Welcome

Candlelighting

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadleek ner shel yom tov. בָּרוּדְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹחֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוּלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשְׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיוּ, וְצִנָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוב.

Blessed are you Adonai, Our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes us holy with mitzvot and commands us to kindle the light of this festival day.

A Traditional Woman's Prayer at Candlelighting

May it be Your will, God of our ancestors, that You grant my family and all Israel a good and long life. Remember us with blessings and kindness, fill our home with your Divine Presence. Give me the opportunity to raise my children and grandchildren to be truly wise, lovers of God, people of truth, who illuminate the world with Torah, good deeds and the work of the Creator. Please hear my prayer at this time. Regard me as a worthy descendant of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, our mothers, and let my candles burn and never be extinguished. Let the light of your face shine upon us. Amen.

(from A Different Night)

Leader:

We begin this Passover Seder celebration, as we begin all celebrations, by honoring Light – both the light brought to us by candles and the light that we feel from all the living creatures in our lives.

Let the candle, the Guiding Light, be passed from person to person welcoming all women to this Seder. Bring the light and the energy of the candles into and through you.

We light the candles:

All:

We light these candles for our families, our loved ones, our friends, and for all whom we care for.

The second second

(edited from Santa Cruz Haggadah)

The 15 Steps of the Seder

Kadesh First Cup & Kiddush First Handwashing (without a blessing) Ur'chatz וּרַתַץ First Dipping: vegetable & salt water כַרפַס Yachatz Breaking the middle matzah יחץ Maggid Storytelling מגיד Rachtzah Second handwashing (with a blessing) רחצה First blessing over the Matzah Motzi מוציא Matzah Second blessing over the Matzah Second Dipping: maror in charoset Maror Korech Hillel Sandwich כורד Shulchan Orech Communal Meal שַלְחַן עוֹרַדְּ Afikoman (dessert) Tzafun צפון Barech Birkat HaMazon (the blessing after eating) Hallel Psalms of Praise הַלָּל Nirtzah Concluding prayer and folk songs

Kadesh First Cup & Kiddush

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Borei p'ri hagafen. בָּרוּדְ אַתְּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְּ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגְּפֶּן.

Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the vine.



Miriam's Cup

We begin our Seder with *kos Miryam*, Miriam's Cup. Legend tells of a mysterious well filled with *mayim hayyim*, living waters, that followed the Israelites through their wandering while Miriam was alive.

Miriam's Well was said to hold Divine power to heal and renew. Its fresh waters sustained our people as we were transformed from a generation shaped by slavery into a free nation. Throughout our subsequent journeys, we have sought to rediscover these living waters.

Tonight at our Seder, let us remember that we are still on the journey. Just as the Holy One delivered Miriam and her people, just as they were sustained in the desert and transformed into a new people, so may we be delivered, sustained and transformed on our journey to a stronger sense of ourselves, both as individuals and as one people.

These are the living waters, God's gift to Miriam which gave new life to Israel as we struggled in the wilderness. May the cup of Miriam refresh and inspire us as we embark on our journey through the Haggadah.

(Pass around the empty Miriam's cup. Each person should pour water from their small water "shot" glass into the Miriam's cup that is on their table. Just as everyone has poured some water into Miriam's cup, so, too, the presence of each person at the table will add something unique to the Seder.)

(Adapted from The Ma'ayan Passover Haggadah)

To honor Miriam, let us fill her cup of water and say:

בָּרוּך אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם מְקוֹר מֵיִם חַייִם

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam m-kor mayim hayim.

Praised are You, Adonai, Ruler of time and space, the Source of living waters.

Kos Miriam - Cup of Miriam

Adapted by Peri Smilow

Zot kos Miriam, kos maiyim chayim
Zecher litziat Mitrayim
Zot kos Miriam, God's gift to us all
May the living waters bring us hope
May the living waters bring us peace
May the living waters carry us on our way
Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam
She'hakol nih'yeh bidvaro, Amen

Ur'chatz First Handwashing

In These Hands
A silent washing – another door to freedom
Hands open to receive the cool water
Our bodies awaken.

Listen as you begin to relax, let go of slaveries, habits, hurts – let go, even of expectations for tonight.

Take a quiet moment.

What does the water of life feel like on your fingers, palm, on the back of your hand?

The blessing is in this silence. in these hands. In this moment.

Now we draw closer To dip To taste To tell To remember To rejoice!

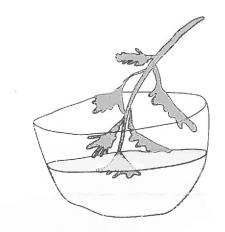


(Sheila Peltz Weinberg from Women's Seder Book)

Karpas

The Tremor in the Seed

Long before the struggle upward begins, There is a tremor in the seed.
Self-protection cracks,
Roots reach down and grab hold.
The seed swells, and tender shoots
Push upward toward light.
This is *karpas*: spring awakening growth.
A force so tough it can break stone.



And why do we dip *karpas* into salt water?

To remember the sweat and tears of our ancestors in bondage,

To taste the bitter tears of our earth, unable to fully renew itself this spring because of our waste, neglect and greed.

To feel the sting of society's refusal to celebrate the blossoming of women's bodies and the full range of our capacity for love.

And why should salt water be touched by karpas?

To remind us that tears stop. Spring comes. And with it the potential for change.

(Ronnie M. Horn-The Women's Seder Sourcebook).

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

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Borei p'ri ha'adama. בְּרוּדְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶּלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַאֲדָמָה.

Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the earth.

Yachatz II Breaking the Middle Matzah

We have lit the candles and set sacred time and space. We have drunk the first cup of wine, and dipped our greens in salt water. Now we focus on the matzah, which symbolizes not only the affliction of slavery but also the potential for transformation.

Ha lachma anya- This is the bread of affliction our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

As we go through the seder, the matzah will be transformed. It will cease to be the bread of affliction and it will become the bread of hope, courage, faith and possibility.

And it begins with a breaking.

Leader:

Each person is invited to hold a piece of matzah, to mindfully feel its weight, notice its color, its shape and texture.

Resting the matzah on our open palms, we remember that the Passover story teaches that oppression and suffering result from fear and the unwillingness to open one's heart to the pain and experiences of others.

It was fear that brought about the enslavement of the Israelites and it was the hardening of the heart that kept the Israelites, the Egyptians and the Pharoah in bondage. From a hardened heart came violence, anguish and grief.

(One person lifts the plate of three matzot. We all take a moment of silence and then call out the beginning of the prayer.)

All:

Ha lachma anya- This is the bread of affliction our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

(We return to silence and each raise up a piece of matzah. We maintain silence while all, at the same time, break our matzot in half. We listen to the sound of the bread of affliction cracking open. As we hold the two pieces in our hands we make a commitment to break open and soften our hearts.)

All:

May our eyes be open to each other's pain.

May our ears be open to each other's cries.

May we live with greater awareness.

May we practice greater forgiveness.

And may we go forward as free people -- able to respond to ourselves and each other with compassion, wonderment, appreciation and love.

(We place the matzah back on the plate.) (Source A Way In Jewish Mindfulness Program)



CHAG V' CHESED: PASSOVER 5775 DVAR TZEDEK

THE HEROIC AND VISIONARY WOMEN OF PASSOVER

By Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt

Maggid 1

On Passover, Jews are commanded to tell the story of the Exodus and to see ourselves as having lived through that story, so that we may better learn how to live our lives today. The stories we tell our children shape what they believe to be possible—which is why at Passover, we must tell the stories of the women who played a crucial role in the Exodus narrative.

The Book of Exodus, much like the Book of Genesis, opens in pervasive darkness. Genesis describes the earth as "unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep." In Exodus, darkness attends the accession of a new Pharaoh who feared the Israelites and so enslaved them. God alone lights the way out of the darkness in Genesis. But in Exodus, God has many partners, first among them, five brave women.

There is Yocheved, Moses' mother, and Shifra and Puah, the famous midwives. Each defies Pharaoh's decree to kill the Israelite baby boys. And there is Miriam, Moses' sister, about whom the following midrash is taught:

[When Miriam's only brother was Aaron] she prophesied... "my mother is destined to bear a son who will save Israel." When [Moses] was born the whole house... filled with light[.] [Miriam's] father arose and kissed her on the head, saying, "My daughter, your prophecy has been fulfilled." But when they threw [Moses] into the river her father tapped her on the head saying, "Daughter, where is your prophecy?" So it is written, "And [Miriam] stood afar off to know what would be[come of] the latter part of her prophecy."

Finally, there is Pharaoh's daughter Batya, who defies her own father and plucks baby Moses out of the Nile. The Midrash reminds us that Batya knew exactly what she doing:

When Pharaoh's daughter's handmaidens saw that she intended to rescue Moses, they attempted to dissuade her, and persuade her to heed her father. They said to her: "Our mistress, it is the way of the world that when a king issues a decree, it is not heeded by the entire world, but his children and the members of his household do observe it, and you wish to transgress your father's decree?"³

But transgress she did.

These women had a vision leading out of the darkness shrouding their world. They were women of action prepared to defy authority to make their vision a reality bathed in the light of the day.

Retelling the heroic stories of Yocheved, Shifra, Puah, Miriam and Batya reminds our daughters that with vision and the courage to act, they can carry forward the tradition those intrepid women launched.

While there is much light in today's world, there remains in our universe disheartening darkness, inhumanity spawned by ignorance and hate.

Passover story recalls to all of us—women and men—that with vision and action we can join hands with others of like mind, kindling lights along paths leading out of the terrifying darkness.

Maggid 2 -Some of us will share our Seder traditions.

¹ Genesis 1:2

²Babylonian Talmud, Megman 14a

³Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 12b

HaLachma Anya Adapted by Peri Smilow

CHORUS HaLachma Anya (3x)
The bread that we ate in Mitzrayim.

רָא לַרְוּמָא עַנְיָא

- 1) All who are hungry let them come and eat (3x) HaLachma Anya CHORUS
- 2) All who are in need let them come and celebrate (3x) HaLachma Anya CHORUS
- 3) Next year may we all be free (3x)
 HaLachma Anya CHORUS

All:

This is the bread of affliction,
The poor bread,
Which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.
Let all who are hungry come and eat.
Let all who are in want
Share the hope of Passover.
As we celebrate here we join with our people everywhere.
This year we celebrate here.
Next year in the land of Israel.
Now we are all still in bonds.
Next year may all be free.

Ha lachma anya



Four Questions

I learned the Four Questions in the kitchen, My mother handed me a towel and said: "I'll wash, you dry. I'll sing a few words, and you repeat." And so we sang, from the night after Purim, every night until I'd learned it all.

I taught the Four Questions at bath time to two little ones, lithe and slippery as seals. "I'll sing a few words, and then you sing," I said. They loved to dip and splash for "sh'tei f'amim." And we sang, from Purim to Pesach. Every night, until they learned it all.

This is the rite of passage. We learn our part and take our turn.

Wine trembles in our cups. Candles flicker. Conversation stops.

First we ask the prescribed questions. Then, we add our own.

(From The Ma'yan Passover Haggadah)

& Four Questions

All of the young women please stand and recite in union.

מַה נִשְׁתַּנָה הַלַּיְלָה הַזָּה מִכֶּל הַלִּילות!

Ma nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?

שָׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אֲנוּ אוֹכְלִין חָמֵץ וּמַצָּה. הַלַּיֶלָה הַזֶּה כֻּלּוּ מַצָּה:

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin hametz umatzah; halailah hazeh, kuloh matzah.

שָׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אֲנוּ אוֹכְלִין שְׁאָר יְרָקוֹת הַלַּיְלָה הַאָּה מָרוֹר:

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin sh'ar y'rakot; halailah hazeh, maror.

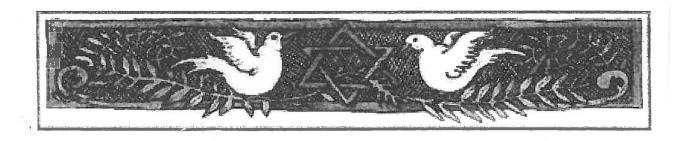
שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אֵין אֶנוּ מֵטְבִּילִין אֲפִילוּ פְּעַם אֶחָת. הַלַּיֶלָה הַזֶּה שתי פעמים:

Sheb'khol haleilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am ehat; halailah hazeh, shei f'amim. שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילות אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבִין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין. הַלַּיֵלָה הַאָּה שִׁבְּין. הַלַּיֵלָה הַאָּר. בַּלַנוּ מִסְבִּין.

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin bein yoshvin uvein m'subin; halailah hazeh, kulanu m'subin.

4 New Questions for Women's Seder

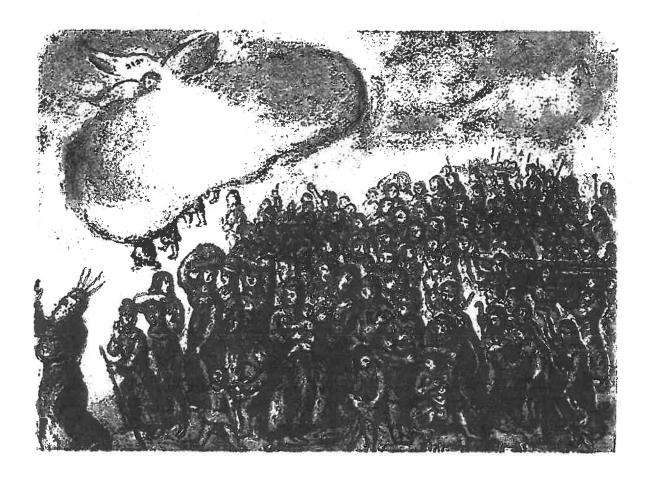
- 1. As a woman, when in your life have your felt enslaved or in bondage?
- 2. How could we as women lift each other up to help us achieve freedom?
- 3. What is your own personal Mitzrayim (Egypt)? What keeps us enslaved or unable to fulfill our potential:?
- 4. In what way do you feel that Pesach is a rebirth? What kinds of values or traditions could we give to our children/grandchildren in order for them to create a better world?



Avadim Hayinu

Avadim hayinu, atah b'nei chorin. עָבָדִים הָיִינוּ, עַתָּה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין.

We were slaves; now we are free!



Exodus from Egypt by Marc Chagall

Four Daughters:

Around our tables sit four daughters.

Wise Daughter

The Wise daughter understands that not everything is as it appears.

She is the one who speaks up, confident that her opinion counts. She is the one who can take the tradition and ritual that is placed before her, turn it over and over, and find personal meaning in it. She is the one who can find the secrets in the empty spaces between the letters of the Torah. She is the one who claims a place for herself.

We call her creative and assertive. We welcome creativity and assertiveness to sit with us at our tables and inspire us to act.

Rebellious Daughter

The Rebellious daughter is the one who dares to challenge the simplistic answers she has been given.

She is the one who asks many questions. She is the one who is not content to remain in her prescribed place. She is the one who breaks the mold. She is the one who challenges the status quo.

We call her daring and courageous. We welcome rebellion to sit with us at our tables and make us uneasy.

Impressionable Daughter

The impressionable daughter is the one who accepts what she is given without asking for more.

She is the one who trusts easily and believes what she is told. She is the one who prefers waiting and watching over seeking and acting. She is the one who believes that the redemption from Egypt was the final act of freedom. She is the one who follows in the footsteps of others.

We call her the one whose eyes are yet to be opened. We welcome the contented one to sit with us at our tables and appreciate what is still to come.

Quiet Daughter

Last is the quiet daughter, the one who does not know how to ask.

She is one who obeys and does not question. She is the reserved one who has not found her own voice. She is the one who feels invisible.

We call her sister. We welcome the silent one to sit with us at our tables and experience a community that welcomes the voices of women.

(Adapted from: JWA/Jewish Boston- The Wandering if Over Haggadah; Including Women's Voices)

Ten Plagues

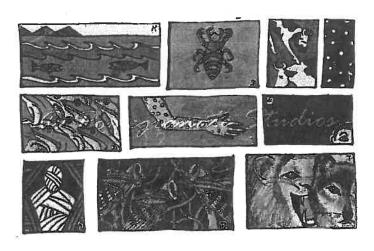
The plagues God visited on the Egyptians in Egypt seem to be a parade of people's greatest Fears. They are a mythological show of the power of the living vs. primal fear.

Starting from the blood of birth and death, through primal human fears of small creatures (lice) and large ones (wild beasts), fear of disease (boils), fear of the dark (losing direction and meaning), we face the greatest fear: the fear of the loss of the future for our children and future generations. Following the traditional plagues, we have an updated list of those plagues which humankind has brought upon ourselves.

Tonight, a night to commemorate the past, we seek the mercy of God's protection, reflect on a world full of fears and dangers and pray for a quieter and more peaceful year ahead.

(From A Night to Remember)

Blood	Dam	ਰ੍ਹ
Frogs	Tz'fardeya	אַק ַ רְאַץ
Lice	Kinnim	כָנִים
Wild Beasts	Arov	עָרוֹב
Pestilence	Dever	רֶּקָּ
Boils	Sh'chin	ָשְׁחִין
Hail	Barad	דֹחָۼַ
Locusts	Arbeh	אַרְבֶּה
Darkness	Choshech	רוֹשֶׁדְּ
Death of the Firstborn	Makkat B'chorot	מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת



Ten Plagues (updated)

All:

 $1-\frac{\Box 7}{}$ DAM (Blood) The blood shed by gun violence in our country and by war throughout the world.

The leaping rate of unwanted pregnancies that result from the lack of access to adequate and affordable birth control.

The homelessness that forces people to live in filth and degradation.

The physical and emotional violence (such as sexual harassment) that people inflict upon one another which make us lower than beasts.

The environmental chemicals that harm our bodies and damage our ability to bear healthy children.

The corrupted values of our society.

7 - BA-RAD (Hail)
The hazard of toxic substances that poison our air and water and pollute the earth.

The ignorance and hate that promotes prejudice, homophobia (fear of homosexual people), misogyny (hatred of women) and xenophobia (fear of foreigners).

The unwillingness to see and listen to others' suffering, recognize their humanity and share our light with them when they are going through dark times.

The danger in which we place our own heritage by not instilling knowledge and love of Judaism in our children.

Adapted from A Night to Remember by Felicia Heiney.

Dayeinu

If we speak truthfully about the pain, joys, and contradictions of our lives,

If we listen to others with sensitivity and compassion,

If we challenge the absence of women's voices in traditional texts, chronicles of Jewish history and in the leadership of our institutions, *dayeinu*.

If we fight economic injustice, sexism, racism, and homophobia,

If we break the silence about violence against women and children in the Jewish community and everywhere,

If we teach our students and children to pursue justice with all their strength,

If we care for the earth and its future as responsibly as we care for those we love,

If we create art, music, dance, and literature, dayeinu.

If we realize our power to effect change,

If we bring holiness into our lives, homes, and communities,

If we honor our visions more than our fears, dayeinu v'ho dayeinu.

It will and it will not be enough.

(From The Ma'yan Passover Haggadah)



אלוּ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִפִּוּצְרְיִם דַּיֵנוּ Ilu hotzianu mimitzrayim, dayeinu אלוּ נָתַן לְנִוּ אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת דַּיֵּנוּ Ilu natan lanu et hashabbat, dayeinu אַלוּ נָתַן לְנִוּ אֶת־הַוּנוֹרָה דַּיֵנוּ Ilu natan lanu et hatorah, dayeinu

(Use of scallions to reenact the whippings that our ancestors received from their slave masters in Egypt: To incorporate this Persian Jewish custom into our Seder, we include a plate of scallions on the Seder table. When we reach the chorus of Dayeinu, everyone should playfully\ Whip the other guests around the Seder table with a scallion.)

Pesach Symbols The Three Symbols I

Pesach: This roasted shankbone or beet symbolizes the lamb's blood that marked the doorposts of our homes in Egypt. The blood protected us from the Angel of Death as it passed over our houses and killed the firstborn of the Egyptians. We lift up this symbol and celebrate life-giving and life-saving blood.

Matzah: We think of all the world's homeless and hungry to whom this simple matzah would be a full meal. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread."

Maror: Maror leads us into memories of bitterness - the bitterness of Egypt, bitter waters, bitter words, enslavement, the bitter cold of the desert night and the bitter heat of the desert sun, the bitterness of wandering, and the bitterness of exile. Yet, even as we remember the bitterness of slavery, we know that no bitterness is without end.

(Lisa S. Greene from Women's Seder Sourcebook)

The Three Symbols II Matzah

Every time we make a decision not to harden our hearts to our own pain or to the pain of others, we step toward freedom.

Every time we are able to act with compassion rather than anger, we stop the flow of violence.

And each moment we find the strength and courage to see ourselves in each other, we open possibilities for healing and peace.

This is the unleavened bread that we bless and share.

(Source A Way In Jewish Mindfulness Program)

Maror

Maror takes its place on our seder plate because the Egyptians embittered the lives of the Israelites as they built with mortar and bricks. We continue to build - families, communities, careers - and we still suffer the bitterness of inequitable treatment in our places of work.

As we taste the bitter herb, we commit ourselves to the struggle of working women everywhere for equity and dignity in their labors.

(Lisa S. Greene from Women's Seder Sourcebook)



Story of the Orange



A Woman's Idea

In the early 1980's, the Hillel Foundation invited me to speak on a panel at Oberlin College. While on campus, I came across a Haggadah that had been written by some Oberlin students to express feminist concerns. One ritual they devised was placing a crust of bread on the Seder plate as a sign of solidarity with Jewish lesbians, a statement of defiance against a rebbetzin's pronouncement that, "There's as much room for a lesbian in Judaism as there is for a crust of bread on the Seder plate."

At the next Passover, I placed an orange on our family's seder plate. During the first part of the seder I asked everyone to take a segment of the orange, make the blessing over fruit, and eat it as a gesture of solidarity with Jewish lesbians, gay men, transgender Jews and others who are marginalized within the Jewish community. These include widows, single women, single parents, interfaith couples, converts and Jews of ethnic minorities.

Bread on the seder plate brings an end to Pesach—it renders everything *chametz*, and its symbolism suggests that being a lesbian is transgressive, violating Judaism. I felt that an orange was suggestive of something else: the fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life. In addition, each orange segment had a few seeds that had to spit out- a gesture of spitting out, repudiating the homophobia that poisons too many Jews. Yet, like the seeds, we each have our own biases to acknowledge, which if we let go, can flourish into beautiful trees of understanding. The skin of the orange symbolizes the tough exterior we must develop as women, though we can be nourishing and nurturing at our core, like the soft flesh of the orange. Let us remember as women, we can be both tough and nurturing, that we can carry biases, and still plant the seed of change and understanding.

When lecturing, I often mentioned my custom as one of many new feminist rituals that had been developed in the past thirty years. Somehow though, the typical patriarchal maneuver occurred: my idea of an orange and my intention affirming lesbians and gay people were transformed. Now the story circulates that a *man* stood up after a lecture I delivered and said to me, in anger, that a woman belongs on a the *bimah* as much as an orange on a seder plate. My ideas—a woman's words- are attributed to a man, and the affirmation of lesbians and gay men is simply erased.

Isn't this precisely what's happened over the centuries to women's ideas: a transfer to men's voices? And isn't this precisely the erasure of their existence that gay and lesbian Jews continue to endure, to this day?

(Adapted from Susannah Heschel from Women's Seder Sourcebook)

B'chol Dor Vador I

In every generation

Food for Thought: What would you like to be remembered for by future generations?

Leaving Egypt

The night is so dark and I am afraid. I see nothing, smell nothing, the only reality — I am holding my mother's hand.

As we walk
I hear the sounds
of a multitude in motion —
in front, behind,
all around,
a multitude in motion.

I have no thought of tomorrow, now in the darkness, there is only motion and my mother's hand.

(Merle Feld)



B'chol Dor Vador II In every generation

Between silence and speech, silence is the more dangerous: its very safety endangers the self ... It is for this reason that the Exodus, and the Passover festival that celebrates it, focuses so compellingly on telling and retelling the story. It is only by taking the real risks of language, by rupturing the autistic safety of silence, that the self can reclaim itself. To venture into words, narratives, is to venture everything for the sake of that "self before God."

(Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg, The Particulars of Rapture)

"The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year and even on every day."

(Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav)

Second Cup of Wine

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Borei p'ri hagafen. בָּרוּדְ אַתָּה יִיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְּ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶּן.

Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the vine.

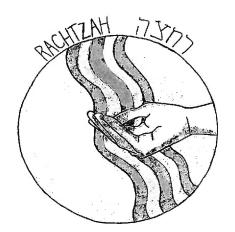
Rachtzah Washing Hands with Blessing

Once again we wash our hands, but much has changed since the seder began. We have passed through the long night of Egypt, and we stand on the far side of the Sea of Reeds. We now wash our hands to celebrate our crossing the sea, our rebirth as a free people. Now we recite a blessing, for our hands are free to perform acts of holiness, to eat matzah, the symbol of liberation.

In this moment of celebration, may this water, symbolically drawn from Miriam's well, cleanse us of all the wounds and pain of Egypt. For even as we remember the past, we are called to strive for a healing future.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim. בָּרוּדְ אַתָּה וְיָ אֱלֹחֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיוּ, וְצִנֵּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדֵיִם.

Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of all worlds, who has made us holy with your *mitzvot* and commanded us to wash our hands.



(from A Night of Questions)

(HOIII A NIGHT OF QUESTIONS)

Leader:

Let us all join hands in a circle and dance as we sing: Mayim & Hora Madura

Motzi Matzah

Blessing over Bread

Leader:

Let us each put our hands on the Matzah or on someone touching the Matzah and recite the following two prayers:

ּבָרוּדְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם הַמּוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch Atah Adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, ha-motzi lechem min ha'aretz.

Thank You, Adonai, for creating a world wherein we can bring forth the component parts of bread, sustenance, from the earth.

Reader:

The matzah is representative of our rush to freedom. The women took with them their partially baked bread; it is bread that is unfinished, as is our world. As we bless this unfinished bread, we make a commitment to *tikkun olam*, the repairing of the world.

Matzah

A special blessing for matzah

Leader:

בָּרוּדְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְשָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אַכִילַת מַצֵּה.

Baruch Atah Adonai, elo'heinu melech ha-olam, asher kid-shanu be-mitzvotav, ve-tzivanu al achilat Matzah.

All:

Blessed are You, Adonai, Creator of the Universe, who has made us holy by giving us the Law, and within that Law obliged us to eat the special bread of Passover, the Matzah.

Break off a piece of Matzah and eat it.

Maror

A blessing over bitter herbs.

Leader:



We dip the maror in the charoset to show that even in the bitterest slavery lies the sweet hope of freedom.

Dip a piece of matzah in the maror and then in the charoset

All:

בָּרוּדְ אַתָּח יִיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶדְ הָעוֹלֶם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר.

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid-shanu be-mitzvotav ve-tzivanu al achilat maror.

Praised are You, Adonai, ruler of time and space, who makes us holy by your mitzvot and commands us to eat maror.

Korech

Leader:

On Pesach, in the days of the Temple in Jerusalem, Rabbi Hillel would make a sandwich by placing the Pesach offering and a piece of maror between two pieces of matzah. He would then eat it, to fulfill the instructions in the verse "with matzah and maror they shall eat it." Tonight, in remembrance of the Temple and Hillel, we will make a similar sandwich.

It is appropriate for women of today to continue this tradition, while adding to it new meaning. Many of us find ourselves part of the "sandwich generation," with responsibility for both parents and children. Most of this caretaking falls to women.

Reader:

We combine the matzah and maror today with *charoset*, which resembles the mortar used in building the pyramids. Women also cement the varied parts of family and community.

Reader:

By continuing the ceremonies of our faith from year to year, bringing family and friends together for joyous occasions, and comforting one another during times of sorrow, we are the cement of our culture.

Reader:

As we prepare our Hillel sandwich now, we place some bitter herbs on a piece of the bottom matzah surrounding it with the sweet *charoset,* and covering it with another piece of matzah from the bottom piece. As we eat it, we celebrate both the bitter and sweet that our responsibilities create.

Shulhan Orekh *Dinner is served*



Tzafun *Eating of the Afikoman*

Leade

In finding the hidden Afikomen, we are reuniting two halves of a whole—a coming together to celebrate and to share old and new traditions. It also symbolizes the hidden strength women have, particularly when we combine our strengths with each other.

Traditionally the adults redeem the Afikoman from the child who finds it. We eat a piece to symbolize our hope for the ultimate redemption of ourselves and all peoples, from affliction and oppression to freedom and self-actualization.

Everyone at the tables share a piece of the Afikoman.

(Sephardic tradition: Pass around the Afikomen (middle matzoh) from left to right at your table.)

Where are you coming from? Mi Mitzrahim

Where are you going to? Yirushalayim. (with a beat)

Barech Birkat HaMazon

We thank God for the food which we have eaten.

בְּרוּךְ אַתִּה יָיָ, אֱלֹחֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, חַזָּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כָּלוֹ בְּטוּבוֹ וּבְטוּבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל תָּמִיד לֹא חֲסֵר לְנִוּ, וְאַל יֶחְסֵר לְנִוּ מְזוֹן לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ. בּּעֲבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, כִּי הוּא אֵל זָן וּמְפַרְנֵס לַכֵּל וּמֵטִיב לַכֵּל, וּמֵכִין בַּעֲבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, כִּי הוּא אֵל זָן וּמְפַרְנֵס לַכֵּל וּמֵטִיב לַכֵּל, וּמֵכִין בְּזוֹן לְכֹל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַזָּן אֶת הַכֹּל:

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַצְשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם, עָלִינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יָנָ עז לְעַמּוֹ יִתַּן, יְנָ יְבָרֶךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בַּשָּׁלוֹם.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech haolam, hazan et haolam kulo b'tuvo, b'chein, b'chesed uv'rachamim. Hu notein lechem l'chol basar ki l'olam chasdo. Uv'tuvo hagadol tamid lo chasar lanu, v'al yechsar lanu, mazon l'olam va-ed, baavur sh'mo hagadol. Ki hu El zan um'farneis lakol umeitiv lakol, umeichin mazon l'chol b'riyotav asher bara. Baruch Atah Adonai, hazan et hakol.

Oseh shalom bimromav, huyahaseh shalom, aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru amen. Adonai oz l'amo yitein, Adonai, y'vareich et amo vashalom.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Our God, Ruler of the universe, who sustains the entire world with kindness and compassion. God provides food for all flesh, for God's lovingkindness endures forever. Through God's great goodness, we have never lacked food; may we never lack sustenance for the sake of God's great name. God sustains all life and is good to all, providing food and sustenance for every creature. Blessed are You, Adonai, who sustains all life.

May the Holy one, who makes peace in the heavens, make peace for us, for Israel, and for all the world. Amen.

Eternal God: g. ive strength to Your people; Eternal God: bless Your people with peace.

Third Cup of Wine

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, Borei p'ri hagafen. בָּרוּדְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶּלֶדְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגְּפֶּן.

Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of all worlds, who creates the fruit of the vine.

& Elijah's Cup

Eliyahu hanavi, Eliyahu haTishbi, Eliyahu haGiladi, bimheirah b'yameinu yavo eileinu, im Mashiach ben David. אֵלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא, אֵלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי, אֵלִיָּהוּ הַגִּּלְעָדִי, בִּמְהֵרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֵלֵינוּ, עִם מָשִיחַ בֶּּן-דְּוִד.

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah of Gilead, quickly in our day come to us heralding redemption.

<u>Food for Thought:</u> Who would you like Elijah to bring to help with the work of redemption/healing/sustaining?

Hallel Mah Gadlu

Mah gadlu ma'asecha Yah m'od amku machsh'votecha.

מַה־גָּדְלַוּ מַעֲשֶׂיִדְּ יָה בְׁמְאֹד עַמְקּוּ מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיִדְּ:

How great are Your works, Eternal One. Your thoughts are very deep. (Pslam 92:6)



Hallel

Leader: Praise as we sing the Hallel, and we reflect on the power of our voices.

We now honor the women of valor of our own time. Although they are not the women closest to us, they should be recognized. Once the swirling dust of modern history has settled, they will surely stand out in sharp relief.

All: We raise our voices in celebration of their achievement.

Reader: Jewish women who are powerful and progressive like Madeline Kunin, Diane Feinstein, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Gertrude Weil, Elizabeth Holtzman, Justine Wise Polier, Dafna Michaelson Jenet , and Lillian Wald.

All: Jewish women who lead the struggle for liberty like Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem and Golda Meir.

Reader: Jewish women whose pens have brought enlightenment to many, like Betty Friedan, Gertrude Stein, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Emma Lazarus.

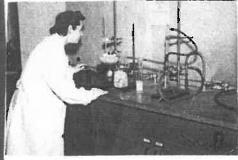
All: Jewish women whose creativity and artistry will inspire generations to come like Debbie Friedman, Barbara Streisand, Judy Chicago, Molly Picon, and Anna Sokolow.

Reader: Jewish women, among them Nobel Laureates whose brilliant achievements extend the horizon of scientific knowledge and improve the human condition like Gertrude Elion, Judith Resnick, and Susan Blumenthal and Rosalyn Yalow.

All: And so many Jewish women who spread the light of religious learning and spirituality like Sally Priesand, Rachel Kohl Feingold, and Rebecca Gratz. and Amy Eilberg.







Leader: Let us grab a tambourine, join hands in a circle and dance to Miriam's Song.

Miriam's Song

--- by Debbie Friedman

All:

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 and danced the whole night long.

And 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 dances toward the light.
(CHORUS)

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 planned, And Miriam raised her voice in song She sang with praise and might, We've just lived through a miracle; we're going to dance tonight. (CHORUS)

The Fourth Cup: The Unnamed

"And I will take you to be my people, and I will be your G-d and you will know that I am your G-d." (Exodus 6:7)

Leader:

Tonight our fourth cup of wine honors those throughout our history who have been left nameless by historians, overlooked by scholars. Most of the unnamed are women: our grandmothers, our aunts, our mothers, and our sisters.



All:

For the sake of these Unnamed, we were delivered from Egypt.

וְהָיִינוּ כֵּלָנוּ שָׁמָה V'hayinu kulanu shana

And we were all there.

And or the sake of these Forgotten, we are here.

וְאַנַחְנוּ כֵּלְנוּ פֿת V'anachnu kulanu po

And we are all here.

Raise the Fourth Cup and say:

בּרוּך אַתָּה יְיָ אֶלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלֶם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַנְּפֶּוֹ.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam borei p-ri ha-ga-fen.

You are Blessed, O G-d, Ruler of time and space, who creates the fruit of the vine.

A Blessing

Leader:

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now when?"

(Rabbi Hillel, Pirke Avot 1:14)

We give thanks for loving-kindness wherever it manifests.

בָּרוּך אַתָּה יְיָ הַטוֹב וְהַמֵּיטִיב לַכֹּל

Baruch Atah Adonai, ha-tov ve-ha-may-tiv la-kol.

Thank You Adonai, for bringing to us the light of goodness, thus making us better human beings.

Nirtzah

We complete the Seder

Leader:

Our Seder is now coming to a close. We have embarked this evening on a spiritual journey from oppression to freedom to wholeness. We realize that this journey is not yet complete.

For hundreds of years, Seders have concluded with the words: "Next year in Jerusalem."

Jerusalem. A name that means city of peace, integrity, wholeness.

Jerusalem. A city of walls, ancient and new, walls of apricot Jerusalem stone, walls of misunderstanding, hatred, and violence between religious and secular, Jew and Arab, woman and man.

Jerusalem, what is our hope for your rebuilding?

All:

A year of equality and inclusiveness. A year of wholeness for our people. A year of peace for all the peoples who sing to you, Jerusalem.

ָּלְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשַׁלָיִם. לִשְׁנָה הַבָּאָה

> L'Shanah Haba'ah L'shanah haba's bi'y'rushalayim

> > Next year in Jerusalem.

Benediction



Sources

The Garden State Women's League Women's Haggadah was compiled from the following texts and Haggadot and was edited by Helene Knee, Lynette Seader, Susan Winter, Laura Sucher, Cindy Patrych-Brotman & Felicia Heiney.

Anisfeld, Sharon Cohen, Mohr, Tara & Spector, Catherine, eds. <u>The Women's Seder Sourcebook: Rituals and Readings for use at the Passover Seder</u>. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003.

Anisfeld, Sharon Cohen, Mohr, Tara & Spector, Catherine, eds. <u>The Women's Passover Companion: Women's Reflections on the Festival of Freedom</u>. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003.

Cohen, Tamar, ed. <u>The Journey Continues</u>, <u>The Ma'yan Passover Haggadah</u>. New York. Ma'yan: The Jewish Women's' Project, 2000.

A Way in Jewish Mindfulness Program, Philadelphia, PA. https://www.awayin.org/

Anshe Emeth Women's Haggadah. Women's Spirituality Group- Va'ad Nashim, edited 2016.

Hadassah at Stonebridge, Miriam's Seder Haggadah, edited 2014.

Acknowledgements

The Garden State Women's League Women's Seder would like to acknowledge the <u>Women's Seder Committee</u> for all their assistance and support:

Heddy Belman, Lisa Fischer, Joleen Fridson, Vera Galleid, Helene Knee, Teri Manes, Rachel Modiano, Betty Needleman, Cindy Patrych-Brotman, Shelley Phillips, Marilyn Pruce, Ilene Rothman, Teresa Samtur, Lynette Seader, Laura Sucher, Susan Winter.

We would like to thank Shelley Phillips for her lovely Haggadah cover art and for the Miriam's Cups design. We would also like to thank Bonni Clark, Temple Beth O'r/Beth Torah office manager and Ken Lavroff from Deli King of Clark for their support of our Women's Seder.



Women's League Community Seder The Four Cups of Wine- Supplement

The four cups of wine we drink this evening are symbols of our freedom and God's presence in our lives. But, as the seder ritual reminds us, freedom is an ongoing journey. The freedom can only be enjoyed when our values are remembered and respected. As members of Women's League, we are guided by our faith, our intentions and our commitment to performing acts of chesed or kindness. At tonight's Seder, instead of feeling despair, we envision and we commit to achieving a society in which every person is valued. We strive for a world filled with blessings of a healthy environment, healthy families, healthy bodies and chesed toward all.

The First Cup of Wine: Healing the Environment

The world is a precious gift that has been entrusted to humanity. In the opening passage of Genesis, God pronounced each part of the creation "good" as it was formed. We are mandated to tend God's Garden and protect our Earth and all of God's creations. Our wellbeing and the wellbeing of our planet are interconnected in a delicate balance. Through neglect, greed and a lack of understanding, we have diminished and threatened the survival of many species and their natural habitats.

If we are indeed stewards of nature, then we must preserve the gift of flora, fauna, and all species that reside on Earth along with us. The Jewish injunction known as "bal tashchit" teaches us to live lightly, reducing our carbon footprint, thus conserving the Earth's resources. Conservation also affirms the value of "tikkun olam" which is our responsibility to repair and heal the world.

Therefore, we need to act as stewards of the environment to protect and preserve it for future generations. So, let us raise the first cup of wine and pledge that we will do more to conserve and protect our planet and learn how to reduce our carbon footprints in our obligation to be good stewards of the environment.

Adapted from the Judaism and Conservation Fact Sheet Society for Conservation Biology, 2008.



The Second Cup of Wine: Mishpachah/Family

While the Jewish family has endured from time immemorial beginning with the biblical generations of Abraham and Sarah and their descendants, it now confronts modernity. A Jewish family used to consist of a mother, a father and children, but we are much more diverse today. Whether it is a mother, father & children, couples with no children, same-sex unions with or without children, single parents, widows, singles, joined families, families with children who are biologically conceived or adopted, a Jewish family defines itself as such, it is not defined by others. Whatever our family looks like, we are fortunate indeed if someone in our family can be a mentor to us, giving us advice when we truly need it. We also know that when families work together, no task is too difficult. Families are our mainstay, our support system, our place for celebrating milestones, creating rituals and memories and transmitting Jewish values. We value and welcome all our families and are aware of the social changes that are occurring in our Jewish world. Let us raise our second cup of wine to celebrate the Jewish family because as Michael J. Fox said, "Family is not an important thing. It is everything."

Adapted from Mishpachah: The Modern Jewish Family, Barbara Ezring, Karen Block, Marjorie EK Fuhrmann, Ellen Kaner Bresnick & Lisa Kogen.



The Third Cup of Wine: Healing Ourselves/Body & Spirit

Hillel used to say "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? Yet, if I am for myself only, what am I? And if not now, when?" Who will nurture and care for us, if we don't care for ourselves?

We all live stress filled lives while carrying out multiple roles, coupled with the demands of our families, our friends, our day jobs, our volunteer jobs, our communities and all the other burdens that we carry on a daily basis. Often, we overlook taking care of ourselves. And yet self-care is vital to maintaining balance in our lives. We do not realize that self-care is not selfish or self-indulgent. We cannot nurture others from a dry well. We need to take care of our own needs first, then we can give from our surplus, our abundance (Jennifer Louden). So, what could we as women do to care for ourselves?

We could start the day by taking time to pray or meditate. Often the first and best thing to do when we are aware of being under stress is to just take a deep breath and acknowledge thoughts as they come and go. Let's try to breathe in positive thoughts and let go of the negative ones. Optimism fosters good health. Let us cultivate contentment. We could practice learning to love ourselves as we are now and learning to be at peace in our current situation. When we feel stress, we could take refuge in a greater love, a more profound sense of unity and connection. We are all sisters and we are here for one another. Let us reach out to our friends who could remind us of our priorities during times of tension and worry. Let us practice gratitude. We promote well-being and happiness and reduce stress each time we voice appreciation for daily wonders. Finally, let us schedule "Me" time and do those things which bring us joy and happiness. The mundane tasks of life can wait so we could enjoy some respite time and peace.

Let us raise the third cup of wine and give ourselves a gift- a gift of caring for ourselves, so that we could care for the others whom we love. Let's give ourselves permission to say "Yes' to ourselves. We are worth it!

(Adapted from Iris Stendig-Raskin, MSN,CRNP,WHNP-BC, Stress-Challenging Yourself to Practice Self Care & from Rabbi Shelia Peltz Weinberg, Easing the Burden of Stress, Jewish Lights Publishing).



The Fourth Cup of Wine: Chesed or Kindness

Chesed means "kindness" in Hebrew. The word can also be translated as "lovingkindness," to convey the deep love that animates Jewish acts of kindness, done without thought of reward.

The Bible has numerous examples of chesed, such as Abraham and Sarah welcoming three strangers to their tent in the heat of the day; Abraham's servant's prayer for a wife for Isaac, answered by Rebecca who offers water to him and to his camels; and Ruth, who shows loyalty and kindness to Naomi, adopting her religion and peoplehood, after Naomi has experienced great loss. The rabbinic tradition enacted many laws to formalize our commitment to kindness, making chesed one of the three central pillars of Jewish life, as Shimon HaTzaddik taught: "The world rests on three things, on Torah, on service of God, and on deeds of kindness" (Pirkei Avot 1:2).

Let us live a life of kindness, where we perform acts in ever-widening realms of generosity: from family, to community, to the larger world; from North America, to Israel, to the world; or from sisterhood, to region, to the larger world of Women's League for Conservative Judaism. And as it is said in Psalm 89, may we build a world of kindness.

Let us raise the fourth cup of wine saying, "May this year be a year in which we all bring more love and kindness and true acts of Chesed into our lives, each and every day."

By Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields, Executive Director, Women's League For Conservative Judaism