

# WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

## Enriching your Passover discussions

The intention of the Passover seder is discussion, even encouraging us to relive **that moment** in history when Israel was transformed from slavery to freedom. In addition to reading the traditional text of the Haggadah, you might want to suggest some topics for discussion:

### **We Were Immigrants in a Strange Land .....**

The Haggadah says *"In every generation, each individual should feel as though he or she had gone out of Egypt."*

So tonight let's focus on how Jewish tradition teaches us that we were once strangers in the land of Egypt. Read the following biblical passages about treatment of the stranger. Discuss what that means for us today?

Moses wife Tzipora bore a son whom she named Gershom, for he said, 'I was a stranger in a foreign land'.  
*Exodus 2:22*

There shall be one law for the citizen and for the stranger who lives among you.  
*Exodus 12:49*

You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not ill-treat any widow or orphan. If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me, and My anger shall blaze forth and I will put you to the sword, and your own wives shall become widows and your children orphan.  
*Exodus 22:20-23*

And you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.  
*Exodus 23:9*

Six days you may do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor, in order that your ox and your ass may rest, and that your bondman and the stranger may be refreshed.  
*Exodus 23:12*

When a stranger lives with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who lives with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt; I the LORD am your God.  
*Leviticus 19:33-34*

But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me.  
*Leviticus 25:23*

When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not pick it over again; that shall go to the stranger, the orphan and the widow. Always remember that you were a slave

in the land of Egypt; therefore do I command you to observe this.

*Deuteronomy 24:17-22*

If you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one man and another, if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphans and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt – then only will I let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for all time.

*Jeremiah 7:5-7*

And the people of the land have practiced fraud and committed robbery; they have wronged the poor and needy, have defrauded the stranger without redress....

*Ezekiel 22:2*

This land you shall divide for yourselves among the tribes of Israel. You shall allot it as a heritage for yourselves and for the strangers who reside among you, who have begotten children among you. You shall treat them as Israelite citizens; they shall receive allotments along with you among the tribes of Israel. You shall give the stranger an allotment within the tribe where he resides – declares the Lord God.

*Ezekiel 47:21-23*

Use these discussion questions or include some of your own or, better yet, ask the participants to pose their own questions.

- How would you interpret the Bible's view of the stranger?
- Why is the stranger so prominent in the book of Exodus? Do you think this is deliberate?
- The Haggadah does not address the issue of Israel as strangers, and its relationship to strangers explicitly. Why?
- How might we, or *should* we think about the contemporary immigration issue in relation to Jewish tradition?

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### **My Bag is Packed ....**

You are leaving in the middle of the night for the long journey home and are allocated one family bag. What is the one thing *you* would add to the family's bag. Ask each guest to add one thing to the bag.

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### **Kos Miryam**

A Miriam's Cup is a way to include the experiences and voices of women in the Passover seder. You

can decide how to perform this ritual. For more information on Miriam's Cup:  
[wlcj.org/resources/resources-for-members-and-friends/](http://wlcj.org/resources/resources-for-members-and-friends/)

- Fill the cup with water and after you recite this blessing, pass it around and have each participant pour a small amount of it into their own water glass.
- Leave the cup empty on the table, pass it around and have each participant pour a small amount of their drinking water into the cup.
- This is new: Create your own way of using the cup.

Before or after, recite the following:

*Zot kos Miryam, kos mayim chayim. Zeicher l-tziat Mitzrayim.*

This is the Cup of Miriam, the cup of living waters. Let us remember the exodus from Egypt.