

haggadah for the liberated lamb

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Haggadah for the Liberated Lamb: bilingual, illustrated, 140 pages

"A vegetarian haggadah that celebrates compassion for all creatures."

This Haggadah is a saga about creation and the emergence of the Jews. Much of the text is traditional, except for passages that celebrate the covenantal relationship the animal enjoyed in the Bible. Included in prayers and blessings in Torah, we also include the animal in a ritual remembrance. Vegetarianism is a pledge to take creaturely life seriously. Meat is never included in the description of diet in the Bible, which is confined to agricultural products, whose constantly recurring expression is "grain and wine and oil." (Deut. 11:14) or the seven agricultural products enumerated in Deut 8:8. The blessing Isaiah bestows on the virtuous is "You shall eat the good things of the earth." Among the visions in Isaiah is the need for reconciliation between the natural and the historical human. Vegetarianism is a step towards that reconciliation.

We say with the psalmist:

Yours is the earth

And all that dwell therein

Teach us to walk in this wisdom

Mesillath Yesharim

In the path of the Just

Teach us to know Your greatness by Your creatures:

That Your tender mercy is upon them all

Thus, in place of a shank bone on this seder table, in addition to bitter herbs, greens and charoset, we place a plate of olives, grapes, and unfermented barley, based on Deut. 24: 19-15, in which we are commanded to leave the second shaking of the olive trees and the grape vines for the poor and not to muzzle the ox who treads out the wheat in the fields. We call these the "mitzvot of compassion for oppressed creatures." The seder is concluded when we open the door to our homes, lift the cup of Elijah and invite blessing on the earth.

This night is different because on this night we eat our ancient meal of herbs, seeds, and fruits of the earth as we ate it in

Eden; we eat matzoh which we ate in the desert as we fled slavery and established the festival of freedom.