

**BEND THE ARC**  
jewish action

# **Liberation Haggadah**

**5781 / 2021**



# Introduction

This Passover, we reflect on our work to defeat hatred and bigotry in the 2020 election, and the work we have yet to do. It takes little effort to see ourselves as if we had been liberated from **Mitzrayim—the narrow place**. We re-tell the story of the ancient Israelites and the mixed multitude. They saw a tyrant defeated at the cost of great violence and pain, only to find themselves on a long trek through the wilderness, headed, they hoped, to **a place they had never seen and could barely imagine**.

We too have just experienced a provisional victory over a would-be tyrant, our well-earned celebrations now being replaced with a sense of what enormous tasks still await us. We rose up this summer in defense of Black lives. We rose up in the last election to defend democracy and the right to vote which, for BIPOC people, is still under attack. Truths were spoken and alliances were formed, but **a 400-year-old system of white supremacy still needs to be overturned**.

*Continued on next slide...*

# Introduction (cont.)

**As Pesach begins, we Jews will begin our journey from liberation to revelation.** Beginning on our second night's Seder, we will start to count the *omer*, the 49 days until Shavuot, the night of study and rededication that ends with the gift of our Torah at Sinai. In our tradition, this is when our mixed multitude becomes a people united in a way of life—**the pursuit of justice.**

This year we will be observing a bittersweet anniversary. Last year was the first Seder we observed in quarantine and we hoped that it would be our last. For most of us, it will not be. Those of us whose observance allows it will be able to hear the Haggadah with friends over Zoom. But we will not be cooking with grandparents or meeting new babies or hugging dear friends who are home for the holiday. We will be missing loved ones whose faces we will never see at our table again. We will tell our ancient story of Jews sheltering behind blood-marked doors, waiting for the plague to pass over, and moving towards freedom and we will feel it in a new way. **We will allow ourselves expressions of our losses even as we celebrate our foundational narrative—our story of freedom.**

# The Seder

Our Passover meal is called a Seder, which means “order” in Hebrew, because we go through 14 specific steps as we retell the story of our ancestors’ liberation from slavery in Egypt.

**Kiddush (the blessing over wine)** | *kadeish* | קִדֵּשׁ

**Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the seder** | *urchatz* | יִרְחֹץ

**Dipping a green vegetable in salt water** | *karpas* | כָּרְפָּס

**Breaking the middle matzah** | *yachatz* | יַחַץ

**Telling the story of Passover** | *magid* | מַגִּיד

**Ritual hand-washing in preparation for the meal** | *rachtza* | רְחֹצֶה

**The blessing over the meal and matzah** | *motzi matzah* | מוֹצִיא מַצָּה

**Dipping the bitter herb in sweet charoset** | *maror* | מָרוֹר

**Eating a sandwich of matzah and bitter herb** | *koreich* | כּוֹרֵךְ

**Eating the meal!** | *shulchan oreich* | שְׁלִיחַן עוֹרֵךְ

**Finding and eating the Afikomen** | *tzafoon* | צָפוּן

**Saying grace after the meal and inviting Elijah the Prophet** | *bareich* | בָּרַךְ

**Singing songs that praise G-d** | *hallel* | הַלֵּל

**Ending the Seder and thinking about the future** | *nirtzah* | נִרְצָה



# The Seder Plate

## Traditional Items Included on the Seder Plate:

**Karpas:** *Karpas* (parsley) represents the initial flourishing of the Israelites during the first years in Egypt. In the course of the seder, we dip the karpas in salt water in order to taste both the hope of new birth and the tears that the Israelite slaves shed over their condition.

**Haroset:** This mix of fruits, wine or honey, and nuts symbolizes the mortar that the Israelite slaves used to construct buildings for Pharaoh. The name itself comes from the Hebrew word *cheres* or clay.

**Maror:** This bitter herb allows us to taste the bitterness of slavery. Like life in Egypt, these lettuces and roots taste sweet when one first bites into them, but then become bitter as one eats more.

**Z'roa:** A roasted lamb shank bone that symbolizes the lamb that Jews sacrificed as the special Passover offering when the Temple stood in Jerusalem. The *z'roa* serves as a visual reminder of the sacrifice that the Israelites offered immediately before leaving Egypt and that Jews continued to offer until the destruction of the Temple. Vegetarians often substitute a roasted beet, both because the red of the beet resembles the blood of the sacrifice and because the Talmud mentions beets as one of the vegetables sometimes dipped during the seder.

**Beitzah:** A roasted egg that symbolizes the *hagigah* sacrifice, which would be offered on every holiday (including Passover) when the Temple stood. The roundness of the egg also represents the cycle of life--even in the most painful of times, there is always hope for a new beginning.



# The Seder Plate (cont.)

Consider including these additional items:

**Orange:** The orange reminds us of the presence of LGBTQ folks in our community, and the oppression they and all of us face within the strict gender and sexuality roles.

**Tomato:** The tomato is a symbol of modern-day slavery, representing the exploited migrant farm workers behind the fruits and vegetables we consume and take for granted every day.

**Lock and Key:** We place the lock and key on our seder plate tonight to ally ourselves with those who are behind bars, with those who are labelled as felons in the community, and with the parents, children, and other family members of those who are locked up and locked out. The key represents our commitment, as Jews who know a history of oppression, to join the movement to end mass incarceration in the United States. The key reminds us of our potential to partner with the Source of Liberation to unlock a more promising, dignified future for us all.

*Adapted from RitualWell*

# Blessing the Lights

Blessed are you, G-d,  
Sovereign of the Universe, who  
has sanctified us with  
commandments and  
commands us to light candles  
on this holiday.

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu  
melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu  
b'mitzvotav vitzivanu lehadlik  
ner shel yom tov.*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר  
קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו להדליק נר של  
יום טוב

Blessed are You, G-d,  
Sovereign of the universe,

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu  
Melech Ha'Olam*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם,  
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Who has kept us alive,  
sustained us, and brought us  
to this season.

*Sheche'hiyanu V'Keymanu  
V'Higiyanu Lazman Ha'Zeh.*

**Blessed is the match consumed in kindling the flame.**

**Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart.**

**Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honor's sake.**

**Blessed is the match consumed in kindling the flame.**

*Hannah Szenes*

1921-1944



# Kadesh: Sanctifying the Day

We make our Seder a holy with the **first out of four cups of wine**. Why four? Some say that it unifies the four corners of the world. Others say it marks the four times that God promises liberation to the Jewish people in the Torah.

After a year where we have been especially scattered and separated, a year where the reality of 400 years of injustice and oppression has been laid bare, **this Passover we yearn for gathering, we yearn for liberation**. As we sanctify our passover Seder in whatever way it has manifested this year, we sanctify our hunger for a better world and promise to play our part in making it reality.



# Kadesh: Sanctifying the Day (cont.)

Blessed are You, Adonai our G-d, Ruler of the world,  
Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, Our G-d, Sovereign of the universe, who  
has chosen us from among the peoples, exalting us by  
hallowing us with mitzvot. In Your love, Adonai our G-d,  
You have given us feasts of gladness, and seasons of joy;  
this Festival of Pesach, season of our freedom, a sacred  
occasion, a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. For  
You have chosen us from all peoples and consecrated us  
to Your service, and given us the Festivals, a time of  
gladness and joy.

Blessed are You, Adonai, who sanctifies Israel and the  
festivals

## **On the first Seder add:**

Praised are you, our G-d, sovereign of the universe, who  
has sustained us, maintained us and enabled us to reach  
this moment in life.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam,  
borei p'ri hagafen.*

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam,  
asher bachar banu mikol am, v'rom'manu  
mikol lashon, v'kid'shanu b'mitzvotav. Vatiten  
lanu, Adonai Eloheinu, b'ahavah mo-adim  
l'simchah, chagim uz'manim l'sason, et yom  
Chag HaMatzot hazeh, z'man cheiruteinu,  
mikra kodesh, zeicher litziat Mitzrayim. Ki vanu  
vacharta v'otanu kidashta mikol haamim  
umo-adei kodsh'cha b'simchah uv'sason  
hinchaltanu.*

*Baruch atah, Adonai m'kadeish Yisrael  
v'hazmanim.*

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech  
ha-olam, she'hecheyanu v'ki'manu v'higi-anu  
laz'man hazeh.*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי  
הגפן

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר בחר  
בנו מכל עם ורוממנו מכל לשון וקדשנו  
במצותיו. ותתן לנו יי אלהינו באהבה (שבתות  
למנוחה ו) מועדים לשמחה, חגים וזמנים  
לששון, את יום (השבת הזה ואת יום) חג  
המצות הזה, זמן חרותנו (באהבה), מקרא  
קדש, זכר ליציאת מצרים. כי בנו בחרת ואותנו  
קדשת מכל העמים, (ושבת) ומועדי קדשך  
(באהבה וברצון), בשמחה ובששון הנחלתנו.  
ברוך אתה יי, מקדש (השבת ו) ישראל  
והזמנים.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו  
וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

# Blessing One Another

Traditionally at Passover Seders and other holiday celebrations, as well as weekly on Shabbat, parents will say a blessing over their children.

On this Passover when we are coming together virtually to observe the commandments and traditions of Passover, **we can send blessings to each other across distance and bring each other into this moment.**



**Traditional:** *May G-d make you like Ephraim and Menashe, like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. May God bless you and watch over you, May G-d shine G-d's face toward you and show you favor. May G-d be favorably disposed toward you, and may G-d grant you Peace.*

**Blessing of each other:** *May G-d keep you safe in your travel, grant you peace in your years. May G-d bestow friendship and family, excitement and love, health and passion, knowledge and confidence. May G-d grant you peace. Amen*

Adapted from the Katz-Hanna Haggadah

# Urchatz: Washing of the Hands

Rebbe Natan of Brelsov writes that '*urchatz*' is from the root-word in Aramaic that means 'trust'.

**During the first of two washings, let us imagine the trust it took to wade into the waters as they parted.**

What trust do we need to build to make our own liberation stories possible? How can we trust ourselves, our communities and the communities we are in partnership with? What do we need to let go of, to wash away, in order to take that next step towards freedom?





# Karpas: Dipping into Saltwater

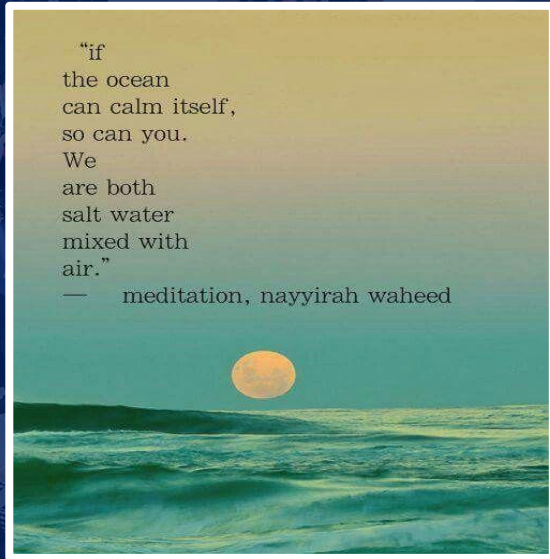
"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am for myself only, what am I? And if not now, when?"

*Hillel, Pirkei Avot 1:14*

"And if not with others, how?"

*Adrienne Rich, Blood, Bread, and Poetry*

"if  
the ocean  
can calm itself,  
so can you.  
We  
are both  
salt water  
mixed with  
air."  
— meditation, nayyirah waheed





# Karpas: Dipping into Saltwater

The Passover festival of freedom developed from an even more ancient holiday: a celebration of the spring harvest.

The fresh greens of spring serve a special purpose at this time in our Seder. As we dip these vegetables, the karpas, into salt water, a symbol of the tears of slavery, **we remember all those who still suffer under the yoke of oppression.**

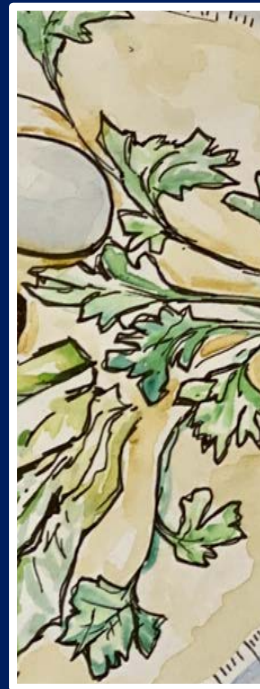
May we open our eyes, our hearts, and our hands, and help to remove suffering and want from our world. **Each person takes some greens and dips them in salt water.**

***Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri ha'adamah.***

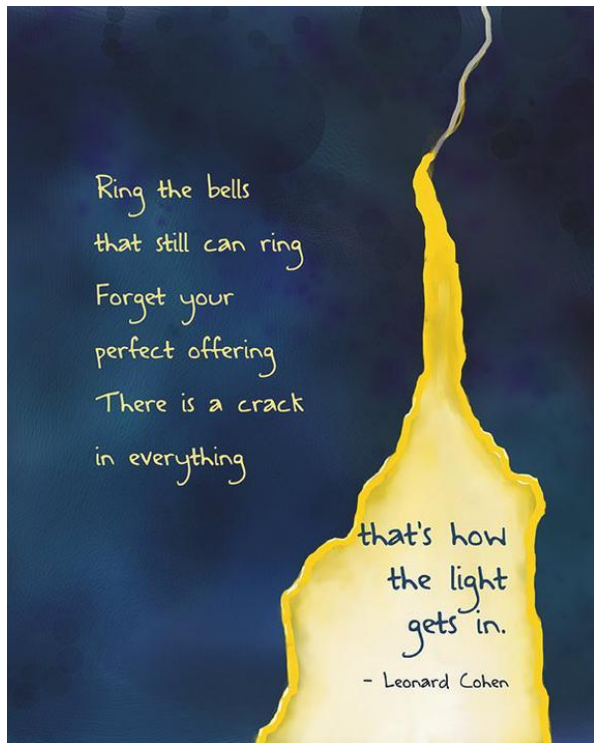
*We praise You, O G-d, Sovereign of the Universe, Who brings forth fruits from the earth.*

**Leaning to the left, the greens are eaten.**

Adapted From INVISIBLE: A Social Justice Haggadah-Religious Action Center



# Yachatz: Breaking the Middle Matzah



**Open the door as a sign of hospitality;  
lift up matzah for all to see and recite:**

הָאֵל לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אָכְלוּ אֲבִהַתָּנָא בְּאַרְעָא  
רְמֻצְרִים. כָּל־דְּכַפֵּין יֵיתִי וְיֵיכֹל. כָּל־דְּצִרִיךְ יֵיתִי  
וְיִפְסֹחַ. הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא. לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא  
דִּישְׂרָאֵל. הַשְׁתָּא עֲבָרִי. לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנִיחוּרִין:

*Ha lakhma anya, di akhalu avhatana, b'ara d'mitzrayim. Kol  
dikhfyn yei-tei v'yeikhol, kol ditzrikh yeitei v'yipsach. Hashata  
hakha, l'shanah haba'ah b'arah d'yisrael. Hashata avdei,  
l'shanah haba'ah b'nei khorin.*

This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat; let all who are needy come and celebrate the Passover with us. Now we are here; next year may we be in the Land of Israel. Now we are slaves; next year may we be free.

# Yachatz: Breaking the Middle Matzah (cont.)

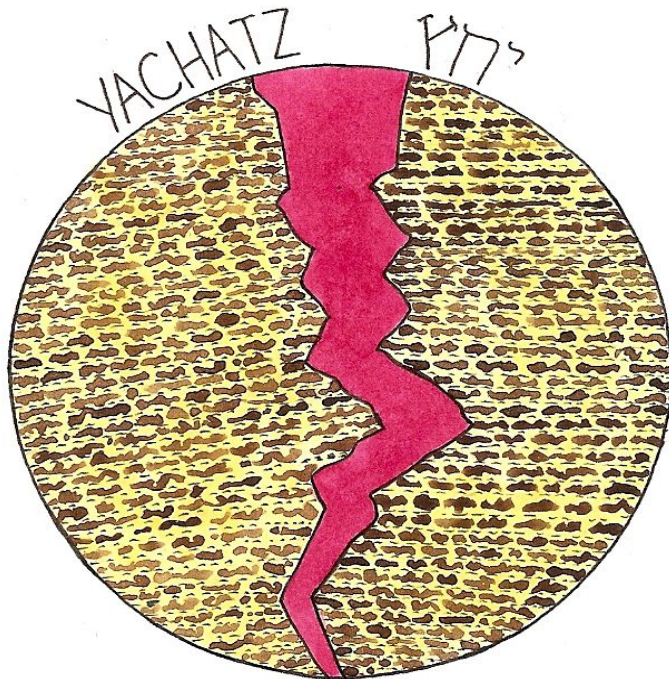


Image by Arielle Angel for haggadot.com

After reciting Ha Lachma Anya, close the door. Break a middle matzah and wrap the larger half in a cloth or napkin. This piece of matzah is now called the “afikoman,” and must be eaten before the seder concludes. Often it is hidden away by adults, for the children to find; the children may request a ransom before giving it back.

**We break the matzah as we broke the chains of slavery, and as we break chains which bind us today.** We will no more be fooled by movements which free only some of us, in which our so-called “freedom” rests upon the enslavement or embitterment of others.

Break a middle matzah and wrap the larger half in a cloth or napkin. **This piece of matzah is now called the “afikoman,” and must be eaten before the seder concludes.**

Adapted from the Katz-Hanna Haggadah

# Yachatz/Misha'rotam

Adapted from the Muslim/Jewish Solidarity Committee

At this point in the seder, many Sepharadi/Arabic Jewish communities practice the tradition of **Mish'arotam** where each person gets a chance to personally act out leaving Egypt. They play out the scene & say:

**Misharotam şerourot BeSimlotam 'al Shikhmam. U'benei Yisra'el 'asou Kidbar Moshe**

*All that remained was bundled in their clothing on their backs, and the children of Israel did as Moshe said.*

Each person takes a turn placing the bag of matzah over their shoulder. They are asked questions in Arabic which they respond in Hebrew:

**MinWen Jaye? Where are you coming from?**

*MiMişrayim! From Egypt!*

**LaWeyin Rayeḥ? Where are you going?**

*LeYerushalayim! To Jerusalem!*

**Ishu zawatak? What are you carrying?**

*Matzah u Maror. Matzah and Bitter Herbs.*



Image by Rebecca Hornstein for Jewish Community Action

# Yachatz/Misha'rotam (cont.)

Adapted from the Muslim/Jewish Solidarity Committee

This moment allows each person to place themselves back in time and replay a scene:

The Jews are wandering the desert, they come upon some locals. The locals all speak Arabic but the Jews are speaking Hebrew, the language that they kept through generations of enslavement. It's clear from the exchange that both groups can understand each other, but the Jews here choose to exert their Judaism proudly, *for perhaps the first time in their lives, because they are free.*

In many families, this tradition is also time to have fun and get creative. People will often make up their own crazy or funny answers to the questions while going around the table. Let's try this out and come up with our own responses to learn about each other.

**At each table, in turn, each guest should answer the following questions:**

*MinWen Jaye? Where are you coming from?*

*LaWeyin Rayeh? Where are you going/What is your hope?*

*Ishu Zawatak? What do you carry with you?*



# **Maggid: Telling Our Liberation Stories**

The courage to let go of the door, the handle.  
The courage to shed the familiar walls whose very stains and leaks are comfortable as the little moles of the upper arm; stains that recall a feast, a child's naughtiness, a loud blattering storm that slapped the roof hard, pouring through.

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill, the small bones of children and the brittle bones of the old whose marrow hunger had stolen; the courage to desert the tree planted and only begun to bear; the riverside where promises were shaped; the street where their empty pots were broken.

The courage to leave the place whose language you learned as early as your own, whose customs however dangerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter you have learned to pull inside, to move your load; the land fertile with the blood spilled on it; the roads mapped and annotated for survival.

*Marge Piercy, excerpt of "Maggid"*



# **Maggid: Telling Our Liberation Stories (cont.)**

A well known passage from the Haggadah tells the story of five sages recounting the Exodus:

מַעֲשֵׂה בְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־עֲזַרְיָה וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְרַבִּי טַרְפוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ מְסֻבִּין בְּבֵנֵי־בְרַק וְהָיוּ מְסַפְּרִים בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם כָּל־אוֹתוֹ הַלַּיְלָה, עַד שֶׁבָּאוּ תַלְמִידֵיהֶם וְאָמְרוּ לָהֶם רַבּוֹתֵינוּ הִגִּיעַ זְמַן קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁל שַׁחֲרִית.

It happened once [on Pesach] that Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon were reclining in Bnei Brak and were telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt that whole night, until their students came and said to them, "The time of [reciting] the morning Shema has arrived."

Digging in deeper we learn that this story isn't just about wise rabbis talking about the Exodus, it is actually **a powerful story of Jewish resistance...**

# **Maggid: Telling Our Liberation Stories (cont.)**

**...As Daniel Gropper writes:**

In the year 123 of the Common Era, a guerilla insurgency began, which resulted in a crack-down by the Roman authorities. B'nei Brak was the headquarters of the rebellion against Roman occupation, a rebellion of which Rabbi Akiva was a leader. Because of rebel activities, the Roman authorities had forbidden gatherings of Jews, on pain of death.

**The Seder described in this passage was used not only as a chance to discuss the liberation from Egypt—but also to plan a strategy of resistance against Roman occupation.** The students were standing guard, ready to caution the rabbis to disband at daybreak, lest they be caught.

This tale may be read as an encouragement to become so joyfully immersed in the Seder that we don't notice the passing of time...and it may also be read as a story of how one liberation begets another. Celebrating our freedom from servitude can be a radical act. It was Rabbi Akiva, after all, who famously answered the query, 'Which is better, study or action?' with the response, 'Study—if it leads to action'

# Four Questions

Adapted from Repair the World

A highlight of the Passover Seder is ***maggid***: telling the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Questions are our springboard to explore how this night is different from all other nights. **This year, around the world, Passover will be different from all others.**

In this time of global pandemic, our lives have been disrupted in significant ways and we find ourselves asking questions we may not otherwise have ever thought to ask. Over the last year, the pandemic has exacerbated and shown us the deep inequity and brokenness in our society that existed long before. **Tonight, we bring our questions to the table in hopes of gaining wisdom and understanding.**

# **Four Questions - Question 1**

Adapted from Repair the World

***Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?***

How is this night different from all other nights?

***Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin chametz umatzah,  
halailah hazeh, kuloh matzah?***

**On all other nights, we eat chametz (leavened foods) and matzah.**

**Why on this night, only matzah?**

Just as the Israelites hastily baked matzah as they left Egypt, this has been a year of making hasty preparations for an unknown journey. How did your rush to prepare shape your feelings of readiness for the journey ahead? How do we gather enough provisions while making sure everyone can access what they need?



# **Four Questions - Question 2**

Adapted from Repair the World

***Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?***

How is this night different from all other nights?

***Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin sh'ar y'rakot, halailah  
hazeh, (kuloh) maror?***

**On all other nights, we eat all vegetables.**

**Why, on this night, (only) bitter herbs?**

Being in restricted and narrow places reminds us that many things are beyond our control.  
What have been the bitter moments of this year? Where have you found expansiveness, hope, connection  
and empathy within the narrowness?

# Four Questions - Question 3

Adapted from Repair the World

***Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?***

How is this night different from all other nights?

***Sheb'chol haleilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am  
echat; halailah hazeh, sh'tei f'amim?***

**On all other nights, we don't dip even once. Why on this night do we dip twice?**

When we dip twice in salt water it reminds us of the abundance that we celebrate in the spring as well as the salty tears of those experiencing scarcity. How can we identify both material and non-material abundance, knowing every person has something to contribute? Can offering gratitude shape our approach to moving through challenging days?

# Four Questions - Question 4

Adapted from Repair the World

***Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?***

How is this night different from all other nights?

***Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein  
m'subin; halailah hazeh, kulanu m'subin?***

**On all other nights, we eat either sitting upright or reclining. Why on this night  
do we all recline?**

How do we recognize our privilege? How do we share our surplus with those who are increasingly vulnerable? How can we build a world where surplus is distributed equitably? Can we zoom out beyond our personal narrative in this moment and find our role in the broader collective of who makes up our community?

# Four Children



## THE FOUR PEOPLE



BY JEWISH MULTIRACIAL NETWORK  
AND REPAIR THE WORLD



On Passover, the Haggadah speaks about four sons; one who is **wise**, one who is **evil**, one who is **innocent**, and one who **doesn't know to ask**.

Tonight we talk of four people who believe in racial justice. They are you and me; people with a variety of lived and learned experience and intersecting identities. **What do they say?** They are Jewish people and non-Jews alike asking questions, engaging with and working towards racial justice. **How do we answer?** We call them in with compassion, we hold them accountable, we learn from those who came before us.

### WHAT DOES A QUESTIONER SAY?

*"I support equality, but the tactics and strategies used by current racial justice movements make me uncomfortable."*

Time and time again during the journey through the desert, the Israelites had to trust a vision of a more just future that the Israelites could not see themselves. They argued that there must be an easier way, a better leader, and a better God. They grumbled to Moses and Aaron in Exodus 16:3, *"For you have brought us out into this wilderness to starve this whole community to death."*

In the midst of our work, there are times when we struggle to identify our own promised land. We see this challenge in various social movements and only when we study these movements in depth, we see that many pushes for progress and liberation endure similar struggles, indecision, and pushback.

### WHAT DOES A NEWCOMER SAY?

*How can I acknowledge my privilege in a way that works towards elevating the voices of marginalized people in my community?*

The Passover story is about the process of moving from oppression to liberation. Liberation is not easy; it demands us to contribute our time and resources for the greater good, even if it makes us uncomfortable.

In the desert, the Israelites constructed the Mishkan (Tabernacle) together. Exodus 35:29 says, *"[T]he Israelites, all the people whose hearts moved them to bring anything for the work that God, through Moses, had commanded to be done, brought it as a freewill offering to God."* Those of us looking to engage in racial justice work can learn from that example. We need to consistently show up, on a path to confronting and exploring our individual privileges and oppressions.

# Four Children (cont.)



## WHAT DOES A JEW OF COLOR SAY?

*I don't often see myself represented in my community and seldom hear my stories, how can I stay engaged in a community that doesn't reflect my identity?*

When our Jewish communities do not fully represent the ethnic and racial diversity of all Jews, we are responsible to question, call out, and call in<sup>1</sup> our institutional leadership to assure that *all* Jews, feel welcomed, included, and represented in Jewish spaces.

Before Moses killed the taskmaster who was beating up an Israelite slave, "he looked around and didn't see anyone" (Exodus 2:12). The next day, an Israelite who knew of the incident said to him, "Who made you our ruler?" (Exodus 2:14). Similarly, we must make sure to agitate in our communities so that Jews whose 'authenticity' is questioned (Jews of Color, LGBTQIA Jews, and Jews with disabilities) are seen, included, and represented.

<sup>1</sup> | Calling in is an alternative to calling out, meant to address a mistake with compassion and patience in service of correcting behaviors while also maintaining relationships. For more information about the approach of calling people in, read Ngoc Loan Tr  n's "Calling In: A Less Disposable Way of Holding Each Other Accountable," Black Girl Dangerous.

## WHAT DOES AN AVOIDER SAY?

*"I am so scared of being called a racist, I don't want to engage in any conversations about race."*

Having conversations about race and racism can be hard and uncomfortable, and we all make mistakes. It's an essential part of the process. When Joseph began having dreams, he told his brothers that they would eventually bow down to him. In Genesis 37:8, Joseph's brothers replied, "'Do you mean to rule over us?' And they hated him even more for his talk about his dreams."

Joseph honed the way that he shared interpretations of dreams, and used them to survive in Pharaoh's palace. He learned from his mistake with his brothers, and his ability helped him to reunite with his family. We can learn from Joseph to overcome mistakes, even when talking about race, by continuing to show up and engage.

[Learn more about Jewish Multiracial Network & Repair the World](#)



# The Ten Plagues

The idea of justice embodied in our story is direct and unquestioned—suffering for suffering. The people of *Mitzrayim* suffered because of their own leader, who is in part set-up by an angry G-d eager to demonstrate his own superiority. In our story, all of this was necessary for freedom.

Jews have been troubled by this for generations, and so, before we drink to our liberation, we mark how the suffering diminishes our joy by taking a drop of wine out of our cup of joy for each of the ten plagues visited on the people of *Mitzrayim*. We are about to recite the ten plagues. **As we call out the words, we remove ten drops from our overflowing cups with our fingers.**

The first emancipation was only a foreshadowing of all the emancipations to follow, and a reminder that the time will come when right will conquer might, and all people will live in trust and peace.

*Adapted from Love + Justice In Times of War Haggadah*



# The Ten Plagues (cont.)

*For each plague, flick a drop of wine onto the plate with your finger as we recite the following together:*

<b>Dam (Blood):</b>	Oh Pharaoh, you have wasted the lives of our people
<b>Tzfardeyah (Frogs):</b>	You cast our infants into the Nile yet required us to fish for food in the Nile's water
<b>Kinim (Lice):</b>	For the years of crowded living, poverty and despair
<b>Arov (Wild Beasts):</b>	We worked as the yoked beast was made to work
<b>Dever (Blight):</b>	Loss that stings like the slave-drivers whip and cruelty
<b>Shichin (Boils):</b>	From the wounds of anger long denied, an ache like the aching of our souls
<b>Barad (Hail):</b>	Our tears, frozen by your greed
<b>Arbeh (Locusts):</b>	Will devour every spring plant like the hordes of bad thoughts, born of exhaustion and lack of trust
<b>Choshech (Darkness):</b>	That we can not smile upon one another as friends
<b>Makat B'chorot (Slaying of the First-Born):</b>	Your loss will equal our own—the death of the first born child

*Adapted from the Lesbian Feminist Haggadah*

# Dayenu

## From the JFREJ Black Lives Matter Haggadah

*Singing Dayenu is a 1000-year old Passover tradition. The 15-stanza poem thanks G-d for 15 blessings bestowed upon the Jews in the Exodus. Had G-d only parted the seas for us, "It would have been enough" we say for each miracle or divine act, thus humbly appreciating the immensity of the gifts. **KB Frazier's reworking of the poem addresses us, rather than G-d.** It calls us to greater action for justice, saying "lo dayenu " (it would not have been enough) in recognition of the work still unfinished.*

1. If we had sparked a human rights revolution that would unite people all over the world and not followed our present day Nachshons as they help us part the sea of white supremacy and institutional racism  
— **Lo Dayenu**
2. If we had followed Nachshons like the youth leaders in Ferguson and not heeded the words they spoke from Black Liberation Leader Assata Shakur: It is our duty to fight for our freedom. *It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains*  
— **Lo Dayenu**
3. If we had learned and chanted the words from Assata Shakur and not protested violence by militarized police — **Lo Dayenu**

# Dayenu (cont.)

From the JFREJ Black Lives Matter Haggadah

4. If we had protested police use of tear gas, rubber bullets, pepper spray and rifles pointed at protesters and forgotten that we are all *b'tselem elohi m*, created in G-d's image — **Lo Dayenu**
5. If we had remembered that we are all created in G-d's image and not affirmed Black Lives Matter — **Lo Dayenu**
6. If we had chanted and cried out that Black Lives Matter and not remembered Rekia Boyd, Alyanna Jones, Shantel Davis, Yvette Smith and Tyisha Miller, Black women and girls also killed by police — **Lo Dayenu**
7. If we had marched for those killed, chanting *Hands up Don't shoot* and not recalled the words of Eicha: *Lift of thy hands toward Hashem for the life of the thy young children, that faint for hunger at the head of every street.* — **Lo Dayenu**
8. If we had recalled the words of Eicha and not called to attention the school to prison pipeline and the mass incarceration of Black and brown people — **Lo Dayenu**

# Dayenu (cont.)

From the JFREJ Black Lives Matter Haggadah

9. If we had called attention to the “new Jim Crow” system — and did not truly sh’ma (listen) — **Lo Dayenu**
10. If we had truly listened to the stories, pain and triumphs of our brothers and sisters of color without feeling the need to correct, erase or discredit them and did not recognize the Pharaohs of this generation — **Lo Dayenu**
11. If we had worked to dismantle the reigns of today’s Pharaohs and had not joined the new civil rights movement — **Lo Dayenu**
12. If we had marched, chanted, listened, learned and engaged in this new civil rights movement and not realized that this story is our story, including our people and requiring our full participation — **Lo Dayenu**
13. If we had concluded that our work is not done, that the story is still being written, that now is still the moment to be involved and that we haven’t yet brought our gifts and talents to the Black Lives Matter movement — **Lo Dayenu**

*While this is not the first instance of state violence against Black people or the first human rights movement, it is indeed OUR time to step up and make a difference. We must work together to progress from Lo Dayenu to Dayenu in the coming years.*

— Ken Yehi Ratzon.



# The Second Cup

Blessed are you, G-d,  
Creator of the Universe  
who creates the fruit of  
the vine.

*Baruch atah Adonai  
Eloheinu melech  
ha'olam borei p'ri  
ha-gafen.*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך  
העולם בורא פרי הגפן.



Original Illustration from Haggadot.com

# Pesach, Matzah, Maror

## Pesach

Why did our ancestors eat the Pesah offering at their Seder?

As a reminder that **G-d passed over the houses marked with lambs' blood**, as it is written, and you shall say, "It is the Passover offering for God, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in *Mitzrayim* and saved our homes."

## Matzah

This matzah, this unleavened bread, why do we eat it?

As a reminder that **there was not sufficient time** for the dough of our ancestors to rise before the Source of strength was revealed and redeemed us. As it is written, "And they baked the dough which they brought from *Mitzrayim* into matzot." (Exodus 12:39)

## Maror

This maror, this bitter vegetable, why do we eat it?

As a reminder that the **Pharaoh embittered the lives of our ancestors**, as it is written, "And they embittered their lives with the hard labor in mortar and bricks, with every servitude of the field, with torment." (Exodus 1:14)

—Adapted from Love + Justice  
In Times of War Haggadah

# Rachtza: Ritual Hand Washing

The symbolic washing of the hands that we now perform recalls the story of Miriam's Well. Legend tells us that this well followed Miriam, sister of Moses, through the desert, sustaining the Jews in their wanderings. Filled with *mayimei chayyim*, waters of life, the well was a source of strength and renewal to all who drew from it. One drink from its waters was said to alert the heart, mind and soul, and make the meaning of Torah become more clear.

—From the Katz-Hanna Haggadah



# Rachtza: Ritual Hand Washing

Blessed are You,  
Source of all Being,  
who sanctifies us with  
Your commandments,  
and commands us to  
wash our hands.

Baruch atah, Adonai,  
eloheinu melech  
ha-olam, asher  
kidshanu b'mitzvotav,  
v'tzivanu al n'tilat  
yadayim.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,  
וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם



# **Motzei + Matzah**

Hamotzi thanks G-d for bringing bread from the earth. This bread results from a partnership between G-d and humanity: G-d provides the raw materials, and people harvest, grind, and bake. So too must we remember that combating all injustice requires partnerships, the circles of involvement are ever-expanding.

—Adapted from T'ruah: The Other Side of the River,  
The Other Side of the Sea Haggadah



# Motzei + Matzah

Blessed are you G-d,  
Sovereign of the Universe  
who brings forth bread  
from the earth.

Blessed are you G-d  
Sovereign of the Universe  
who sanctifies us through  
mitzvot and commands  
us to eat Matzah.

*Baruch Atah Adonai,  
Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,  
hamotzi lechem min  
ha-aretz.*

*Baruch Atah Adonai,  
Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,  
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav  
v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן  
הָאָרֶץ

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ  
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו  
וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה

# Maror: Bitter Herbs

**"The taste of bitterness reminds us that we were once slaves, that slavery still exists.** In Immokalee, Florida, I saw the evidence of the bitterness of slavery: I saw the chains in the Modern Slavery Museum organized by CIW; I spoke with farmworkers who had gotten up at 4:00 am every morning to wait for hours in a parking lot, hoping for a few hours of work, doubtful whether they'd ever get paid. Bitterness reminds us, and its sharp favor can wake us up. In Immokalee, I saw the amazing action that the taste of bitterness can inspire: weekly meetings of workers to plan their own liberation; marches on foot, on bicycle, to protest at corporate headquarters; immigrant workers who lack all legal protections creating a powerful mechanism to stop the abuses they once faced. **As we bless this maror, let us bless both awareness and awakesness — the knowledge of bitterness, and of the action it can inspire us to take."**

**Rabbi Toba Spitzer,**

from the T'ruah Haggadah: The Other Side of the River, the Other Side of the Sea



# Maror: Bitter Herbs

Everyone takes some maror and dips it in the charoset. All then recite the following blessing, after which everyone should immediately eat their maror without leaning to the left.

*Ba'ruch Ah'tah Ah'doh'nai (Brucha at Ya) Eh'lo'hay'nu Melech ha'o'lam ah'sher kidishanu b'mitz'vo'tav v'tzee'vanu al ah'chee'laht ma'ror.*

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us in His commandments and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.



# Korech: Eating a sandwich of matzah and bitter herbs

We made a sandwich on matzah combining bitter herbs with sweet charoset. This reminds us of our deliverance from slavery. It also reminds us of the **seductive sweetness of the status quo**, the misery with which we are familiar, as compared to the unknown result of going forward to liberation.

How many times did the Israelites remember *Mitzrayim* through a fog of nostalgia when wilderness life seemed too hard? How many times have you heard people say, “When this pandemic ends, we can get back to normal,” forgetting that normal meant white supremacy, patriarchy and class injustice?

# **Shulchan Orech: Festive Meal!**



# Tzafun: Finding the Afikomen



The Seder cannot officially end until everyone has had **a taste of the afikomen**. Nothing is eaten after the afikomen, so that the matzah may be the last food tasted.

Afikomen comes from the Greek, *epikomen*—that which comes after. The Afikomen is broken piece of the middle matzah that was hidden earlier in the seder. We eat it now to end the meal, before we move into the last stages of the seder.

Finding the Afikomen gives us a moment to really seek out — what is left for us here? What are the **sometimes hidden parts of life that give us meaning and joy**, that brings closure, or that points us towards the next thing? Those moments are Afikomen moments. The moments after experiences and events, when, in processing, we can see lead us ever clearer towards the vision we want to be living in.

**Adapted from the Katz-Hanna Haggadah**

# **Barech: Showing our Gratitude**

To recite after the festive meal and after eating the afikomen:

You are the  
source of  
Life for all that is  
And your blessing  
Flows through  
me.

*Brikh raḥamana*  
*Malka d'alma*  
*Ma'arey d'hi pita*

ריך רחמנא  
מלכא דעלמא  
מריה דהאי פיתא



Art by Rebecca Hornstein

# Third Cup

Blessed are you,  
G-d, Creator of  
the Universe who  
creates the fruit  
of the vine.

*Baruch atah  
Adonai Eloheinu  
melech ha'olam  
borei p'ri ha-gafen.*



ברוך אתה !! אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי  
הגפן.

# Hallel

This is a time in the Seder where we sing songs of praise! Sing whatever fills you with joy and gratitude!

**Here are a few classic Passover songs to get you started:**

- Chad Gadya
- Dayeinu
- Adir Hu
- Miriam's Song

Find more music and singable songs from Let My People Sing!



Image by Arielle Angel for haggadot.com

# Elijah and Miriam's Cups

In every generation you return  
speaking what few want to hear  
words that burn us, that cut  
us loose so we rise  
and go again  
over the sharp rocks upward.  
Open the door for Eliyahu  
that he may come in.

You come as a wild man,  
as a homeless sidewalk orator,  
you come as a woman  
taking the bima,  
you come in prayer and song,  
you come in a fierce rant.  
Open the door for Eliyahu  
that she may come in.

There are moments for each  
of us when you summon, when  
you call the whirlwind, when you  
shake us like a rattle: then we  
too must become you and rise.  
Open the door for Eliyahu  
that we may come in.

**-Marge Piercy**



# Elijah and Miriam's Cups (cont.)

Eliyahu hanavi, Eliyahu hatishbi,  
Eliyahu hagiladi.  
Binherah veyameynu yavo eyleynu,  
im mashi'ah ben David.

May Elijah the prophet,  
Elijah the Tishbite,  
Elijah of Gilead,  
quickly in our day come to us  
heralding redemption.

Miriam hanevi'ah oz vezimrah  
beyadah.  
Miriam tirkod itanu lehagdil zimrat  
olam.  
Miriam tirkod itanu letaken et  
ha'olam.  
Bimherah veyameynu hi tevi'enu  
el mey hayeshu'a.

Miriam the prophet, strength and  
song in her hand.  
Miriam dance with us in order to  
increase the song of the world.  
Miriam dance with us in order to  
repair the world.  
Soon she will bring us to the  
waters of redemption.





# Counting the Omer

Beginning on our second night Seder, **we count the *Omer***, the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuot; between redemption and revelation. Shavuot, like Pesach, used to be a pilgrimage holiday, when we brought the first fruits of our crops to sacrifice in Jerusalem. Now it is the holiday when we celebrate our receiving of the Torah, that awesome time when we undertook the honor of mutual obligation and responsibility and consecrated our relationships with The Divine and with one another. **It is said that the soul of every Jew that ever was or will be stood at Sinai that day and said Yes!**



# Fourth Cup

**You will know that I am your G-d, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.**

(Exodus 6:7)

Our fourth cup invokes **a moment of liberation but also of completeness**. As we come to the end of our Seder take some time to reflect:

***What does it mean to be complete after liberation?  
What burdens do we remain under?***

## Fourth Cup (cont.)

Blessed are you,  
G-d, Creator of the  
Universe who  
creates the fruit of  
the vine.

*Baruch atah  
Adonai Eloheinu  
melech ha'olam  
borei p'ri  
ha-gafen.*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו  
מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי  
הַגָּפֶן

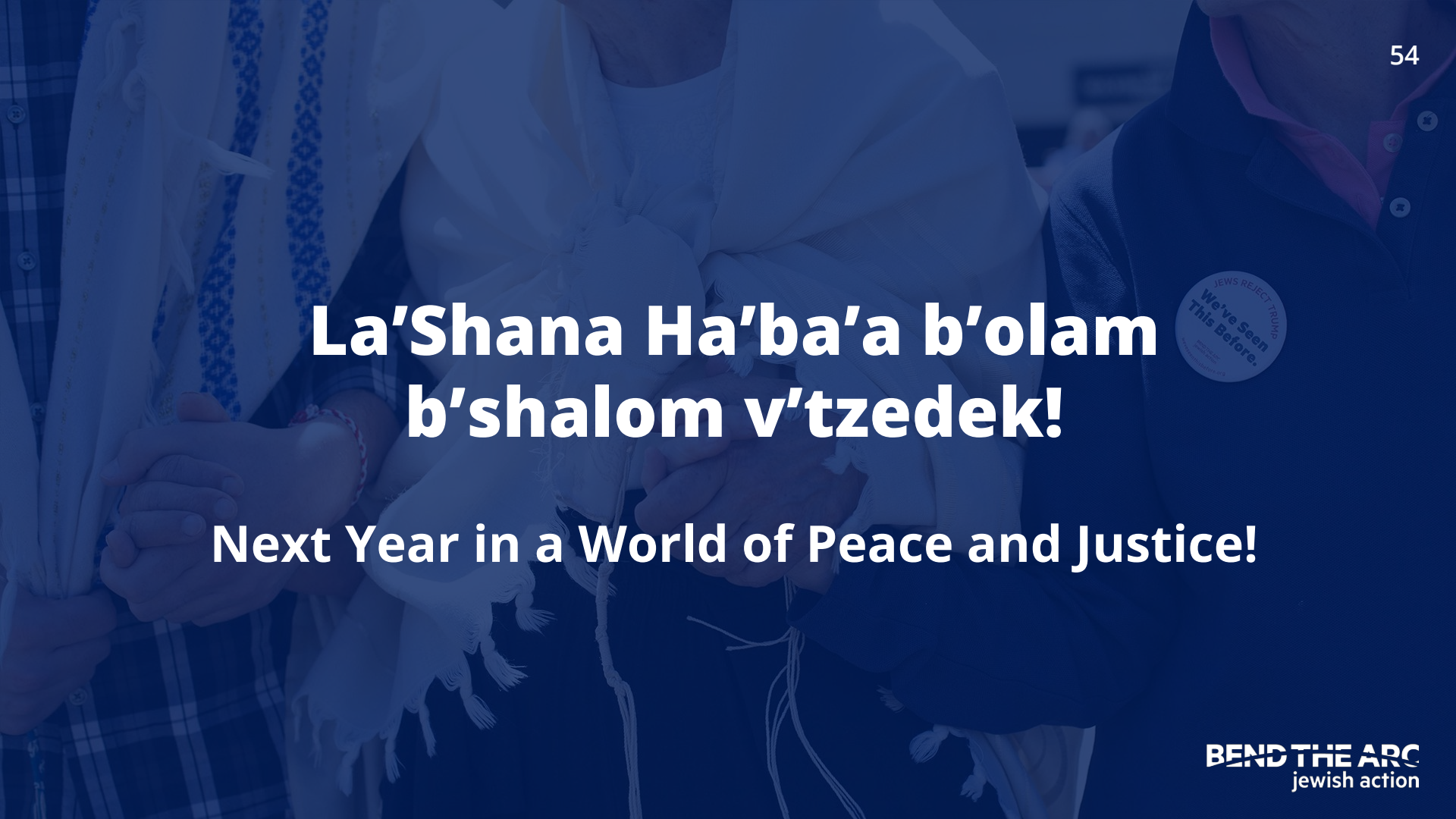


# Next Year in a Liberated World!

As we end, we return to the idea that we are observing a **bittersweet anniversary**. It has been a year since our first Seder observed in quarantine. A year of missed traditions, opportunities, and intimacy. A year of waiting out a plague. A year of mourning. A year of taking action for the world we want. A year of being heartbroken for the world as it is.

After the Israelites waited in Egypt, they moved towards freedom. **How do we do we carry the experiences of the last year with us as we continue our journey?**





**La'Shana Ha'ba'a b'olam  
b'shalom v'tzedek!**

**Next Year in a World of Peace and Justice!**





# LIBERATION SEDER

Next Year in  
A World of  
Peace and  
Justice!

JEWS  
FOR  
BLACK  
LIVES

ALL  
IMMIGRANTS  
ARE  
WELCOME  
HERE

KNOW JUSTICE  
KNOW PEACE

BEND THE ARC  
jewish action



# Many thanks to:

- **Bend the Arc: Jewish Action Ritual Committee** members for the creation of this beautiful Haggadah
- **Rebecca Hornstein** for the original art throughout, **Gaby FeBland** for the Red Sea and Liberation Seder backgrounds, and **Jessica Valoris** for the mural background on this slide
- **The authors of the rich texts** from across our movement included in this Haggadah

Join the movement  
[www.bendthearc.us](http://www.bendthearc.us)