

## IDENTITY

# Revenge of Dinah: Karpas

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

“Until we are all free, we are none of us free”- Emma Lazarus, American Jewish Poet

Instead of the cleansing current of the Nile, we are now confronted with a slough of salty tears and scathing sweat. To whom do these stinging waters belong? Clear beads swelling on eyelashes, suddenly drooping, dropping, splashing skin with an invisible heaviness. Down the cheek, its damp path slowly drying, leaving only a dust of salt. **These tears shall not be forgotten.** Thousands of years ago, a tenor cry reverberated as whips cracked on the backs of enslaved Israelites; thousands of years later, the sound of the whip still echoes in the hearts of countless people. While our ancestors were liberated from ancient Egypt, who has yet to be free today? **What now enslaves our sisters and brothers and gender non-binary siblings?**

Like a spoonful of salt dissolved in clear water, micro-aggressions do not inflict physical pain, and they remain unseen to the uncaring eye. The single grain of salt is insignificant, unimportant, just a joke. But beyond the still surface is a collecting mound of salt which, once tasted, cannot be forgotten. Clear water is not always pure, and a smiling person is sometimes a hidden victim. Behind that shallow smile is the pain inflicted by that single grain of salt on a burning wound. As salt hits our tongues, we remember the pains of slaves in ancient times and today, but also consume it. **We have the power to overcome, to grow.**

On our Seder plate lies what appears to be a mundane piece of broccoli. Yet the simplicity of a vegetable reminds us that our potential to make change is not impossible to attain. Rather, the tree of life, our prospective growth, lies right in front of us.

*Break off a branch of broccoli and dip it into the salt water twice. Say a blessing while leaning into discomfort, perhaps into the edge of your chair or into the shoulder of your peers. (Remember, consent!) If something doesn't sit right with you tonight, if you feel uncomfortable at any moment, if you want to object—that is when to think more, engage in conversation, and seek to stretch. Note those moments, and continue to explore them after this Seder. Together, we say the following blessing,*

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה**

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hey-nu Me-lech ha-o-lam, Bo-rey pe-ri ha-a-da-mah.

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.