



**Passover Haggadah
2025**

Birkat HaNer: Lighting of the Candles

Traditionally, the woman hosting lights the candles in preparation for the Passover celebration. This is part of preparing the space for the emotions of joy and sorrow to come.

[The woman of the house lights the candles and recites the following prayer.]

Baruch atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech ha-Olam, asher kidshanu bemitsvotav vetsivanu lehadlik ner shel yom tov.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Thy commandments and commanded us to kindle the festival lights.

Kiddush: The First Cup - The Cup of Blessing

[The leader—who rotates annually—overfills each cup, including Elijah’s.]

We fill the cup until it overflows, as the first cup symbolizes the joy of God’s goodness and the hope of redemption, represented by Elijah’s cup. We come to the Passover table as free people. Thus, we drink comfortably, leaning to the left.

[The leader recites the blessing and all drink, leaning to the left.]

Baruch atah Ado-nai Elo-hei-nu Melech ha-Olam, bo-ray pri ha-gah-fen.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Karpas: Dipping of the Parsley

The parsley symbolizes the hyssop used to place the blood of the Passover lamb upon the doorposts and lintels of the Israelites’ homes during the tenth and most terrible plague, which is recorded in the story of Exodus, read later in the Seder. The

salt water reminds us of the tears shed by the enslaved Israelites and those still in slavery.

[This is a good time to mention those around the world who are hurting and enslaved. By way of example, the leader offers the name of a group or community that is suffering oppression today. The act of remembrance continues, moving left around the table, until all have had an opportunity to acknowledge the hurt in our world.]

[All dip a sprig of parsley in the salted water as the leader recites the blessing.]

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, boh-ray pri ha-adamah.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth.

Urcatz: Washing of the Hands

This first washing of the hands is a symbolic gesture of personal cleansing as we enter into the holy celebration of the Passover. Traditionally, someone, often the youngest member present, carries a pitcher, a basin, and a towel and goes around the table pouring a little water on the guests’ hands, starting with the leader of the Seder.

Yachatz: Breaking of the Middle Matzah

One of the central elements of the Passover is matzah. For the Passover Seder, three separate sheets of matzah are inserted into a bag with three compartments, known as the matzah tash. In Jewish tradition, this three-in-one bag has many interpretations. It is said to represent the three Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; or the three kinds of people of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the masses.

Believers in Yeshua suggest that this could be a representation of the triune nature of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

[The leader takes the middle matzah, breaks it in two and puts one half back in the middle of the matzah tash. The leader then wraps the other half, now known as the afikoman, in a white napkin and hides it for the youngest attendees to search for later.]

Ma-istana: The Four Questions

Traditionally, the youngest child in attendance asks the Four Questions to the leader of the Seder. You might choose to have all the children read together, have one child ask each question, or ask one child to read them all.

[Child asks, “Why is this night so different from all other nights?”]

Question 1: “On all other nights we eat bread with leaven. On this night, why do we eat only matzah?”

Question 2. “On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables; on this night why do we eat only bitter herbs?”

Question 3. “On all other nights we never think of dipping herbs in water or in anything else; why on this night do we dip the parsley in salt water?”

Question 4. “On all other nights we eat either sitting or reclining; on this night why do we eat only reclining?”

[The leader responds to the questions with the traditional answers.]

Answer 1: “Matzah reminds us that when the Israelites were preparing to leave Egypt, they had no time to bake bread.”

Answer 2: “Maror reminds us of the bitter and cruel way Pharaoh treated the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt.”

Answer 3: “We dip parsley in salt water to remind us of the faith that the Israelites had despite the bitterness of their conditions.”

Answer 4: “We recline at the table to remind ourselves that we are free to eat comfortably.”

Elie Wiesel encourages us to ask different questions every year, according to our maturity and awareness of the human condition. He writes, “For the child or novice, what is tasted, seen and heard might be the level of understanding. For the learned, the Seder is an opportunity to study. For all of us, our responses and questions change over time and become more complex: ‘Why exile? Why suffering? Why evil?’” (*A Passover Haggadah*, 1993, p. 26).

To answer the questions Wiesel poses, we search the story of Passover and the book of Exodus.



Maggid: The Story of the Passover

It is tradition to tell the story of the Passover to ensure that every generation keeps the memory of Israel's deliverance from slavery alive.

[Everyone takes turns reading the following paragraphs.]

God promised Abraham and Sarah that their children would become a great people. God made this promise again to each new generation: to Isaac and Rebecca and to Jacob, Rachel, and Leah.

One of Jacob's sons, Joseph, came to live in the land of Egypt and was an advisor to the Pharaoh. When Joseph's family came to Egypt in search of food, they were invited to settle. They lived there in peace for 200 years. Years later, a new Pharaoh came to rule who did not remember Joseph and all he had done for the Egyptian people. Pharaoh feared that the Israelites had become too many in number and too powerful, so he enslaved them.

Maror: Eating of the Bitter Herbs

The maror (bitter herbs) reminds us of the bitterness of Israel's slavery in Egypt and the bitterness of humankind's slavery to sin. It is tradition to dip one's matzah and take a heaping portion of the bitter herb, enough to make one shed a tear. Each person breaks an olive-sized piece of matzah and dips it in the bitter herbs.

[The following blessing is recited.]

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, ash-er kid-sha-nu b'mits-vo-tav v'tsi-va-nu al a-chi-lat mah-ror.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of the bitter herbs. All eat together of the maror.

Korech: Eating of the Bitter Herbs and Charoset

The charoset (sweet mixture) symbolizes the mortar the children of Israel used to make the bricks as they toiled under Pharaoh's harsh taskmasters. It is eaten with matzah. In order to settle a controversy about how the Passover is to be eaten, Rabbi Hillel, a famous sage, began the tradition of the "Hillel sandwich," which is made by eating the maror and the charoset together between two pieces of matzah. It is also said that this combination of bitter and sweet reminds us that God's promise can bring joy in the midst of sorrow.

[Each person takes two small pieces of matzah and places some charoset and maror in the middle. All eat together.]

Maggid: The Story of the Passover (continued)

Fearful of a prophecy that predicted an Israelite would overthrow his rein, Pharaoh eventually decreed that all Israelite boys be killed. To save her son, Jochebed hid her baby in a basket on the riverbank. When Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe at the river and found the baby, she took him home to care for him, giving him the name Moses, a Hebrew name meaning "drawn out of the water."

As Moses grew up, he saw the suffering of the Israelite slaves and once could not control his anger. He killed an Egyptian who was beating a slave and, knowing his life would be in danger, fled for the land of Midian where he became a shepherd.

One day while tending sheep on Mount Horeb, Moses saw a bush that seemed to be on fire but did not burn up.

From the bush, Moses heard God's voice telling him to go back to Egypt and lead the Israelites to a new land flowing with milk and honey. Moses could not imagine being God's messenger, but God promised Moses, "I will be with you."

God told Moses to warn Pharaoh that He would bring plagues on the Egyptians if the Israelites were not set free. Moses then set out for Egypt to confront Pharaoh.

[All sing the traditional spiritual “Go Down, Moses (Let My People Go).”]

Go down, Moses,
Way down in Egypt land
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go!

Oh when Israel was in Egypt land
Let my people go!
Oppressed so hard, they could not stand
Let my people go!

So the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell all Pharaohs
To let my people go (let my people go)

So Moses went to Egypt land
Let my people go!
He made old Pharaoh understand
Let my people go!

Yes the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go (let my people go)

Thus spoke the Lord, bold Moses said

Let my people go!
If not I'll smite, your firstborn dead
Let my people go!

God the Lord said, go down (go down) Moses (Moses)
Way (way) down (down) in Egypt land
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go!

Way down in Egypt land
Tell old Pharaoh
To let my people go

When Moses asked Pharaoh to free the Israelites, the stubborn ruler refused, so God brought ten plagues on the Egyptians.

Makkot: The Second Cup - The Cup of Plagues

Each Passover cup is a symbolic full cup of joy except for the second cup because God teaches us never to rejoice over the fate of our enemies.

[The second cup is filled. Each participant dips their little finger into the cup of wine, removing one drop and placing it onto a plate in front of them, once for each plague. All recite together, one plague at a time.]

Blood

Frogs

Gnats

Flies

Pestilence

Boils

Hail

Locusts

Darkness

Slaying of the Firstborn

Maggid: The Story of the Passover (continued)

Each plague frightened Pharaoh and each time he promised to free the slaves, but when each plague ended Pharaoh did not keep his word. It was only after the last plague, the slaying of the first born, that Pharaoh finally agreed to let the Israelites go.

They were not affected by the last plague as they had been instructed to sacrifice the lamb and mark the doorposts of their homes. Those houses so marked had been passed over by the Angel of Death. The people got ready to leave Egypt very quickly and they did not have time to bake bread for the journey. Instead they put raw dough on their backs and the sun baked into hard crackers called matzah.

The people followed Moses and came to the sea. They were frightened because Pharaoh's army was behind them. Pharaoh had changed his mind again. The sea lay before the Israelites, so God told Moses to lift his shepherd's rod and when he did, the sea parted and made a path for the Israelites to walk through. Once they were through, Moses lifted the rod again and the sea rushed back in, covering the Egyptian army. God had led them out of Egypt and had saved their lives.

[The Cup of Plagues is raised, and the leader recites the blessing while all drink leaning to the left.]

Baruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, boh-ray pri ha-gah-fen.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Pesach: The Lamb Shankbone

We raise the shankbone of the lamb and again remind ourselves of the lamb slain on behalf of the firstborn males among the Jewish people.

Beitzah: The Roasted Egg

Traditionally, the roasted egg on the Seder plate brings to mind the temple sacrifices and prayers involved in festival rites. We eat the egg to remind ourselves of the circle of life, punctuated by celebrations and mourning, births and deaths.

[Everyone is served a hardboiled egg in a bowl of salt water for consumption.]

Rachtzah: Second Washing of the Hands

The second symbolic washing of the hands reinforces personal cleansing as we continue the celebration of the Passover and prepare to eat the celebratory meal.

[The leader recites the following blessing.]

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, ash-er kid-sha-nu b'mits-vo-tav v'tsi-va-nu al ne-tee-lat ya-dayim.



Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing of hands.

Shuchan Orech: The Set Table

The Passover meal can now be served. Eat, tell stories, and enjoy!



Tzafun: Finding and Eating the Afikoman

After the meal is finished, the leader of the Seder sends the children to find the afikoman, which is the middle piece of matzah that was broken, wrapped in a napkin and hidden before the meal.

The child who finds it brings it to the leader of the Seder, who redeems the afikoman for a reward, usually some money or chocolate.

For Jews, this part of the Passover represents redemption from brokenness and suffering and the reward of uniting as a community to share our bounty.

For Christians, it is believed that Jesus used the afikoman to reveal to His disciples His identity and the pending suffering and death that He would soon endure. The Book of Luke records Jesus' words on this occasion: "And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me'" (Luke 22:19).

[The leader of the Seder then unwraps the afikoman and blesses it.]

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-Olam, Ha-mo-tzi le-chem min ha-ah-retz.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

[The leader breaks the afikoman into small pieces, distributing the pieces for all to eat together.]

Celebratory Singing: "Dayenu" - It Would Have Been Enough

With a grateful heart and a healthy fear of the Lord, we sing "Dayenu" ("it would have been enough") together, remembering the many great acts that God has done on behalf of His people.

[All sing "Dayenu."]

If God had brought us out of Egypt and had not inflicted judgment upon the Egyptians, it would have been enough. Da Dayenu (x3) Dayenu, Dayenu!

If God had slaughtered their first born and had not turned their wealth over to us, it would have been enough. Da Dayenu (x3) Dayenu, Dayenu!

If God had divided the sea for us and had not made us pass through on dry land, it would have been enough. Da Dayenu (x3) Dayenu, Dayenu!

If God had supplied our necessities in the wilderness during forty years and had not fed us with manna, it would have been enough. Da Dayenu (x3) Dayenu, Dayenu!

If God had fed us with manna and had not given us a homeland and the Sabbath, it would have been enough. Da Dayenu (x3) Dayenu, Dayenu!

HaGeulah: Third Cup - The Cup of Redemption

The Cup of Redemption is a reminder of the lamb's blood, the price paid for Israel's promised redemption.

[The cup is filled and the following blessing is recited:]

Baruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, boh-ray pri ha-gah-fen.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

[All drink, leaning to the left.]

Eliyahu - The Coming of Elijah

The empty place setting and cup of wine is reserved for Elijah, the prophet heralding the coming of humanity's redemption.

[The youngest person present opens the door to usher Elijah in.]

Hallel: Fourth Cup - The Cup of Praise

The fourth and final cup of the Passover Seder is the Cup of Praise, a reminder of our promised future beyond pain, sorrow, oppression, and strife. In many ways, this cup also alludes to redemption to come.

[The cup is filled, all lift it and the following blessing is recited:]

Baruch Atah Adonai Elo-hei-nu Me-lech ha-Olam, boh-ray pri ha-gah-fen.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

[All drink, leaning to the left.]

Next Year in Jerusalem!

It is tradition to conclude the Seder with a joyous proclamation of hope and faith by reciting in unison:

L'Shana HaBa'ah B'Yerushalayim!

Next Year in Jerusalem!