

We remember

Contributed by [Bruce Saran](#)

Source:

We remember לזכור

An empty seat at our table.

Once again, during this year's Seders, we celebrate our holiday of liberation with reservation. Even as we revel in our freedom as Jews in the modern world, the legacy of hatred, anti-Semitism and open violence still afflicts our people. This Anti-Semitism is wrapped in historical fiction and spreads close-minded and virulent hatred repackaged as "a new truth" that continuously assaults our children, college students and Jewish communities around the world. This vile hatred has evolved to become a justification to silence our voices and to brutalize and kill Jews. Our brothers and sisters in Israel, France, Belgium, Holland, Argentina, Turkey, North Africa, Asia, Russia, **in America, in nearly every country where the Diaspora has dispersed us** share this burden. We set an empty chair at our Seder table, an empty place to remind us of those families who will have empty chairs at their tables for those family members, missing husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, who were lost to this hatred and violence. And for the Jewish victims of the Tree of Life / Light of Blessing Synagogue and all those who were murdered before Pittsburgh, in Argentina, France, Turkey, Morocco, Lybia, Tunisia, India-simply because they were Jewish.

This year, in particular, we must rise to the challenge to reclaim our symbols, remember our losses and to reaffirm our people-the Jewish People and a true peace. They seek to deny our existence and spread hate. We must fight this by declaring our heritage and serving as a people, as it is written, "a light to the world." We also reaffirm our commitment to Israel, the one true refuge in a history of violence and expulsion as the only country whose existence was founded to protect Jews.

We leave an empty seat in their memory.

We also mourn the thousands killed in the pogroms, expulsions and riots before and after the Shoah, across the world. We also remember another 1,538 Jews killed in Israel since 1994, when the Arabs signed the Oslo Peace Accords and established Arab governed areas in Judea, Samaria and Gaza only to respond with continued violence, lies and a gospel of hatred.

We leave an empty seat and remember all of these innocent victims.

May their memory be for a blessing.

לזכור