

# *Passover Guide and Seder Supplement*

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The Festival of Passover (Hebrew – “Pesach” or “Pesah”) has a unique place in the Jewish home because of the Seder, the many changes that take place and the special atmosphere in the home during the Passover week. This Passover home atmosphere is something created by the family. One makes "Pesach" at home by the enthusiastic, cheerful observance of the traditional rules and regulations especially pertaining to foods, unique family and ethnic food customs, their preparation and serving.

You should feel encouraged to create new traditions and customs in your Seder's interpretation of the Torah narrative and Rabbinic re-statement of the Exodus from Egypt. Plenty of “white space” has been left throughout these pages to provide for your own individual instructions, interpretations, additions or creations. In addition to participating in communal Passover projects of tzedakah and caring, to attending synagogue services with your family, potential precious family holiday activities empower you to create and offer your family a beautiful and meaningful Passover heritage. The treasures of childhood memories are immeasurably enriched by the indelible impressions left on the young through sharing in Passover preparations, the Seder meal and the holiday services.

The following pages have been collected, edited, written and re-written numerous times, and they have been shared in congregational bulletins, faxes and now over the Internet. Wherever possible I have tried to give proper attribution. I hope that as we learn who has written which of these pieces we can give credit properly in the years to come. One should never simply take credit for the work of others and that was not my intention.

This is a work still in progress and I would hope that if you would like to make a contribution that can be used, I would be grateful to incorporate it into this supplement and of course give you credit. Please note that spellings and transliteration will vary and indeed some readings will certainly provoke discussion, both agreement and disagreement which is the intention of the Passover Seder.

Preparing this Passover Guide for our family and our congregations has been a labor of love over the years. I hope that parts or all of it will be helpful to you and your family as well as friends for a sweeter and more meaningful Seder and Pesach Festival. With best wishes from our home to yours for a “zissen Pesach”

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## **PREPARING FOR PASSOVER**

### **SIYYUM FOR THE FIRST BORN**

The "Siyyum" Service for the first-born is held in gratitude to God for sparing the first-born sons among the children of Israel when the Egyptian first born were smitten. It is conducted at the Synagogue early on the morning of the eve of Pesach; when Passover begins Saturday evening, the Siyyum is conducted the previous Thursday morning.

### **BEDIKAT CHAMETZ (SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ)**

It is the practice, according to ancient tradition, after the house has been thoroughly cleaned, to make a final ceremonial search for whatever "chametz" may remain. This search, called Bedikat Chametz", is conducted on the eve of the day preceding Passover and the "chametz" is burned on the following morning. (See the Haggadah for the traditional recitations at these ceremonies). One may eat a chametz meal until 10:00 AM on the eve of Pesach. No matzah is to be eaten until the Seder that night. The term "Chametz" or "Leaven" is applied not only to food, the use of which is to be avoided the eight days of Pesach but also to the dishes and utensils in which foods are prepared or served during the year.

### **PREPARING THE HOME FOR PASSOVER**

Observing the laws of Kashrut on Passover is somewhat different from observing Kashrut throughout the year. The joy of keeping the Passover will be realized when you are seated at your Seder table knowing that you have prepared your foods in the traditional manner. This spirit of rejoicing will erase from your minds any memories of labors you undertook to observe the Passover rules. The rules and procedures for preparing the house are according to the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly.

### **WHEN FIRST SEDER OCCURS ON SATURDAY EVENING**

This is a more complicated procedure and it is one in which you should consult with your own Rabbi and congregation for a final opinion. For many, the house is prepared for Passover and all leavened products are removed. Since Passover hasn't begun and one customarily doesn't eat matzah until the Seder, it has been one accepted pattern to accompany the Shabbat meal with "egg matzah" that is "kosher for Passover" in terms of being in your possession but isn't "kosher" as matzah for the Seder and Festival unless there are extenuating medical circumstances.

Because there are technical issues involved, please speak with your Rabbi for specific guidance in your preparations for Passover when the First Seder occurs on Saturday evening.

## **CHECKLIST FOR YOUR PASSOVER**

### **HAMETZ**

Make sure you have sold your Hametz through your local Rabbi before Passover  
Don't forget to give a contribution to "Matzah Fund" ("Maot Hittim") providing for the needy.  
Search at the correct time in the evening, involve the child(ren) and reciting the appropriate texts.  
Remember to burn the hametz the next morning or discard it as your Rabbi has taught.

### **SIYYUM FOR THE FIRST-BORN**

Attend the synagogue and the special study session and breakfast with your first-born (and all your children) the "siyyum" freeing you from fasting during the day before the Seder.

### **FOR THE TABLE(S):**

Set out at least one Seder plate with:

- Karpas – celery sticks, potato pieces, cucumber
- Marror – grated horseradish
- Hazeret – bitter lettuce, Romaine
- Haroset – use a different recipe each Seder and for each Seder plate
- Zeroah – roasted bone or a roasted beet for vegetarians
- Beitzah – hard-boiled egg which is a little browned

Small bowl(s) of saltwater should be conveniently placed near each Seder plate

Set out a plate with a Matzah cover and three matzot – try and get hand-made matzot. Some add a fourth matzah under the matzah cover for oppressed Jews. Don't forget to put out plates of regular matzah.

Try using a different bottle of Israeli wine for each of the four cups, perhaps beginning with dry wine and concluding with sweet. For children and others make sure to have grape juice and there are Israeli grape juices as well.

Don't forget to provide a Cup for Elijah – which some fill with wine from each participant

### **FOR EACH PARTICIPANT:**

- Provide the same Haggadah for all in order to follow conveniently.
- Provide an additional Haggadah, each with a different commentary at each place.
- Each one to have their own kiddush cup
- A pillow for each participant who wishes to really recline

### **LEADER'S PREPARATION:**

- A Haggadah marked with notes, pages from other sources, songs, comments, etc.
- Prizes for the various contests and quizzes for the children, especially the Afikoman
- Props for various ways to involve the children and the adults throughout
- \*Think about who will be present and how to involve them meaningfully and respectfully.

## HOW “LONG” IS A “GOOD” SEDER?

A “good” Seder is not measured by the amount of time spent reading the Haggadah and discussing the Exodus or the length of the meal. A “great” Seder is one in which everyone has a chance to participate, and using a good Haggadah will facilitate each member of your family and friends to take parts in the Seder appropriate to their age, Hebrew and English facility, special interests, etc.

It is also much easier to have “participatory” Seder when the Haggadah is more than just a text, even with an English translation. Select a Haggadah for the Seder that has a variety of options for participation, and then select additional materials from the many different Haggadot, which are being published with special themes, from a vegetarian Haggadah, a feminist Haggadah or a kibbutz Haggadah. Don’t forget that there are magnificent art Haggadot that have illustrations and reproductions of great Passover art from the last 1000 years.

For those who would prefer “a Bare Bones Basic Seder” we can thank Noam Zion for the following suggestion built into The Shalom Hartman Institute Haggadah [A Different Night](#). He suggests that sections 1-17 which take place before the meal should take about an hour. However, it often occurs that once people “get into” a Seder, it can take longer; don’t cut off the discussion and readings too early!

1. Signposts of the Seder: **Kadesh Urchatz**
2. First Cup: **Kiddush**
3. Dips: **Karpas**
4. Breaking the Matza: **Yachatz**
5. The Story of the Matza: **Ha Lachma**
6. Four Questions: **Ma Nishtana**
7. Storytelling – “We were slaves”: **Avadeem Hayeenu**
8. Four Children
9. The Promise: **V’hee She-am-da**
10. The Tale of the Wandering Jew
11. Ten Plagues
12. **Dayeinu**
13. Explaining **Pesch, Matza** and **Maror**
14. “In Every generation”
15. Psalm 114: **Hallel**
16. Second Cup of Wine
17. Eating **Matza, Maror** and **Korech**

After the Meal

18. **Afikoman**
19. Blessing after eating: **Barech**
20. Third Cup of Wine
21. Elijah’s Cup and opening the door
22. Fourth Cup of Wine
23. Seder Songs traditional and new
24. Next Year in Jerusalem: **La-Shana Haba-a**

## TRADITIONAL JEWISH LAW: Legal Minimums of the Seder

The following is taken from A Different Night, pp. 22-23 written by Noam Zion and David Dishon and published by The Shalom Hartman Institute: “Reading every paragraph of the traditional Haggadah is not legally obligatory. . . . The halachic minimum suggested below is an invitation to add more, not to shorten the Seder. . . . In case of doubt consult your rabbi. As we all know there are many views in Jewish law. . . . We are grateful to Rabbi Yaacov Warhaftig, director of the Ariel Institute, Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary in Jerusalem, who gave us his advice and approval for this section.”

1. Candle-lighting
2. Optional: reading/chanting of poem **Kadesh Urchatz**
3. **Kiddush** and **She-he-chee-yanu**
4. **Urchatz, Karpas, Yachatz**
5. **Ha Lachma Anya**
6. Shmuel’s story: **Avadeem Hayeenu**
7. Optional: rabbis of B’nei Brak and Ben Zoma
8. Optional: but very important: the Midrash of the Four Children
9. Rav’s Story: **Mee-Tchee-law**, “Our Ancestors Were Idol Worshippers”
10. Optional but customary: **V’hee She-amda**
11. **Arami Oved Avi**: The obligation is to read and comment on this entire section from Deuteronomy 26; but if the group has a creative discussion on these verses rather than reading the entire midrash word for word, this may be a wholly appropriate fulfillment of the mitzvah.
12. Optional: Midrash on the 50, 200, 250 plagues
13. Optional and very traditional: **Da-yeinu**
14. Rabban Gamliel: **Pesach, Matza, Maror**
15. “In Every Generation” **B’Chol Dor Va’Dor**
16. **Hallel**, Psalms 113-114
17. Second Cup of Wine
18. Washing Hands and eating **Matza with Maror**, and then **Korech**
19. Meal
20. **Afikoman**
21. **Birkat Ha-Mazone**, “Grace After Meals”
22. Third Cup of Wine
23. **Sh’foch Cha-mat-cha**
24. **Hallel** and its Blessings
25. Fourth Cup of Wine and the Blessings after this cup of wine
26. **Sefirat Ha-Omer** is obligatory on the Second Seder Night
27. Optional but customary: Seder poems and songs
28. Optional but customary: **Nirtza** and “Next Year in Jerusalem”

## **DO's AND DON'T's FOR PASSOVER SEDER**

**DO** start your preparations early enough. Make sure your house is sparkling clean, and your table as beautiful as possible. Invite as a guest someone who is far from his own home.

**DO** have uniform Haggadot with good translations and perhaps transliteration for everyone at the table, in order that all can participate in the Seder without difficulty. These Haggadot are in addition to the decorative ones, or ones of special historical interest. Select, in advance, sections of the haggadot to be assigned for individual reading in English by those who may not be able to follow the Hebrew. Rehearse MAH NISHTANAH with the child who will ask the Four Questions, and also for other special parts given to individuals.

**DO** plan different wines, especially Israeli wines for the four cups. You may want to place a saucer under each wine cup to prevent excessive stains on the tablecloth. Arrange a cushion or pillow for the master of the house to recline on during the meal in the style of the "freemen" in ancient times. Remember to arrange for different red and white grape juices, including Israeli juices, for the children and those who do not drink wine.

**DO** remember to provide an appropriate small reward for the child who finds the AFIKOMAN. During the Seder the father hides a part of the middle matzah to be distributed and eaten later by all present. Toward the end of the meal, the father pretends not to notice that the children hid it. He offers a reward for its return, since the meal cannot be properly concluded until each person has tasted a piece of the AFIKOMAN. In some homes, the father will hide the AFIKOMAN and after the meal, they will search for it; in some homes, they are instructed "hot and cold."

**DO** suggest that one of the children prepare a talk for the Seder on freedom in modern times.

**DON'T** rush through the Seder; it is time that is being invested in your family and a family tradition for future generations. Plan ahead for the meal such that you have time for the traditional family songs and hymns at the end of the Seder.

**DO** use an attractive, different "Pesachdik" set of dishes which are used annually only for the holiday; they add to Seder beauty and dignity. Invest in different Passover plates, Matzah covers, Elijah cups, bowls for washing and similar ritual items that become family heirlooms.

## **PASSOVER FOR CHILDREN**

**1. GAMES** (Nuts and nut games are popular for Passover, for two reasons: firstly, nuts within the shell are available in abundance for little cost and are kosher for Passover; secondly, "nut" in Hebrew has the same numerical value as the word "good" in Hebrew, both are 17.)

### Nut Ferry

Carry nuts on the blade of a dull knife as relay teams with a time limit.

### Nut Roll

Make a board lean against a wall and attempt to "win" a nut by tossing against the board and having the tossed nut roll down and hit a target nut.

### Nut Pick-Up

Using two pencils, determine who can pick up the most nuts in a time limit to be placed in each team's bowl.

### Nut pitching

Each team attempts to throw nuts into a target basket or pot within time.

## **2. TEXT GAMES**

### Guessing Game

Let a player put nuts under plates for other players out of the room who will return at a signal and indicate which plate they wish. Leader may choose to put different numbers of nuts or the same number under each plate.

### Scrambled Pesach Story

Cut up the story of Passover and distribute parts without numbering sequence. The leader begins and each participant starts reading when he believes that his portion is appropriate.

### Questions and Prizes

Plan on asking questions throughout the Seder for which winners receive nuts, and at the end of the Seder then the prizes can be given out to all of the children based upon the number of nuts they have collected – and their appropriate age and needs.

## **3. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE SEDER**

Costumes are a wonderful way in which children can be kept involved in the Seder. They can dress up as guests and come in through the door for "Ha Lachma Anya" and even be dressed up as Jewish historical guests – but remember to save Elijah the Prophet for opening the door after the meal.

Children can distribute symbols of each of the 10 plagues: ping pong balls for everyone to throw at the mention of "hail" or sunglasses to symbolize darkness. While there are commercial "Plague Sacks" which have symbols for each of the plagues, you should consider planning with the kids for their own interpretations.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – FOR ADULTS AND FOR CHILDREN

1. What are the other names of Passover?
2. How long is this holiday?
3. What are the Hebrew dates?
4. What does this phrase refer to: The Intermediate Days?
5. What is the name of the Sabbath preceding Passover?
6. Which name is out of place? Pharaoh, Aaron, Miriam, Moses?
7. Who was Zipporah?
8. What doesn't belong? Frogs, lice, ants, locusts?
9. What was the tenth plague?
10. Name three songs sung during the Seder?
11. What does Haggadah refer to, and what does the word mean?
12. Who is the Fourth Son?
13. What word is out of place? Shankbone, bitter herbs, cheese, salt water.
14. Complete this phrase: "On all other nights we don't dip"
15. Why are four cups of wine poured during the Seder?

### Answers

1. Z'man Herutenu - Season of our Freedom, and Hag HaMatzot - Festival of the Spring.
2. Passover is celebrated for 8 days; in Israel 7 days.
3. Nisan 15-22.
4. The Hol Hamoed or the Intermediate Days refers to the period of time between the first two days of Passover and the last two. They are regarded as semi-holidays.
5. Shabbat HaGadol. "The Great Sabbath". The name probably refers to the phrase, "the great day of the Lord" which occurs in Malachi 3-23 and is read as part of the Haftarah. (Prophetic Reading) that Sabbath morning.
6. Pharaoh is the name out of place. Aaron and Miriam were brother and sister to Moses.
7. Zipporah was Moses' wife.
8. "Ants" does not belong in this list as frogs, lice and locusts were three of the Plagues God sent upon the Egyptians corresponding to the deeds they had perpetrated against the children of Israel.
9. The Tenth Plague was the slaying of the first born sons of the Egyptians.
10. Dayenu, Chad Gadya, Ehad Mi Yodea, Addir Hu.
11. Haggadah meaning "the telling" refers to the book which tells the story of Passover and describes the Seder.
12. The Fourth Son is the "one who does not know enough even to ask".
13. "Cheese" is out of place; the other items refer to symbols used during the Seder.
14. "On all other nights we do not dip even once, but on this night we dip twice."
15. To symbolize the four expressions of liberation which the Bible uses. (Exodus 6:6).

## **THE MEANING OF PASSOVER SYMBOLS**

### **A. WHY DO WE USE THE FOLLOWING?**

1. **Three Matzot** placed separately in the sections of the special matzah cover, or in the folds of an ordinary napkin: Two of these symbolize the two loaves of bread over which a benediction is pronounced on Sabbaths and festivals. The third matzah emphasizes the unique role of the matzah in the Pesach ritual. The matzah is a symbol of the affliction of slaves in Egypt and a reminder of the haste of departure. An allegorical explanation teaches that the three matzot represent the three groups into which Judaism is divided: Kohen, Levi, Yisrael; if we are ever to survive, we must always be united. At many Sedarim, we add supplementary symbolic matzot for different oppressed Jewish communities and individuals to be remembered at Passover when we celebrate our freedom and they are still denied their freedom. You should also discuss non-Jewish communities and individuals who still await their own physical, spiritual and political freedom.

2. **A Roasted Shankbone (Zeroah)** commemorates the paschal sacrifice which our ancestors brought to the Temple on Pesach in ancient times. Vegetarians often substitute a beet (with its red juices) rather than use real bones.

3. **Bitter Herbs (Maror)** symbolize the bitterness of Israel's bondage in Egypt. Horseradish is usually used or a bitter lettuce.

4. **A Roasted Egg (Beitzah)** symbolizes the HAGGIGAH or "Festival sacrifice" which was always brought to the Temple in Jerusalem on festive occasions and which on Pesach supplemented the paschal lamb.

5. **Charoset** symbolizes the mortar the Israelites used building the "treasure cities for Pharaoh". Charoset is a mixture of grated apples, chopped nuts, cinnamon and a little wine, and there are many different recipes reflecting different places and cultures where Jews have celebrated Passover.

6. **Parsley, Lettuce, Watercress (Karpas)**, or any other green herb and a dish of salt water into which it is to be dipped before being eaten: These greens symbolize the coming of Spring and suggest the perpetual renewal of life. Hence, they represent the ever-sustaining hope of human redemption. The message to us is that we must always be optimistic.

7. **Four Cups of Wine** to be offered during the Seder service: one at Kiddush, one following the recital of the first part of the Hallel, one after Grace and one at the conclusion of the Seder. These four cups symbolize the four-fold promise of redemption which, according to the Bible, God pledged to Israel: "I will bring you forth," (Exodus 6:6): "I will deliver you," (ibid). "I will redeem you," (ibid) and "I will take you," (Exodus 6:7).

**8. Salt Water:** used as a simple spice for vegetables (karpas). Some say it represents tears shed in Egypt, and others suggest that it reminds us of the Red Sea through which God led the Israelites. It may also represent the tears shed by God when He had no choice but to punish the Egyptians for their oppression of the Israelites.

**9. Cup of Elijah (Kos Eliyahu):** Elijah has always been associated with the coming of the Messiah. Pesach, the holiday of freedom, is an ideal time to usher in the messianic age, and so we invite Elijah to be present with us. Also, in Exodus 6:8 the Bible states, "I will bring you to the land..." Throughout the ages the Jews looked forward to this promised return to the Holy Land. In Jewish literature, Elijah was always a protective presence when a community or individual was threatened; and his presence at the Seder was very welcome throughout Jewish history in Europe when this was an especially dangerous season for Jews.

#### **B. WHY DO WE WASH OUR HANDS PRIOR TO EATING THE VEGETABLES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEDER?**

The hand washing is to cleanse the fingertips before handling the vegetables and has no symbolic ritual meaning. Today, it is done merely to elicit questions from the children at the Seder.

#### **C. WHAT IS THE AFIKOMAN?**

It is a piece of the middle matzah set aside at the beginning of the seder (yachatz) as a substitute for the Paschal lamb and eaten at the conclusion of the meal. It is hidden during the seder to keep the children awake and interested during the middle of the seder.

#### **D. WHY IS THE 'HA LACHMA' WRITTEN IN ARAMAIC INSTEAD OF HEBREW?**

The spoken language, at the time it was written, was Aramaic. Aramaic was used since an invitation has to be extended in a language understood by all; today we use English.

#### **E. WHY DO WE DIP HERBS TWICE?**

We dip parsley in salt water because it reminds us of the green that comes to live again in the springtime. We dip the maror, or bitter herbs, in the sweet charoset as a sign of hope. Our ancestors were able to withstand the bitterness of slavery because it was sweetened by the hope of freedom.

#### **F. WHY DO WE RECLINE AT THE TABLE?**

Because reclining at the table was a sign of a free man in olden times. Since our ancestors were freed on this night, we recline at the table.

#### **G. WHY ARE THERE 4 DIFFERENT KINDS OF CHILDREN?**

The Rabbis found in the Torah, four different versions of the command that the father tell the story of the Exodus to his child, deducing four different kinds of children.

#### **A Mystical Understanding of the Four Children of the Seder**

Consider the parallel between the "four children" and the "four" who entered PARDES from the Talmud:

The wise child: Rabbi Akiva who knows the difference between water and water, -- between the upper spirituality and lower spirituality.

The wayward/other one: Acher (Elisha) who sees in the pardes a failure of absolute justice in the world, doubts and turns to his own path.

The simple one: Ben Zoma who encounters the Divine mystically literally and becomes psychologically damaged

The one who could not ask any questions: Ben Azai dies from the experience and hence can not speak.

#### **H. WHY DO WE RECITE THE HALLEL?**

We recite Hallel because of our awareness that the freedom is given by God, and we relate our exodus from Egypt to God's power. Therefore, we praise Him with traditional psalms of praise.

#### **I. WHY DO WE POUR A LITTLE WINE OUT OF OUR CUPS AS WE SAY THE 10 PLAGUES?**

Even though the Egyptians persecuted us, we still feel sorry that they suffered so much through the plagues. We, therefore, diminish our joy by pouring out the wine.

#### **J. WHY DO WE WASH OUR HANDS WITH A BLESSING BEFORE THE MEAL?**

This is a usual ritual washing which is done at any meal where bread or matzah is eaten prior to the blessing over the bread. The table is regarded as an altar where proper conversation and decorum is maintained. Just as the priest in the past washed his hands in preparation to approaching the altar, so do we.

#### **K. WHY TWO BLESSINGS OVER THE Matzah?**

One is the usual blessing for bread (matzah is bread which has not risen). The other blessing is specifically for the matzah which is eaten on Pesach Eve.

#### **L. WHY DO WE EAT BITTER HERBS A SECOND TIME IN A SANDWICH?**

We do it out of respect for the great scholar Hillel whose custom was to eat the maror with matzah. Since we recited the blessing already, we only mention why we are eating the sandwich.

#### **M. IS THERE ANY SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO "CHAD GADYA?"**

The kid, cat, dog, etc., each devouring the other have represented the mighty empires of the past, each one defeating the succeeding ones until God puts a final end to their power. Many of the popular Seder songs have various attributed meanings, although in truth we don't often really know what their authors intended.

#### **N. WHY DO WE EAT HARD BOILED EGGS?**

They symbolize the festival sacrifice. Some point out that the longer the egg is boiled, the harder it becomes, paralleling the ability of the Jewish People to become increasingly strong in the face of increasing oppression. Others suggest that since an elegant Hellenistic meal might begin with an egg, so then did the Seder meal that imitated a luxurious dining style of that period for free people.

#### **O. WHY DO WE SAY "L'SHANAH HA BA'AH BEE-RU-SHA LA-YIM?"**

"Next year in Jerusalem." This wish has always been associated with a future of perfect peace. To the Jew today it also expresses his close ties with Israel and his desire to visit Israel soon.

## HOW TO CONDUCT A SEDER

### **LIGHT YOM TOV CANDLES**

Before sunset, the mother is given the privilege to usher in the festival by lighting the candles and reciting the following blessing: "Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha-Olam Asher Kidshanu B'Mitzvotav V'tzivanu lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov."

**I. Kiddush.** On Friday evening add first portion (biblical selection on the Sabbath). On Saturday evening, add Havdalah section separating sanctity of Sabbath from Sanctity of holy day.

**II. Lave.** Washing preparation for eating vegetable entree (Karpas). Since the need for such washing was questioned, no blessing is required. It is good to go around to each of the participants, pouring water over the hands from a pitcher into a bowl.

**III. Karpas.** Any vegetable that is not bitter may be eaten. Among vegetables used are celery, parsley, onion and potato. Dipped in salt water for purification and seasoning they remind us of the vegetation of Spring - or the baby boys cast in the Nile - or the tears shed by the slaves. The blessing said is the usual benediction of thanks before eating any vegetable.

**IV. Divide** middle Matzah into two parts. Take larger part, wrap it in napkin and save for the conclusion of the meal. Try - but don't try too hard -to keep it from being stolen by the children because it must be available for the end of the meal.

### **V. Narrate**

1. Lift up the plate with the symbols of affliction. The traditional invitation to the stranger to join the Seder is offered.

2. The wine cups are refilled.

3. The Four "Questions."

4. The Response to the "Questions." Read portions in unison. Have other portions recited by different individuals at the table.

(a) The Four Sons. Play up this part. Discuss different types of reactions to Judaism.

(b) Since the cup of wine represents the "cup of salvation", it is lifted when we recall God's promise to Abraham, emphasizing His eternal watchfulness.

(c) Note how the biblical verses (Deuteronomy 26: 5-8) are elaborated upon, phrase by phrase.

(d) The Ten Plagues. Since our "cup of salvation" cannot be regarded as full when we recall the suffering of the Egyptians, a drop of wine is removed from the cup with the mention of each plague.

(e) Dayenu - Let all present join in the refrain.

(f) The explanations of the three principal symbols: the lamb bone, the matzah and the bitter herbs. Highlight this section at your Seder.

5. The cup is again lifted in joy, thankful for God's deliverance, ready to praise Him with the first word of the Psalm of praise (Hallel).

6. Two psalms of the Hallel.

7. Drink the wine, with the blessing of salvation.

**VI. Lave.** Ready to eat, the hands are washed before the meal, as is required at any meal similar to the previous hand-washing. Now, though, all wash with the usual benediction as the hands are dried.

**VII. Motzi - Matzah.** The first food at the meal is, as usual, bread (naturally, however, this bread - the matzah - is unleavened bread). The usual berakha - the motzi - is recited. However, before eating the matzah, a second berakha, thanking God for the requirement to eat matzah, is recited.

**VIII. Herbs.** Small pieces of horse-radish are dipped into the charoset (symbolic of mortar) to indicate that over emphasis on material things results in bitterness. Before eating it, a berakha thanking God for this requirement is recited. Some people mix the ground horse-radish with charoset, combining this with "IX,"

**IX. Hillel Sandwich.** In ancient times, Hillel ate the three symbolic foods (lamb, matzah and bitter herbs) together so that each mouthful contained all three. Thus the symbols of slavery and of liberation were intermingled. Now that we do not have the Paschal lamb, we eat just the matzah and horse-radish in a "Hillel sandwich". No special berakha is said, but we do read the words recalling Hillel's practice.

**X. Meal.** The joyous feasting gives us the feeling of human fellowship in harmony with God.

**XI. Dessert.** Now the afikoman. Either someone has "stolen" it, or parents can hide the afikoman when it is first put aside (IV) and let the children look for it during the meal to win a prize.

**XII. Birkat Ha-Mazon.** This is the usual "bentschen," grace after meals, including, of course, thankfulness for the Passover holiday. Fill the cup before this grace and drink the third cup at its conclusion, with the usual "bore p'ri hagafen."

At this point in the Seder, we **Open the Door For Elijah**, who by tradition is the forerunner of the Messiah, the harbinger of hope. Sing "Eliyahu Ha-navi."

**XIII. Hallelujah.** The rest of the evening is given over to hymns and songs. The Hallel is completed, and all join in singing songs: Adir Hu, Had Gadya, etc.

**XIV. Chasal Seder.** With the traditional formula, the Seder is concluded, and the we sing L'Shana HaBa'ah B'Y'rushalayim.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY SEDER READINGS**

(Note that some of the supplementary Seder Readings are from a few years ago and we can see how the political and religious conditions for the Jews and for others who are oppressed have changed so quickly in our world. Discuss with the Seder participants how relevant each of these readings still is today and why each is or is not still necessary.)

### **PRAYER FOR THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN LANDS OF OPPRESSION**

*(To be recited after "HA LACHMA ANYA," "This is the bread of affliction" at the beginning of the Seder)*

Behold this matzah, the symbol of our affliction but also of our liberty. As we look at it let us remember our brethren everywhere who are in distress. On this festival of our freedom, may our hearts be turned to our brothers and sisters in Russia and in Arab lands who are not able to celebrate this Passover in the traditional, reclining attitude of free men. Rock of Israel, hasten the day when all of our brethren will know true freedom and in consort with the whole house of Israel give thanks to Thee for Thy wondrous deeds and Thy redemption. And may the redeemer come unto Zion. Amen.

### **LET ALL WHO ARE HUNGRY**

*(The following reading has been prepared by "MAZON: a Jewish response to hunger" to be read at "HA LACHMA ANYA":)*

"The words are a pledge, and the pledge is a privilege. Surrounded by the hungry and the homeless, we can redeem the pledge. This evening, so that the hungry may eat, we contribute to Mazon, A Jewish Response to Hunger, and we say, together:

*Barukh eloheinu sheb'tuvo he'vianu v'zikanu l'mitzvat matan mazon.*

Blessed is our God through whose goodness we have been brought to the privilege of sharing our bread."

### **MATZAH OF HOPE**

*(A fourth Matzah is added to the traditional three on the main Seder place and the following prayer is recited after "HA LACHMA ANYA" at the beginning of the Seder).*

This Is The Matzah of Hope: This matzah, which we set aside as a symbol of hope, for the three million Jews of the Soviet Union, reminds us of the indestructible link that exists between us. As we observe this festival of freedom, we know that Soviet Jews are not free to learn of their Jewish past, to hand it down to their children. They cannot learn the languages of their fathers. They cannot teach their children to be the teachers, the rabbis of future generations.

They can only sit in silence and become invisible. We shall be their voice, and our voices shall be joined by thousands of men of conscience aroused by the wrongs suffered by Soviet Jews. Then shall they know that they have not been forgotten and they that sit in darkness shall yet see a great light.

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## **SEDER READING FOR ETHIOPIAN JEWRY**

*(Some add a fourth additional symbolic matzah to the traditional three covered matzot in order to remember oppressed Ethiopian Jewry, Jewry of Arab lands and Soviet Jewry still waiting to be redeemed. We then read:)*

It has become customary at the Seder to set aside a few minutes for Jews in other lands, especially the Soviet Union and those in Arab lands, who are not free to celebrate Passover. We also remember another group of our brothers and sisters, perhaps less familiar to us, but living in even more dire circumstances. These are the Ethiopian Jews or "Falashas" as they were called by the Ethiopians. Even their name, "Falasha," means stranger, though this group of Jews has been living in Ethiopia at least since the time of the Second Temple. They call themselves instead "Beta Yisrael," "The House of Israel."

Though their origins may be mysterious, their current problems are not. Once a proud and prosperous community of 500,000, their numbers have dwindled in recent years due to poverty, disease, drought, civil war and missionary efforts. Today, while most have been resettled in Israel for which they hoped, some still remain in Ethiopia. Their only desire is to be able to return to the land of their ancestors, Israel.

## **AN ETHIOPIAN JEW'S PRAYER**

*(We celebrate the successful ingathering of Ethiopian Jews in the State of Israel for which they prayed and waited for so many years. We shall not forget their oppression and the modern miracle of their redemption even as they are rapidly becoming mainstream Israelis. We also want to preserve their heritage of values and liturgy.)*

Do not separate me, O Lord, from the chosen  
From the joy, from the light, from the splendor,  
Let me see, O Lord, the light of Israel,  
And let me listen to the words of the just  
While they speak about the Law.  
To teach fear of Thee, O Lord, King forever.  
Thou are blessed, O Lord, be merciful to me.  
By day be Thou my shepherd, and my guardian at night.  
When I walk be my guide, when I sit be my guardian.  
When I call Thee, keep Thou not silent.  
I love Thee, hate me not;  
I have confidence in Thee,  
Abandon me not.



## THE GLORY OF PESACH

(From United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism collected materials by Rabbi Moshe Edelman)

All three Pilgrim festivals (Pesach, Shavuot and Succot) contain elements which make of them complete joyous occasions. However, it is Pesach, more than the others, which combines all elements into a most harmonious and soul-satisfying whole.

**Pesach is a festival of the head.** It calls upon the Jew to meditate on the ideal of freedom. It transports you back in history to the period of bondage in Egypt and it asks that you put yourself in the place of your ancestors who were released from Pharaoh's yoke. It is not enough to regard the Exodus as history. "In every generation a person is obliged to regard oneself as if you had left the land of Egypt. To translate Pesach into contemporary terms is one of the elements of the festival.

**Pesach is a festival of the heart.** It calls upon us to rejoice, to feel the presence of God as the source of human happiness. The Seder, with its song and rites, with the objects to delight children and the ease to relax adults, join in producing a feeling of well-being. The observance of Pesach is not a solemn ceremony but a delightful celebration.

**Pesach is a festival of hand.** Before it arrives, the Jew is asked to give what is called "Maot Chittim," money to provide for those in need of Matzot and other food for the festival. When the holiday actually arrives, we usher it in, at the very outset, by saying "Let all who are hungry come and eat with us." The spirit of hospitality dominates the festival, and the concern if the Jews is turned to our fellow man. But it is not a vague feeling of sympathy and concern of others which fills us. It is the act of giving, of extending one's hand to the needy that is an essential element of our celebration. For a least one week of the year, we remove the leaven of selfishness from our lives and we want to share life's blessing with others.

**Pesach is the festival of the head, the heart and the hand - an ideal combination for producing the wholeness, the integration, which religion should bring.**

## THE FIFTH CHILD -THE ONE WHO CANNOT ASK

On this night, we remember a fifth child.  
This is a child of the Shoah (Holocaust), who did not survive to ask.

Therefore, we ask for that child -- Why?

We are like the simple child. We have no answer.  
We can only follow the footsteps of Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, who could not bring himself to mention the Exodus at night until Ben Zoma explained it to him through the verse: *In order that you REMEMBER the day of your going out from Egypt, all the days of your life. (Deut. 16.3)*

We answer that child's question with silence. In silence, we remember that dark time. In silence, we remember that Jews preserved their image of God in the struggle for life. In silence, we remember the seder nights spent in the forests, ghettos, and camps; we remember that seder night when the Warsaw Ghetto rose in revolt.

## **FIFTH CUP (IN MEMORY OF THE SIX MILLION)**

*(To be recited after opening the door for Elijah)*

On this night of the Seder we remember with reverence and love the six million of our people of the European exile who perished at the hand of a tyrant more wicked than Pharaoh who enslaved our fathers in Egypt. Come, said he to his minions, let us cut them off from being a people, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more. And they slew the blameless and pure, men and women and little ones, with vapors of poison and burned them with fire. But we abstain from dwelling on the deeds of evil ones lest we defame the image of God in which man was created.

Now, the remnants of our people who were left in the ghettos and camps of annihilation rose up against the wicked ones for the sanctification of the Name and slew many of them before they died. On the first day of Passover the remnants in the Ghetto for Warsaw rose up against the adversary, even as in the days of Judah the Maccabee. They were lovely and pleasant in the lives and in their death they were not divided. They brought redemption to the name of Israel throughout all the world.

And from the depths of their affliction the martyrs lifted their voices in a song of faith in the coming of the Messiah, when justice and brotherhood will reign among men.

*"Ani ma-amin be-emuna sh'layma b'viat ha-mashiach;  
V'afal pee she-yit-may-mayah im kol ze ani ma-amin."*

(I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah;  
and, though he tarry, none the less I believe.)

## **THE FIFTH CUP - IN THANKFULNESS FOR ISRAEL**

*(To be recited after drinking the fourth cup of wine at the conclusion of the Seder.)*

We read in the Talmud: These four cups correspond to the four expressions of redemption which the Torah uses in relating the events of Egypt: Vehotzeti and I shall bring forth: Vehitzalti and I shall save; Vegaalti and I shall redeem: Valakahti and I shall take. Rabbi Tarphon would add a fifth cup to correspond to Veheveti and I shall bring.

And now, in our own time, when we have been privileged to behold the mercies of the Holy One, blessed is He and His salvation over us; in the establishment of the State of Israel which is the beginning of redemption and salvation, as it is written: "And I shall bring you into the land which I swore to give unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob and I have given it unto you as an inheritance; I am the Lord! it is fitting and proper that we observe this pious act, the drinking of the fifth cup as a form of thanksgiving.

We give thanks unto the Eternal for the wartime miracles and wonders He wrought for us. The mercies of the Eternal stood us in good stead in time of dire peril, when seven nations united to destroy and annihilate the Jewish state at the very time of its birth and yet once again they pledge do annihilate the land and its people and plunge it into rivers of blood and fire. The Eternal, in His loving kindness, frustrated the designs of our enemies and vouchsafed victory unto us bringing us again to Jerusalem in joy.

## **RECITED BEFORE THE RECOUNTING OF THE TEN PLAGUES**

*(Using the little finger, remove a drop of wine and touch it to a saucer or napkin for each plague.)*

As we prepare to spill wine from our cup at the mention of each plague, we recall the sentence of the Bible, "Rejoice not when your enemy falls". Our Rabbis taught that when the children of Israel sang songs of praise to God as the Egyptians drowned in the sea, the angels on high wished to join in these songs and were stopped by God who said, "These are my creatures who are drowning in the sea! For this you would sing songs of praise?". Thus we too lessen our joy at Passover time at the mention of these plagues, for there can be no rejoicing at the death or suffering of human beings, even our enemies. And so we diminish this cup of joy, for our redemption had to come through the destruction of others.

## **PESACH, BERGEN-BELSEN 1944**

*(To be recited when describing the Matzah and the Seder Plate.)*

The Jewish prisoners in the German concentration camp at Bergen Belsen did not have matzah for the observance of Pesach in 1944. Under the circumstances the sages at the camp permitted the eating of leavened bread for which occasion this benediction was composed:

Our Father in heaven, behold it is evident and known to three that it is our desire to do they will and to celebrate the festival of Pesach by eating matzah and by observing the prohibition of leavened food. But our heart is pained that the enslavement prevents us and we are in danger of our lives. Behold, we are prepared and ready to fulfill they commandment; "And ye shall live by them and not die by them".

We pray to thee that thou mayest keep us alive and preserve us and redeem us speedily so that we may observe thy statutes and do thy will and serve thee with a perfect heart. Amen.

## **MAROR-AN ADDITIONAL TRADITION**

*(Before reciting the blessing for Maror, the leader holds up the Maror and recites this statement together with the Seder participants.)*

The Maror represents bitterness. Lest we become complacent let us remember on this Seder night that millions of our people still taste the maror of servitude. Cruel tyrants refuse to permit them to practice their faith or teach their children the beauty of Judaism. Strengthen them in their struggle to be free men and say again the words: "Let My People Go, that they may serve Me". On Pesach we pray that another Exodus will come to pass. May the maror, the bitterness of selfishness, give way to the sweetness of sharing. Reward our efforts, so that next year may see the emancipation of our people and the advent of a world-wide Pesach replete with justice, equality and Shalom.

## **A READING FOR THE RANSOM OF THE AFIKOMAN:**

*(When the child finds and prepares the return of the Afikoman, the following dialogue is read. If necessary, an adult or older child may assist in reading the "child's" part.)*

CHILD: (Holding the Afikoman, a child addresses the Seder leader:)

Father...(Grandfather, Mother...) I have found this half of the Matzah...the Afikoman.

LEADER: And, I have the other half. Where did you find your half of the matzah?

CHILD: I found it. . . . .

LEADER: And now, we who have enjoyed this bountiful Seder must share what you have found. We will share the Afikoman as our dessert and also remember and provide for those still in bondage.

CHILD: How much will you pay me for this dessert?

LEADER: I will pay you whatever we agree upon. And, in memory of our own escape from Egypt and to free those still in bondage in Ethiopia, we at this table will give generously to free Beta Yisrael, the Jews of Ethiopia.

(Child hands the Afikoman to the Leader.)

LEADER: As I receive this Afikoman, may it be an offering for all our people who still suffer. May this be the fulfillment of Rabbi Maimonides' conviction that the greatest of all Mitzvot is the "redemption of captives."

## **THE AFIKOMAN PLEDGE**

*(When the Afikoman is found, the following is an alternative or supplementary reading on the part of all Seder participants:)*

"Tonight we read together:

Lo! This is the bread of poverty that our ancestors ate.

Let all who are hungry come and eat!

Let all who are in need share in the hope of Passover!

This year we all are slaves,

Next year may we all be free.

Tonight, to redeem the Afikoman:

We renew our commitment to help all who are hungry round the world,

So that next year we may all be free."

## **DAYENU - "IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH"**

*(The following verses were written in 1988 by CLAL to continue the tradition of adding to the story of the Exodus, of making that ancient story a modern extension of our dream for a time when all of God's children will live together in peace and harmony.)*

Had God upheld us throughout two thousand year of Dispersion But not preserved our hope for return	Dayenu
Had God preserved our hope for return But not sent us leaders to make the dream a reality	Dayenu
Had God sent us leaders to make the dream a reality, But not given us success in the U.N. vote	Dayenu
Had God given us success in the U.N. vote, But not defeated our attackers in 1948	Dayenu
Had God defeated our attackers in 1948, But not unified Jerusalem	Dayenu
Had God unified Jerusalem, But not led us toward peace with Egypt	Dayenu
Had God returned us to the Land of our ancestors, But not filled it with our children	Dayenu
Had God willed it with our children, But not caused the desert to bloom	Dayenu
Had God caused the desert to bloom, But not built for us cities and towns	Dayenu
Had God rescued our remnants from the Holocaust's flames, But not brought our brothers from Arab lands	Dayenu
Had God brought our brothers from Arab lands, But not opened the gates for Russia's Jews	Dayenu
Had God opened the gate for Russia's Jews, But not redeemed our people from Ethiopia	Dayenu
Had God redeemed our people from Ethiopia, But not planted in our hearts a covenant of One People	Dayenu
Had God planted in our hearts a covenant of One People, But not sustained in our souls a vision of a perfected world	Dayenu

***Dayenu!***

## RECOMMENDED HAGGADOT

### FOR ADULTS AND LEADERS:

**A Different Night: The Family Participation Haggadah**, Noam Zion and David Dishon. The Shalom Hartman Institute, 5757. **Leader's Guide** by Zion and Dishon also available.

**Passover Haggadah: The Feast of Freedom**, Ed. Rachel Anne Rabinowicz. New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1982.

**The New American Haggadah : Haggadah Shel Pesah**, Ed. Mordecai Menahem Kaplan, Eugene Kohn, Ira Eisenstein, Gila Gerirtz. New York: Berhman House.

**A Passover Haggadah**, Ed. Herbert Bronstein. Central Conference of American Rabbis.

**Family Haggadah/Book and Audio Cassette**, Shoshana Silberman. Kar-Ben Copies Publishers.

**The Art of Jewish Living**, Ron Wolfson. New York: The Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, 1988.

**The Women's Haggadah**, E. M. Broner with Naomi Nimrod. San Francisco: Harper, 1994.

**Passover Survival Kit**, Shimon Apisdorf. Columbus: Leviathan Press, 1994.

### FOR CHILDREN:

**Why On This Night?** Rahel Musleah. Alladin Paperbacks, 1999.

**The Story Haggadah**, Sol Scharfstein. New York: KTAV, 1990.

**The Ten Plagues of Egypt**, Shoshana Lepon. New York: The Judaica Press, 1988.

**The Santa Cruz Haggadah Kids Passover Fun Book**, Karen Roekard. Berkeley: The Hineni Consciousness Press, 1994

**My Very Own Haggadah**, Judyth R. Saypol and Madeline Wikler, Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies, 1993.

**We Tell It To Our Children**, Mary Ann Barrows Wark. St. Paul: Mt. Zion Hebrew Congregation Rabbi's Publication Fund and Mensch Makers Press, 1988.

**Haggadah Shel Pesach: A Singing Haggadah**, Ellen M. Egger. Princeton: L'Rakia Press, 1986.

**My Favorite Family Haggadah**, Shari Faden Donahue. Los Angeles: MAZON, 1994.

**UH! OH! Hidden Passover Objects You'll (Almost) Never Find**, Janet Zwebner. Israel: Yellow Brick Road Press, 1994.

## **5761 Modern Passover Seder Songs**

(These songs have been gathered from far and near, and they should be enjoyed and sung either at the end of the Seder. Feel free to insert them at a place that you and your Seder participants will enjoy and find meaningful.)

### **1. There's No Seder Like our Seder**

*(sung to the tune of "There's no Business like Show business")*

There's no seder like our seder,  
There's no seder I know.  
Everything about it is halachic  
Nothing that the Torah won't allow.  
Listen how we read the whole Haggadah  
It's all in Hebrew  
'Cause we know how.

There's no Seder like our seder,  
We tell a tale that is swell:  
Moses took the people out into the heat  
They baked the matzah  
While on their feet  
Now isn't that a story  
That just can't be beat?  
Let's go on with the show!

### **2. Take Us Out of Egypt**

*(sung to the tune of "Take me out to the ball game")*

Take us out of Egypt  
Free us from slavery  
Bake us some matzah in a haste  
Don't worry 'bout flavor--  
Give no thought to taste.  
Oh it's rush, rush, rush, to the Red Sea  
If we don't cross it's a shame  
For it's ten plagues,  
Down and you're out  
At the Pesach history game.

### **3. Les Miselijah**

*(to the tune of "Do you hear the people Sing" from "Les Miserables")*

Do you hear the doorbell ring,  
And it's a little after ten?  
It can only be Elijah  
Come to take a sip again.  
He is feeling pretty fine  
But in his head a screw is loose.  
So perhaps instead of wine  
We should only give him juice.

#### 4. Elijah

*(to the tune of "Maria")*

Elijah!  
I just saw the prophet Elijah.  
And suddenly that name  
Will never sound the same to me.  
Elijah!  
He came to our seder  
Elijah!  
He had his cup of wine,  
But could not stay to dine  
This year--  
Elijah!  
For your message all Jews are waiting:  
That the time's come for peace  
and not hating--  
Elijah--  
Next year we'll be waiting.  
Elijah!

#### 5. Just a Tad of Charoset

*(to the tune of "Just a spoon full of sugar")*

##### **Chorus:**

Just a tad of charoset helps the bitter herbs go down,  
The bitter herbs go down, the bitter herbs go down.  
Just a tad of charoset helps the bitter herbs go down,  
In the most disguising way.

Oh, back in Egypt long ago,  
The Jews were slaves under Pharaoh.  
They sweat and toiled and labored  
through the day.  
So when we gather Pesach night,  
We do what we think right.  
Maror, we chew,  
To feel what they went through.

Chorus

So after years of slavery  
They saw no chance of being free.  
Their suffering was the only life they knew.  
But baby Moses grew up tall,  
And said he'd save them all.  
He did, and yet,  
We swear we won't forget.  
That.....

Chorus cont....

While the maror is being passed,  
We all refill our water glass,



Preparing for the taste that turns us red.  
Although maror seems full of minuses,  
It sure does clear our sinuses.  
But what's to do?  
It's hard to be a Jew!!!

Chorus

## 6. Same time next year

*(to the tune of "Makin' Whoopee")*

Another Pesach, another year,  
The family seder with near and dear...  
Our faces shining,  
All thoughts of dining  
Are put on hold now.  
We hear four questions,  
The answer given  
Recalls the Jews from Egypt driven.  
The ch'rain is bitter, (charoset better!)  
Please pass the matzah.  
Why is this evening different  
From all the other nights?  
This year the Jews all over  
Are free to perform the rites.  
A gorgeous dinner--who can deny it--  
Won't make us thinner, to hell with diet!  
It's such great cooking...  
and no one's looking,  
So just enjoy it.  
Moving along at steady clip  
Elijah enters, and takes a sip;  
And then the singing with voices ringing  
Our laughter mingling.  
When singing about Chad GadYa.  
Watch close or your place you'll lose,  
For Echad Mi Yodea:  
Which tune shall we use?  
We pray next Pesach  
We'll all be here.  
It's a tradition...  
Same time next year...  
So fill it up now, the final cup now,  
Next year at Nanny and Zayde's house

## 7. The Ballad of the Four Sons

*(to the tune of "Clementine")*

Said the father to his children,  
"At the seder you will dine,  
You will eat your fill of matzoh,  
You will drink four cups of wine."

Now this father had no daughters,  
But his sons they numbered four.  
One was wise and one was wicked,  
One was simple and a bore.

And the fourth was sweet and winsome,  
he was young and he was small.  
While his brothers asked the questions  
he could scarcely speak at all.

Said the wise one to his father  
"Would you please explain the laws?  
Of the customs of the seder  
Will you please explain the cause?"

And the father proudly answered,  
"As our fathers ate in speed,  
Ate the paschal lamb 'ere midnight  
And from slavery were freed."

So we follow their example  
And 'ere midnight must complete  
All the seder and we should not  
After 12 remain to eat.

Then did sneer the son so wicked  
"What does all this mean to you?"  
And the father's voice was bitter  
As his grief and anger grew.

"If you yourself don't consider  
As son of Israel,  
Then for you this has no meaning  
You could be a slave as well."

Then the simple son said simply  
"What is this," and quietly  
The good father told his offspring  
"We were freed from slavery."

But the youngest son was silent  
For he could not ask at all.  
His bright eyes were bright with wonder  
As his father told him all.

My dear children, heed the lesson  
and remember evermore  
What the father told his children  
Told his sons that numbered four.

## 8. Pharaoh Doesn't Pay

(To the tune of "I've Been Working on the Railroad")

I've been working on these buildings;  
Pharaoh doesn't pay.  
I've been doing what he tells me  
Like making bricks from clay.  
Can't you hear the master calling,  
"Hurry up, make a brick!"  
Can't you feel the master hurt me  
Until I'm feeling sick.  
Oh is this a mess,  
Oh is this a mess,  
Oh is this a mess, for Jews, for Jews.  
Oh is this a mess,  
Oh is this a mess,  
Oh is this a mess for Jews.  
Someone's in the palace with Pharaoh -  
Someone's in the palace we know, ow, ow, ow,  
Someone's in the palace with Pharaoh -  
Does he know they treat us so?  
Keep singing work, work, work all day,  
Work all day and then some mo -ore,  
Work, work, work all day -  
Does he know they treat us so?

## 9. Pharaoh's Lament

(To the tune of "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider")

My river and my sun gods have always helped me rule.  
Down came the plagues  
And folks think I'm a fool.  
Up come the slaves' God  
And tells me what to do.  
I'm a roughy-toughy Pharaoh.  
Why won't my gods come through?

## 10. Plagues

(To the tune of "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain")

Bad things will come to Egypt, don't you know?  
Bad things will come to Egypt, don't you know?  
Bad things will come to Egypt,  
Bad things will come to Egypt,  
Bad things will come to Egypt, till we go  
  
God will give you this last chance to let us go;  
God will give you this last chance to let us go;  
As midnight passes by -y  
All your firstborn sons will die -ie;  
And your people will cry out if we can't go.

## 11. Our Passover Things

*(To be sung to the tune of "My Favorite Things" from the "Sound of Music")*

Cleaning and cooking and so many dishes  
Out with the chametz, no pasta, no knishes  
Fish that's gefilted, horseradish that stings  
These are a few of our Passover things.

Matzah and karpas and chopped up charoset  
Shankbones and kiddish and yiddish neuroses  
Tante who kvetches and uncle who sings  
These are a few of our Passover things.

Motzi and moror and trouble with Pharaohs  
Famines and locusts and slaves with wheelbarrows  
Matazah balls floating and eggshell that clings  
These are a few of our Passover things.

When the plagues strike  
When the lice bite  
When we're feeling sad  
We simply remember our Passover things  
And then we don't feel so bad.

## 12. Let My People Go

When Israel was in Egypt land  
Let My People go  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand  
Let My People go.  
Go down, Moses  
Way down in Egypt land  
Tell old Pharaoh  
To Let My People go.

### 13. It Made Them Mad

*(To the tune of "Clementine")*

It made them mad to hear the answer  
Pharaoh would not let them go.  
God would help them with a signal  
Mighty power God would show.

No, no, no, no, no, no, no  
That was all that Pharaoh said.  
With no way to beat his army,  
They would change his mind instead.

Every time bad things got started  
He would almost let them go;  
But as soon as things got better,  
He would switch and tell them NO! (shout "no!")

When the tenth plague scared old Pharaoh,  
He'd no longer let them stay.  
"Get out of Egypt," he fin'lly shouted.  
"Take your stuff and go away."

With their cattle and some matzah  
Jews were fin'lly on their way.  
Through the Red Sear and hot Sinai  
To their own God they could pray.

### 14. TONIGHT

*(To the tune of "Tonight," from West Side Story, By Rabbi Dan Liben Passover, 2000)*

Tonight, tonight,  
We'll tell a tale tonight,  
Of Pharaoh, Slaves and God's awesome might;

We'll do it right, with matzah, and maror  
and four children: -dull, wicked- and bright!

Tonight, we'll tell our people's story,  
The "genut" and then the glory,  
And how it came out right..

And when we're through  
You'll know you've been freed too  
On this Saaay-der night!

Tonight, tonight, we'll drink four cups of wine,  
We'll laugh and sing and dine  
'till its light;

The tale's not new  
And yet it still rings true  
It gives meaning -to being -a Jew!

Egyptian masters they did beat us  
But Moses he did lead us  
From darkness into light;

And soon we'll know  
Why God did make it so  
On this Saaaay-der night!

## 15. The Ballad of Mo Amramson

(sung to the tune of "The Ballad of Jed Clampett")

Come and listen to a story 'bout a man named Mo,  
His people they were slaves to the evil Pharoah,  
Until one day he was lookin' at a bush,  
And he heard the voice of God, though he wasn't a lush---  
The LORD, that is, I AM, The Big G.

Next thing you know, Mo's talkin' to Pharoah,  
Mo says, "God said you gotta let my people go!"  
But the king says, "No, they always will be slaves to me!"  
So God sent down ten big plagues on Pharoah's whole country---  
Blood 'n frogs, that is,  
Pestilence,  
Special effects.

When the first borns died, Pharoah sent the Jews away,  
They ran and ate some matzoh on that very happy day,  
So now we have our Seder to commemorate that feat---  
We drink some wine and talk a lot, we sing and also eat!  
Matzoh, that is,  
Maror too.  
And good food.  
Y'all come back now, y'hear!

## 16. Haggadah Wash that Man Right out of my Hair

Haggadah wash that man right out of my hair  
Because he's full of chometz but he doesn't care.  
That it's a custom now to be rid of that snare,  
I'll send him on his way.  
Haggadah drink my wine and feel real free,  
Haggadah eat charosez, matzah and tea,  
Haggadah keep the seder, with joy and glee.  
I really love that day!!  
He doesn't like gefilte fish,  
eat it up, eat it up.  
He doesn't like the matzah dish  
Heat it up, heat it up.  
can't wait for him to change-  
Hey buddy... (repeat 1st verse).

## 17. Morrh

(Sung to the tune of "More..")

Morrh is the bitterness the world has known,  
But in Canada we need not moan.  
Morrh were the ghettos of across the sea,  
But here we habitate a land that's free.

Morrh on the table, we are sure and  
we're able to look forward to many  
types of joy - oh boy-oi-oi-oi...  
Morrh is the bitter herb upon our plate,  
And if we were sober we would palitate  
Morrh is the answer for the schnorer, who is rich or poorer-  
Why can't we love forever .....Morrh!

## 18. The Eight Nights of Passover

(To the tune of "The Twelve Days")

On the first night of Passover my mother served to me

- 1) a matzo ball in chicken soup
- 2) two dipped herbs
- 3) three pieces of matzah
- 4) four cups of wine
- 5) five gefilte fish
- 6) six capons baking
- 7) seven eggs a boiling
- 8) eight briskets roasting

## 19. Moses Island

(Mark Kreditor, sung to the tune of Gilligan's Island)

Just recline right back and you'll hear a tale,  
a tale of dreadful trip.  
That started with ten awful plagues brought onto Egypt,  
brought unto Egypt.

The boss he was a Jewish man raised as a Pharaohos son.  
Then G-d he did come calling and soon the fun begun,  
soon the fun begun.

More blood, such frogs, and all those bugs,  
Pharaoh could just barely see.  
The Jews were really scoring points and soon they would be free.  
and soon they would be free.

They shlepped and shlepped for forty years across a desert land.  
He went up to Mt Sinai and a party soon began, a party soon began.  
Moses, the Pharaoh too, Aaron and his wife.  
Marianne the skipper too here on the desert island.

## 20. Don't sit on the Afikomen

(To the tune of Glory, Glory, Hallelu-kah)

My Dad at every Seder breaks a Matza piece in two  
And hides the Afikomen half-A game for me and you  
Find it, hold it ransom for the Seder isn't through  
'till the Afikomen's gone.

Chorus:

Don't sit on the Afikomen.  
Don't sit on the Afikomen.  
Don't sit on the Afikomen.  
Or the Meal will last all night

One year Daddy hid it 'neath a pillow on a chair  
But just as I raced over, my Aunt Sophie sat down there  
She threw herself upon it-Awful crunching filled the air  
And crumbs flew all around

Chorus

There were matza crumbs all over-Oh, it was a messy sight  
We swept up all the pieces though it took us half the night  
So, if you want your seder ending sooner than dawn's light,  
Don't sit on the Afiko-o-men

Chorus

## 21. Passover Story

(Mark Kreditor, sung to the tune of The Brady Bunch)

It's a story, about baby Moses, who came floating  
down the river called the Nile  
Pharoh's Queen was there just to catch him and so he stayed a while.

Its a story about Jewish builders, who were tired  
of building Pyramids. All of them were slaves just  
like their Mothers and just like their kids.

Until one day big Moses talked to Big G. That's  
G-O-D and that spells Moses's God. He said you  
just leave and go to Israel I won't make it hard.

So then Moses asked old Pharoh let my people go.  
He said "For Real"!, no Moses never no. So the 10  
plagues were brought to Pharoh and he said: Moses go .

Your people can go. Now Moses go. That's the  
way Pharoh said now Moses go.



## 22. Moses

(Mark Kreditor, sung to the tune of The Flintstones)

Moses, he's our Moses he's the man that took us for a tour  
Out of, Pharaoh's Egypt went the children that he soon would lure

Come sit and eat matzah all week long. Listen to our prayers and to our songs of Moses  
he's our hero he's a really really good time, a forty year guy he's the one that set us free.

## 23. Barney Pesach

(Mark Kreditor, sung to the tune of I Love You, You Love Me)

We are Jews can't you see,  
Moses took us out we're free.  
With a long long walk from Sinai to Israel,  
Charlton Heston's role he'd steal.

## A Wish for You

May you have ...  
Enough happiness to keep you sweet;  
Enough trials to keep you strong;  
Enough sorrow to keep you human;  
Enough hope to keep you happy;  
Enough failure to keep you humble;  
Enough success to keep you eager;  
Enough friends to give you comfort;  
Enough wealth to meet your needs;  
Enough faith in yourself to inspire you to do your best, and  
Enough determination to make each day better than  
yesterday.

## THE EMPTY CHAIR PRAYER

*(Please take a moment at your family seder to join in this prayer:By Rabbi Naftali Schiff)*

Do you remember seder night 50 years ago?

We had empty seats in our family after the Nazi Holocaust.

Do you remember seder night 20 years ago?

We had an empty seat in our home for a Jew in Soviet Russia.

This year, 50 percent of young Jews are being lost to apathy and assimilation.

Should we leave an empty seat tonight?

Dear God,

Thank you for allowing us to enjoy another seder night together with our family and friends.

Just as our family joins together on seder night, bridging all distances and differences, please help us the Jewish People to heal the rifts of internal dissent.

Please infuse us with the knowledge and inspire us with the awareness that Jewish people all over the world are part of our family.

Together we have survived the turmoil of 3300 years, making a difference to civilization wherever we go.

Today we are losing every second Jewish child to the ravages of apathy and assimilation.

Dear God, help us to bring these young Jews back to us, back to You.

They are our children.  
They are our grandchildren.  
They are our future.

Fortify us with the resolve and the commitment to reach out to them so that together we can forge our common destiny.

Next year, please God, let there be no empty seats at our family seder.

## A WOMAN'S PRAYER FOR PASSOVER

By Esther Blaustein 1971

Lord, let not the line at the supermarket be too long  
Let the produce be fresh and crisp and let there be  
Just one more jar of Kosher-for-Passover mayonnaise left.  
You see, Lord, I forgot that there is school next week  
And tuna fish falls off matzoh sandwiches so easily  
When it is not held together with enough mayonnaise.

God, please let everyone be well for the two Seder nights  
And while You are at it, could you please make it the rest of the  
year, too?  
And if you do not make me spend so many hours  
Swabbing chickenpox with calamine lotion  
I promise that I will devote my leisure  
To ecology, UJA, JHA and things like that.

Almighty God, let the children behave at the seder table  
For I have labored so long to make everything right and lovely.  
Suffer not their little fingers to spill wine on the tablecloth  
and carpeting  
It never seems to come out.  
And let them pipe the Mah Nishtanah and the Chad Gadya  
In such abundant glee and wisdom  
As to make the car pool to Hebrew School worth it.

Ruler of the Universe, it seem that I will never get all these  
dishes changed  
And Everyone's clothes ready, and all the chametz out of the  
house in time.  
So remember, Dear Lord,  
To please make sure that the cleaning woman shows up.

Creator of the World, let each year have our table be fuller  
Not only with Your bounty, but with people.  
All our loved ones, dear friends, new babies,  
And young lovers shyly brought home for approval.  
And let this year begin, and next year see  
Our banquet seats overflowing  
With our long-lost Jews who crouch in fear in countries other  
than ours.

God of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel and  
Leah  
Let me not,  
In the hustle and rush of preparation,  
Forget what the Passover really means.

## Prepare your computer for Pesach!

*(A reading for the more technically minded - set it to music at your own risk.)*

Now is the time to prepare to kasher your computer for Pesach (remember the halakhic decision of the Miekrosovter Rebbe, Velvele ("Vill") Getz that it is prohibited to use a computer on Pesach unless all hametz has been removed)

We introduce ANTI\_HAMETZ the software that will purge your files of all non-kosher for Pesach words and allow you to use your computer on Pesach and free you from the obligation to sell it to a gentile.

ANTI\_HAMETZ will substitute the word "Matzah" for "bread" and delete all other non-kosher words, substituting asterisks \*\*\*

ANTI\_HAMETZ comes in three versions: Kosher, Kittniyot and > Gebrocht. All versions are under Rabbinical supervision and bear the hekhsher YK2000.

No one's files are completely hametz free. Look at this seemingly innocuous sentence.

"He has been speaking about the price of flowers bred in Bethlehem"

Here is what Kosher ANTI\_HAMETZ will do:  
He has been speaking about the price of \*\*\*\*\*s matzah in Bethmatzah.

And Kitniyot ANTI\_HAMETZ :  
He has \*\*\*\*(1) s\*\*\*\*king(2) about the p\*\*\*\*(3) of \*\*\*\*\*s matzah in Bethmatzah.

- (1) beans are kitniyot
- (2) peas are kitniyot
- (3) rice is not eaten on Pesach by Ashkenazim

REJOINDER: Do not base any halakhic decisions on this ad. It is possible that it is only a Purim parody. If you are worried about Hametz in your computer files ask a Rabbi. The most interesting decisions will be given by Rabbis on Purim, especially if they are sufficiently inebriated.

## **THE PASSOVER - "FREEDOM GAME"**

BY RABBI STEPHEN BAARS

Create a lively discussion by giving out a copy of this page during the Seder meal: Of the following list, who is the most enslaved person and who is the most free?

A. "Three years ago I was taken by the KGB and put in a labor camp in Siberia, I am told when to get up, when to go to bed and everything between."

B. "I was ship-wrecked on a desert island. I can do anything I want, but there's nothing to do here."

C. "I'm a heavy heroine addict. I live my days just to get the next high. Luckily I inherited a large fortune that allows me to support my habit."

D. "I worked hard all my life to become rich. At the height, I was worth around \$25 million. Then came the crash. The bank took everything - my business, my house, even my car. I now work 9-to-5 in a sweatshop, struggling to make ends meet. When I had money, I used to take exotic vacations and dine in the finest restaurants. Life was fun. Now I'm lucky if I can afford takeout."

E. "In the country I live in, cigarettes are banned. I used to smoke two packs a day. Now I can't get them and I'm very depressed."

F. "I used to be a top college athlete and was headed for a pro career. Then last year I dove into a pool that was too shallow and broke my neck. I'm now completely paralyzed from my chin down. All I think about all day long is what I used to be able to do."

G. "Last year I tried to commit suicide but a policeman caught me just before I jumped. I was institutionalized. There's no possibility here for me to do what I really want to do - kill myself."

## A PASSOVER QUIZ

### 1. Which traditional food is on the Seder plate:

- a. egg roll                      b. matzah balls                      c. haroset

### 2. What is part of the Passover preparations?

- a. turning your house upside down                      b. re-acting the slavery by lugging up the dishes from the basement  
c. burning the chometz without being cited by the EPA                      d. all of the above

### 3. Matzah is known as the "bread of affliction" because:

- a. the slaves ate it                      b. it makes you constipated                      c. the price goes up every year

### 4. The best place to hide the Afikoman is

- a. behind the carburetor                      b. in a steel vault with doors 2" thick                      c. in the underwear drawer

### 5. The Number One Afikoman gift this year is

- a. Moses and Aaron action figures                      b. Nissan matchbox trucks  
c. "When I was a kid, we were lucky to get a quarter." require batteries or assembly                      d. Anything that does not

### 6. The Four Questions include

- a. Are we there yet?                      b. How can we recline without a La-Z-Boy?  
c. If a tree falls in an Israeli forest, how quickly can American Jewry plant another?

### 7. If there were a Passover Hall of Fame, who would you vote to induct?

- a. Uncle Louie    b. Leonard Nimoy                      c. Moshe Oofnik                      d. Charleton Heston

### 8. The Four Children include

- a. the doctor    b. the lawyer    c. the Russian    d. Simple Simon

### 9. Before the time of Abraham, people worshipped

- a. the dust of the earth                      b. the salt of the earth  
c. the stars of the heaven                      d. the stars on Hollywood Boulevard

### 10. When Jacob and his family originally went down to Egypt

- a. they were only a few, but became "religiously pluralistic"  
b. built several synagogues - at least one in which they wouldn't attend!  
c. spread out in the Land of Goshen

### 11. On Seder night, we are supposed to drink wine until

- a. Uncle Irving's jokes sound new to you  
b. you can no longer tell the difference between Pharaoh and Moses  
c. you don't miss bread

## THE HAGGADAH - IN COMPUTER COMMAND LANGUAGE

```
Release ISRAEL
ISRAEL running in slave mode, cannot release
Set ISRAEL;mode=master
Pharaoh already running in master mode, cannot change ISRAEL
Set Pharaoh;mode=slave
Command ignored
Load Moshe
Done
Deactivate Pharaoh
Pharaoh account hard locked;cannot be deactivated
For i=1 to 10 do plagues      Are you sure? Y   Done
Release ISRAEL
error: ISRAEL uninitialized
Set ISRAEL = 600,000
Done
Release ISRAEL
ISRAEL released
Declare Matza;array(width=20,length=20,height=0)
Done
Move ISRAEL to Sinai
OPERATOR WARNING! SYSTEM ABOUT TO CRASH! PHARAOH AND RED SEA HAVE
LIMITED YOUR MEMORY SPACE! SAVE YOUR WORK!
Save ISRAEL
Specify save device
Save ISRAEL with miracle
Done
Move ISRAEL to Sinai
Done
[sent to me by a congregant; no authorship]
For I=1 to 10 do commandments
Allocation conflict:Commandments cannot be operated with active golden
calf routine
Destroy calf                Done
For I=1 to 10 do commandments
Done; commandments stored on hard rock device
Move ISRAEL to desert
Warning! Command could lead to infinite loop
Move ISRAEL to desert;limit=40 years      Done
Build Mishkan
Syntax error
Build Mishkan;owner=Betzalel              Done
Move ISRAEL to ISRAEL
Warning: operand terms must be unique
Move ISRAEL to CANAAN
Overload: cannot move all of ISRAEL to CANAAN
set ISRAEL = ISRAEL - (SPIES * 10)        Done
Move ISRAEL to CANAAN                    Done
```

### **The Dr. Seuss version of the 4 questions**

(Professor Eliezer Segal, <http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/>)

Why is it only  
on Passover night  
we never know how  
to do anything right?  
We don't eat our meals  
in the regular ways,  
the ways that we do  
on all other days.

'Cause on all other nights  
we may eat  
all kinds of wonderful  
good bready treats,  
like big purple pizza  
that tastes like a pickle,  
crumbly crackers  
and pink pumpernickel,  
sassafras sandwich  
and tiger on rye,  
fifty falafels in pita,  
fresh-fried,  
with peanut-butter  
and tangerine sauce  
spread onto each side  
up-and-down, then across,  
and toasted whole-wheat bread  
with liver and ducks,  
and crumpets and dumplings,  
and bagels and lox,  
and doughnuts with one hole  
and doughnuts with four,  
and cake with six layers  
and windows and doors.  
Yes--  
on all other nights  
we eat all kinds of bread,  
but tonight of all nights  
we munch matzah instead.

And on all other nights  
we devour  
vegetables, green things,  
and bushes and flowers,  
lettuce that's leafy  
and candy-striped spinach,  
fresh silly celery  
(Have more when you're finished!)  
cabbage that's flown  
from the jungles of Glome  
by a polka-dot bird  
who can't find his way home,  
daisies and roses



and inside-out grass  
and artichoke hearts  
that are simply first class!  
Sixty asparagus tips  
served in glasses  
with anchovy sauce  
and some sticky molasses--  
But on Passover night  
you would never consider  
eating an herb  
that wasn't all bitter.

### **MATZA REUNION**

© *D. Grupper, 1997*

This middle matzah which is one  
I now break into two  
We eat one piece to start our feast  
The other when we're through

Between these halves our tale is told  
Yahatz 'till afikomen  
Then these halves unite again  
Inside of our abdomen

### **"There was a Man"**

*(Peter, Paul and Mary)*

There is a man, comin' to Egypt,  
And Moses is his name,  
There is a man, Comin' to Egypt,  
In his heart there burns a flame,  
In his heart there burns a flame, oh Lord, In his heart there burns a flame.

There is a man, comin' to Egypt,  
And his eyes are full of light,  
Just like the sun, Come up in Egypt,  
Come to drive away the night,  
Come to drive away the night, oh Lord, Come to drive away the night.

There is a man, comin' to Egypt,  
To heal our souls from pain,  
And we will follow, Into freedom,  
Never wear these chains again,  
Never wear these chains again, oh Lord, Never wear these chains again.

**"Uncle Eli's Special-for-Kids Most Fun Ever Under-the-Table Passover Haggadah"** *(another Seuss-like version)*

And on all other nights  
you would probably flip  
if anyone asked you  
how often you dip.  
On some days I only dip  
one Bup-Bup egg  
in a teaspoon of vinegar  
mixed with nutmeg,  
but sometimes we take  
more than ten thousand tails  
of the Yakkity-birds  
that are hunted in Wales,  
and dip them in vats  
full of Mumbegum juice.  
Then we feed them to Harold,  
our six-legged moose.  
Or we don't dip at all!  
We don't ask your advice.  
So why on this night  
do we have to dip twice?

And on all other nights  
we can sit as we please,  
on our heads, on our elbows,  
our backs or our knees,  
or hang by our toes  
from the tail of a Glump,  
or on top of a camel  
with one or two humps,  
with our foot on the table,  
our nose on the floor,  
with one ear in the window  
and one out the door,  
doing somersaults  
over the greasy k'nishes  
or dancing a jig  
without breaking the dishes.  
Yes--  
on all other nights  
you sit nicely when dining--  
So why on this night  
must it all be reclining?

## **FOUR MORE SONS: FOUR MORE QUESTIONS**

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Tzvi Feldman, Yehuda Katz.

*These are the names of four Israeli sons who cannot be at our seder table this year. Since they cannot ask their questions at our table, we must all ask four more questions for them at our seder this year.*

### **1) Why are these sons different from all other sons?**

While fighting for their people and the security of the State of Israel, these sons, soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces, were captured.

### **2) Why are these prisoners different from all other prisoners?**

These missing soldiers have been denied the basic human rights guaranteed by international law. They have been treated as hostages rather than as prisoners of war and have been denied any form of contact with their families, or with any Israeli or international human rights organizations.

### **3) Why are these hostages different from all other hostages?**

These sons are being held hostage years after international efforts have secured the release of all the other Western hostages who were held in Lebanon. In spite of Israel's aid in securing the release of the other Western hostages, the Israeli hostages were not included with the release of the others. The Arab governments refuse to divulge any information about the conditions under which they are being held. The pain and anxiety that their families and friends are undergoing is immeasurable.

### **4) Why do we raise the issue of soldiers who are Missing-In-Action at the Seder on Passover?**

They are being held prisoner and not allowed their freedom. Passover, the Festival of freedom, reminds us that only those who remember enslavement can fully appreciate their freedom. Israel is still fighting for the release of their soldiers, and we must do all that we can in order to help. We must do all we can to implore our elected officials to fight for the return of these four sons. We earnestly request world leaders to seek the mortal core of humanity, to transcend political differences and in the name of the parents and families of the missing young soldiers, "FREE OUR SONS!"

#### **RON ARAD**

Born: May 5, 1958	Birthplace: Israel
Parents: Batya & Dov (Deceased)	Wife: Tami
Child: Yuval (Daughter)	Captured: October 16, 1986
Last Contact: October, 1987	Status: Prisoner of War
Last known to be held by Muslim Extremists	

#### **ZACHARY BAUMEL**

Born: November 17, 1960	Birthplace: United States
Parents: Miriam & Yona	Captured: June 11, 1982
NO CONTACT	Status: Missing In Action

#### **ZVI FELDMAN**

Born: December 29, 1956	Birthplace: Israel
Parents: Penina & Avraham	Captured: June 11, 1982
NO CONTACT	Status: Missing In Action

#### **YEHUDA KATZ**

Born: July 18, 1959	Birthplace: Israel
Parents: Sara & Joseph	Captured: June 11, 1982
NO CONTACT	Status: Missing In Action

## The Birth of a People: Preamble to the Seder

(Al Sporer)

*"B'chol dor vador...*in every generation,  
*chayav adam...*each person is enjoined,  
*lir'ot et atzmo...*to see him/her self,  
*k'eeloo hu yatzah mi'Mitzrayim...*as if s/he emerged from the 'narrow place' ".

It is a mitzvah for us, tonight, to relive a dramatic event - our emergence from slavery to freedom; our birth as a people. Tonight we are not the audience in this drama we are its actors. Tonight, we let our heart surprise our head, and we let our head inform our heart.

The drama of our birth as a people is related in fragmentary elements much like a dream recorded after awakening. Words alone are inadequate to relate a dream, yet that is all we have. To assist us in reliving the drama of this dream the seder provides us not only with words but with guideposts: midrash, symbols, melodies and pictures to connect the words in the drama.

This drama we attempt to relive tonight is not only about our ancestors, it is not even about us, it is us. Our ancestors lived and, now, we live the dream. They wrote, we are writing and our children will rewrite the dream of our birth and our lives as a people. Our task is to fill in the spaces between the dream and the reality of our lives. When we engage in the task of making ourselves whole we become our own midrash.

And now let us begin our task. The Talmud teaches that it is not our responsibility to finish our task but it is our responsibility to begin it.

**"Hineni muchan um'zuman...**here am I ready and prepared  
**l'kayem et mitzvat asey...** to fulfill the mitzvah of doing.

## **MEDITATION FOR SEDER or SHABBAT SHIRAH**

*by Laura Asita Weiss and Rabbi Goldie Milgram*

Allow your eyes to close. Inhale and exhale. Listen to the sound of your breath. Do you not hear the distant sound of an ancient sea? Listen to your breath from that part of your heart that remembers being there at the time of the Exodus from Mitzrayim. Inhale and exhale and hear the moving of the waters echoing in your innermost ear as you inhale and exhale.

Keeping your eyes closed, look up as if you were looking at the top of the pillar of cloud that is guiding us out of Egypt. Observe the form and color of the cloud and feel the hope and promise that this pillar of cloud represents. Feel its pull on your soul drawing you toward freedom. Now allow your eyes to slowly slide down the length of the cloud, down and down, until your eyes reach the horizon. Notice the mass of people moving with you.

Feel yourself moving toward the Sea in that ocean of Israelites. Are you leading children by the hand? Or are you a child yourself, moving quickly to keep up with the big people. Wondering that there is no work to be done today. No bricks to be made, no taskmasters with whips.

Listen! In the distance you can hear the dim clatter of spears and shields, horses' hooves and the rumble of chariot wheels. The whinny of a horse, a muffled command barked by one of the charioteers or Egyptian Captains. The rumbling of the chariots. Pharaoh's great army is coming behind us.

We are approaching the sea. Inhale the tangy salty, watery smell of the sea. Feel the sand sift through your toes in your sandals. Listen! Perhaps you can hear the bleating of sheep. And the children saying "Mommy, Daddy, where are we going?" "What will happen to us?"

The familiar, the known, is behind. The sea lies ahead, and the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots are rumbling - coming closer. The wind is picking up. A strong wind from the East. A persistent, steady, seemingly purposeful wind. A wind that could change everything.

Your hair is flying and there are white caps on the sea. And then - Look!! Moshe is holding out his hands - - MY God - the sea is beginning to split. It is a miracle! The Sea has parted and there is a path on dry land before us. There is a huge, quivering wall of water on the left and a wall of water on the right.

What is in your heart at this moment? Will you rush into the Sea with a trusting heart, running toward freedom, praising God Or do you hang back - afraid of the unknown, afraid the walls of water will close and drown you - afraid of being caught - afraid of change. (Pause) This is not an illusion.

Both choosing and being propelled by the crowd. Almost numb with fear, curiosity, hope, and awe you are moving forward into the sea. Even the children and animals fall eerily silent as you walk between the towering walls of water.

You can see the intense blue green of the sea on either side. Perhaps a dolphin cavorts along side you in the wall of water. What do you see in the wall of water? Light filters through the waters and casts dancing blue shadows on everyone.

Now we're half-way across. The wall of water on the left and right stretch as far as you can see in front and as far as you can see behind. Incredible ! We are walking on dry land in the midst of the sea.

What an exhilarating moment - *she-khe-khe-yanu*, to be alive at this time to experience this . Even if we drown or Pharaoh's army overtakes us - *dayenu*. This would have been enough.

The chariots sound different now - their wheels scraping and groaning against the sea floor. You are beginning to hear the suggestion of a melody (pause...if you happen to have an instrument begin playing a version of *micha mocha* off-key and grating...) beckoning in the distance as you move toward the opposite shore. Could it be animals? No, voices? Singing?

Despite exhaustion, growing elation lightens our footsteps. (Modulate...move onto key if using instrument, or else humming could work) Your heartbeat quickens. The pace of everyone increases, surges.... soon you are running, flying..... eager to reach the opposite side.

A woman is singing.... you join her.....(burst into full melody with instrument, do not break the sacred trance....allow everyone to experience the fullness of their vision.)

(After a while ask people to notice their breath, to place their vision into their sacred memory chest and return to active awareness.)

#### For your own information and background:

[How does this work and why? Guided visualization actually is reported not to work with about 10% of people, some of us are simply hard wired for different forms of spirituality.

I mention this so those who have this difference won't wear themselves out trying. For those who can benefit from guided visualization it is a very powerful spiritual tool.

Several major medical research centers have discovered that it can even be a tool for active healing (called psycho-neuro-immunology), although this meditation is primarily designed for shifting consciousness.

Be sure to read slowly, with feeling and honor all the pauses fully, they are very important elements...like rests between the notes of a score. I wish you a joyous, deep and transformative Pesach.]

## **MY MOTHER'S DISHES**

Diane Cohen, Colonia NJ

Every year, I swear I'll never do it again. Every year, it gets more and more difficult.

It used to be, I was surrounded by small children, dogs and hamsters. There was help, someone to bring the dishes in from the garage, someone to help take them out again. I worked late into the night and I was tired, but the context was family and somehow I was all right.

Then I left, and everything changed overnight. I left the kids and the dogs and the hamsters and the support. And my mother left me. In one summer, my history disappeared.

Or so I thought.

So I'm standing here on my stepstool, going through the motions again. Except unlike the old days, in the house in the suburbs, I carry in and carry out by myself. There are fewer dishes, and fewer people to feed.

And unlike the old days in the suburbs, I have beautiful etched glass stemware and silver-plated tableware and ancient ceramic dishes that serve only four (and even then missing a tea cup) - all my mother's legacy. There's the little brown teapot with the hand-painted flowers. And the honey pot. And the strawberry jar.

And I realize that my history isn't gone at all.

So while I tape the paper over the hametzdik glasses and cups to hide them and wonder why I keep doing this, I reflect on the quiet pleasure I find each year when I unpack the glass compote set and the matching glasses - all the vestiges of my childhood when everything seemed, to me at least, so simple and so safe. These are all old friends. It's wonderful to greet them every year.

Passover isn't an event. It's a process. It's the unfolding of memories, the rediscovering of old friends.

The liberation of Passover, that happens over and over again each year, is the liberation from the bondage of the pain that is wrapped around each memory. How easy it would be to put the dishes and glasses and stemware away, never look, never be reminded of the sweet times I remember. The walnuts and hazelnuts floating in Manischewitz concord grape, not during the seder but watching TV two days later. The taste of my mother's sponge cake with Swee-Touch-Nee Tea. The gefilte fish and carrot slices, icy cold and freshly made the day before. And the warmth and security I took for granted.

I am free now to remember without too many tears. And the tears are from happiness as much as they are from sadness - for they are the tears of one blessed to have had those memories. I was lucky then and I am lucky now, to have the memories to unpack with my mother's things every Passover.

So I will continue to pack them away and unpack them again, and rediscover these old friends, friends I would take for granted if they were with me every day of the year. And I will be grateful for the tears I shed when I see them each spring, for the freedom to choose to bring them out again, for the freedom to choose my burdens, and for the freedom to love my burdens.

## **Responsum From the Vaad Halakha of The Masorti Movement**

Vol. 5, pp. 109-116

(OH 444:1)

**Note:** The following was issued for Conservative/Masorti Jews living in Israel. It is shared for information and resources in Jewish law. For a ruling on how you and your family should resolve these issues when Erev Pesach occurs on Saturday evening, speak with your Rabbi.

**Question:** Erev Pesach this year falls on Shabbat. How should one prepare for the holiday and what should one eat on Shabbat?

**Responsum:** This is a rather rare occurrence; it has happened only eleven times in the twentieth century. The main laws are as follows:

The fast of the firstborn: According to R. Yosef Karo, once the fast is pushed off, it is pushed off entirely. According to the Rema, the fast is moved up to the Thursday before Pesach, and this is the accepted Ashkenazic practice. Thus Ashkenazim should conduct a siyyum on Thursday, the 12th of Nissan, in order to enable the firstborn to eat.

The search for the hametz: This ceremony is performed on Thursday evening and the hametz is burned on Friday morning. Technically, it could be burned at any time on Friday since it is not Erev Pesach, but it is burned at the usual time at the end of the fifth hour (10:28 a.m. in Jerusalem) in order not to confuse people the following year.

The Shabbat meals: This is the main problem connected with Erev Pesach which falls on Shabbat. On the one hand, according to the Yerushalmi (Pesahim 10:1, fol. 37b) it is forbidden to eat matzah on Erev Pesach in order to eat it at the seder with a hearty appetite. On the other hand, it is difficult to keep hallot in the house on Shabbat when all of the remaining hametz was already burned on Friday morning. Furthermore, it is forbidden to eat hametz on Shabbat morning - which is Erev Pesach - after the fourth hour of the day (9:10 a.m. in Jerusalem).

Indeed, this situation is already mentioned in the Mishnah (Pesahim 3:6), Tosefta (ibid. 3:9, 11) and Bavli (ibid. 49a and parallels) but those sources are not entirely clear and, as a result, four solutions have developed over the years:

Rabbi Yitzhak ibn Giyyat (Spain, d. 1089) ignored the Yerushalmi mentioned above or was not familiar with it and ruled that one should eat matzah at all of the Shabbat meals. This custom seems to have disappeared because it contradicts the Yerushalmi.

The second approach is based on Pesahim 13a and parallels, which says that one leaves enough hametz for two meals - one on Friday night and one on Shabbat morning before the fourth hour of the day, after which one recites "kol hamira" at the end of the fifth hour, as one does every year. This approach has been followed for hundreds of years, but



it is quite inconvenient because one must eat in a corner away from the Pesach dishes and one must make sure no crumbs fall on the floor.

Furthermore, one must wake up very early in the morning in order to pray and finish eating hametz by 9:10 a.m. (in Jerusalem) and then discard the hametz outside of the house. Rabbi Eliyahu Hazzan (d. 1908) and others have already criticized this method because of the problems of crumbs, sweeping the house, the prevention of Oneg Shabbat and the fear lest one eat hametz after the permitted time. Therefore, it is preferable to look for another solution.

Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef has suggested a third approach - to use matzah, which has been recooked in soup. After the soup cools off, one removes it in whole pieces and dries it out. It can then be used for the second and third Shabbat meals while regular matzah can be used on Friday night because the prohibition in the Yerushalmi does not pertain to the night before Pesach. This method is halakhically valid, but it is difficult to adopt for practical reasons because most Jews will not have the time or patience to follow this complicated procedure.

The fourth approach is the simplest and the preferred method - to use "matzah ashirah" (egg matzah) at all three Shabbat meals since it is neither hametz nor real matzah. It is already mentioned by the Maggid Mishneh (Spain, 14th century) and by Rabbi Yosef Karo. The latter only rejected it for practical reasons, since not everyone could bake egg matzah. R. Haim Palache relates that this was the practice in Ismir in the nineteenth century and it was followed by Rabbi Eliyahu Hazzan mentioned above and by Rabbi Joseph ben Walid.

In the twentieth century, it was recommended by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, by my grandfather Rabbi Mordechai Ya'akov Golinkin z"l, the Av Bet Din of Boston for many years, by my father Rabbi Noah Golinkin, by Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Rabbi Kassel Abelson and others.

As for the third Shabbat meal (seudah shelishit), it is possible to be stringent like the Rema and eat only fruit, meat and fish. But it is also possible to eat egg matzah all day long following the custom of Rabbeinu Tam, Rabbi Yosef Karo and Rabbi Yehezkel Landau.

In conclusion, in our day the fourth custom is preferable. One should search for the hametz on Thursday night, burn the hametz and recite "Kol Hamira" on Friday morning and eat egg matzah on Pesach dishes at all three Shabbat meals.

Rabbi David Golinkin  
Approved Unanimously

## **My Grandfather's Seder**

Rabbi Eric A. Silver

Temple Beth David, Cheshire, CT

Pesach is a joyous time of year, with friends and family gathered around the table, singing songs, sharing food, recounting our experiences in leaving the slavery of Egypt behind us. Pesach is supposed to stimulate memory, and so we all have our remembrances of Seders past. We remember sitting together with those whom we loved, usually a grandparent seated at the head of the table, leading the family in worship on this solemn/joyous/sacred night.

For many of us, the sight of Grandfather seated there at the head of the table remains our most vivid memory. Imagine my delight, then, when a congregant once told me that my seder reminded him of his grandfather's, and that he hadn't had a seder like that in many years. What he was trying to say was that I had evoked some of those early childhood memories, waiting to sing Dayenu, watching to see if the wine level in Elijah's cup would really drop as they said it would, searching for the Afikoman, and falling asleep with Grandfather's face the last thing before our sleep-blurred eyes. I was humbled and honored, and at the same time, I felt a nostalgic twinge, recalling Seders of my youth, and I tried to remember what it was about those Seders that I most remembered.

Like them, I remembered my grandfather, the smells of cooking, the delicious foods, the matzah, and everything else. But with the passage of years, my grandfather's Seder became a thing of the past. It was my father, now become the family patriarch, sitting at the head of the table. Yet the Seder was the same, the foods, the singing, the feeling of joy, and the sense of recapturing those moments of so long ago when we relived the experience of going out of Egypt.

In time, I grew up, and feeling somewhat strange, slid into the place at the head of the table. Looking around, I see my wife and children, my mother occasionally attending, telling me that my Seder is like my father's. Friends and family take their seats around the table where once the grownups sat, and I realize that we are now the grownups. And the crowd of children where once I and my friends and my cousins played has picked up the tradition and is raucously enjoying the same Seder that I loved when I was their age. And I remember.

I remember my father's Seder, though he's been gone over twenty-five years. I remember my grandfather's Seder, half a century ago. And the memories of their Seders mingle with mine and I remember what it is that I remember. I remember that I am a Jew who left Egypt, and who promised God that every year, I would celebrate this event, precisely so that I might remember. I remember that my grandfather and my father brought their joy and their spirit to the Seder. I remember so that I might relive the experience each year, and pass the memories on to my children, as did my father before me, and his father before him. It is in this fashion that my Grandfather's Seder remains intact today, as vibrant as it was when he sat at the head of the table. Some day, if it pleases God, I will be the grandfather who sits there, and my grandchildren will remember that it was I who gave them that.

And now, as the Talmud so often asks, *mai nafka minei*--what is the point of all this? The point is that you don't have to come to my house to see your grandfather's Seder. You can do it at your home just as well as I do it at mine. You can take your memories of Passover and make them come alive around your table, providing your children and your grandchildren something of Jewish value that will stay with them through the years. You can make your grandfather's Seder your own, and with it, succeed in transmitting your Jewish faith through the ages.

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## **Miriam's Cup Ritual in the Family Seder**

<http://www.miriamscup.com/RitualPrint.htm>

*Filling Miriam's Cup follows the second cup of wine, before washing the hands. Raise the empty goblet and say:* "Miriam's cup is filled with water, rather than wine. I invite women of all generations at our seder table to fill Miriam's cup with water from their own glasses."

*Pass Miriam's cup around the table(s); explain the significance of filling Miriam's cup with water:* A Midrash teaches us that a miraculous well accompanied the Hebrews throughout their journey in the desert, providing them with water. This well was given by G-d to Miriam, the prophetess, to honor her bravery and devotion to the Jewish people. Both Miriam and her well were spiritual oases in the desert, sources of sustenance and healing. Her words of comfort gave the Hebrews the faith and confidence to overcome the hardships of the Exodus. We fill Miriam's cup with water to honor her role in ensuring the survival of the Jewish people. Like Miriam, Jewish women in all generations have been essential for the continuity of our people. As keepers of traditions in the home, women passed down songs and stories, rituals and recipes, from mother to daughter, from generation to generation. Let us each fill the cup of Miriam with water from our own glasses, so that our daughters may continue to draw from the strength and wisdom of our heritage.

*When Miriam's cup is filled, raise the goblet and say:* We place Miriam's cup on our seder table to honor the important role of Jewish women in our tradition and history, whose stories have been too sparingly told.

*Continue by reciting this prayer:* "You abound in blessings, G-d, creator of the universe, Who sustains us with living water. May we, like the children of Israel leaving Egypt, be guarded and nurtured and kept alive in the wilderness, and may You give us wisdom to understand that the journey itself holds the promise of redemption. AMEN." (from Susan Schnur)

*Next, tell the story of a Jewish woman you admire. Begin by saying:* Each Passover, we dedicate Miriam's cup to a Jewish woman who has made important contributions in achieving equality and freedom for others. This year, we honor....(see "Biography").

*Dancing in honor of the prophetess Miriam follows the rituals for the prophet Elijah after the meal. Lift Miriam's cup and say:* Miriam's life is a contrast to the life of Elijah, and both teach us important lessons. Elijah was a hermit, who spent part of his life alone in the desert. He was a visionary and prophet, often very critical of the Jewish people, and focused on the messianic era. On the other hand, Miriam lived among her people in the desert, following the path of hesed, or loving-kindness. She constantly comforted the Israelites throughout their long journey, encouraging them when they lost faith. Therefore, Elijah's cup is a symbol of future messianic redemption, while Miriam's cup is a symbol of hope and renewal in the present life. We must achieve balance in our own lives, not only preparing our souls for redemption, but rejuvenating our souls in the present. Thus, we need both Elijah's cup and Miriam's cup at our seder table.

*Sing and dance with tambourines. First hold up a tambourine and say (from Exodus 15:20-21):* "And Miriam the prophetess, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam sang unto them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." As Miriam once led the women of Israel in song and dance to praise G-d for the miracle of splitting the Red Sea, so we now rejoice and celebrate the freedom of the Jewish people today. (<http://www.miriamscup.com/RitualPrint.htm>)

# How Not to Panic in preparing for Pesach

by Joshua J. Adler, Yerushalayim (March 23, 2000)

Do not do general cleaning prior to Pesach. This is not, I repeat not, part of the mitzvah.

This year it is best to treat Friday as Erev Pesach ( no Hametz to be eaten after 10 am, biyur hametz etc. though the Pesach does not officially begin till Shabbat night.

Two days before Pesach- collect all food items which contain Hametz from all the rooms and gather them up in one drawer or closet and mark it Hametz. No additional "cleaning" is necessary.

Then all that is left is the kitchen. Here too collect all Hametz products a which which are or contain Hametz e.g. pastas, beer, (check cans with food) and gather them up in one or two closets and mark them Hametz. Hametz should be out of sight during all of Pesach.

Clean your refrigerator and freezer and put all perishable Hametz products so they cannot be seen or used during Pesach on separate shelves.

If you will use your oven during Pesach then it must be cleaned well and heated up to maximum for a few minutes or have someone with a blow-torch do the job. Your burners on top of the stove which are used for cooking should be cleaned and all flames lit for a minute or two.

Clean your sinks and table tops. Then cover them with plastic, aluminum foil or anything you deem fit.

Take out your Pesach dishes, pots, pans etc. and make your kitchen ready for Pesach cooking with Pesach products only for Shabbat.

The Hametz that is left keep in a special place but try not to eat it or make crumbs since your home is already Hametz free.

Make sure your Hametz is sold to a Gentile prior to the holyday. ( this year on Friday before 10am).Usually this is done through a rabbi who acts as your agent.

This year observe all the Pesach rules already on Friday though the Seder is not till Saturday night. Instead of bread or Hallah one may use regular Pesach matzah on Friday night. Others use egg matzah for the meals till the seder since there is a tradition in the Talmud that one should not eat regular matzah the day before the seder. Other rabbis permit even the eating of regular matzah even prior to the Seder Follow either tradition.

As for medicines which may contain Hametz, this is left to every individual to decide for himself since it involves one's health. A person needs medicines on a regular basis if he does not wish to decide for himself should seek guidance from a dietician, pharmacist or physician.

This year one should keep a light (e.g. a yahrzeit candle) all during Shabbat so that when shabbat is over one lights the Yom Tov candles with it as well as taking fire in order to do cooking which is permitted on Yom-Tov.

P.S. An Orthodox rabbi told my Haredi relative that if she spent more than five hours preparing her home and kitchen for Pesach that is several hours too much.

# A Proposal to Foster Jewish Unity

by Benjamin Mordecai Ben-Baruch

## Preface

I am asking you to join the "Rice for Passover Campaign" by placing rice (or other "qitniyot") on the seder table next to Elijah's cup to symbolically indicate our vision of a Jewish community that acts affirmatively to promote tolerance and mutual respect of different customs and that acts decisively against institutionalized forms of discrimination and racism within our community.

Eastern and Central European Jews traditionally do not eat rice, beans or similar items on Passover while Jews from other parts of the world prepare traditional Passover dishes from these items. Why? In the following short essay I attempt to answer this question and provide some guidelines for celebrating Passover now that Jews from all over the world live together in the same communities. I rely to a large extent on a responsum (tshuvah) from the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel (affiliated with the Masorti/Conservative movement).

## Introduction and Definition of Qitniyot

There is a strange custom of unknown origin and of unknown halakhic purpose or reason among Jews of European origin to prohibit the eating of qitniyot on Passover. Qitniyot, usually translated as "legumes", is a rabbinic (and not a botanical) category of foods that includes rice, beans, chick peas (humus), peas, soy products (including tofu or bean curd), vanilla beans, cola beans, wild rice, peanuts, maize, caraway seeds, potatoes, garlic, radishes, coffee, poppy seeds, sesame, mustard, sunflower seeds, etc. (There is no single agreed upon list of the "forbidden" items in this category which adds to the confusion.) Essentially, the category of qitniyot includes virtually all food items not included within the five prohibited grains, which over the years since the 13th century have been declared "prohibited" to European Jews by one or more rabbinic authorities. The five grains which can be used to make halah, and therefore can become hamaiz and are prohibited on Passover are:

*Hitim* - wheat [Triticum durum and vulgare]

*Se'orim* - 6- and 4-rowed barley, [Hordeolum sativum and vulgare]

*Kusmim* - {Even Shoshan=Triticum dicoccum, J Cohen=spelt}emmer/lesser spelt/ rice wheat [Triticum dicoccum]

*Shibbolet Shu'al* - {Even Shoshan=Avena; J Cohen=oats}2-rowed barley [Hordeolum distichum]

*Shippon* - {Even Shoshan=Secale=rye, J Cohen=rye} spelt wheat [Triticum spelta].

These are the only items which can become hamaiz. While there is virtually total rabbinic agreement since Talmudic times that these Biblical Hebrew terms comprise the sum total of items which can become hamaiz, there is not agreement regarding the proper translation of the terms kusmim and shibbolet. Some authorities include oats in the above list but it is doubtful whether oats should be included.

Cereal foods such as buckwheat ("kasha") and grains such as rye are sometimes mistakenly included in the above group because of mistranslations of the Hebrew or upon modern Hebrew usages which should not be applied to terms in their Biblical contexts. [NOTE: This does not make rye breads made of a combination of rye and wheat flour kosher for Passover.]

For years I have had a "Rice for Passover" campaign. I believe that it is time to have a unified halakhah that facilitates all Jews freely and comfortably eating at each other's homes on Passover. This Ashkenazi prohibition was originally promulgated by mistake and there is no reason to perpetuate this custom other than it has become traditional. On the other hand, there are many reasons to abolish this custom. Maintaining the prohibition against eating qitniyot serves to perpetuate the power and influence of the worst segments of the Ashkenazi clerical establishments, implicitly denigrates Sephardic customs and traditions, and stifles the natural and desirable process of incorporating Sefardi traditions into the traditions of all Jews. Personally, I recommend that all Ashkenazi Jews show their acceptance in principle of such a change by placing qitniyot on Elijah's place-setting regardless of whether they personally are accustomed to eating qitniyot.

### **Proposed Modern Practice**

To those who feel that eating qitniyot violates the feeling of Pesah and the customs they practice, I still recommend the following:

- (1) place qitniyot on Elijah's plate to symbolize the fact that you are acting out of a feeling towards your own personal and family traditions and NOT out of acceptance of misguided rabbinic rulings that were wrong and foolish when they were promulgated and which today are divisive;
- (2) place qitniyot on Elijah's plate to symbolize a vision of a time to come very soon when there will be unity among the different Jewish communities (even while different traditions are preserved as customs);
- (3) follow the wise recommendations of the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel: "Undoubtedly, there will be Ashkenazim who will want to stick to the "custom of their ancestors" even though they know that it is permitted to eat legumes on Pesach. To them we recommend that they observe only the original custom of not eating rice and legumes but that they use oil from legumes and all the other foods "forbidden" over the years, such as peas, beans, garlic, mustard, sunflower seeds, peanuts, etc. Thus they will be able to eat hundreds of products which bear the label "Kosher for Pesach for those who eat legumes." This will make their lives easier and will add joy and pleasure to their observance of Pesach."

But let us also think about customs we want to preserve and customs we want to change: We do not pass on to our children a 17th, 18th or 19th century version of Judaism or a heder education (which is available in this country today) or most other archaic aspects of Eastern European Jewish culture. Our homes are modern homes and our children observe 20th century Judaism -- and this is good.

"But there is something about that traditional food." Let's stop and think about that for a moment. The traditional European Passover menu is basically not all that traditional. (Remember, the potato wasn't even known in Eastern Europe until 1819! And some authorities put it in the same category as rice and beans and still prohibit this "new" food!) Secondly, it is primarily a menu based upon the culture of an impoverished people who even in the best of times were living in a geographical area where there were very limited food items available.

There is value in preserving old culinary traditions. There is also value in integrating customs from other Jewish communities into our lives and deepening our appreciation of Jewish traditions by eating other traditional foods. Can we do both? Wouldn't there be greater value in doing both -- eating the foods we grew up with and eating other "traditional" foods? I think so. How can we do this?

The first seder might be based on a European culinary tradition, but other foods eaten after that. Perhaps foods from different traditions can be eaten at the same meal. Perhaps one seder can be European and another seder be based on Mediterranean Jewish cuisine. There is no single answer.

In the final analysis, people have to go with their heart and do what gives them the feelings appropriate for the holiday. But we also have to act according to our values. As Reconstructionists we affirm that there is value to our food traditions. But we also believe that preserving divisions and conflict between Ashkenazim and Sefardim is against our values and that preserving an absolute prohibition against eating qitniyot is therefore against our values. We value the sharing of the many Jewish traditions -- which means preserving all of them and learning to share and participate in many of them. Many of us may choose to not eat qitniyot but we should all recognize that this should be a personal choice and should no longer be a matter of halakhah for anyone.

*(Note: I have translated large sections of the Rabbinical Assembly of Israel's Tshuvah [responsum] regarding the eating of rice and qitniyot on Passover. I summarized sections that I did not translate and have thus "reduced" a 21 page printed Hebrew document to a 5 page English text. While my translation and summary do not substitute for the complete text, you may find it valuable and informative. If you are interested in this translation, please contact me (email: bbenbaruch@earthlink.net).*

With best wishes for a joyous, meaningful and liberating Pesah, Benjamin Ben-Baruch