

Elijah

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Source:

There is an extra cup of wine at the table. This is the cup for Elijah. It is said that Elijah is the champion of the oppressed. He brings hope, cheer, and relief to the downtrodden. There is a legend that Elijah visits every Seder to wish everyone a year of peace and freedom. He is the harbinger of good tidings and peace. He will foretell the coming of the Messiah.

As we open the door for Elijah, we recognize that Passover is a night for openness. We open our doors to visitors, our minds to learning, and personal growth, and our hearts to those who are less fortunate.

We set a cup for Elijah as we open our front door to greet our honored guest and invite him to join our seder. We pray that he will return to us bringing a time of peace and freedom. May Elijah the Prophet come to us quickly and in our day, bringing the time of the Messiah.

It is customary to fill a cup of wine for the prophet Elijah, who in messianic literature will announce the coming of the messiah so we open the door for him to enter and usher in an age of peace and harmony.

At our seder we have two cups at the center. One is for Elijah, and the other for Miriam. We fill Miriam's cup with water, to remember the well that followed Miriam through the desert after crossing the Red Sea and keeping the Israelites from dying of thirst. Miriam represents the long history of women's contributions to Judaism and to the world that are often overshadowed or silenced in favor of the stories of men. There are many midrashic examples of women's leadership, from the women marching forward into the Red Sea to make the waters part to the women refusing to take part in the creation of the golden calf. These are stories that don't make it into the final editing of the Bible, but are added later as the rabbis felt them to be important.

In our lives we seek to bring forward those stories of women's leadership. These are the stories that are not told as often, but as essential to histories. We must uncover, listen to, and reflect on these often untold stories.

Let Miriam stand as the prophet of equality and freedom for all.