

JQ International GLBT Haggadah

By JQ International



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Introduction

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

This GLBT Haggadah was created as a result of a collaborative effort by JQ International and the Institute for Judaism & Sexual Orientation at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion (IJSO). Our goal was to create a comprehensively GLBT-oriented Haggadah and GLBT Passover experience by codifying the annual GLBT Seder experience created by lay members of JQ International since 2004 and making it available to GLBT Jews for reapplication anywhere around the world. A committee of dedicated members representing both JQ International and HUC's IJSO brought together ideas from a variety of sources including leaders in the GLBT community, personal experiences at GLBT Seders and many new, never before seen elements were incorporated in to this GLBT Haggadah.

Our Haggadah attempts to bridge traditional and modern, old and new, historical and contemporary. Our goal was to create a text that was inclusive on many levels, offering leaders a great degree in flexibility regarding the essence of their seder. Recognizing the diversity within our GLBT Jewish community, the Haggadah could be used to hold a rather traditional seder, however, it also aims to provide the material and ideas necessary to create an interactive, progressive seder that speaks directly to the themes and issues facing the GLBT Jewish community.

We would like to thank all of those involved with the process, from leaders of past JQ International GLBT Seders to authors of the text to editors and proofreaders, who include Asher Gellis, Brandon Gellis, Dean Hansell, Jacob Heller, Lior Hillel, Jay Jacobs, Joel Kushner, Jeff Lieberman, Dan Parness, Eric Rosoff, Kevin Shapiro, Rabbi Jerry Brown, Wylie Tene, and more!

We also thank the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles for its continued support and sponsorship of JQ International's work in the community and Hebrew Union College's support of the Institute of Judaism and Sexual Orientation's creation of liturgy to help foster the continued inclusion of GLBT Jews.

נִסְחָ

The holiday's name – *Pesach*, meaning “*passing over*” in Hebrew, is derived from the instructions given to Moses by God. In order to encourage the Pharaoh to free the Israelites, God intended to kill the first-born of both man and beast. To protect themselves, the Israelites were told to mark their dwellings so that God could identify and “*pass over*” their homes. In modern times the holiday of Passover has grown to represent a time to remember the struggle for civil liberties in our current day lives or in other words individuals whose recognition of rights and validation of identity have been “*passed over*” by the society they live in.

Pesach or Passover traditionally is the celebration of God's decree to spare the first-born male Israelites as recounted in Exodus, which ultimately concludes with the liberation of the Jewish people from a life of oppression, tyranny and slavery. However, with great irony today's Seder or Passover service seeks to consciously recognize and remember those that have been overlooked in our current day by reliving the struggles of our community collectively as a group. With pride we acknowledge the history of events that brought us here tonight. Our Seder abounds with many old and many new symbols that serve as our communal recognition of the hurdles we have overcome and our ongoing drive to reaffirm and recognize the GLBT Jewish community as vibrant and valuable community worthy of celebrating with Pride.

בְּרִיךְ הוֹשֵׁן

We gather together tonight as a community to remember the bondage of our ancestors and the struggles of those that continue today, so that we may be inspired to cherish the freedom we now have, to recognize the bondage of those who are not yet free, and to encourage our collective call to help in the struggle to free all people and to value all people equally. On these evenings, the bond of friendship, love, family and community reaches out from within – as from this gathering – to unite all humankind in remembering our collective history in hope for tomorrow.

As a Jewish community, we are an old people; our history reaches back over 4000 years. In that history, our forebears have seen bondage and freedom, trial and triumph, high achievements and terrible disasters. Today, too, as we recline in the luxury of our freedom, let us not forget how deeply our neighbors in other places yearn for the simple necessity of release from their bondage and oppression and those who sit here beside you who have faced incredible challenges in their lives to gather here as a community.

You Don't Have to Be Jewish to Celebrate Freedom

Passover is a Jewish holiday, but it is not just for Jews. We welcome our non-Jewish friends to our celebration of liberation. Liberation from oppression is always a deep concern for Jews because of our history. We invite our friends and family to share this night with Jews all over the world, as we take this opportunity to celebrate our freedom and pray for the freedom of all those who suffer, wherever and whomever they may be.

The History of our Haggadah

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

What's the story behind the Haggadah?

According to Rabbi Moshe Lazarus, the word Haggadah comes from the Torah command – “And you shall tell (*v’Higadeta*) your children on that day...” Although the minimal fulfillment of this mitzvah is a simple recounting of the going out of Egypt and explaining a few of the Passover symbols, proper fulfillment requires much more.

Over the centuries, additions have been made to the Haggadah to enhance this mitzvah. Many of these additions gained such wide acceptance that they became part of the Haggadah. One of those additions is the *Chad Gadya*. Another is *Dayeinu*. Rav Saadia Gaon (882 CE – 942 CE) included neither in his Haggadah, although he did recognize the existence of *Dayeinu*. Neither Rashi (1040-1105) nor Maimonides (1135-1204) included *Chad Gadya* in their versions of the Haggadah, although Rashi did include *Dayeinu*.

Our Haggadah was created as a GLBT community response for the need of a fully inclusive and integrated GLBT Passover experience. In years past, GLBT Seders have incorporated select items of GLBT significance such as an orange on the Seder Plate and Miriam’s Cup. However, our Seders saw the need for fully integrated GLBT content. What sets this Haggadah apart is the creation and integration of the GLBT struggle, history, pain and joy throughout the text as a conscious amalgamation to a holiday that has already grown synonymous with the Jewish GLBT civil liberties movement.

Great care was taken to ensure the elements of a traditional Seder were preserved while integrating the GLBT material into this Haggadah. Following the customary Seder order, four new segments have added ceremonious acts to the ritual nature of the traditionally well organized Passover Seder. First *Eyru’ayim* meaning “events” in Hebrew is a recounting of the GLBT historical timeline of struggles and accomplishments over the last century. Judaism teaches the importance of remembering the history, good and bad, of our people as well as our traditions, customs and culture. The *Eyru’ayim* brings us the opportunity to pass forward the history of this movement and to collectively learn from our history in much the same manner as in the *Maggid*, the telling of the ancient Exodus story.

The remaining three segments *HaCarah*, *Chamutz* and *HaDerekh*, meaning “The Recognition, Sour Vegetables and The Path” respectively in Hebrew revolve around the addition of a second Seder Plate. In recent years, the GLBT community has added an orange to the traditional Seder Plate. However, in this Haggadah, we fully integrate the GLBT Seder Plate, created and developed by Asher Gellis for Passover 2007. The GLBT Seder Plate and its symbolic components are integrated into this GLBT Haggadah and it becomes an equal and integral part of our Seder experience alongside the traditional Seder Plate.

The orange is no longer just the addition of a foreign object to the traditional Seder Plate. Instead, a whole new GLBT Seder Plate, full of symbolism, was developed to sit proudly and equally next to the traditional Seder Plate, with its shank bone, egg, *charosef*, bitter herbs, greens and parsley. The orange is now joined by the coconut, sticks and stones, flowers, pickled vegetables and fruit salad, each representing additional hardships and blessings that we will explore at our GLBT Seder.

In addition to our four segments adding ceremonious acts to the ritual nature of the Passover Seder experience, many other innovative creations have been integrated, including an additional “fifth” question that has been added to the traditional “Four Questions,” which we now call “Our Five

Questions,” authored by Lior Hillel and “The Four Children,” by Eric Rosoff.

The GLBT Jewish community’s timeline and 10 Plagues, Miriam’s Cup, an accurate account to the origin of the orange on the Seder Plate and other Judaic and GLBT content was researched, compiled and edited by Kevin Shapiro and Joel Kushner.

JQ Haggadah Table of Contents

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

Tonight's Haggadah contains the following ingredients:

Kadesh – Sanctification – קִדְּשׁ

Oorhatz – Washing of the hands – וְרַחֵץ

Carpas – The eating of the green vegetables – כֶּרֶפֶס

Yahatz – Breaking of the Middle of the three *Matzot* – יַחַץ

Maggid – The story of Exodus – מַגִּיד

Eyru'ayim - The reading of the GLBT timeline – אֵירוּעִים

Rachatz – Washing of the hands before the meal – רַחֵץ

Motzi – Blessing before the meal – מוֹצִיא

Matzah – Blessing for the *Matzah* – מַצָּה

Maror – Eating of the bitter herbs – מְרוֹר

Korech – Eating of the *Matzah* and *Maror* sandwich – כּוֹרֵךְ

HaCarah - The conscious recognition of those not completely seen – הַכָּרָה

Chamutz – Eating of the sour vegetables – חֲמוּץ

HaDerekh – The path – הַדֶּרֶךְ

Shulhan Orech – The meal - שְׁלֵטֵן עוֹרֵךְ

Tzafon – Eating of the Afikomen – צָפוֹן

Barech – Birkat HaMazon – בְּרַךְ

Hallel – Closing recitation – הַלֵּל

We begin this Seder by...

Recounting and intertwining the story of Exodus and bringing our ancestral heritage into our lives here in the present. At this table, we collectively relive the saga as if we experienced the redemption ourselves.

The light of Passover is the light of freedom; the hope of Passover is the hope of freedom. Our ancestors suffered in the darkness of slavery and dreamed of their liberty; some of our world neighbors must yet do the same. In the flame of the Passover candle, we celebrate the light of freedom, the light that gives life and reveals the beauty in our diversity.

The Story of Exodus

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

During the time when Pharaoh issued his decree to kill Israelite males, Moses, who later was to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to freedom, was an infant. His concerned mother, Jochebed placed him in a basket of reeds in the Nile River while Moses' sister Miriam watched from a distance to see who would come to find him. The basket was found by the Pharaoh's daughter, who decided to raise the infant as her own son and named him Moses. She unknowingly hired Jochebed as a nurse to care for him, and Jochebed secretly taught Moses his Israelite heritage. At age 40, on a visit to see his fellow Israelites, Moses saw an Egyptian taskmaster beating an Israelite slave and in his rage, killed the Egyptian. Fearing for his life, Moses fled Egypt. He fled across the desert, for the roads were watched by Egyptian soldiers, and took refuge in Midian, an area in present-day northwestern Saudi Arabia along the eastern shores of the Red Sea.

While in Midian, Moses met a Midianite priest named Jethro and became a shepherd for the next 40 years, eventually marrying one of Jethro's daughters, Zipporah. Then, when Moses was about 80 years of age, God spoke to him from a burning bush and said that he and his brother Aaron were selected by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt to freedom. At first, Moses hesitated to take on such a huge task, but eventually Moses and his brother Aaron set about returning to Egypt, commencing what was to be the spectacular and dramatic events that are told in the story of Passover. It is said that the Israelites entered Egypt as a group of tribes and left Egypt as one nation. It has also been estimated that the Passover exodus population comprised about 3 million people, plus numerous flocks of sheep who all crossed over the border of Egypt to freedom in Canaan.

Under the reign of Pharaoh Thutmose III in Egypt in 1476 BCE, the Israelite leader Moses ("Moshe" in Hebrew) – guided by God – led his people out of Egypt after a series of 10 plagues that were created by God and initiated by Moses. Prior to most of the plagues, Moses had warned the Pharaoh about each plague and that it would devastate his people, if he refused to let the Israelites go. After the first two plagues, the Pharaoh refused to let them go because his court magicians were able to re-create the same miracles, and so the Pharaoh thought: "This proves that the Israelite God is not stronger than I." But when the third plague occurred, the Pharaoh's magicians were not able to duplicate this miracle; however, that still did not change the Pharaoh's mind about letting the Israelites leave Egypt. After each subsequent plague, the Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go, but the Pharaoh soon changed his mind and continued to hold the Israelites as slaves. Finally, after the 10th plague, the Pharaoh let the Israelites go for good.

When the Pharaoh finally agreed to free the Israelite slaves, they left their homes so quickly that there wasn't even time to bake their breads. So they packed the raw dough to take with them on their journey. As they fled through the desert they would quickly bake the dough in the hot sun into hard crackers called matzah. Today to commemorate this event, Jews eat matzah in place of bread during Passover.

Though the Israelites were now free, their liberation was incomplete. The Pharaoh's army chased them through the desert towards the Red Sea. When the Israelites reached the sea they were trapped, since the sea blocked their escape. When the Israelites saw the Egyptian army fast approaching toward them, they called out in despair to Moses. Fortunately, God intervened and commanded Moses to strike his staff on the waters of the Red Sea, creating a rift of land between the waves, enabling the Israelites to cross through the Red Sea to safety on the other side. Once the Israelites were safely across, God then commanded Moses to strike the waters of the Red Sea with his staff again, just as the Egyptian army followed them through the parted Red Sea. The waters came together again,

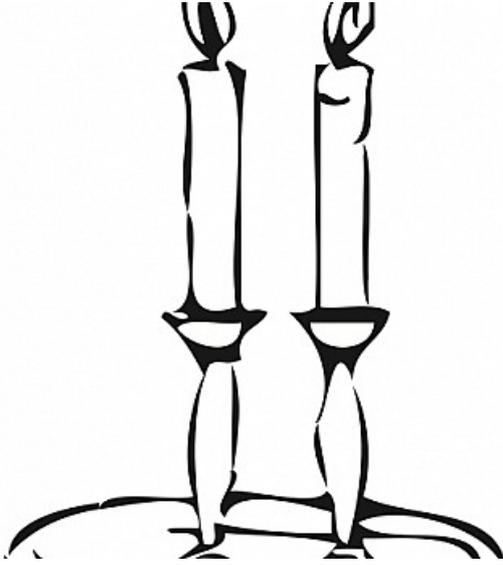
drowning the entire Egyptian army and the Israelites were saved.

[KADESH](#)

Kadesh

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah



Kadesh - Sanctification - קִדְּשׁ

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

The Candle lighting celebration begins by honoring light

We light the candles and say...

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב**

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam
Asher Kidishanu B'Mitzvotav V'Tzivanu L'Hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov.*

Blessed are You, Lord, our God, Ruler of the universe,
Who sanctifies us with commandments, and commands us to light the candles on this holiday.

-

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁחַיֵּינוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam
Sheche'hiyanu V'Keymanu V'Higiyanu Lazman Ha'Zeh.*

Blessed are You, Lord, our God, Ruler of the universe,
Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Traditionally Passover celebrates...

The Jewish people's freedom from Egyptian bondage that took place approximately 3,500 years ago, as told in the first 15 chapters of the Book of Exodus. Before the Jewish people were known as Jewish or Jews – names that were derived from the Kingdom of Judah where they lived from 922 BCE until 587 BCE – they were known as either Israelites or Hebrews. "Hebrews," "Israelites," or the "Children of Israel" were names that collectively described the descendants of the Hebrew patriarch Jacob (also known as Israel). The Hebrews and Israelites eventually established and lived in both the Kingdom of Judah and the Kingdom of Israel.

The events of Passover written about in the Book of Exodus occurred at a time before the Jewish people were known as Jewish or Jews, and so we refer to the Jewish people as either Hebrews or Israelites in the Passover story that follows. Interestingly, the Hebrew word for Egypt is Mitzrayim, and means either "constriction" or "narrow straits." This is in reference to the Israelites being in a state of constriction while toiling as slaves in the land of Goshen, an area of ancient Egypt. As slaves, the Israelites were building cities such as Pithom and Ra'amses which were used as supply centers for the Pharaohs of Egypt.

The First Cup - Welcome The Festival

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

We sanctify the name of God and proclaim the holiness of this festival of Passover. With a blessing over wine, we lift our wine, our symbol of joy; let us welcome the festival of Passover.

In unison, we say...

Our God and God of our ancestors, we thank You for enabling us to gather in friendship, to observe the Festival of Freedom. Just as for many centuries the Passover Seder has brought together families and friends to retell the events that led to our freedom, so may we be at one with Jews everywhere who perform this ancient ritual linking us with our historic past. As we relive each event in our people's ancient struggle, and celebrate their emergence from slavery to freedom, we pray that all of us may keep alive in our hearts the love of liberty. May we dedicate our lives to the abolition of all forms of tyranny and injustice.

Reclining on our left side demonstrates our freedom from slavery. We hold our first cup of wine and we recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam Borey P'ree Hagafen.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Urchatz - Washing of the Hands

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah



We wash our hands, omitting the blessing.

[KARPAS](#)

Karpas - Appetizer

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah



Karpas - Eating the Green Vegetables

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

The traditional Haggadah preserves some customs from when the Temple was still in existence in Jerusalem. All formal dinners began with an appetizer. Karpas is the appetizer of the Passover meal. It may consist of any green vegetable: parsley, lettuce, endive, cress, even scallion.

The green vegetable is a symbol of springtime and the miracle of nature's renewal. At this season, when Mother Earth arrays herself anew, the human spirit rises, and we renew our faith in a world where freedom and justice will prevail.

The salt water, into which the Karpas is dipped, has been interpreted as salty tears, to remind us of the tears shed by the oppressed Israelites.

We recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאָדָמָה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam Borey P'ree Ha'Adamah.

Blessed are You, Lord Our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who creates the fruit of the Earth.

The GLBT Seder Plate

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International, Photo Courtesy of the Jewish Journal



The JQ GLBT seder plate includes some special symbolic items including:

- **An Orange** which carries the seeds of rebirth and represents the diversity of the Jewish community as we increase inclusion.
- **A Coconut** for the LGBT still in the closet and their struggle in coming out
- **Sour Vegetables** for the flavor of hatred and bigotry
- **Fruit Salad** for our collective potential and recognition
- **Flowers, Sticks and Stones** for the path all of us as LGBT and Allies are on as we move through life and play our role in the development of our culture and commemoration of our history.

The Traditional Seder Plate

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

When the hardships imposed by the Pharaoh did not slow down the population growth of the Israelites, Pharaoh then decreed that all Israelite males born should be killed. However, the Israelite midwives – Shifra and Puah – who were ordered by Pharaoh to be in charge of this task, feared the wrath of God and made sure that this did not happen. The Pharaoh then ordered his people to throw every male child born to an Israelite in the Nile River. Pharaoh was afraid that the Israelite males would grow up to become fighters against his regime. Pharaoh spared Israelite girls because he doubted they would become fighters against his regime, and he thought they would marry Egyptian men and adopt Egyptian values. But they did not!

As human beings today, we reflect with great distance on the hardship of our ancient ancestors but with great commitment we spend a significant amount of energy retelling and remembering their suffering and story of perseverance annually. As we make great efforts to celebrate and commemorate, we also turn and look at our recent history and the stories that surround our collective struggle to bring equality and respect to all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion and any other divisible way we segment ourselves in our modern lives.

The GLBT community has made great strides in the last half century to receive recognition, acceptance and respect as human beings and within the Jewish community on spiritual and cultural fronts. We sit here today to celebrate, commemorate and further commit ourselves to making all people welcome and respected here at this table and everywhere we can in our everyday lives.

As GLBT community members, allies, friends and family of the GLBT community, our second Seder Plate symbolically represents our lives, our struggles and our progress here and now.

Yachatz – Breaking of the middle of the three Matzot – יָחַץ

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

We are about to take the middle *matzah* and divide it in half. This *matzah* which we break and set aside is a symbol of our unity with Jews throughout the world. We will not conclude our Seder until the missing piece (the Afikomen) is found and spiritually reunited. This is a reminder of the indestructible link which infuses us as a world family.

In unison we say...

We cannot forget those who remain behind in any land of persecution, fearful of a growing public anti-Semitism or bigotry. To those still seeking liberty of life, to those striving courageously to build a better Jewish life in the country of their choice and to those of all humankind that strive to live a free and equal existence with all people of the world regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity and religion, we pledge our continued vigilance, support, and solidarity.

Later, we will search for the hidden piece of *matzah*. In much the same way, we seek to reconnect with our neighbors throughout the world. Once having found the missing half, we will be able to continue our Seder. So, too, will the continued bonding of Diaspora Jewry with our homeland allow Israel to grow and blossom as the eternal core of our collective Jewish identity.

In unison, we say...

We pray that they may live in peace, in a land at peace, with a world knowing war no more. We pray that the characteristics that make each human unique will be celebrated everywhere, with a world embracing diversity and knowing prejudice no more.

For the daily meal, there is one loaf of bread; but on the Sabbath there are two loaves as a reminder of the double portion of manna which fell on Friday for the Children of Israel as they traveled in the wilderness. (Exodus 16:22) In honor of Passover, a third *matzah* was added specifically for the Passover Seder experience.

אָפִיקוֹמֵן

We break the middle *matzah* in half and place the larger piece of *matzah*, the Afikomen, in a napkin and hide it.

The door is opened as a sign of hospitality.

The *matzot* are uncovered and held up.

Behold the matzah, bread of affliction, which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat; all who are needy, come and celebrate the Passover with us.

The Five Questions

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

The MaNishtana traditionally asks us, “What is unique or different about tonight?” and, “Why do we eat Matzah, why do we dip and eat Bitter Herbs not just once, but twice and why do we recline?” These elements are symbolic themes that mirror the reflection our ancestor’s liberation from slavery, the hardships they experienced and the oppression that infringed on their freedoms. Tonight at our GLBT Passover Seder we incorporate a fifth question and answer. “What is unique or different about tonight’s seder, why tonight do we have Pride?” Pride is a very symbolic word in the GLBT community. We use this word often and tonight we have the opportunity to demonstrate how proud we are of our sexual orientation and gender identity.

מה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל־הַלַּיְלוֹת

שֶׁבְּכָל־הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין חֲמִץ וּמַצָּה

הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כָּלוּ מַצָּה

שֶׁבְּכָל־הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין שְׂאֵר יִרְקוֹת

הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מְרוּר

שֶׁבְּכָל־הַלַּיְלוֹת אֵין אָנוּ מְטַבֵּילִין אֶפְלוֹ פַּעַם אַחַת

הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה שְׁתֵּי פַּעְמִים

שֶׁבְּכָל־הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבֵין וּבֵין מְסַבֵּין

הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כָּלְנוּ מְסַבֵּין

Mah nish-ta-na ha-lai-lah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-lei-lot!

Sheh-beh-chol ha-lei-lot a-nu och-lin ha-metz u-matzah. Ha-lai-lah ha-zeh, ku-lo matzah?

Sheh-beh-chol ha-lei-lot a-nu och-lin sh'ar y'ra-kot. Ha-lai-lah ha-zeh, maror?

Sheh-beh-chol ha-lei-lot ein a-nu mat-bi-lin a-fi-lu pa-am e-hat. Ha-lai-lah ha-zeh, sh-tei fi-ah-mim?

Sheh-beh-chol ha-lei-lot a-nu och-lin bayn yosh-vin ou-vein mis-u-bin. Ha-lai-lah ha-zeh, ku-la-nu mis- u-bin?

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat either leavened bread or *matzah*. Why, on this night, do we eat only *matzah*?

On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs. Why, on this night, do we eat only bitter herbs?

On all other nights we do not dip herbs. Why, on this night, do we dip them twice?

On all other nights we eat sitting or reclining on pillows. Why, on this night, do we eat only reclining upon pillows?

The fifth question:

Sheh-beh-chol ha-lei-lot sed-er a-nu o-seem sed-er ma-sar-ti. Ha-lai-lah ha-zeh, ku-la-nu ga-im?

On all other Seder nights we do a traditional Seder. Why, on this night, do we have Pride?

The Five Answers

Speaker 1: We were slaves in Egypt. Our ancestor in flight from Egypt did not have time to let the dough

rise. With not a moment to spare they snatched up the dough they had prepared and fled. But the hot sun beat as they carried the dough along with them and baked it into the flat unleavened bread we call *matzah*.

Speaker 2: The first time we dip our greens to taste the brine of enslavement. We also dip to remind ourselves of all life and growth, of earth and sea, which gives us sustenance and comes to life again in the springtime.

Speaker 3: The second time we dip the *maror* into the *charoet*. The *charoet* reminds us of the mortar that our ancestors mixed as slaves in Egypt. But our charoet is made of fruit and nuts, to show us that our ancestors were able to withstand the bitterness of slavery because it was sweetened by the hope of freedom.

Speaker 4: Slaves were not allowed to rest, not even while they ate. Since our ancestors were freed from slavery, we recline to remind ourselves that we, like our ancestors, can overcome bondage in our own time. We also recline to remind ourselves that rest and rejuvenation are vital to continuing our struggles. We should take pleasure in reclining, even as we share our difficult history.

Speaker 5: We are proud to be gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer and everything else under the rainbow. And all of us together here, add meaning to an age old Jewish tradition and for that we have pride. As a community we have come far, and while we are not done with our struggle, we should reflect proudly on our accomplishments as we celebrate here tonight at our GLBT Passover Seder.

The Four Children - GLBT

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah - Eric Rosoff and Asher Gellis

The Supportive/Open Minded Child

How do we make our GLBT Seder more inclusive?

We seek to ensure that everyone is included and that all of their needs are being met. For example, there is a movement to encourage the use of gender-neutral pronouns like *ze* for he/she and *hir* for him/her at inclusive Seders. We have incorporated many new traditions into our own Seder for example, the orange on our Seder plate, or the creation of a whole second Seder plate.

While discussing the ancient oppression in Egypt, we should recognize today's oppression and the struggles for women's rights, GLBT rights, racial equality and the elimination of unfair discrimination and the assurance of equal rights for all.

The Hateful Child

Why must you have your own "Queer" (GLBT) Seder?

Judaism is about incorporating each individual's needs into community and cultural celebrations. Very often, traditional Seders are not sufficiently inclusive of Queer people's needs. A Seder is a moment to reflect upon the painful lessons of long ago. What better time is there to discuss how these barbaric practices of hate and discrimination still thrive today?

Let our Seder symbolize our (Queer) ability to overcome obstacles for a brighter future.

The Apathetic Child

Why should I participate?

It is in one's best interest to recognize the world around him or her or hir and to become involved in making a better future for everyone. The following quote about the Holocaust by a contemporary social activist (Martin Niemöller) illustrates this point.

"First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out—
because I was not a communist;
Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—
because I was not a socialist;
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—
because I was not a trade unionist;
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
because I was not a Jew;
Then they came for me—
and there was no one left to speak out for me."

The Ignorant or Closeted Child

Does not know how to ask or perhaps is too afraid...

This child must receive support and guidance from the community. A community that fosters support, tolerance, and understanding is vital to creating an environment where one can explore one's own identity and understand others'.

Rabbi Gamliel (Grandson of the great Sage Hillel) taught; one who has not explained the following three symbols of the Seder has not fulfilled the Festival obligations:

GLBT Timeline

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International

1939 Gad Beck, a gay Jewish teenager living in Hitler's Germany joins the Jewish underground, smuggling food, arranging housing and helping Jews escape from Berlin, often by bribing German officials.

1955-1956 Poet Alan Ginsberg authors "Howl," which contains gay sexual imagery.

1969 Stonewall Rebellion in New York City.

1972 Two gay men and two lesbians decide to form their own synagogue in Los Angeles. Beth Chayim Chadashim holds its first service in July of 1972. In London, The Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group, JGLG is formed.

1974 Beth Chayim Chadashim is chartered by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, making it not only the first gay and lesbian synagogue, but also the first gay religious organization of any kind to be officially recognized by an American national body.

1974 David Goodstein buys the LA Advocate, which will become the largest circulating gay newspaper.

1978 Rabbi Alan Bennett allows himself to be outed in the San Francisco Chronicle as the first gay rabbi in the United States.

1980 World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations founded.

1984 The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College faculty vote to admit gay and lesbian students.

1989 Barnett "Barney" Frank comes out becoming the first openly gay Jewish member of the US Congress.

1992 The Conservative law committee declared that Jewish law clearly prohibited commitment ceremonies for same-sex couples and the admission of openly gay people to rabbinical or cantorial schools.

1993 Israel forbids discrimination against sexual orientation in its military.

1997 the Jerusalem Open House is founded to serve the city's LGBTQ population regardless of religion or nationality.

1999 Rabbi Steven Greenberg challenged this tradition when he became the first Orthodox rabbi ever to openly declare his homosexuality.

2000 The Central Conference of American Rabbis, which is part of the Jewish Reform movement, has agreed to sanction religious ceremonies for same-sex couples.

2000 Hebrew Union College founds the Institute for Judaism & Sexual Orientation to challenge and eliminate homophobia and heterosexism and to transform the communities connected to the Reform movement into ones that are inclusive and welcoming of GLBT Jews.

2001 Award-winning documentary *Trembling Before God* released, a cinematic portrait of various gay Orthodox Jews who struggle to reconcile their faith and their sexual orientation.

2002 Uzi Even is sworn in as the first openly gay member of Israel's parliament, the Knesset.

2002 Paul Colichman and Stephen P. Jarchow found HERE! America's 1st GLBT dedicated TV network

2003 Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion admits the first openly transgender rabbinical student in the world.

2004 JQ International is born to serve the 20's and 30's demographic of the GLBT Jewish community with specific programming designed to fully integrate and reconcile the Jewish and GLBT identity among its young adult members. JAG, *Judios Argentinos* GLBT was born in Buenos Aires due to the interest of a group of friends and Rabbi Sergio Bergman who, together, addressed the lack of treatment of gay Jewish issues in the local Jewish Community.

2006 The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, adopted policies giving gays and lesbians the chance to serve as clergy.

2006 Israel's High Court of Justice rules that two gay men married in Canada, as well as four other same-sex couples wedded abroad, should have their union recognized in Israel.

2007 The Jewish Community Foundation recognizes the valuable work of JQ International and provides significant funding to advance JQ's mission and create lesbian specific programming.

2007 The Jewish Theological Seminary, the intellectual and spiritual center of Conservative Judaism, began accepting openly gay and lesbian candidates into its rabbinical and cantorial schools.

2008 The Women's Programming committee is launched by JQ International to better understand and serve America's young adult lesbian Jewish population.

2008 The 1st fully integrated GLBT Haggadah is created.

GLBT Ten Plagues

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

These events on our timeline reflect mostly accomplishments of the GLBT community in the face of adversity. Tonight we acknowledge and recognize the GLBT community's endurance under ten additional plagues. For each of these plagues we continue our tradition of dipping our finger tip in our wine cups, and for each plague we place one drop of wine on our plates:

Blood: The blood shed in the Nazi death camps and in Queer-bashings.

Laughter: The laughter caused by our stereotyped representation in jokes and in the media.

Guilt: The guilt we are told is inherent in our simple existence.

Shame: The shame we are made to feel when we share our lives and our bodies with someone of the same gender as ourselves.

Despair: The despair we feel when we are told that we are evil and monstrous, that AIDS is God's judgment upon us.

Fear: The fear caused by a hostile society that would cast us out if it knew what we are.

Pain: The physical pain of being attacked by homophobes, and the mental pain of being rejected by family and community. **Loneliness:** The loneliness of thinking that we are the only one of our kind.

Darkness: The darkness of our closets, and of where many of us are forced to spend our lives: the bars, the parks, the unsafe neighborhoods.

Silence: The hollow silence of when we do not speak out in our own defense, the silence from one generation to another.

In unison we say:

We may not have individually felt each plague, but since they afflict our community on a global level, they afflict us as well. Let us not become complacent.

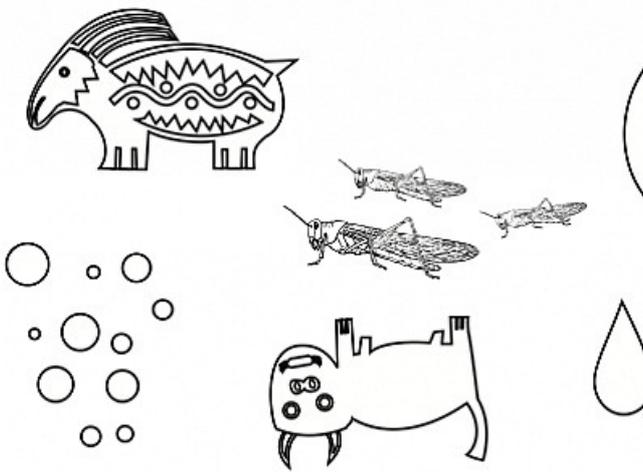
And let us not become so involved with our own problems that we forget others who also suffer. The path out of Egypt is open to all who flee slavery and seek the Promised Land.

To cleanse ourselves and wash off these ten GLBT plagues that still exist in our world today we wash our hands and say the blessing.

The Second Cup - The Ten Plagues

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah



With a finger, remove a drop of wine from your cup and wipe it on your plate, as each plague is mentioned...

Blood

Frogs

Lice

Wild Beasts

Blight

Boils

Hail

Locusts

Darkness

Slaying of the First Born

dayenu! it would have been enough

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

Dayenu! it would have been enough

We show our gratitude for each of the many ways God protected the Israelites as they journeyed from slavery to freedom. We acknowledge that each saving act would have been sufficient. Nevertheless, we are grateful for God's manifold gifts and we sing Dayenu!

Had God brought us out of Egypt and not divided the sea for us, Dayenu!

Had God divided the sea and not permitted us to cross on dry land, Dayenu!

Had God kept us for forty years in the desert and not fed us with manna, Dayenu!

Had God fed us with manna and not given us the Sabbath, Dayenu!

Had God given us the Sabbath and not led us to Mount Sinai, Dayenu!

Had God led us to Mount Sinai and not given us the Torah, Dayenu!

Had God given us the Torah and not let us into the land of Israel, Dayenu!

Had God led us into the land of Israel and not built for us the temple, Dayenu!

Had God built for us the temple and not sent us prophets of truth, Dayenu!

Had God sent us prophets of truth and not made us a holy people, Dayenu!

I-looh ho-tzi-anu mih-mitz-rayim v'loh ah-sah bah-hem sheh-fah-team, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh ah-sah bah-hem sheh-fah-team, v'loh ah-sah beh-lo-hey-hem, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh ah-sah beh-lo-hey-hem, v'loh hah-rog eht beh-khor-hey-khem, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh hah-rog eht beh-khor-hey-khem, v'loh nah-tan lah-nu eht mah-moh-nom, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh nah-tan lah-nu eht mah-moh-nom, v'loh kah-rah lah-nu eht hah-yom, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh kah-rah lah-nu eht hah-yom, v'loh heh-eh-vey-rah-nu beh-toh-kho beh-kha-ra-vah, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh heh-eh-vey-rah-nu beh-toh-kho beh-kha-ra-vah, v'loh sheh-kah tsar-kay-nu beh-toh-kho, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh sheh-kah tsar-kay-nu beh-toh-kho, v'loh see-pek tsar-kay-nu bah-mid-bar ahr-bay-eem shanah, dayyeh- nu.

I-looh see-pek tsar-kay-nu bah-mid-bar ahr-bay-eem shanah, v'loh hah-ekh-hih-lah-nu eht hah-mon, dayyeh- nu.

I-looh hah-ekh-hih-lah-nu eht hah-mon, v'loh nah-tan lah-nu eht hah-shah-bot, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh nah-tan lah-nu eht hah-shah-bot, v'loh kehr-ba-nu lif-ney har see-nai, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh kehr-ba-nu lif-ney har see-nai, v'loh nah-tan lah-nu eht ha-tor-ah, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh nah-tan lah-nu eht ha-tor-ah, v'loh heekh-nee-h-sah-nu leh-er-etz yis-rah-el, day-yeh-nu.

I-looh heekh-nee-h-sah-nu leh-er-etz yis-rah-el, v'loh bah-na lah-nu eht bayt ha-beh-kheeh-rah, day-yeh-nu.

Rachatz – Washing of the hands before the meal.

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam
Asher Kidshanu Bemitzvotav Ve-Tzivanu Al Netilat Yadayim.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe,
who sanctifies us with commandments, and commands us to wash our hands

“Mitzrayim,” Hebrew for Egypt, literally means narrow straits. Judaic commentary has always viewed Mitzrayim as more than the literal escape from slavery, more than an escape from a place of narrow straits, an obviously accurate physical description of Egypt, but metaphorically the leaving behind or “exodus” from a narrow place – the place that squeezes the life out of the human soul and body. Mitzrayim is viewed as an intrinsically constrictive state; a state where we are unable to express ourselves and be free, to be who we are as we seek to define ourselves to others.

Besides the obvious homophone (words with different meanings and different spellings but the same pronunciation) of strait and straight, which parallels the Israelites liberation and escape from narrow straits, a place of oppression, our GLBT community often seeks escape from narrow-minded straits. We gather here today as the result of GLBT activists that struggled and fought for the rights and privileges we have today and from the support of countless GLBT allies in the straight community. Those allies who have stood by us personally in our lives and those who we will never know that have stood by countless other GLBTs in our community today and historically. These straight allies have escaped narrow mindedness and chose the path of justice and righteousness.

We spend a lot of time focusing on those outside our community that we feel hold us down and fail to recognize us as equal or worthy of equal rights, but at what point will we focus on what holds us back from within the GLBT community? How can we work from within our community to improve how we view ourselves, our souls and the value of our gender identity and sexual orientation?

Traditional Seder Plate Symbols

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

The Paschal Lamb reminds us that the Holy One, praised be God, passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt.

The *Matzah* is to remind us that before the dough our ancestors prepared for bread had time to rise, God revealed the might, power and presence of God unto them and redeemed them.

The Bitter Herbs are to remind us that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt.

In gratitude for the miracles which God has performed for our ancestors and for us from the days of old to this time, we raise our cups of wine and together we say:

Therefore, we should- thank and praise, laud and glorify, exalt and honor, extol and adore God who performed all these miracles for our ancestors and for us. God brought us from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to great light, and from bondage to redemption.

Let us, then say...

Halleluyah!

Motzi u'Matzah - Blessing Before The Meal And Over The Matzah

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

We take the uppermost *Matzah* and break it into pieces and distribute it to each participant at our Seder.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam Ha'Motzi Lechem Min Ha'Aretz.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who brings forth sustenance from the Earth.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam
Asher Kidshanu Bemitzvotav Ve-Tzivanu Al Achilat Matzah.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who sanctifies us with commandments, and commands us to eat Matzah.

Maror - Eating of the Bitter Herbs

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

We take some *Maror* and recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam
Asher Kidshanu Bemitzvotav Ve-Tzivanu Al Achilat Maror.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe,
who sanctifies us with commandments, and commands us to eat Maror.

We now make and eat *Maror* and *Charoset* Sandwiches.

Hillel Sandwich

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

To the Sage Hillel, eating *Matzah* and *Maror* together was not a trivial matter. To him, slavery and freedom were merged in one historical event. The bread of poverty became bread of freedom and was tasted together with *Maror*, so that one should know both the bitterness of slavery and the joy of freedom. In the time of freedom, we remember the bitterness of slavery; in time of oppression, we keep alive the hope of freedom. This is why Hillel's practice of eating *Matzah* and *Maror* together has such an important message for us today.

And today at our GLBT Seder, we recognize that oppression; inequality and bigotry still thrive as enemies of minorities and those that go against the flow of our society's expectations, "norms" and barbaric mandates. The GLBT experience has changed dramatically in the last century and here today we review a timeline of events that brought us here to celebrate the ancient liberation from slavery in Egypt as told in Exodus but also to learn about the history of the GLBT cause. From the Nazi's persecution of Jews, Homosexuals and many others in WWII, to the modern day global movements for GLBT Rights, Gay Marriage and current day anti-GLBT legislation, events have unfolded that attest to a determination to not just survive but flourish and have pride in our sexual orientation and gender identity.

GLBT Seder Plate In Depth - The Orange, The Coconut, Sour Foods, Fruit Salad, Flowers, Sticks & Stones

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

HaCarah – The conscious recognition of those not completely seen

Tapuz v'Ko'kos – The Orange and Coconut

Why do we have an orange and a coconut on the Seder Plate?

Speaker 1: In our own day as in the ancient days of our tradition, an event becomes a story, a story is woven with new legends, and the legends lead the path into new teachings. So it is with the orange on the Seder plate.

Speaker 2: To begin with in the early 1980's, while speaking at Oberlin College Hillel, Susannah Heschel was introduced to an early feminist Haggadah that suggested adding a crust of bread on the Seder plate, as a sign of solidarity with Jewish lesbians (there's as much room for a lesbian in Judaism as there is for a crust of bread on the Seder plate). Heschel felt that to put bread on the Seder plate would be to accept that Jewish lesbians and gay men violate Judaism like *chametz* violates Passover. So, at her next Seder, she chose an orange as a symbol of inclusion of gays and lesbians and others who are marginalized within the Jewish community.

Speaker 3: Heschel offered the orange as a symbol of the fruitfulness for all Jews representing lesbians and gay men and their contributions as active members in Jewish life. In addition, each orange segment had a few seeds that had to be spit out – a gesture of spitting out, repudiating the homophobia of Judaism.

Speaker 4: While lecturing, Heschel often mentioned her custom as one of many feminist rituals that have been developed in the last twenty years. She writes, "Somehow, though, the typical patriarchal maneuver occurred: my idea of an orange and my intention of affirming lesbians and gay men were transformed. Now the story circulates that a MAN said to me that a woman belongs on the *bimah* as an orange on the Seder plate. A woman's words are attributed to a man, and the affirmation of lesbians and gay men is erased. Isn't that precisely what's happened over the centuries to women's ideas?"

Speaker 5: We place an orange on our Seder plate to symbolize the affirmation of lesbians and gay men, and to ensure we continue to cherish that growth of Judaism. Tonight all the excluded of our people – lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender, women, Jews by choice –and all who have felt left out – take their full and rightful place in shaping the future of our people and traditions by placing the orange on its own Seder plate. Our two Seder plates represent the duality of symbolism as we sit here at our GLBT Passover Seder; the Jewish traditions that we embrace since ancient days and our transformation as GLBT Jews into equal contributors to the growth of our people's traditions.

Speaker 6: So why an orange? Because the orange carries within itself the seeds of its own rebirth. So have gay men and lesbians, bisexuals, women, Jews by choice within Judaism given birth to their own inclusion.

Speaker 7: Also because an orange provides both food and drink – it alone could sustain life for quite some time. So have queer Jews and others on the outskirts of the tradition had, at times, to sustain themselves until others understood and chose to welcome and include instead of turning away.

Speaker 8: This year we'll do more than let the orange sit upon the Seder plate as a silent symbol, unconsumed. Tonight we will say the blessing and taste the sweetness of our orange and use it to add

flavor to our *Charoset* to remind us that we are all a part of the mortar that binds our people. Take note how the flavor of our *Charoset* changes when we are able to taste the sweetness of integration.

Speaker 9: Tonight the orange is joined by the Coconut which represents those who are still locked inside their shell hiding from the world their inner beauty as an out and proud GLBT Jew. We notice that the shell is nearly impossible to crack with our bare hands and equally difficult for the beauty inside to escape on its own.

Pass Coconut around the table

Speaker 10: We all know from experience that once a coconut is opened up the richness of its inner essence pours out almost with excitement of its long awaited liberation. Tonight we hold up our coconut and recognize the struggle of coming out as something most of us have experienced personally. I ask; should anyone like to try to open this coconut with their bare hands, do so now!

Speaker 10 continues: Otherwise we wait patiently for those who struggle silently within their shells to join us here, hopefully next year to celebrate our GLBT experience as free and out people.

Peel orange and break into sliced segments to distribute

For both the orange and the coconut, we make a conscious decision to recognize those who have not fully been seen by everyone in our society. We take a piece of orange and imagine a piece of coconut and recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam, bo'ray p'ree ha'etz

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

Chamutz - Eating of the Sour Foods

Traditionally on Passover, all liquids which contain ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol or vinegar (other than cider vinegar) are prohibited. Consequently, pickled foods are uncommon and undesirable for those observing the dietary guidelines of Passover. Equally undesirable in our world is the sour flavor of hatred, bigotry and homophobia. We take our sliced cucumber piece soaked in cider vinegar and lemon juice and recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam, bo'ray p'ree ha'adamah.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

Fruit Salad

In recognition of our collective potential, when we all work together, able to recognize each others' identities, we hold the fruit salad and inspect its components. Each piece of fruit is different from the other and regardless of which fruit it is, together the diversity of textures and flavors work together to make a collective entity that is greater than anyone piece. In an ideal world all people will be included in society as equal players able to contribute to society making it greater than before and able to give and receive freely as equal participants in our society.

HaDerekh - The Path

The path that brought us to who we are today is full of flowers we can see and smell. The flowers here on our Seder plate represent the beauty within each of us on this path of life, but we must recognize the sticks and stones that lay on our path to making us who we are today. For the members of our community that have suffered the pain and anguish of physical assault for being different and for

those that have suffered verbal abuse and harassment we bow our heads, close our eyes and reflect on our own experiences and how different our lives might have been had we been in your shoes.

These sticks and stones have affected us and shaped our identities. Today we remember the many crossroads, vistas, cracks and divots along the way.

We take the sticks, stones and flowers and recite:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרֹ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam, she-ha-kol ni-h'yeh bid-va-ro.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, by whose word everything comes to be.

Shulhan Orech - The Meal

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source:

As we begin the Seder meal, we link physical delight and pleasure to our celebration of faith and freedom. Judaism calls upon us to serve God with all that we are and have.

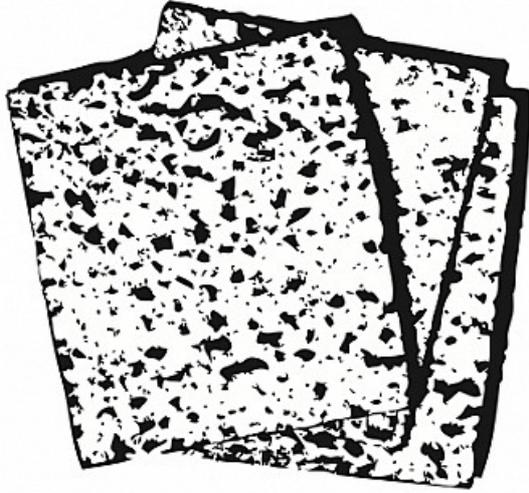
In unison we say:

Enjoying the Festival Meal As we enjoy our Festival meal, we pray that joy and contentment may soon be the lot of all God's children, in a world of peace and freedom.

Find & Eat the Afikomen!

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah



The Third Cup - Redemption

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

“I will redeem you with an outstretched arm,” Exodus 6:7

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בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam Borey P'ree Hagafen.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Cup of Wine For Elijah, A Cup of Water for Miriam

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

Fill the cups with wine; open door; all rise...

Elijah the Prophet

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

-Malachi 4:5

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah from Gilead, May he come quickly, In our days, with the Messiah son of David.

Eh-lee-ya-hu ha-na-vee, Eh-lee-ya-hu ha-tish-bee, Eh-lee-ya-hu ha-gi-la-dee, Bim-hey-ra Ya-vo e-ley-nu Im-ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid.

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah from Gilead, May he come quickly, In our days, with the Messiah son of David.

cup of wine for elijah

Let us open the door and invite Elijah to enter and join with us as we drink the wine of our freedom

Eliyahu Ha-Navi ("Elijah the Prophet" in English) was a biblical prophet who lived in the 9th century BCE during the reign of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel in the Kingdom of Israel. His prophetic fervor and fierce defense of God in the face of pagan influences in comparison with all other Israelite biblical prophets earned him the honor of being the 'guardian angel' of the Israelites and subsequently, the Jewish people. Because he was considered the strongest defender of God, he was said to be the forerunner of the Messiah. In the Book of Malachi, Malachi, who was the last of the Israelite prophets, states that Elijah would reappear just before the coming of the Messianic Age. (Malachi 3:1)

a cup of water for miriam

Tonight we have both our traditional cup filled with wine for Elijah the Prophet, and a second one filled with water, for Miriam the Prophetess (Exodus 15:20).

According to Rabbi Susan Schnur, Miriam is a central figure in the Passover drama. She stands guard loyally when her baby brother Moses is set floating on the Nile, and she arranges for a wet-nurse, Moses' own mother, who gets paid by Pharaoh's daughter for caretaking and living with her own child. Miriam leads the Israelites in singing and dancing (that most natural expression of religious joy) after they cross the Red Sea. And she dies by the kiss of God; the Angel of Death, we are told, has no power over her. After her death in the desert, the Israelites lose their most precious possession: water-and its then that Miriam's grieving brother strikes the rock.

The Midrash teaches us that the water, which disappeared at Miriam's death, came from a miraculous well. Created during twilight on the eve of the world's first Sabbath, God gave the well to Miriam because of her holiness, and it was intended to accompany the Israelites in the desert throughout the span of her life. "Miriam's Well," as it was called, not only quenched thirst; it also cured body and soul. Both Miriam and her well were spiritual oases in the desert bedrock sources of nurturance and healing

We raise our wine glasses and say collectively:

You abound in blessings, God, creator of the universe, Who sustains us with living water. May we, like the children of Israel leaving Egypt, be guarded and nurtured and kept alive in the wilderness to understand that the journey itself holds the promise of redemption.

Amen.

Miriam's Song

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

We sing "Miriam's Song," by Debbie Friedman in honor of Miriam and the Israelite women at the crossing at the Sea.

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 thread and every strand she crafted her delight. A woman touched with spirit, she dances toward the light.

[Chorus]

As 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 had planned. And Miriam raised her voice with song.
She sang with praise and might,

We've just lived through a miracle; we're going to dance tonight.

The message of Passover carries a sense of humbleness to the self, placing one's frame of mind in a more balanced proportion relative to one's immediate surroundings and to the universe as a whole. Self-centeredness can magnify one's view of the world to the point where one can only see oneself more than one can see one's environment and those in it. The Feast (and Feat) of Freedom, called Passover, is a shining example of a meaningful story showing God's intent to convey a psychological balance between the Israelite's self-concerns and the concerns of their enemies, the Egyptians.

Similarly today we recognize both our society's evolution in embracing the GLBT community and the challenges still to come. We strike a balance between celebrating our victories and recognizing the pain and hardships that we have endured. We thank our allies for their unending support and God for providing us with the strength to seek a just world.

[HALLEL](#)

The Fourth Cup - Cup of Praise

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

"I will take you as my own people." Exodus 6:6

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בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha'Olam Borey P'ree Hagafen.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

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For the Children of Israel went out with a high hand." Exodus 14:8

Shortened Translation of Echad Mi Yode'a (Who Knows One)

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

Who knows 13? I know 13. 13 are the attributes of God
12 are the Tribes of Israel
11 are the stars in Joseph's dream
10 are the commandments
9 are the months before birth
8 are the days to the brit milah
7 are the days in a week till Shabbat
6 are the orders of the Mishnah
5 are the books of the Torah
4 are our matriarchs
3 are our forefathers
2 are the tablets of the commandments
1 is Our God who is in the heavens and on earth.

Closing

Contributed by [JQ International](#)

Source: JQ International GLBT Haggadah

In every generation, we all should feel as though we ourselves had gone forth from Egypt, as it is written: "And you shall explain to your child on that day, it is because of what God did for me when, I, myself, went forth from Egypt." (Exodus 13:8)

We end our Passover Seder by saying in unison:

May slavery give way to freedom.

May hate give way to love.

May ignorance give way to wisdom.

May despair give way to hope.

Next year, at this time, may everyone, everywhere, be free!

Next year in Jerusalem!

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם!

L'Shanah HaBa'ah B'Yerushalayim!

