

TRADITIONAL

Kadesh

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Source: Downtown Seder (modified)

Kadesh

Here we are, ready to perform the mitzvah of the first cup of wine and to dedicate this whole evening "to telling the story of miracles and wonders that were performed by our ancestors in Egypt on the night of the 15th of the month of *Nisan*, more than 3200 years ago. This recalls God's promise of redemption to the people of Israel, as it says, "Remember the day of your Exodus from Egypt" (Exodus 13:3).

Fill the first cup of wine

We are gathered here tonight to affirm our continuity with the generations of Jews who kept alive the vision of freedom in the Passover story. For thousands of years, Jews have affirmed that by participating in the Passover Seder. We not only remember the Exodus, but actually relive it, bringing its transformative power into our own lives.

The Hebrew word for Egypt, *Mitzrayim*, means "narrow straits." Traditionally, *Mitzrayim* has been understood to mean a spiritual state, the "narrow place," a place of confusion, fragmentation, and spiritual disconnection. The way out of *Mitzrayim* is through *chesed*, through attempting to understand those who seem so different from us and through translating our responsibility to others into genuine concern and meaningful acts on their behalf.

Drink the first cup of wine.