

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](#).