

A PASSOVER HAGGADAH

THE KADESH

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE DAY

ONE: Now in the presence of loved ones and friends, before us the emblems of festive rejoicing, we gather for our sacred celebration. With the household of Israel, our elders and young ones, linking and bonding the past with the future, we heed once again the divine call to service. Living our story that is told for all peoples, whose shining conclusion is yet to unfold, we gather to observe the Passover, as it is written.

ALL: You shall keep the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of Egypt. You shall observe this day throughout the generations as a practice for all times.

ONE: We assemble in fulfillment of the mitzvah:

ALL: Remember the day on which you went forth from Egypt, from the house of bondage, and how God freed you with a mighty hand.

LIGHTING THE FESTIVAL CANDLES

ALL: Happy are those of steadfast faith who still can bless the light of candles shining in the darkness Rejoice, O Earth, in those who keep the way, for there is still song for them within you.

ONE: In praising God we say that all life is sacred.

In kindling festive lights, we preserve life's sanctity.

With every holy light we kindle, the world is brightened to a higher harmony.

(I LIGHT THE CANDLES AS WE RECITE THE BLESSING)

ALL: We praise You, God, majestic sovereign of all life, who hallows our lives with commandments and bids us kindle festive holy light.

KOS KIDDUSH

THE FIRST CUP – THE CUP OF SANCTIFICATION

ONE: Our story tells that in diverse ways, with different words, God gave promises of freedom to our people. With cups of wine we recall each one of them, as now, the first:

ALL: I am Adonai and I will *free you* from the burdens of the Egyptians.

ONE: We take up the Kiddush cup and proclaim the holiness of this Day of Deliverance.

ALL: We praise You, God, Sovereign of Existence, Who creates the fruit of the vine!

One: We praise You, God, Sovereign of Existence! You have called us for service from among the peoples, and have hallowed our lives with commandments. In love You have given us festivals for rejoicing, seasons of celebration, this Festival of Matzot, the time of our freedom, a commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt. Praised are You, our God, who gave us this joyful heritage and Who sanctifies the Sabbath, Israel and the festivals.

ALL: We praise you, our God, Sovereign of Existence, who has kept us in life, sustained us, and brought us to this festive season.

ONE: **LET US DRINK THE FIRST CUP OF WINE.**

KARPAS

REBIRTH AND RENEWAL

- ONE: In the spring, on the festival of Pesah – Passover we read from the Song of Songs.
 Arise my beloved, my fair one, and come away; For lo, the winter is past, flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing is here. The song of the dove is heard in our land.
 Let us go down to the vineyards to see if the vines have budded. There will I give you my love.
Let us take some of the greens and dip them in salt water and hold them for the blessing.
- ONE: Praised are You, Adonai, Sovereign of Existence, who creates the fruit of the earth.
Let us dip them again and together we eat the greens

YAHATZ

A BOND FORMED BY SHARING

- ONE: Now I break the middle matzah and conceal one half as the afikoman (AHfeekomen). Later we will share it, as in days of old the Passover offering itself was shared at this service in Jerusalem. Among people everywhere, sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship. For the sake of our redemption, we say together the ancient words which join us with our own people and with all who are in need, with the wrongly imprisoned and the beggar in the street. For our redemption is bound up with the deliverance from bondage of people everywhere.
- ALL: This is the bread of affliction, the poor bread which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat.
- ONE: Let all who are in want share the hope of Passover.
- ALL: As we celebrate here, we join with our people everywhere.
- ONE: This year we celebrate here.
- ALL: Next year in the land of Israel.
- ONE: Now we are all still in bonds.
- ALL: Next year may all be free.

MOTZI, MATZAH, MAROR

- ONE: I am breaking the matzah and sharing with you – please take a piece of the matzah.
- ALL: We praise You, O God, Sovereign of Existence, who brings forth bread from the earth.
- ONE: We praise you, O God, Sovereign of Existence who hallows our lives with commandments. Who has commanded us regarding the eating of matzah.
- ALL: We praise You, O God, Sovereign of Existence, who hallows our lives through commandments, who has commanded us regarding the eating of maror.

KOREH

CONTINUITY WITH PAST TRADITIONS

- ONE: Preserving a bond with the observance of our ancestors, we follow a practice of Hillel, from the time when the Temple stood. He combined the matzah and maror and ate them together, so that he might observe the precept handed down to him, exactly as his father before him: “They shall eat the paschal lamb with matzah and maror together.
- ALL: Together they shall be: the matzah of freedom, the maror of slavery.
- ONE: For in the time of freedom, there is knowledge of servitude.
- ALL: And in the time of bondage, the hope of redemption.
- ONE: Please break your piece of matzah in two. Now put a bit of the maror – the horseradish on it, and some of the charoset between the pieces of your matzah and let us eat it together.**

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

- ONE: “We will go, young and old. We will go with our sons and our daughters . . . for we must observe unto God a festival.” So it was said before the first Passover observance. To this day, our children continue to join in our observance.
- 2: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we eat either leavened bread or matzah; on this night – only matzah.
- 3: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we eat all kinds of herbs; but on this night, we especially eat bitter herbs.
- 4: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we do not dip herbs at all; on this night do we dip them twice.
- 5: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we eat in a ordinary manner; tonight we dine with special ceremony.

MAGGHID

THE NARRATION

- ONE: There are many questions. Now we begin to answer.
 Our history moves from slavery toward freedom.
 Our narration begins with degradation and rises to dignity.
 Our service opens with the rule of evil and advances toward
 the Kingdom of God.
- ALL: This is our story.
- 2: We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and God freed us from Egypt with a mighty hand. Had not the Holy One, who is to be praised, delivered our people from Egypt, then we, our children, and our children's children would still be enslaved.
- ONE: Therefore, even if all of us were wise, all of us people of understanding, all of us learned in the Torah, it would still be our obligation to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Moreover, whoever searches deeply into its meaning is considered praiseworthy.
- ALL: For Redemption is not yet complete.
- 3: We have known physical bondage and spiritual servitude. We have also been subjected to social degradation. For in the eyes of others we were a subject people — Arameans.
- ALL: My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there, and there became a great and populous nation. . . . "A Great . . . Nation."
- ONE: I took your father Abraham from across the river and led him into the land of Canaan, and I increased his descendants. I gave him Isaac and to Isaac I gave Jacob. When Jacob and his children went down into Egypt, Joseph was already there for his brothers had sold him into slavery. Joseph found favor with the Pharaoh and emerged with power over the land of Egypt.
- ALL: There was famine in all lands.
- 2: But in the land of Egypt, there was bread . . . and Pharaoh said to the Egyptians - "Go to Joseph, whatever he tells you, you shall do" . . . and all the world came to Joseph in Egypt. After Joseph died and all his brothers and all that generation A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Look the Israelite people are much too numerous for us. Let us, then, deal shrewdly with them, lest they increase, and in the event of war, join our enemies in fighting against us and gain ascendancy over the country."
- 3: So they set taskmasters over them with forced labor and they built garrison cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Raames. The Egyptians embittered their lives with harsh labor at mortar and brick and in all sorts of work in the field. But the more they were oppressed the more they increased and spread out, so that the Egyptians came to despise and dread the Israelites. So Pharaoh

charged all the people, saying “Every boy that is born shall be thrown in the Nile, but let every girl live.”

ALL: We cried unto the God of our ancestors, and God heeded our plight, our misery, and our oppression.

4: God heard our moaning, and God remembered the Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and God looked upon the Israelites and God knew. . . And God said, “I will go through the land of Egypt on that night . . . and I will mete out justice against all the gods of Egypt. I the Eternal.

ALL: And God brought us out of Egypt by a mighty hand,

5: Yes, God brought us out of Egypt by a mighty hand, an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents; not through a messenger, not through any intermediary or any supernatural being, but the Holy One alone, in solitary glory.

ONE: The time the Israelites remained in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. At the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year, to the very day, all the hosts of God departed from the land of Egypt. That same night is God’s watch-night for the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Together let us lift our cup of wine – but we do not drink.

ALL: We praise God who keeps faith with the people Israel. God’s promise of Redemption in ancient days sustains us now.

ONE: For more than one enemy has risen against us to destroy us. In every generation, in every age, some rise up to plot our annihilation. But a Divine Power sustains and delivers us.

Now let us set our cups down un-tasted.

MAKOT, MITZRAYIM

THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT

- ONE: Our rabbis taught: When the Egyptian armies were drowning in the sea, the Heavenly Hosts broke out in songs of jubilation. God silenced them and said, "My creatures are perishing, and your sing praises?"
- 2: Though we descend from those redeemed from brutal Egypt, and have ourselves rejoiced to see oppressors overcome, yet our triumph is diminished by the slaughter of the foe, as the wine within the cup of joy is lessened when we pour ten drops for the plagues upon Egypt.
- ONE: To remember upheaval that follows oppression, we will pour ten drops for the plagues upon Egypt. Our rabbis taught: God is urgent about justice, for upon justice the world depends
- ALL: Each drop of wine we pour is hope and prayer that people will cast out the plagues that threaten everyone everywhere they are found, beginning in our own hearts:
- 2: The making of war,
ALL: the teaching of hate and violence
- 3: Despoliation of the earth,
ALL: Perversion of justice and of government,
- 4: Fomenting of vice and crime
ALL: Neglect of human needs,
- 5: Oppression of nations and peoples,
ALL: Corruption of culture,
- 2: Subjugation of science, learning, and human discourse,
ALL: The erosion of freedoms.
- ONE: We pour ten drops for the plagues on Egypt

ONE: Take your finger and dip into your wine and spill drop a drop of wine onto the napkin for each of the plagues as I read them.

ONE: Blood
 Frogs
 Lice
 Wild Beasts
 Blight
 Boils
 Hail
 Locust
 Darkness
 Slaying of the First-Born

ALL: How plentiful are the reasons for our gratitude to God.

4: For the many favors bestowed upon us! God brought us out of Egypt, divided the Red Sea for us, permitted us to cross on dry land, sustained us for forty years in the desert, fed us with manna, ordained the Sabbath,

5: Brought us to Mount Sinai, gave us the Torah, led us into the land of Israel, built for us the Temple, sent us prophets of truth, and made us a holy people to perfect the world under the kingdom of the Almighty, in truth and in righteousness.

ONE: According to the Mishnah, Rabbi Gamliel said: Whoever does not consider well the meaning of these three, pesah, matzah, maror, has not fulfilled the purpose of the Seder.

(I point to the pesah/shankbone.)

ALL: What is the meaning of this shankbone?

2: Our people ate the paschal lamb when the Temple was still standing. Passover is a reminder that God “passed over” the houses of our ancestors in Egypt during the redemption.

3: Of old, matzah was meant to remind us that the dough prepared by our people had no time to rise before the final act of Redemption. “And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

ALL: We link ourselves today as we fulfill the mitzvah – the good deed: “For seven days shall you eat matzah, that you may remember your departure from Egypt as long as you live.

ONE: What is the meaning of this maror? (point to the maror)

ALL: It is eaten because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our people. Today, as well, wherever oppression remains, we taste the bitterness.

ONE: In every generation, each of us should feel as though we ourselves had gone forth from Egypt, as it is written: “And you shall explain to your child on that day, it is because of what the The Eternal did for me when I, *myself*, went forth from Egypt.”

ALL: Still we remember, “It was we who were slaves . . . we who were strangers,”

4: You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger,

ALL: Because we ourselves have been strangers in the land of Egypt,

5: When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them . . .

2: You shall love them as yourselves.

ALL: Because we were strangers in the land of Egypt

3: You shall rejoice before God with your son and daughter . . . and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow in your midst.

4: Always remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt. You shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the orphan

ALL: Not only our ancestors alone did the Holy One redeem but us as well, along with them, as it is written:

5: “And God freed us from Egypt so as to take us and give us the land sworn to our ancestors.”

ONE: Therefore, let us rejoice at the wonder of our deliverance from bondage to freedom, from agony to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to light, from servitude to redemption.

All: Before God let us ever sing a new song.

THE SECOND CUP – THE CUP OF REDEMPTION

ONE: With the second cup of wine we recall the second promise of liberation:

ALL: As it is written: “I will deliver you from their bondage”

ONE: We praise You, O God, Sovereign of all existence, who created the fruit of the vine.

Together, let us drink the second cup of wine.

THIS IS WHERE A MEAL TYPICALLY WOULD BE SERVED.

THE SEARCH FOR THE HIDDEN

ONE: The hidden matzah is returned and now we will share it together it is the last food to be tasted.

THANKS FOR DIVINE SUSTENANCE

One: Let us say Grace

ALL: The name of the Eternal be blessed from now unto eternity.

ONE: Let us praise God of Whose bounty we have partaken.

ALL: Let us praise our God of whose bounty we have partaken and by whose goodness we live.
Through God's kindness mercy, and compassion, all existence is eternally sustained, God is forever faithful, surpassing goodness fills all time and space.

THE THIRD CUP – THE CUP OF BLESSING

ONE: Together we take up the cup of wine, now recalling the third divine promise.

ALL: As it is written "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm." We praise Thee, our God Sovereign of the universe, who has created the fruit of the vine.

ONE: Now let us drink the third cup of wine together.

THE CUP OF ELIJAH

ONE: Elijah, the prophet, challenged the injustice of the king and overthrew the worship of Baal. He healed the humble sick and helped the widowed. As to the end of his days . . . his disciple Elisha had a vision of Elijah being carried to the skies in a chariot of fire. Legend has it that Elijah returns to earth, from time to time, to befriend the helpless. . . .

2: The man of mystery became associated with the End of Days, with the Messianic hopes of our people. . . . and to announce the coming of the Messiah when all mankind would celebrate freedom. . . . therefore Elijah has a place in every Seder.

ALL: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet . . . before the coming of the great and awesome Day of God!

3: Elijah opens up for us the realm of mystery and wonder.

ALL: Let us now open the door for Ejjiah.

4: I open the door to welcome Elijah.

ONE: I will pour the cup of wine and lift up the cup of deliverance and call upon the Name of God.

(POUR THE CUP OF WINE)

ONE: It is still dark as I pour this cup and lift up the cup of deliverance and call upon the Name of God. As light dawns over Zion as we raise this cup, for the day when we will tell of the Deliverance of all. We set aside this as a sign of hope, for the Beginning of Redemption.

ALL: We praise You, O God, Sovereign of Existence, who has sanctified us with Your commandment and commanded us to renew the hope of Redemption!

ONE: I set down the cup untasted as Ejjah has yet to come.

ALL: We will praise our God Forever.

CONCLUSION

THE FOURTH CUP – THE CUP OF ACCEPTANCE

ONE: As our Seder draws to an end, we take up our cups of wine. The Redemption is not yet complete. The fourth cup recalls us to our covenant with the Eternal One, to the tasks that still await us as a people called to the service of God, to a great purpose for which the people of Israel lives; The preservation and affirmation of hope. As it is written: “ I will take you to be my people.”

ALL: We praise You, our God, Sovereign of all Existence, who has created the fruit of the vine.

ONE: Now together we all drink the fourth cup of wine.

ONE: The Seder service now concludes: its rites have been observed in full, its purposes revealed.

ALL: This privilege we share will ever be renewed, until God’s plan is known in full, God highest blessing sealed:

ONE: Peace!

ALL: Peace for us! For Everyone!

ONE: For all people, this, our hope:

ALL: Next year in Jerusalem!

ONE: Next year, may all be free!

ALL: Yes, next year, may all be free!