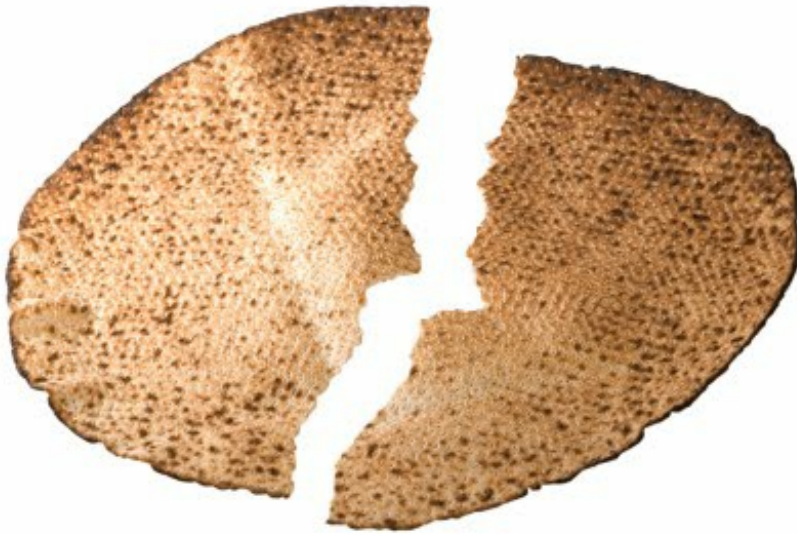


Breaking

Contributed by [Jessica Tanenhaus](#)

Source: Tanenhaus Haggadah



We are told physically to break one of the elements of our Passover Seder, the middle *matzah*. In this imperfect world, joy cannot come without sorrow, life cannot be without death. We can view *Yachatz*, the breaking, as symbolic of all the breakings that characterize the most significant experiences of our lives: birth of a child, going to school, moving out, falling in love and losing love, marrying and leaving our solitary life, divorces, deaths, changing jobs. The list goes on and on, and so do our lives, fractured like a beautiful and intricate mosaic, only truly visible when you can stand back and see the whole.

Half of the Matzah becomes the *Afikomen*, and is hidden away to be shared later, as in earlier Passovers, the offering at the temple would be shared out among the Jews. We do share, in the joys and sorrows and condition of others. Our hope of freedom ultimately depends on the deliverance from bondage of all people, everywhere. For the sake of our redemption, we say together the ancient words which join us together with all who are in need:

הא לחמא עניא די אכלו אבהתנא בארעא דמצרים. כל דכפין ייתי ויכל. כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח. השתא הכא. לשנה הבאה בארעא דישראל. השתא עבדי. לשנה הבאה בני חורין

Ha lachma anya di achalu avahatana b'ara d'Mitzrayim. Kal dichfin yeitei v'yeichul. Kal ditzrich yeitei v'yifsach. Hashata hacha, l'shanah haba'ah b'ara d'Yisrael. Hashata avdei. L'shana haba'ah b'nei chorin.

This is the bread of affliction, which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.

Let all who are hungry come and eat.

Let all who are in need come and share the hope of Passover.

As we celebrate here, we join with our people everywhere.

This year we are here: Next year, in the land of Israel.

This year we are slaves: Next year may we all be free.

This statement of welcoming into the Passover Seder is written in Aramaic, not Hebrew. According to Jewish legend, Aramaic is the one language angels do not understand. Perhaps the *Ha Lachma* is written in Aramaic to remind us of those who do not feel that they can call on the angels for help. It is left to us, who know the language of the poor, for we were poor in the land of Egypt, to reach them, to call them to join our celebration of freedom and sustenance for all.

