

# Earth Justice Haggadah

By Religious Action Center



## Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
Preparing for the Seder: Continuity with the Future	3
<b>KADESH</b>	<b>4</b>
The First Cup: Access to Clean Water	4
<b>URCHATZ</b>	<b>5</b>
Handwashing: The Importance of Water	5
<b>KARPAS</b>	<b>6</b>
Dipping Greens: If the Earth Could Speak	6
<b>YACHATZ</b>	<b>7</b>
Breaking the Middle Matzah: Seeking Restoration of a Broken World	7
<b>MAGGID - BEGINNING</b>	<b>8</b>
Telling the Story: Honi Ha-M'agel	8
<b>-- FOUR QUESTIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
The Four Questions	9
<b>-- FOUR CHILDREN</b>	<b>10</b>
The Four Children	10
<b>-- TEN PLAGUES</b>	<b>11</b>
Ten Plagues	11
<b>-- CUP #2 &amp; DAYENU</b>	<b>12</b>
Enough: What Constitutes Enough for You?	12
<b>RACHTZAH</b>	<b>13</b>
Handwashing: The Importance of Water	13
<b>MOTZI-MATZAH</b>	<b>14</b>
The Blessing Over the Meal & The Impact of Our Food Consumption	14
<b>MAROR</b>	<b>15</b>
Bitter Herbs: Where Does Our Food Come From?	15
<b>KOREICH</b>	<b>16</b>
Hillel Sandwich: Freedom and Comfort	16
<b>SHULCHAN OREICH</b>	<b>17</b>
An Invitation to a Plant-Based Meal	17
<b>BAREICH</b>	<b>18</b>
Birkat Hamazon: Grace After Meals	18
The Third Cup: Conservation	19
<b>HALLEL</b>	<b>20</b>
Singing Praise	20
The Fourth Cup: Mitigation	21
Elijah's Cup: Climate Action	22
<b>NIRTZAH</b>	<b>23</b>
Acceptance: It is Not Yet Enough	23
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>24</b>
Learn More & Take Action	24

## Preparing for the Seder: Continuity with the Future

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

### Continuity with the Future: Seders and Climate Change

*Joelle Novey, Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA) From the Shalom Center's "Purim to Pesach" Project*

"In every generation one must look upon herself as if she personally came out of Egypt."

On Pesach, we are told to feel as if we personally went free from Egypt, Mitzrayim, and the rituals of the seder help us cultivate that "memory" in many ways. We eat not only the unleavened bread that the Israelites ate in their haste, but also foods symbolic of their experience: bitter herbs, salt water "tears," and charoset "mortar" paste of fruit and nuts. We tell the story of the Exodus aloud, engaging the youngest and oldest at the table. At some seders, the participants "lash" each other with scallions, reenacting slavery, and come to the table with bags packed for a journey.

Jewish tradition has developed a suite of experiential rituals for ensuring that we personally engage with the Exodus in every generation.

Our generation of Jews, free from slavery, now faces a new burden along with the entire human family. 97% of scientists have concluded that burning fossil fuels is pouring heat-trapping climate pollution into the atmosphere, causing our Earth to warm.

One reason people have been slow in responding is that we're wired to focus on more immediate threats. The human brain is "a beautifully engineered get-out-of-the-way machine ... for things out of whose way it should right now get," wrote Daniel Gilbert in a Los Angeles Times article. Gilbert continues: "Just a few million years ago, the mammalian brain learned a new trick: to predict the timing and location of dangers before they actually happened ... But this innovation is in the early stages of development ..."

Tragically, writes Gilbert, human beings "haven't quite gotten the knack of treating the future like the present it will soon become."

Perhaps the Jewish knack for connecting with the past can help us. The Haggadah insists that we experience continuity with generations that experienced the Exodus in the past. The climate crisis asks us to feel a sense of personal connection and responsibility with generations in the future.

What if we used the seder not only to feel as if we personally were present in the Exodus from Egypt, but also to experience ourselves in the world our grandchildren will live in, in the climate we are damaging now?

If, in this generation, we looked upon ourselves as sitting side-by-side with those who'll gather around our families' seder tables in two or three generations, what would we be doing about climate change now?

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## The First Cup: Access to Clean Water

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

### Four Cups of Wine

Each Passover, we join together to drink four cups of wine to represent the promises of freedom that God made to the Israelites in Egypt. This Passover we will make four new promises: to protect, adapt, conserve and mitigate. As we welcome Elijah for a fifth cup of wine, we will also welcome a commitment to climate action, in order to promote justice and health for our earth and all of its inhabitants.

As we begin our Passover seder and prepare to drink this first cup of wine, we must remember that, while we drink wine, many in the United States and around the world do not have access to clean water. Clean water is not a privilege; it is a basic human right. One in ten people currently lack access to clean water. That's nearly 1 billion people in the world without clean, safe drinking water. Almost 3.5 million people die every year because of inadequate water supply. Sanitation, hygiene, and handwashing alone can reduce this number by 35%. From Flint, Michigan to California, from Israel to Haiti, communities are suffering without equal access. This need not be the case. Our first cup of wine is our first promise: We will work to ensure that everyone has access to clean water, free from pollution.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

{ GREENING TIP }

Give up bottled water. Buy yourself a reusable water bottle and inspire those around you, too. (TakeBackTheTap.org)

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Handwashing: The Importance of Water

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

As the water washes over our hands, we call to mind the promise we made when drinking our first cup of wine. Let us now focus on our individual water usage, and how we can make our water consumption more sustainable. Let us call to mind the importance of water to all life and be more aware of the amount of water we use daily.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Dipping Greens: If the Earth Could Speak

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

### If the Earth Could Speak, It Would Speak with Passion

*By Rabbi Warren Stone, Temple Emanuel, Kensington, MD*

As you dip the beauty of greens into the water of tears, please hear my cry. Can't you see that I am slowly dying? My forests are being clear cut, diminished. My diverse and wondrous creatures -- birds of the sky and beasts of the fields -- small and large are threatened with extinction in your lifetimes. My splendid, colorful floral and fauna are diminishing in kind. My tropical places are disappearing before us, and my oceans are warming. Don't you see that my climate is changing, bringing floods and heat, more extreme cycles of cold and warm, all affecting you and all our Creation? It doesn't have to be! You, all of you, can make a difference in simple ways. You, all of you, can help reverse this sorrowful trend.

May these waters into which you dip the greens become healing waters to soothe and restore.

As you dip, quietly make this promise:

Yes, I can help protect our wondrous natural places. Yes, I can try to use fewer of our precious resources and to replant and sustain more. I can do my part to protect our forests, our oceans and waters. I can work to protect the survival of creatures of all kinds. Yes, I will seek new forms of sustainable energy in my home and in my work, turning toward the sun, the wind, the waters. I make this promise to strive to live gently upon this Earth of ours for the good of all coming generations.

Before eating the Karpas, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, בן רא פרי האדמה.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri haadamah*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the earth.

{ GREENING TIP }

Cut down on the water and energy you use in the shower, set a 5 minute timer for your shower, and see how your normal shower length compares.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Breaking the Middle Matzah: Seeking Restoration of a Broken World

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

The breaking of the middle matzah is a reminder of the fractures and breaks in our environment and world. It is a time to think about the current state of the environment and the communities that are disproportionately impacted by the environmental issues. How are we impacted by the changing climate, and how have we contributed to the rise of sea level?

We take the larger half of the broken matzah to hide, and it becomes the *afikomen*. It is no longer a regular piece of matzah; the afikomen is the final hidden treasure that we need to find before the seder is complete.

We will search for the afikomen after the meal, but we will search for the afikomen throughout the evening in our minds. One reason that we physically look for the afikomen is to bring the two broken pieces of matzah back together and symbolize a move from brokenness toward healing. Simultaneously, in our minds, we will begin to uncover different aspects and responses to environmental injustice, bringing us closer to understanding how together, we can repair our environment and world.

{ GREENING TIP }

U.S. households use about 1/2 their energy on heating and cooling. Reduce your carbon footprint by lowering your heat and air conditioning.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Telling the Story: Honi Ha-M'agel

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

At this point in the seder we retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. As you retell the story using your Haggadah, you can use this companion as a resource to consider the environmental perspective on the following sections.

### Honi Ha-M'agel Sleeps for Seventy Years

A long time ago, there lived a wise man named Honi Ha-M'agel. One spring day, while on a walk, he noticed a very old man planting a carob tree. Honi asked, "Excuse me sir, but how long does it take for this tree to bear fruit?" The man replied, "In about seventy years, this tree will produce carobs good enough for eating." "Do you think that you will live seventy more years and be able to eat the carob fruit," asked Honi. The man replied, "Oh no! But I remember enjoying carob fruits as a young boy from trees planted by those who wanted to leave a gift for younger people. Just as my parents and grandparents planted trees for me, so I plant trees for my children and grandchildren."

Honi decided it was time to take a rest, and as he slept a rock formation surrounded him, and he slept for seventy years.

When he awoke, Honi noticed a man picking carobs from a tree nearby and asked, "Did you plant this tree?" "No," answered the man. "My grandfather planted it seventy years ago." "I can't believe it," Honi said to himself. "I must have been sleeping for seventy years!" "I'm going to plant a carob tree also," said the man. "See, I have a sapling all ready to plant. Someday my children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy carobs just as I do." Honi remembered the words of the old man. "Just as my parents and grandparents planted trees for me, so do I plant trees for my children and grandchildren."

*Adapted from the Babylonian Talmud (Ta'anit 23a)*

{ GREENING TIP }

Canfei Nesharim is website that has Torah text with contemporary issues and is a great resource to learn more about the Jewish connection to the environment and Passover: <http://canfeinesharim.org/pesach/>

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## The Four Questions

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

At this point in the seder, we traditionally call on our youngest member to pose the Four Questions. These questions remind us to reflect on the very process of questioning and remembering why it is we do things as we have done them for so long. We take stock of the status quo, of our daily habits and rituals. As our youngest leads us in this process of reflection, we must look back into ourselves to question our own habits.

In addition to asking ourselves why it is we always eat leavened bread, we may ask what happens when water shortages cause a global agricultural crisis, the very source of this bread? We must continue to ask ourselves about our habitual dependence on fossil fuels. We must remember all that we take for granted every single day: healthy food, reliable electricity, moderate weather, safe homes, beautiful landscapes, and unflooded shorelines.

We must remember, as we deviate from our everyday customs on this special night, that not every person has the ability to sustain what we consider to be norms every day; they may not have access to vegetables— bitter or otherwise— or have tables where they can sit or recline, nor a stable roof over their heads.

The importance of questioning is to always make anew the questions we ask. We ask the same questions but with renewed understanding. And we ask new questions, while recognizing that the way things have become is perhaps not the way things once were, not like the stories of Moses, or even the way things were 25 years ago when our global temperature had only increased by 1.4 degrees in the past 150 years. We recognize that the circumstances have changed, but we are still struggling to understand our place within the earth that we have impacted as a human race, and as Jews—for better or for worse. We take this time being together to remember how it is we will use our collective wisdom to bring light to the problems we face in this world, by asking the questions of our ancestors and understanding in this time what the answers mean.

### Why is this night different from all other nights?

*Ma nishtana halayla hazeh mikol haleylot*

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?

### [Why] on all other nights [do] we eat leavened bread and matza, [but] on this night, only matza?

*Shebechol haleylot anu ochlin chametz u matzah, halayla hazeh kulo matza?*

שְׁבַּח כָּל הַ לַיְלוֹת אֲנוּ אֵין כִּ לַיִן תִּמְצֵן מִצֶּהַת לֵלַיִת הַזֶּה כִּלְוֵן מַצָּה?

### [Why] on all other nights [do] we eat all kinds of vegetables, [but] on this night, bitter herbs?

*Shebchol haleylot anu ochlin she'ar yerakot, halayla hazeh maror?*

שְׁבַּח כָּל הַ לַיְלוֹת אֲנוּ אֵין כִּ לַיִן שְׁאֵר יִרְקוֹת, הַ לַיִת הַזֶּה מְרוֹר?

### [Why] on all other nights we do not dip even once, [but] on this night [we dip] twice?

*Shebechol haleylot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am echat, halayla hazeh sh'tei pe'amim?*

שְׁבַּח כָּל הַ לַיְלוֹת אֵין אֲנוּ מִטְבִּילִין אֶפִּילוֹן פַּעַם אַחַת, הַ לַיִת הַזֶּה שְׁתֵּי פְעָמִים?

### [Why] on all other nights [do] we eat sitting or reclining, [but] on this night, everyone reclines?

*Shebechol haleylot anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein mesubin, halayla hazeh kulanu mesubin?*

שְׁבַּח כָּל הַ לַיְלוֹת אֲנוּ אֵין כִּ לַיִן בֵּין יוֹשְׁבֵין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין, הַ לַיִת הַזֶּה כֻּלָּנוּ מְסֻבִּין?

For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).

For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).

## The Four Children

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

We often talk at the seder about the Four Children: the Wise, Wicked, Simple, and the One Who Does Not Know How to Ask. We see a little of ourselves in each child as we discuss their place in the seder and how we explain to them the story of Passover. Do we tell them that we were there together at Sinai, including them in our legacy, or do we exclude them and criticize their apathy?

This year, as we consider Passover's Four Children around the seder table, let us discover and discuss the tension between our Jewish community's obligation to "till and tend" the earth as God told humankind in the Garden of Eden, and the spectrum of beliefs that many may hold about climate change.

### The Wise Child:

This child knows that climate change is real and that they must act to combat its effects. The Wise Child has read that global temperatures and sea levels are rising every year, that more species are becoming endangered, and that more communities are experiencing extreme weather events and decreased crop viability. The Wise Child sees all this and is motivated to combat climate change in any way they can.

### The Wicked Child:

The Wicked Child has read about climate change and is aware that scientists predict a whole range of negative effects if we don't reduce global carbon emissions. But the Wicked Child doesn't think the issues caused by climate change apply to them. They believe climate change will only affect the poor and the vulnerable in places they will never visit. They remain unconcerned.

### The Simple Child:

The Simple Child is overwhelmed by the idea that humankind could be radically altering the entire face of the earth. They don't believe it's possible that scientific predictions are accurate. This child simply ignores the evidence that the problem is real at all.

### The One Who Does Not Know How to Ask:

This child is much more like The Wise Child than we may typically imagine. The One Who Does Not Know How to Ask has also read about climate change and knows that environmental degradation and the effects on the global population are a real and present threat. Unlike The Wise Child and much more like the Simple Child, this child is overwhelmed. How is this possible? This child might ask, How can I, alone, prevent this global catastrophe?

Just as we are like and unlike each of the Four Children of the Passover seder that we discuss every year, we each have in us elements of the Four Children of climate change. We all have some awareness that climate change is an issue, but may be able to face its gravity differently, and may or may not acknowledge to ourselves the relationship between our action and carbon emissions.

There is an answer for each of these children. We can look to The Wise Child and ask them to be a leader in their community and congregation, spearheading environmental initiatives like recycling, composting, and energy efficiency. We can tell the The One Who Does Not Know How to Ask to follow the Wise Child and learn about work they can do in their synagogue or even their home and the small changes they can make in their life like changing their light bulbs to LEDs or CFLs or cooking at home to reduce their personal emissions. To the Wicked Child and to the Simple Child, we have to show the growing body of evidence that climate change is real and is affecting not just the poorest and vulnerable among us, but will reverberate through all communities as its impacts grow.

Perhaps, over the course of this Passover, as we move past this seder table, we can consider these Four Children as we encounter them in our lives and work together, both to acknowledge that climate change is real and learn how to prevent the worst predicted effects.

### { GREENING TIP }

Switch your light bulbs to LEDs and CFLs to reduce your energy consumption.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Ten Plagues

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

We dip our finger in our wine and place one drop on our napkin for each plague, to diminish our joy with the memory of the sorrow of our enemies. This year, as we remember the plagues cast upon the Egyptians, we also remember 10 modern plagues, that have befallen the entire human race. We take one drop out of our cup of wine for each plague, because our joy is diminished as humankind suffers.

### From the Religious Action Center's "10 Environmental Plagues"

**Climate Change** – Burning fossil fuels releases greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, raising our global temperature, increasing the risk of coastal flooding, and threatening nearly every part of our lives.

**Deforestation** – Trees are our most important natural resource, yet a forest area the size of 20 football fields is lost every minute to paper production.

**Water Pollution** – The United States dumps billions of tons of chemicals into our water every single day, causing health problems for millions of Americans.

**Lead Poisoning** – Lead enters our ecosystem through industrial air pollution, corroded piping, and faulty irrigation practices. Without intervention, lead can cause kidney problems and developmental disorders in children and can lead to stillbirths and miscarriages in pregnant women.

**Habitat Destruction** – The leading threats to the diversity of species in the United States are habitat destruction and degradation. In fact, 80% of the coastline in the lower 48 states has been developed, thus increasing the rate of extinction to 1000 times the background rate.

**Mountaintop Removal** – Mountaintop removal strip mining is the practice of blasting off the tops of mountains in order to mine coal deposits underneath. When it rains the residue from these mountains form sludge causing huge mudslides in West Virginia and polluting drinking water.

**Radiation Poisoning** – Each year countless numbers of Americans are exposed to higher than normal levels of radiation due to nuclear waste and improper x-ray technology. Even small levels of exposure can cause cancer and immune system malfunctions.

**Factory Farms** – According to the EPA, waste from hogs, chicken, and cattle has polluted 35,000 miles of rivers in 22 states and contaminated water in 17 states. Additionally, factory farms do not treat God's creatures with the respect that Judaism demands that they receive.

**Over-fishing** – Our current fishing practices are decimating fish populations, throwing off natural food chains and allowing invasive species like algae to bloom. In fact recent studies have shown that if current fishing practices continue all fish stocks could collapse in 50 years.

**Acid Rain** – Acid rain is caused when human chemicals like sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) mix with water vapor in the earth's atmosphere and return as precipitation, thereby destroying forests, poisoning wildlife, and affecting human health.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Enough: What Constitutes Enough for You?

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

*From COEJL's "Preparing for Passover: Readings for the Seder Table" Stewart Vile Tahl, COEJL*

One of Passover's lessons is learned to distinguish between more and enough. Dayenu means "it would have been enough for us." Often, enjoying more wealth and comfort stimulates our desire for more – more attention, more comforts, more money, more, and more, and more. Passover and the Haggadah teach us to be mindful of what our real needs are, of what constitutes "enough."

What constitutes enough for you? What material objects or consumptive activities could you do without?

Make up your own verses to the Dayenu tune, stating what would be enough and what can be done without.

For example: If we had enough clothes for comfort and we didn't have such full closets – Dayenu If we ate meat only on special occasions and we ate vegetarian most of the time – Dayenu If we biked or walked to our daily destinations and we didn't own private automobiles – Dayenu If we purchased from bulk containers and we didn't have disposable packaging – Dayenu If our stuff was built to last and we rarely threw anything away – Dayenu And your own verses...

### The Second Cup: Climate Change Adaption

Our climate is changing at an accelerating rate. As global sea levels, temperatures, and the frequency of extreme weather events rise, our national and international community must join together to help the international community adapt. Adapting means recognizing that our disrupted climate has impacts on daily life for people around the world. Our second cup of wine is our second promise: We will provide the communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change with the information and resources necessary to adapt. Forests are natural buffers for climate change, so protecting forests are an important component of adaptation.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen* Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro). For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Handwashing: The Importance of Water

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

After washing our hands for the second time, and calling to mind the importance of water, we say:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו, וצונו על נטילת ידים.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al nitilat yadayim.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and Comanded Us to Wash Our Hands

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## The Blessing Over the Meal & The Impact of Our Food Consumption

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהי הינון מלך העולם, הנותן לנו לחם מן הארץ.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, hamotzi lechem min haaretz*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

As we bless the matzah we thank God for bringing forth bread from the earth and commanding us to eat matzah. Although we verbally thank God for giving us the tools to sustain ourselves, we must also show our gratitude with action. Let us work to show full appreciation and understanding of the environmental and human impacts of our food consumption. Furthermore, let us work to ensure that sustainable food is accessible to everyone.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהי הינון מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו ב מצוותיו, וצונו על אכילת מצה.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and ordained that we should eat unleavened bread.

{ GREENING TIP }

Try purchasing locally-grown food. Consider going to the farmers' market or joining a community-supported agriculture (CSA) group to receive fresh, local produce. Find a CSA near you: [LocalHarvest.org](#)

For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](#).

For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](#).

## Bitter Herbs: Where Does Our Food Come From?

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

The bitter herbs serve to remind us of how the Egyptians embittered the lives of the Israelites in servitude. When we eat the bitter herbs, we share in that bitterness of oppression. We must remember that slavery still exists all across the globe. When you go to the grocery store, where does your food come from? Who picked the sugar cane for your cookie,

or the coffee bean for your morning coffee? We are reminded that people still face the bitterness of oppression, in many forms.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אל הינו מלך העולם, א שר קדשנו ב מ צוֹתֵינוּ, ו צוֹנוֹ עַל אֲכִילַת מַרוֹר.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and ordained that we should eat bitter herbs.

{ GREENING TIP } Start a garden in your community and use the produce for synagogue gatherings or donate it to your local food pantry or soup kitchen.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro). For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Hillel Sandwich: Freedom and Comfort

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

The great sage Hillel provided us with the tradition of constructing the Hillel sandwich, combining the bitterness of the maror with the sweetness of the charoset between the fortitude of the two pieces of matzah—the symbol of freedom. Through this ritual, we think about mortar and brick. We think of the Israelites traveling through the desert with no homes, no place to land and build up their strong communities, and only the matzah as a reminder of their freedom. It is not until they came to the biblical Promised Land that they experienced the sweetness of their redemption.

We sit tonight in a place of both freedom and comfort, while we remember the bitterness of the hardships of our ancestors. But what about those who cannot foresee their own redemption from the impending impacts of climate change, those who literally do not have the infrastructure that the mortar and brick of redemption affords? There are people all over the world on the edges of shorelines which are slowly slipping away, whose homes cannot withstand the rising waters and violent winds of extreme weather caused by climate change. Already over 22 million people a year are being displaced from their homes due to natural disasters (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2014).

Tonight, as we eat this sandwich, let us remember the privilege of our infrastructure and the freedom and comfort that our homes provide us. The bitterness of the salty ocean waters continues to destroy many people's homes, for many a symbol of sweetness and freedom. Without proper adaptation and mitigation, people will continue to lose their homes. They will continue to be wandering, without a strong community or place they can call home.

{ GREENING TIP }

The world's poor are being hit hardest by climate change. Learn more: ([ActionAidUSA.org](#) > What We Do > Climate Change)

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](#).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](#).*

## An Invitation to a Plant-Based Meal

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

**“An Invitation to a Plant-Based Meal”** *Adam Gorod, Jewish Veg. D.C.*

Our food choices during the Exodus were so much simpler. We could subsist on manna alone. Free of animal products, manna was a bread from heaven with a taste like coriander seed. Today the options—even during Passover—are more varied. Any number of Kosher-for-Passover items sit in the curated displays of many supermarkets at the arrival of spring. These options, however, make one fact unavoidable: we are now, at all seasons, responsible for our dietary choices. Even as we reflect on our redemption from slavery, we must consider whether we have taken all of the steps we can possibly take in this day and age to liberate ourselves from the lure of destructive eating habits.

Every day, we decide what foods to consume. We decide whether to eat plant-based foods that have significant benefits for the wellbeing of our health, the planet, other people, and animals. We choose whether to promote environmental sustainability by saving rain forests, protecting wildlife habitats and marine ecosystems, alleviating water shortages and pollution, and reducing antibiotic, growth hormone, and chemical use. We choose whether to minimize world hunger and the dangers confronted by slaughterhouse workers. We choose whether to prevent the abuse, exploitation, and killing of land and sea animals. Passover is a time to appreciate the choices that freedom allows us to make. Each of us should, therefore, welcome this annual opportunity to ensure that our current food choices are in accord with the values we want to embrace.

{ GREENING TIP } Reduce your food waste by planning well and eating leftovers. Consider composting what's left. Learn about composters ([bit.ly/ how2compost](http://bit.ly/how2compost)), or see if there are local companies that will pick your table scraps up for composting.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro). For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Birkat Hamazon: Grace After Meals

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

After the meal we recite this blessing to thank God for the food we have eaten.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו אתה ה'.

*Baruch atah Adonai, hazan et hakol.*

We praise You, O God, Source of food for all who live.

{ GREENING TIP }

The average person uses 350-500 plastic bags per year. Reduced your waste by switching to reusable bags.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## The Third Cup: Conservation

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

Jewish tradition teaches us that “even those things that you regard as completely superfluous to Creation – such as fleas, gnats and flies – even they were included in Creation; and God’s purpose is carried through everything” (Midrash Genesis Rabbah 10:7). Today, we continue to be entrusted with protecting all of the creatures that share our earth and the natural resources of our earth.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p’ri hagafen*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

{ GREENING TIP }

What impact are you having on the climate? Calculate your footprint today: [CoolClimate.Berkeley.edu/calculator](http://CoolClimate.Berkeley.edu/calculator)

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

[HALLEL](#)

## Singing Praise

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אֵ שֶׁר קָדְשׁ שָׁנָן בְּ מִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְצִוִּינוּ לְקַרְאֲךָ אֶת הַהַלֵּל.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu likro et haHallel.*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments and ordained that we should read the Hallel.

### Psalm 135

הוֹדִין לִיקוּחַ כִּי-טוֹב; כִּי לַעַן לַפֶּה סְדוּ

*Hodu l'Adonai ki tov: ki l'olam chasdo.*

Praise Adonai, for Adonai is good, God's steadfast love is eternal.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

[HALLEL](#)

## The Fourth Cup: Mitigation

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

There is hope for the future of our planet, for our children and our children's children, to inherit a healthy, habitable earth. We are already seeing the first stirrings of a green economy. Renewable energy sources like solar and wind power are beginning to take center stage. Climate change is not unstoppable or unsolvable, we have solutions at our fingertips. Our fourth cup of wine is our fourth promise: We will, as individuals, families, and communities begin to transition to renewable energy sources.

Together, we recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, borei p'ri hagafen*

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Elijah's Cup: Climate Action

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

For the majority of the seder, the focus is to remember, retell, discuss, and experience history. As we pour this fifth and final glass of wine, our focus changes from the past to the future. This final cup is only for Elijah. We don't share in this ceremonious final cup of wine with the prophet Elijah, because our history is not yet complete. We still have a chance to write our future. The final cup represents a change in the focus of the seder, from our history to our hopes. As we open the door for Elijah, our guest, we open the door for collaboration and new possibilities as we work to solve environmental injustice. This open door is an opportunity, for every individual to make a commitment this year to take part in writing our communal environmental future.

Actions you can take:

1. **Advocacy** - Call, email, or visit your Members of Congress. You are the constituent, they want to hear from you. Share with them why this particular issues is important to you.
2. **Education** - Host an environmental film screening, propose reading an environmental related book for a book club.
3. **Engagement** - Find a local environmental organization or campaign in your community and get involved.
4. **Greening** - Be more conscious about the energy and water you use, and try to reduce it.
5. **Community** - Meet the members of your community living in areas that are environmentally unsafe, hear their story, and get involved in solution building by engaging in greening projects and advocacy efforts.

What commitment can you make to take environmental action in this coming year? Share with the community around you as you welcome in Elijah.

Together, we sing:

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנְּבִיאַ, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי, בְּמַהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֵלֵינוּ, עַם מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד.

*Eliyahu haNavi, Eliyahu haTishbi, Eliyahu Eliyahu, Eliyahu haGiladi, Bimheirah v'yameinu, Yavo eileinu, Im mashiach ben David*

May Elijah the Prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah of Gilead, quickly in our day come to us heralding redemption

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Acceptance: It is Not Yet Enough

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

*Rabbi Fred Scherlinder-Dobb, Adat Shalom Bethesda, MD*

"Chasal siddur Pesach, the ritual is completed." Yet of course, the work of liberation – for ourselves, for those who are marginalized, for our own descendants, for Earth – is anything but over. We end the seder not only with songs, but on an unresolved note, aware that we're never done even as we wrap up our ritual with conviction. Though today Israel is a manageable (if high-cost and high-carbon) plane ride away, generations of diaspora Jews with zero chance of seeing the Holy Land still fervently chanted " *Bashanah Ha'ba'ah B'Y'rushalayim*, Next Year in Jerusalem." This statement is a near-messianic expression of hope and faith.

We can't afford to pray and hope alone, of course; we need to work, diligently, to make the world just a little more ready for redemption, for sustainability. Let us declare all we've done so far *dayenu*, enough for us. And for all that must yet be done, together, let us say " *od LO dayenu*, it's not yet enough." Let us dream of that far-off mythic day when we are "done" with the work of Creation care: when the climate is stabilized, pollution is ended, environmental justice is established, and everyone has become a *shomer Adamah*, guardian of the Earth. Tonight, let us celebrate the work we've done so far in that direction, and declare it "good," and "done."

Tomorrow, let's pick up where all previous efforts have left off, and bring our world one more small step towards redemption. Together.

*Moadim l'simcha*, a blessing upon each other for joyous sacred seasons, whose lessons reverberate throughout our weeks, years, and lifetimes...

*For more information on the environmental justice, please visit [rac.org/enviro](http://rac.org/enviro).*

*For all Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism resources, please visit [rac.org/Passover](http://rac.org/Passover).*

## Learn More & Take Action

Contributed by [Religious Action Center](#)

Source: Earth Justice Seder

[Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life – COEJL.org](#)

[Interfaith Power and Light – gwIPL.org](#)

[Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism- rac.org/environment](#)

### RECOMMENDED HAGGADOT

#### **Sharing the Journey: The Haggadah for the Contemporary Family**

Edited by Alan Yoffie

Illustrations by Mark Podwal

(Also available through iTunes)

#### **The New Union Haggadah, Revised Edition**

Rabbi Howard A. Berman, Consulting Editor

Rabbi Benjamin Zeidman, Developmental Editor

(Also available through iTunes or Kindle)

#### **A Passover Haggadah, Second Revised Edition**

Edited by Rabbi Herbert Bronstein

Illustrated by Leonard Baskin

#### **The Open Door: A Passover Haggadah**

Edited by Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell

Art by Ruth Weisberg

#### **A Children's Haggadah**

Text by Rabbi Howard Bogot and Rabbi Robert Orkand

Illustrated and Designed by Devis Grebu

All available from CCAR Press [ccarpress.org](#)

### Contributors:

Adam Joel Gorod is affiliated with Jewish Veg Washington, D.C., a volunteer group committed to furthering our mission to advocate a plant-based diet as one of Judaism's highest ideals. [www.jewishveg.org/](#)

Joelle Novey directs Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA), one of forty Interfaith Power & Light groups working with congregations across the country to form a religious response to climate change: [www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/state](#).

Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb is the Rabbi at Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda, Maryland. He serves at the chair of the national board of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, as Immediate Past Chair of Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light, and on the board of the Shalom Center.

Rabbi Warren Stone has served as rabbi of Temple Emanuel in Kensington, MD since 1988. Rabbi Stone serves as Co-Chair of the National Religion Coalition on Creation Care and founding chair of the Central Conference of American Rabbis' Committee on the Environment. Rabbi Stone represented many national Jewish organizations as a UN delegate at the Conference on Climate Change in Kyoto, Japan in 1997 and in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2009, where he blew the Shofar and led interfaith programs and prayer vigils.

Translations from *Sharing the Journey: The Haggadah for the Contemporary Family* copyright (c) 2012 by the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Used by permission of Central Conference of American Rabbis. All rights reserved. Not to be re-distributed, sold or copied without express written permission.

