haggadah was developed over time by Rabbis.

While the overall structure and order of the Haggadah remains consistent, there are many different published versions, along with homegrown family ones such as this one. This allows the Haggadah to be an evolving body of work that adjusts for the participants and allows for a deepening understanding of the spiritual relevance of this ancient biblical event, while still retaining the historic value of the celebration. The traditional prayers are in Hebrew transliteration and English, and the Scriptures we will be reading, are found in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) portion of the Bible.

Diane

### The Seder

**Leader:** Welcome to our Passover Seder. Passover is a celebration of freedom and redemption (rescue, saving). Seder means order. We are following the order of the fifteen traditional steps for the Passover service outlined in the Haggadah. The meaning of the number 15 in the Bible is rest. This rest comes after deliverance, represented by the number 14.

Passover always occurs on the 15th of Nisan on the Hebrew Calendar which is a different date each year in March or April on the Gregorian calendar. (The Hebrew calendar is a lunar calendar, based on the cycles of the moon, as compared to the Gregorian calendar, which is the calendar most widely used globally, and is a solar calendar based on earth's orbit around the sun.) God, as the sun set on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan told Abram (later renamed Abraham), in a vision, that His descendants would end up as slaves in a foreign country, and they would eventually be set free.

**Any reader:** Read Genesis 15:12-16

**The female head of household:** Lighting the candles holiday candles. "Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Pesach." "Blessed are You, Adonai (Lord) our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us with laws and commanded us to light the Passover candles."

With this blessing, the Seder, and our time during it, is sanctified (set apart) for God's purposes. Light is a symbol of God's presence. And Adonai in this traditional candle lighting prayer, is the plural of the Hebrew word Adon, which means "lord" or "master." The plural form of Adonai refers to God's greatness as Master. The plural form could also refer to the Trinity.

**Various readers:** Read Deuteronomy 6:20-23; Exodus 12:12-15.

**Leader:** Some will observe the physical commandment to clean our homes and workplaces of chametz (leaven) and then to not eat leaven for the entire weeklong holiday. Leaven is any food or drink made of wheat, barley, oat, rye, or spelt (a hulled wheat), that has been in contact with water, yeast, or any other leavening agent and been allowed to ferment and "puff up." Just about anything made from these grains, other than Passover matzah, which is carefully controlled to avoid leavening, is considered chametz.

Physical is symbolic of the spiritual. Leaven in scripture generally symbolizes sin and corruption. Back in Genesis, Adam, and Eve, through the willful, and deliberate move against the one thing God had told them not to do, were elevating themselves above God, their creator, and the sustainer of all life. This has been the nature of sin ever since, a nature that every single person after Adam and Eve inherited. It is in our heredity material, our spiritual DNA. There were immediate, and eternal consequences. The entire Seder service provides a prophetic picture pointing towards how this situation will be rectified.

**Leader:** Explanation of the Seder Plate (pointing to each item)

**Zeroa** is a chicken neck or leg bone that is roasted representing the Pesach (or Paschal) lamb, which was sacrificed as a special offering on the eve of the exodus from Egypt. It is a symbol of salvation then, and is also a picture of the Messiah, whose sacrifice provides salvation preserving the eternal lives of all who believe.

**Beitzah** (pronounced bay-TSAH) is a roasted hardboiled egg. The egg represents the festival sacrifice that was offered at the Temple during Passover and other holidays. It is roasted brown as a symbol of mourning for the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in the year 70, and the inability to offer sacrifices there and yet, with a hope. The egg is also a symbol of spring, rebirth, hope. The word Beitzah also means “want” or “desire”, so it implies the love God has for His people, and His desire to free people from their personal bondage and bring them to His salvation.

**Maror** (bitter herb, horseradish). This symbolizes the bitterness of Egyptian slavery.

**Chazeret** [pronounced [khah-ZEH-ret] (another bitter herb, romaine lettuce). It represents the hyssop branches used to apply the blood of the lamb to the doorpost. (Exodus 12:22)

**Charoset** is a pasty mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon, grape juice, ground and combined to resemble the mortar, or clay which the Israelite slaves used to make bricks for building Pharaoh’s cities and palaces. The charoset is sweet because the sweetness is symbolic of God’s mercy and grace.

**Karpas** is a vegetable (parsley, onion, or boiled potato) dipped into saltwater. It represents spring, rebirth, new beginning. The salt water represents tears that the Israelites shed as slaves.

### **The Fifteen Steps of the Passover Seder**

**Any reader:**

**1. Kadesh** - This first of four cups during the Seder is called the **Cup of Sanctification**. We recite Kiddush which is the blessing over the wine, and Kiddush means sanctification. Using red wine or red grape juice is significant as grapes and vineyards are referenced numerous times in scripture, and are symbolic of prosperity, especially spiritually. The red color symbolizes blood, a foundational concept in this holiday celebration.

**Leader:** All raise their cup of wine or grape juice; the leader recites the Kiddush, and after the prayer is complete, all drink their first sip. “Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam, borei p’ri hagafen.” “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe Who creates the fruit of the vine.” “Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam, shehecheyanu v’kiy’manu v’higiyanu laz’mann hazeh.” “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has kept us alive, sustained us and brought us to this season.”

**Any reader:**

**2. Urchatz** (oor-HATZ) - In Hebrew, Urchatz means “washing” or “cleansing.” This first washing of the hands is a symbolic gesture of personal sanctification as we enter the holy celebration of Passover. In Aramaic, the sister language to Hebrew, Urchatz means “trusting.” There is no prayer said during this hand washing. (This is somewhat based on Exodus 30:18-21.)

**Leader:**

**3. Karpas** - (The leader of the Seder dips the Karpas (parsley or celery) from the Seder plate in saltwater.) The Karpas represents spring, rebirth, and new beginning. The salt water represents tears that the Jews shed as slaves. The leader recites the blessing over vegetables “Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha’olam, borei p’ri ha’adamah.” “Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the universe Who creates the fruit of the earth.”

**Leader:**

**4. Yachatz** - means divide. The leader holds up the plate of the three matzos for all to see and breaks the middle matzo into two unequal pieces. The larger part is wrapped in a napkin and set aside, and the other broken piece is placed back in between the two whole matzos. The wrapped piece is for later use as the Afikomen, as a game, and as part of the dessert.

In some traditions, during the Seder meal, the Afikomen is “stolen” by the younger Seder participants and hidden by them. At the end of the Seder, the leader must find it. In other traditions, the leader hides the afikomen and the younger participants search for it. In both traditions, the younger participants all receive a small gift upon the afikomen being reclaimed, as the leader redeems the afikomen. This tradition dramatizes the empowerment of the powerless, and the precious and uplifting grace of God, foundational concepts unpacked in the biblical Passover event.

**Various readers:**

There are different interpretations of why three matzos, and why the middle piece is broken.

One interpretation is that the three matzos are symbolic of the three classes of Jews at the time: Priests, Levites, and Israelites, all of whom were liberated from Egyptian bondage. The middle piece recalls God's splitting of the Sea of Reeds to allow the Jews to cross out of Egypt on dry land.

Another interpretation is that the three represent Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, known as the Patriarchs of the Jews. The middle matzo, the one broken, symbolizes the Passover Lamb, and corresponds to Isaac. Isaac, the miraculously born son of Abraham, was taken by Abraham to what would become the Temple Mount to be offered as a sacrifice as God requested. God ultimately provided a ram in place of Isaac for the offering. This is a prophetic picture.

Read Genesis 22:1-18

Another interpretation is that the three pieces represent God, the Messiah, and the Spirit of God; the fulfillment of the prophetic picture. While some are waiting for the first arrival of this Messiah, Hebrew Bible scripture alludes to the reality that He already arrived, and that He will return. Over three hundred prophecies stated in the Hebrew Bible were fulfilled by Jesus. As one continues to read the cohesive body of scriptures into the New Testament, that the Messiah Jesus arrived, and will return, becomes increasingly clearer.

Read Isaiah 53

**Leader:**

**5. Maggid** - Maggid is a Hebrew word that means telling a story. (The leader uncovers the matzos and again raises the plate for all to see.) This is the bread of affliction, which the Jews ate in Egypt. When Pharaoh freed the Jews, they left in such a hurry that they could not wait for bread dough to rise. All who are hungry, come and eat. All who are needy, come and celebrate Passover. On Passover long ago, through miracles, only God could perform, and faith, the Jews left Egypt and slavery. The story is completely about God, and what He has done for us all.

The Four Questions, (Mah Nishtanah), asked by the youngest at the Seder, often sung to a traditional melody, seek to answer one overall question and demonstrate how our transition from slavery to freedom is the reason for all the different practices mentioned in the questions.

**Youngest at Seder:** "Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?" "Why is this night different from all other nights? Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin chametz umatzah, halailah hazeh, kuloh matzah? On all other nights, we eat leavened bread and matzah, but tonight, only matzah? Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin sh'ar y'rakot, halailah hazeh, maror? On all other nights, we eat any kind of vegetables, but tonight, only bitter herbs? Sheb'chol haleilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am echad; halailah hazeh, sh'tei f'amim? On all other nights, we don't dip our food even once, but tonight, we dip twice? Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein m'subin; halailah hazeh, kulanu m'subin? On all other nights, we eat either sitting upright or reclining, but on this night, we recline?"

**Leader:** The Bible speaks concerning four different sons, basically four ways children may typically ask questions about the Seder. Through this, we get a sense of different kinds of people as individuals and learners. These sentences are the Scriptures written out.

- 1) "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?" (Deuteronomy 6:20)
- 2) "What do you mean by this rite?" (Exodus 12:26)
- 3) "What does this mean?" (Exodus 13:14)
- 4) And for the one who is unable to ask, we simply explain "It is because of what the Lord did for me when I went free from Egypt." (Exodus 13:8)

**Various readers:**

**We will now tell the story of Passover, summarized here, but in full in Exodus 1-15.**

The Jews were already in the land of Egypt. A new king arose over Egypt and imposed great labor and hardship on the Jews. But the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and spread out. The king then ordered that all newborn baby boys be killed. A Levite woman conceived and bore a son and hid him for three months. After that time, she prepared a wicker basket and laid the child in the basket and placed it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe in the Nile and saw the basket among the reeds and had her slave girl fetch the basket.

The Pharaoh's daughter took pity on the child and made him her own son. She named him Moses, explaining, "I drew him out of water." Moses grew and learned of his heritage. After witnessing an Egyptian beating a Jew, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh. He arrived in the land of Midian, where he married his wife, Zipporah.

A long time had gone by, and the king of Egypt died. The Jews were groaning under bondage and cried out to God. God heard their cries. God appeared to Moses in a burning bush telling him that He would use Moses to lead His people out of Egypt into a land "flowing with milk and honey." So, Moses returned to Egypt and Moses took the rod of God with him. Moses and his brother Aaron went to the Pharaoh to ask for the release of their people. But Pharaoh's heart had been hardened and Pharaoh would not release them from the bondage of slavery. Each time Pharaoh refused to let the Jews go, the land of Egypt came under a great plague. With the tenth and most awful plague, the heart of Pharaoh would be pierced.

"You shall have a perfect male lamb in its [first] year; you may take it either from the sheep or from the goats. And you shall keep it for inspection until the fourteenth day of this month, and the entire congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it in the afternoon. And they shall take [some] of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they will eat it. And on this night, they shall eat the flesh, roasted over the fire, and unleavened cakes; with bitter herbs, they shall eat it. And this is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste it is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord." (Exodus 12:5-8,11)

"I will pass through the land of Egypt on this night, and I will smite every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt will I wreak judgments I, the Lord. And the blood will be for you for a sign upon the houses where you will be, and I will see the blood and skip over you, and there will be no plague to destroy [you] when I smite the [people of the] land of Egypt." (Exodus 12:12-13)

**Leader:** This second of four cups during the Seder is called the **Cup of Deliverance**. After each mentioned plague, let us dip our little finger into the cup, allowing a drop of wine or grape juice to fall. Each plague had mocked an Egyptian god, caused a devastating effect, and had the same response from the Pharaoh each time, until the last one. We all "dip," the leader reads.

**Blood:** Water supply. The Nile River turned to blood contaminating the water supply, threat of disease. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 7:14-24)

**Frogs:** Personal property. Property ruined, threat of disease. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 8:1-5)

**Lice:** Personal comfort, threat of disease. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 8:16-19)

**Wild Beasts:** Land and all possessions. Caused pollution and uncleanness, threat of disease. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 8:20-32)

**Pestilence:** Animal life. Animals dying of disease. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 9:1-7)

**Boils:** Health and well-being. Inability to stand, work, and move around. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 9:8-12)

**Hail:** The heavens, sky. Personal security, destruction of property. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 9:13-35)

**Locusts:** Destruction of food supply. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 10:1-20)

**Darkness:** Light was removed. Inability to see. Pharaoh's heart was hardened. (Exodus 10:21-29)

**Death of the firstborn:** Life and death. Pharaoh's response: Freed God's People!!! (Exodus 11:1-10)

This final plague especially had to happen because there must be the shedding of blood, if there is going to be redemption. "For the soul of the flesh is in the blood, and I have therefore given it to you [to be placed] upon the altar, to atone for your souls." (Leviticus 17:11)

Interesting to note that while after the tenth plague, Pharaoh finally relented and ordered the Jews to leave, Pharaoh later changed his mind and pursued them, leading to the Jews' miraculous crossing of the Red Sea.

**Any reader:** Read Exodus 14

**Leader:** And now we bless our second cup of wine/grape juice. "Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen." "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe Who creates the fruit of the vine." All drink their second sip.

**Leader:**

**6. Rachtzah** - All participants wash their hands for the second time and say a blessing. This second handwashing is closely related to the food about to be consumed. "Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam, asher kidishanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al netilat yadayim." "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the washing of hands."

**Leader:**

**7. Motzi** - Everyone receives a small piece of matzo from the matzo plate and holds it, not eating it yet. We will now bless the matzo as food. "Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz" "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth." (Keep holding the matzo.)

**Leader:**

**8. Matzo** - The matzo of Passover is not just food, but a fulfillment of a commandment. "Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat matzo" "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to eat matzo. Everyone now eats their small piece, plain.

**Leader:**

**9. Maror** - Pointing to the Maror. The Maror (bitter herb, horseradish) symbolizes the bitterness of Egyptian slavery. "Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Haolam, Asher Kidshanu B'Mitzvotav V'Tzivanu Al Achilat Maror." "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to eat bitter herbs."

**Any reader:**

**10. Korech** – Dipping a dab of the Maror into Charoset on a piece of Matzo. The bitter herb and the Charoset together remind us of the hardship the Jewish slaves endured as they labored with mortar and with bricks, and with all kinds of labor in the fields. The bitter herb represents slavery/bondage. The Charoset is the glue, the mortar which represents the sweet glue of God's grace pouring over us, back then, and today. Everyone at the Seder eats a small piece matzo with bitter herb and the Charoset. Certainly, feel free to eat additional matzo with just the charoset, a delicious treat!

**Leader:**

A traditional song in the Passover Seder is "Dayenu", a song thanking God for bringing us out of Egypt. The leader reads the stanzas one at a time, and everyone will respond, with the chorus which means "it would have been enough" (Pronounced Die Ay Nu). Dayenu is a reminder to remember all the miracles in our lives. We can actively seek a reason to be grateful, a reason to say "Dayenu."

This is the first line in transliterated Hebrew and below is the chorus. The rest I simply have in English.

Ilu ho-tsi, ho-tsi-a-nu,  
Ho-tsi-anu mi-Mitz-rayim  
Ho-tsi-anu mi-Mitz-rayim

Da-ye-nu  
Chorus  
Da-di-ye-nu,  
Da-di-ye-nu,  
Da-di-ye-nu,  
Da-ye-nu Da-ye-nu

If God would've taken us out of Egypt and not executed judgment upon them, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've executed judgment upon them and not upon their idols, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've judged their idols, and not killed their firstborn, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've killed their firstborn, and not given us their wealth, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've given us their wealth, and not split the sea for us, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've split the sea for us, and not let us through it on dry land, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've let us through it on dry land, and not drowned our enemies in it, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)  
If He would've drowned our enemies in it and not provided for our needs in the desert for 40 years, it would've been enough for us. (Chorus)

*Although traditionally the holiday meal is eaten at this point, we're going to complete the Seder first, and then eat the holiday meal.*

**Leader:**

**11. Shulchan Orech** – The eating of the holiday meal. During the holiday meal, whoever is hiding the afikomen hides it.

**Leader:**

**12. Tzafun** - The Hebrew word tzafun means “hidden” or “concealed.” After the meal, whoever is looking for the afikomen, looks for it. When it is found, it is held up for all to see, and the younger participants all receive a small gift upon the afikomen being reclaimed, as the leader redeems the afikomen. Afikomen is a Greek word meaning "that which is coming" which is why the afikomen is considered the dessert, as well as fulfilling the anticipation of finding something that has been hidden.

**Leader:**

**13. Beirach** (Bay-rack) - The third of the four cups during the Seder is called the **Cup of Deliverance**, symbolizing the blood of the Passover Lamb. We bless our third cup of wine/grape juice. “Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam, borei p’ri hagafen.” “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe Who creates the fruit of the vine.” All drink their third sip.

A cup of wine/grape juice is also placed in the center of the table waiting for Elijah the prophet to announce the coming of the Messiah “Lo, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.” (Malachi 3:23 Hebrew Bible, Malachi 4:5 Old Testament) God used Moses to bring redemption to the Israelites, freedom from slavery, and entry into the Promised Land. Moses was a type of messiah, every aspect of his life paralleling to The Messiah who was to come.

**Leader:**

**14. Hallel** - The fourth of the four cups during the Seder is called the **Cup of Praise**, thanking God for how He liberated us, back in Egypt, and to those who receive Him now. We bless our fourth cup of wine/grape juice. “Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech haolam, borei p’ri hagafen.” “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe Who creates the fruit of the vine.” All drink their fourth sip.

**Leader:**

**15. Nirtzah** - The Seder is now concluded. The Afikomen is the last item eaten and is shared among the Seder participants in remembrance of the Passover sacrifice. "May the Lord bless you and watch over you. May the Lord cause His countenance to shine to you and favor you. May the Lord raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)