

Why We Gather

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Passover celebrates the redemption of the Jews from enslavement in Egypt. This traditional story of defiance against brutality and slavery has inspired countless men and women to achieve freedom in our own times.

As the haggadah says, “B’khol dor v’dor chayav adam lirot et atzmo k’ilu hu yatza mi’Mitzrayim,” – “from generation to generation, each of us is obligated to see ourselves as though we personally had just been freed from slavery.” We must remember the past to understand today and to protect our tomorrows.

Therefore, in each generation and each year, we retell the story of the exodus to our children and to our grandchildren, in order that they, too, will understand the pain of slavery and the value of freedom.

Our story is the story of all people who have ever been in bondage, and this story compels us to work toward freedom for those who remain physically, spiritually, or economically enslaved.ⁱ

Let us therefore celebrate our freedom and strengthen ourselves to join the fight against injustice wherever it exists. In the words of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.”ⁱⁱ

Please keep Dr. King’s words in mind as we go throughout our Seder. Our theme for the night is justice for all, and we will reflect on the different ways in which we can work for a more just city.