

JWC WOMEN'S SEDER

5770



Welcome to the 16th annual JWC Women's Seder. We begin with a niggun, a melody without words.

Sing niggun into...

Standing At The Sea, part one

We're standing at the sea, mi chamocha (3x)

Freedom's on our way.

We're singing and dancing, mi chamocha (3x)

Freedom's on our way.

CHORUS: Freedom! Fre-e-dom! (3x)

Freedom's on our way!

INTRODUCTION

Rituals are inherently meaningless. Met superficially, they remain superficial. We give them meaning by choosing what qualities to entertain in our consciousness.

But myths are more than they appear. The stories are coded messages, heard by whatever part of our consciousness is open to receive them. Met with genuine devotion, a ritual can be transformative. They are as relevant to our lives as we allow them to be.

The goal, then, is to look beyond the ritual for the deeper meaning. Holiness is not a random event; it is a choice we make, a state of being and a quality of consciousness. A Passover seder is a powerful reminder to pay attention to the things that matter most: within ourselves and within the world in which we live.

Tonight we celebrate our liberation from Egypt—in Hebrew, *Mitzrayim*, literally “the narrow place.” But narrow places exist in more ways than one. Though we no longer labor under Pharaoh’s overseers, we may still be enslaved—now in subtler ways, harder to eradicate. Do we enslave ourselves to our jobs? To our expectations? To the expectations of others? To our fears?

Let this holiday make us mindful of internal bondage which, despite outward freedom, keeps us enslaved. This year, let our celebration of Passover stir us to shake off these chains. Our liberation is in our own hands.

*We begin with degradation and end with dignity.
We begin with shame and conclude with praise.*

KABBALAT PANIM WELCOMING EACH OTHER

We introduce ourselves by saying our names in English and/or Hebrew along with the names of our mothers.

As you introduce yourself, let us adapt a Sukkot custom and invite our absent mothers, daughters, friends-any women with whom you would wish to share this women's ritual.

Together:

נְבָרֶךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּיתָנוּ וְקִיַּמְתָּנוּ וְהִגִּיעַתָנוּ לְזֶמַּן
הַזֶּה.

*Nevareh et ruah ha'olam sheheheyatnu vekiyematnu
vehigi'atnu lazeman hazeh.*

We bless the spirit of the world, who gave us life, and kept us strong, and brought us to this time.

The Order of the סדר

1. Sanctify the Name of God	קדש
2. Wash the hands	ורחץ
3. Eat the green vegetables	כרפס
4. Break the middle matzah	יחץ
5. Tell the story of the Exodus	מגיד
6. Wash hands before the meal	רחצה
7. Say ha-motzi	מוציא
8. Recite blessing for matzah	מצה
9. Eat bitter herbs dipped in charoset	מרור
10. Eat matzah and maror together	בורך
11. Festival meal	שלחן עורך
12. Eat afikomen	צפון
13. Recite Birkhat HaMazon	ברך
14. Recite Hallel	הלל
15. Conclude seder	נרצה

כוס מרים

MIRIAM'S CUP

Miriam is beginning; Elijah is end. Miriam is present, Elijah is future. Miriam is place; Elijah is time. Elijah is the mountain, Miriam is the sea. The water of Miriam rises from the earth, the fire of Elijah descends from the sky. Together they are the circle of sunlight and rain, not separate or dissimilar, for both are needed for growth. We must have consciousness of both in order to be free.

Miriam reminds us that as free people, we have the power to leave our constraints behind, if we only choose to do so.

Pass the Miriam's Cup at each table. Pour some water from Miriam's Cup into your cup. Say together:

זאת כוס מרים כוס מים חיים. זֶכֶר לִיצִיאת מִצְרָיִם.

Zot kos Miryam, kos mayim chayim. Zeicher litziat Mitzrayim.

This is the Cup of Miriam, the cup of living waters. Let us remember the Exodus from Egypt. These are the living waters, God's gift to Miriam, which gave new life to Israel as we struggled with ourselves in the wilderness. May the waters of Pesach cleanse and purify you and your home, physically and spiritually, and may you drink deeply of the refreshing and redeeming waters of Miriam's Well.

The Water in the Well

Spring up oh well
And sing ye into it!

Chorus:
Oh the water in the well
And the healing in the well
The women and the water
And the hope that's in the well

When the world was created
There was heaven and dry land
And all the waters gathered
Upon hearing God's command
There was a bit of water
That was left, or so they tell
That was the water that became
The water from the well
Chorus

It was in Miriam's honor
That the first well came to be
To celebrate her music
Her dance and prophecy
And the people turned to Miriam
When their spirits rose and fell

She nourished all their visions
With the water from the well

Chorus

For the memory of the women
For the memory of the well
For the ones who came before us
Their stories we must tell
We are searching for the waters
Where we wander, where we dwell
For Miriam and all of us
Who thirst to find the well!

Chorus

קדש

KADESH - FIRST CUP

... וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבִלֹת מִצְרַיִם:

V'hotzeiti etchem mitachhat sivlot mitzrayim.

"...I will bring you out from under the burdens
of Egypt" (EXODUS 6:6).

As you drink your first cup, think about what burdens you. We do not have to haul bricks or make buildings; our burdens are often invisible. The Israelites did not have to look hard to find their burdens, but we may not even realize we are weighed down. We start our journey by identifying that which burdens us.

Let us remember, for now and for all time, that freedom starts in our hands, in our hearts, in our minds, with our internal reality.

We fill our glasses and sing together:

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵאת פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam boreyt peri hagafen.

We bless the spirit of the world, who creates the fruit of the
vine.

ורחץ

URCHATZ – WASHING THE HANDS

We wash here to re-enact the ritual purification the Kohen performed before mounting the altar. In the Temple of old, fifteen steps led up to the altar where we brought *korbanot*, sacrifices which drew-us-near to the Holy Blessed One. The seder we celebrate now unfolds through fifteen steps, a chance to make intangible offerings on the altar of our hearts. On this festival of spring, what are you bringing to draw you near? Having come through the Sea of Reeds, what songs will you sing?

Please go to the water station and pour water over the hands of the person behind you, bringing her into a special space. The washing is done in silence, without a blessing.

כרפס

KARPAS – DIPPING THE GREENS

Pesach is designed to occur in the spring because, as seedlings begin to penetrate out of the darkness of the soil towards the sun, so too do we move out of the darkness of our confinement towards the Light. Thus the rhythms of the natural world and the rhythms of the spiritual world coincide.

We dip the greens of spring into salted water. The salt water is made from the tears of the ancient Israelites mixed with our own. Salt has permanence even as it dissolves. This also mirrors our own experience. Even as our tears dry and we find the strength to leave our pain behind, they have permanence in our memory. The salt in the bowl remains after the water evaporates, and it has value of its own. Our pain may never entirely leave us, but its residue becomes a part of our evolving selves.

Together:

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵאת פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam boreyt peri ha'adamah.

We bless the spirit of the world, who creates fruit of the earth.

יָחַץ

YACHATZ BREAKING THE MIDDLE MATZAH

Break the middle matzah in half. The larger half is the afikomen.

The seder urges us to look for that broken part of self and reclaim it rather than further distancing ourselves from it. To emphasize this idea, once we find that broken part (the afikomen), we then consume it. We make it part of us to remind ourselves that we can be whole again.

מגיד

MAGGID – TELLING OUR STORY

Have you ever noticed that when you re-read a beloved book, you discover new things in it? No matter how many times you've already read it, there are still bits a pieces you never noticed. Or maybe you did notice them but you didn't pay attention. It's not that the book is different; it's that we are.

It's the same with the haggadah. The story is the same every year; only we are different. And the new people we are this year take in the story differently than we did last year. That's why we retell the story of the Exodus every year. Our perspectives, our experiences and our needs are new to us tonight, so we will hear new things in it. Parts we never thought much about before will jump out at us. The rabbis said of Torah, "Turn it and turn it again, for everything is in it". The haggadah may not have quite as much in it as the Torah itself, but it continues to speak to us, over years and lifetimes and centuries. What do you hear this year?

HA LACHMA ANYA

הָא לַחְמָא עֲנִיא

Together:

This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry, come and eat. All who are needy, come and celebrate Passover with us. Now we celebrate in slavery. Next year may we be truly free. Let all who wish to explore the meaning of slavery and its consequences, and all who hunger to assert their spiritual freedom, join us in our observance of the Festival of Maztah.

Sing together:

הָא לַחֲמָא עֲנִיא דִּי אָכְלוּ אַבְהָתָנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם.
 כָּל־דִּכְפִּין יִיתִי וְיָכֹל, כָּל־דִּצְרִין יִיתִי וְיִפְסָח. הַשְׁתָּא הָבָא,
 לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. הַשְׁתָּא עַבְדִּי, לְשָׁנָה
 הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין.

Ha lachma anya di-achalu avahatana b'ara d'mitzrayim.
 Kol dichvin yetey v'yechevol; Kol ditzrit yetey v'yifsach.
 Hashata hacha; I'shanah ha ba-ah b'ara d'yisrael.
 Hashata avdai; I'shanah ha ba-ah b-nai chorin.

Together:

B'av-dut ha-yi-nu-we have been enslaved.
 Tonight, we vow: May we always be free!

Sing together:

B'av-dut ha-yi-nu a-ta b'not chorin.

Once we were enslaved, but now we are free.

MA NISHTANAH – THE FOUR QUESTIONS

The haggadah was compiled with the idea that those using it would be intimately familiar with traditional Jewish rituals and practices, so that anything out of the ordinary would attract attention and provoke questions. In particular, the rabbis wanted to perform actions that would encourage children to ask for explanations, at which point the adults could tell the story of the Exodus.

Tonight, we have no children, nor do we have people who are traditional Jews. So although we sing the traditional questions, they don't really fit us, and that means that they fail at their purpose. A story has to be told to fit its audience. So the questions we ask to start the telling should be the ones that are meaningful to us. Here are a few to get us started:

What has changed since we first started doing women's seders?

What hasn't changed since then?

Will it ever be time to stop doing women's seders?

THE FOUR DAUGHTERS

The Torah speaks of four Daughters: One possessing wisdom of the heart, one rebellious, one naive and one who cannot ask questions.

The daughter possessing wisdom of the heart, what does she say?

“Father, your decree is harsher than Pharaoh’s...The decree of the wicked Pharaoh may or may not have been fulfilled, but you who are righteous, your decree surely is realized.” The father heeded his daughter (Miriam). So we too follow in her steps with drums and dancing, spreading her prophecy amongst the nations.

According to the Midrash, young Miriam persuaded her father Amram and the other enslaved men of Israel not to separate from their wives despite Pharaoh’s decree to destroy all male newborns. When her mother Yocheved gave birth to a boy, the two worked together to save the new son/brother. Miriam recognized the historical significance of this nascent struggle, as she did at the splitting of the Red Sea, and thus led her people to redemption (Talmud Bavli, Sotah 12).

The rebellious daughter, what does she say?

“Recognize” the ways of enslavement and the tyranny of man’s rule over man. Although she rebels against authority it is said: She was more righteous than he, and we enjoy no freedom until we have left our unjust ways.

Tamar’s complex relationship with her father-in-law, Judah son of Jacob our forefather, expresses a rebellion whose result was critical to the continuation of the tribe of Judah and the Jewish people. With her deeds, Tamar barricaded herself against her loss of freedom as an imprisoned widow. She eventually achieves the *yibum* (levirate marriage) to which she is entitled, and becomes the “founding mother” of the Davidic dynasty, symbol of messianic redemption (Tamar, Genesis 38:26).

The simple and pure daughter, what does she say?

“Wherever you go, so shall I go, and where you rest your head so there will I rest mine. Your people are mine, and your God my God” (Ruth, 1:16). We shall indeed fortify her in her loyalty to those she loved, and it was said to her: “May God make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built up the House of Israel.”

Ruth the Moabite remained true to her mother-in-law Naomi, and her ingenuous loyalty is absolute. This wonderful emotional closeness that Ruth so adamantly demonstrates rescues both of them from poverty and internal bondage (Ruth 4:11).

And the daughter who cannot ask – only her silent weeping is heard, as it is written, “and she wept for her father and mother.”

This last of the four daughters lacks sufficient freedom to taste even slightly the redemption and thus remains weeping in utter slavery. Although the "beautiful captive" from war is allowed to grieve for her parents before she is taken (Deuteronomy 21:13), she is a reminder of the reality of silenced bondage, which continues to exist in our midst in various ways.

The silent weeping that erupts from this dark reality is a call to action for the cause of freedom and liberty of every man and woman (Leviticus 25: 10), born in the image of God, in order to live securely in their homes, among their people and loving family (Song of Songs 3:4).

We will be her mouthpiece and she will be for us a judge. We will return her to her mother's house and to her who conceived her, and we will proclaim "liberty in the land for all its inhabitants."

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Standing At the Sea, part two

They're coming up behind, mi chamocha (3x)	Freedom's on our way.
We're bound no more, mi chamocha (3x)	Freedom's on our way.
CHORUS: Freedom! Fre-e-dom! (3x)	Freedom's on our way!
The sea, she parts, mi chamocha (3x)	Freedom's on our way.
We're walking through the water, mi chamocha (3x)	Freedom's on our way.
CHORUS: Freedom! Fre-e-dom! (3x)	Freedom's on our way!

Together:

"Then *Adonai* took us out of *Mitzrayim* with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with awesome power, with signs and with wonders." (Deut. 26:8)

קדש

KADESH - SECOND CUP

וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מֵעַבְדָּתָם V'hitzalti etchem mei'avodatam

"I will deliver you from under their bondage"
(EXODUS 6:6).

With our second cup we acknowledge that we are slaves to our self-created burdens. Perhaps we are being driven by our unmet needs, or by emotions that have become toxic. Perhaps our attachment to work or leisure activities has enslaved us. Perhaps we are in thrall to our love of material possessions. When we see and understand that they, not we, are controlling our lives, we begin to learn how to free ourselves from our enslavement and let go of our burdens.

We fill our glasses and raise them for the kiddush.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵאת פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam boreyt peri hagafen.

We bless the spirit of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

THE TEN PLAGUES

As we saw earlier, the Hebrews did not start out in Mitzrayim as slaves. Pharaoh feared them, and decided that instead of expelling them, he would force them to stay under his eye. When Moshe came to him with God's message, Pharaoh realized that he was doing wrong by enslaving the Hebrews. But despite increasingly graphic consequences for himself and his people, he continued to hold them. Even after his own son died, even after he gave permission for the slaves to leave, he could not bring himself to let them go. The results, for himself and his army, were terrible to behold.

We are Pharaohs to ourselves. We have beliefs and behaviors to which we cling, knowing that they are unhealthy and bad for us. We know that they enslave us. We know that there will be consequences for us and those close to us if we do not let those beliefs and behaviors go. But yet we fear the unknown; we fear losing the selves we know if we do not have those habits of mind and feeling that are so familiar to us.

At Pesach we tell the story of Nachshon ben Aminidav, the first person to walk into the Sea of Reeds. He alone had the strength and faith to take the chance, to risk himself for freedom. He walked into the Sea until it had reached his mouth-and then the Sea parted. Each of us faces a Sea of Fear. And each of us can cross it. Or we can wait, do nothing-and suffer the plagues that will inevitably find us.

God brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians, and they were:

Blood	Dam	דָּם.
Frogs	Tzefardeah	צִפְרֹדֵּעַ.
Lice	Kinim	כִּנִּים.
Beasts	Arov	עֲרוֹב.
Blight	Dever	דֶּבֶר.
Boils	Sh'chim	שִׁחִין.
Hail	Barad	בָּרָד.
Locusts	Arbeh	אַרְבֶּה.
Darkness	Hoshech	חֹשֶׁךְ.
Death of the Firstborn	Macat B'khorot	מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת:

Sing together:

None of us are free till all of us are free

DAYEINU דַּיֵּינוּ

How much is too much?

Sing together:

אלו הוציאנו ממצרים: דינו

*Ilu hotzi, hotzi'anu
hotzi'anu mimitzrayim (2x) Dayeinu...*

אלו נתן לנו את השבת: דינו

*Ilu natan, natan lanu,
natan lanu, et hashabat. (2x) Dayeinu...*

אלו נתן לנו את התורה: דינו

*Ilu natan, natan lanu,
natan lanu et hatorah. (2x) Dayeinu...*

Had God only taken us out of Egypt:
It would have been enough

Had God only given us the Shabbat:
It would have been enough.

Had God only given us the Torah:
It would have been enough.

*Speak proudly to your children
where ever you may find them
tell them
you are the offspring of slaves...*

-Audre Lord

At first, our ancestors worshipped idols. But God took our father Abraham and our mother Sarah into the land of Canaan. Abraham and Sarah gave birth to Isaac, who married Rivka and gave birth to Jacob, eleven other sons and a daughter, Dina. The youngest of Jacob's sons, Joseph, went down to Egypt. When famine came to Canaan, Jacob, his wives Leah and Rachel, his handmaids and his family came to join Joseph. There they prospered. The original seventy Hebrews became a nation, as many as there are stars in the sky. These large numbers alarmed the Egyptians, who feared that in the event of a war, the Hebrews would side with their enemy. So the Egyptians enslaved the Hebrews. They "afflicted us," they "imposed harsh labor upon us." We cried to God, the God of our ancestors, and God heard our voice and remembered the covenant the Holy One had made with our mothers and fathers.

We were taken out of there, we were released, we were shown the way...through our cries for help and our trust in *Hashem*, our Maker. And if the Holy One, if *Hashem*, had not chosen to redeem our ancestors from their *Mitzrayim*, ...then we, and our children and our children's children would still be enslaved to the reality and/or the beliefs of a Pharaoh in a *Mitzrayim*.

And that covenant was made with Abraham and Sarah, with Isaac and Rebecca, with Jacob, Rachel and Leah, with every member of the House of Israel. It belongs to all ages, all women, all men; it belongs to the children and to the grandparents. It belongs to all of us, even the generations waiting to be born.

Standing

I'm standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me

Recalling generations past, imagine those yet to be.

We weave our lives into our traditions.

We save what we value --- what it takes to survive.

We pass on the faith that lives in our deepest heart.

We weave our rituals with the threads of our lives.

V'HI SHE'AMDA – GOD'S PROMISE

Sing together:

וְהִיא שְׁעָמְדָה	V'hi she'amda
לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ.	la'avoteinu ul'imoteinu velanu.

And She stood by us and She protected us, and gently guided us to this day.

This is God's promise to our ancestors and to us: Although one individual stands against us to destroy us, another stands with us in difficult times. In every generation, when some are blinded by hate, others build bridges of understanding. The Holy One, our Source of help, sustains us.

RABBAN GAMLIEL'S SYMBOLS – AND ONE FROM SUSANNAH HESCHEL

Rabban Gamliel, a first century sage, said, "Whoever does not explain the following three things on Pesach has not fulfilled her duty: *pesach*, matzah, and *maror*."

Why these three? They represent the timetable of our experience in Mitzrayim. The *maror* is the period of our slavery. The *pesach* is the night of our liberation. The *matzah* is our departure and our journey towards Sinai.

We do not point to or raise the shank bone on our seder plate because it symbolizes a sacrifice that was only offered in the time of the Temple.

The *pesach* our ancestors ate: why did they eat it? Why is this shank bone on our plates?

God *pasach* (passed over) the houses of our Israelite ancestors when the firstborn sons of the Egyptians were taken by the angel of death.

In kabbalah, the shank bone represents *chesed*, loving kindness. God showed *chesed* to us in hearing our pleas and taking us out of Mitzrayim. Just as slaves often need help to escape their slavery, we too need help to free ourselves from our burdens. The shank bone reminds us that if we cry out, others will hear our cry and reach out to us.

Raise the matzah.

The matzah, why do we eat this unleavened bread?

Matzah: what is it? It is unleavened bread produced by mixing flour and water, but fermentation is prevented by the immediate baking of the dough. Matzah is what it appears to be-its essence. It is uninflated. It represents being. It represents being just you, just who you are, with your ego, but an uninflated ego. For after all, the ego is not bad, as it is a necessary part of the interface between the physical world and the spiritual world. Chametz, on the other hand, is symbolic of our inflated, swollen egos-mostly hot air.

Point to the maror.

The *maror*, why do we eat these bitter herbs?

These bitter herbs-why do we eat them? To remind ourselves that the Egyptians made our lives bitter “with harsh labor at mortar and bricks and with all sorts of tasks in the field that they made [us] perform.” (Exodus 1:14)

Reb Zalman Shachter-Shalomi reminds us that maror is also meant to reawaken for us the pain and the bitterness that are sometimes a part of our lives. We go through the pain and we forget it; sometimes we learn from it, sometimes we don’t. Maror, with its harsh taste brings us, once again, to the reality of the pain. Awareness can lead to discomfort, and discomfort can lead to action.

But what about the other symbols on our seder plates?

Raise the egg.

The roasted egg, why do we put it on our plates?

Have you ever noticed that there is no reference whatever to the egg in the Haggadah? It appears there as a silent witness to something-but what?

Some say that the egg represents our mourning for the Temple, as eggs are the first food served in a house of mourning. Others suggest it recalls the Temple sacrifices. Still others point to it as a symbol of fertility and new birth. It makes Jewish sense to include a remembrance of the Temple at our seders, as we do at other times of great joy (weddings, for instance). Still, that a clearly female symbol is present but unmentioned is, to say the least, discomfiting. But we don’t have to let the egg be a silent witness! This is our opportunity to celebrate the female potential in all its power and significance, so let’s not miss it!

Raise the orange.

And this orange, what is it doing on our seder plates?

Susannah Heschel put a tangerine on the Seder plate at her family’s Passover. She offered the orange as a symbol of the fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life. Heschel, daughter of the famed Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, extended the tangerine to stand for others whom she felt were marginalized within the Jewish community, including widows – like her mother – and orphans and single women – like herself.

The orange shows us how tradition can be enriched, not threatened, by appropriate additions.

Together:

בְּכָל-דּוֹר וְדּוֹר תִּיב אָדָם לִרְאוֹת אֶת-עַצְמוֹ, כְּאִלּוּ הוּא יָצָא מִמִּצְרַיִם,

In each generation, each of us is obligated to see ourselves as if we had personally left Egypt.

רחצה

RACHTZAH – WASHING THE HANDS WITH BLESSING

Return to a water station to wash your neighbor's hands, this time with a blessing. Pour water over each hand. The persons whose hands are washed says:

נְבָרֶךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּתָנוּ עַל
נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

*Nevareh et ruah ha'olam asher kideshatnu bemitzvoteha
vetzivatnu al netilat yadayim.*

We bless the spirit of the world, who has made us holy with
the *mitzvot* and commanded us to wash our hands.

מוציא מצה

MOTZI MATZAH – BLESSINGS FOR UNLEAVENED BREAD

Distribute pieces of the top and middle matzah.

Together:

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיָּאָה לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam hamotziah lehem min ha'aretz.

We bless the spirit of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּתָנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam asher kideshatnu bemitzvoteha vetzivatnu al ahilat matzah.

We bless the spirit of the world, who has made us holy with the *mitzvot* and commanded us to eat matzah.

מרור

MAROR – BITTER HERBS

Everyone takes a piece of maror and charoset.

We do not recline when eating this combination because maror and charoset are both reminders of slavery. We sit upright as we eat them together, in awareness of the oppression of others in our world.

Together:

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּתָנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam asher kideshatnu bemitzvoteha vetzivatnu al ahilat maror.

We bless the spirit of the world, who has made us holy with *mitzvot* and commanded us to eat *maror*.

כורֶךְ

KORECH - HILLEL SANDWICH

At the time that the Temple stood in Jerusalem, it was Hillel's custom to combine the the matzah and maror and eat them together. Today we place maror between two pieces of matzah forming a sandwich and eat it.

The Korech is life in a sandwich-bitter and sweet, both necessary and often inseparable. Each brings out the character of the other more truly. At our seder, the rule is that everyone has to taste both bitter and sweet, but that each person can control the amount of each he or she takes on. So in our lives, we can never entirely eliminate the bitterness, but we can choose to temper and balance it with sweetness that we create.

Make a sandwich of matzah, maror and charoset and enjoy!

קִדְשׁ

KADESH - THIRD CUP

וְגֵאלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָה
וּבִשְׁפָטִים גְּדֹלִים

V'gaalti etchem bizroah n'tuyah uvishfatim g'dolim.

I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. (Exodus 6:6)

This is the cup of thought. We envision alternatives to the world in which we live. Our world is in danger, physically, socially and morally. We can redeem it. The first step, as Rav John Lennon taught, is to imagine.

Together:

נְבָרֶךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵאת פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam boreyt peri hagafen.

We bless the spirit of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

קִדֵּשׁ

KADESH - FOURTH CUP

וְלָקַחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעָם וְהָיִיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים V'lakachti etchem li l'am v'hayiti lachem leilohim

"And I will take you to be my people and I will be your God" (EXODUS 6:7).

This is the cup of essence. We now come to the point of the seder: we accept our individual and collective responsibility to act to repair the world and end the wrongs that people make other people suffer. Can we do it? Yes we can!

Together:

נְבָרֶךְ אֶת רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵאת פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Nevareh et ruah ha'olam boreyt peri hagafen.

We bless the spirit of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

סְפִירַת הָעוֹמֶר

COUNTING THE OMER

You shall count from the eve of the second day of Pesach, when an omer of grain is to be brought as an offering. The day after the seventh week of your counting will make fifty days. On that same day you shall hold a celebration; it shall be a sacred occasion for you. (Lev. 23:15-16, 21)

Sing together.

We Are Counting

These are the days of the journey

As we wandered the desert
together

We walked and we watched and
we waited for our time

So we counted each day of the
journey

It's a journey we travel together

Till the day we arrive at the
mountain and we climb

If we counted the sand in the
ocean

If we counted the stars in the sky

If we counted the minutes and
the hours

Counting the days going by

Counting the days going by

We are counting, we are counting

One by one, one by one

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר

*Baruch atah adoni eloheynu melech ha'olam asher kidshanu
b'mitzvotav vetzivanu al s'firat ha'omer*

Blessed are you, ETERNAL, our God, the sovereign of all worlds, who has
made us holy with your mitzvot and commanded us concerning the counting of the Omer.

4. הַיּוֹם אַרְבָּעָה יָמִים לָעֹמֶר

Hayom arba'ah yamim la'omer.

Today is the fourth day of the Omer.

What is the reason, what does it show
Where does it lead us, where do we go?
How will we get there, how do we return?
What will we do now with what we have learned?

כוס אליהו

ELIJAH'S CUP- *KOS ELIYAHU*

Several months before he died, Israeli poet and writer Yehuda Amichai told an interviewer that he had walked through every alley of Jerusalem and that peace would emerge from one of them.

AN ARAB SHEPHERD IS SEARCHING FOR HIS GOAT ON MOUNT ZION

Yehuda Amichai

*An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat
on Mount Zion,
And on the opposite hill I am searching
for my little boy.
An Arab shepherd and a Jewish father
Both in their temporary failure.
Our two voices meet above
The Sultan's Pool in the valley between us.
Neither of us wants the boy or the goat
To get caught in the wheels
of the "Chad Gadya" machine.
Afterward we found them among the bushes,
And our voices came back inside us
Laughing and crying.
Searching for a goat or for a child has
always been
The beginning of a new religion in
these mountains.*

אליהו הנביא

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי
אֱלִיָּהוּ אֱלִיָּהוּ אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֵלֵינוּ
עִם מָשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד:

EILYAHU HANAVI

*Eilياهو hanavi, eilياهو hatishbi,
Eilياهو, eilياهو, eilياهو hagiladi.
Bimheira v'yameinu, yavo eileinu,
im mashiach ben david. (2x)*

Elijah the Prophet, come to us soon,
for you herald Messianic days.

מרים הנביאה

מִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה עֹז וְזִמְרָה בְּיָדָהּ.
מִרְיָם תִּרְקֹד אִתָּנוּ לְהַגְדִּיל זִמְרַת עוֹלָם.
מִרְיָם תִּרְקֹד אִתָּנוּ לְתַקֵּן אֶת־הָעוֹלָם.
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ הִיא תְּבִיאֵנוּ
אֶל מִי הַיְּשׁוּעָה אֶל מִי הַיְּשׁוּעָה:

MIR'YAM HAN'VI'A

*Mir'yam han'vi'a oz v'zimra b'yada.
Mir'yam, tirkod itanu, l'hagdil zimrat olam.
Mir'yam, tirkod itanu, l'takein et ha'olam.
Bim'heira v'yameinu, hi t'vi'einu.
El mei ha'y'shua. El mei ha'y'shua.*

Miriam the Prophet, strength and song are in her
hand. Miriam will dance with us to strengthen
the world's song. Miriam will dance with us to heal
the world. Soon, and in our time, she will lead us
to the waters of salvation.

שולחן עורך

SHULCHAN ORECH – THE TABLE IS SET

צפון

TZAFUN – EATING THE AFIKOMEN

ברך

BARECH BLESSINGS AFTER THE MEAL

V'ACHALTA, V'SAVATA, U'VEYRACHTA

You shall eat, and be satisfied, and bless.

We ate when we were hungry
And now we're satisfied
We thank the Source of Blessing
for all that is provided

Giving and receiving
We open up our hands
From seedtime through harvest
We're partners on the land

V'achalta, v'savata u'veyrachta (2x)

V'achalta, v'savata u'veyrachta (2x)

Hunger is a yearning
in body and soul
Earth, Air, Fire, Water
And Spirit make us whole

We share in a vision
of wholeness and release
Where every child is nourished
and we all live in peace

V'achalta, v'savata u'veyrachta (2x)

V'achalta, v'savata u'veyrachta (2x)

HALLEL – PRAISES

Hodu l'Adonai ki tov, Ki l'olam chas-do.
Tomar-na, tomar-na, tomar-na Yisrael.
Hodu l'Adonai ki tov, Ki l'olam chas-do.
Tomru-na, tomru-na, tomru-na beit Miriam.
I give thanks and praise, it's understood
Singing from the heart for God is good!
Hodu l'Sh'chinah ki tov, ki l'olam chasda.
Tomru-na, tomru-na, tomru-na ohavot Sh'chinah.

נִרְצָה

NIRTZAH – CONCLUSION *Standing At The Sea, part three*

We're on the other side, mi chamocha (3x) Freedom's on our way.

ONE GOD!, mi chamocha (3x) Freedom's on our way.

CHORUS

We're standing at the sea, mi chamocha (3x) Freedom's on our way.

We're singing and dancing, mi chamocha (3x) Freedom's on our way.

CHORUS

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם.

Leshanah haba'ah birushalayim

Next year in Jerusalem!

Next year in a city of peace for all its inhabitants!

MAY THE SOURCE OF PEACE BRING PEACE TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND TO
ALL OF HUMANITY. AMEN!

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