

4. Bareich (Grace after Meals)

Contributed by [Moishe House London](#)

Source:

Here we drink the '3rd' (actually 2nd in reverse seder) cup of wine.

Elijah and Miriam's Cup:

We'll also pour two more cups of wine for the prophets Elijah and Miriam, and open the door for them. In the next page we'll look at a Pardes section on Elijah. Tonight, we are also considering the prophet Miriam. Miriam prophesied "My mother is destined to give birth to a son who will save Israel". Miriam's mother later gave birth to Moishe (Moishe House, woo!).

A Midrash teaches us that a miraculous well accompanied the Hebrews throughout their journey in the desert, providing them with water. This well was given by God to Miriam, Moses's sister, the prophetess, to honor her bravery and devotion to the Jewish people. Both Miriam and her well were spiritual oases in the desert, sources of sustenance and healing. Her words of comfort gave the Hebrews the faith and confidence to overcome the hardships of the Exodus.

We fill Miriam's cup with water to honor her role in ensuring the survival of the Jewish people. Like Miriam, Jewish women in all generations have been essential for the continuity of our people. As keepers of traditions in the home, women passed down songs and stories, rituals and recipes, from mother to daughter, from generation to generation.

We place Miriam's cup on our Seder table to honor the important role of Jewish women in our tradition and history, whose stories have been too sparingly told.

Miriam's life is a foil to the life of Elijah. Elijah was a hermit, a visionary, and prophet, often very critical of the Jewish people, and focused on the world to come. Miriam lived among her people in the desert, constantly encouraging them throughout their long journey. Elijah's cup is a symbol of future messianic redemption, while Miriam's cup is a symbol of hope and renewal in the present. Both are important: we need both Elijah's cup and Miriam's cup at our Seder table.

During Bareich in a conventionally ordered seder, we say thanks for the food we just ate. In this reverse seder, we'll now go around the room and say something we are grateful for - be it the food we are about to eat, or something else in life.