

## CHILDREN

# Parsley, Sages, Saltwater and Time

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Source: Original

We dip a green vegetable, often parsley, into saltwater and recite the blessing for green foods that grow in the ground.

Why? The traditional reason, according to the Sages of the ages, is to taste the salty tears of slavery.

But is there more?

Of course! Isn't there always?

1. Passover is the Festival of spring and the rebirth of nature after the dormancy of winter. New green growth returns to the fields, replacing the brown of winter. The parsley we dip tonight is a tasteful reminder of our dependence on the ability of the earth to regenerate the food that enables all life - human and animal - to exist. The saltwater symbolizes the origin of all life in the sea, and the interdependence of ocean and land in the cycle of fertility.

2. The parsley also historically represents the hyssop which was dipped into the salty (saline) blood of a lamb to mark the door posts of the Israelites homes in Egypt on that fateful night of the 10th plague and the ensuing exodus.

The custom of dipping one food into another or into some sauce or condiment is usually characteristic of an appetizer or prelude to something more substantial to follow.

Symbolism is wonderful, but it doesn't fill a hungry stomach. It is truly just a prelude - to action - to remind us as we feast for freedom how many still fast for lack of food and perish for want of sufficient nourishment.

As we observe this time-honored Seder tradition, let it sensitize us to our obligation as partners with God to continue to strive to make this a more just and perfect world.

Tonight, especially, when we remember from where we came and where we are today, let us renew our commitment to helping all who hunger find stable, sustainable sources of sustenance in this world, just as God renews nature every spring.