

Passover

Start by Lighting the Candles
What is the Seder?
Hand Washing Ritual
First Cup of 4 cups of Wine
Elijah
Seder Plate
Second Cup of Wine
Sing Dayanu
The 4 Questions
Soup Break
The 10 Plagues
3rd cup of wine
4th cup of wine

1. Tonight we light these candles in the hope that they will shed new light on our traditions. Inspire us to learn about our ancestors and share their stories with each other; to illuminate our heritage from darkness.

May the festival of lights we now kindle
Inspire us to use our powers
To heal and not to harm,
To bless and not to curse,
To serve the cause of freedom.

And let the flame of this light give us warmth with one another as we share this evening of celebration.

Light the candles and say together:
Baruch Atah Adanoi Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik near shel yom tov.

2. We are gathered here tonight to celebrate and share the traditional festival of Freedom, or Seder. Seder is for asking questions.

Just as for many centuries the Seder has brought together families and friends to retell the events that led to our freedom, so may we this night be at one with Jews, and other freedom loving peoples

everywhere, performing this ancient ritual linking us with our historic past. As we relive each event in our people's ancient struggle, and celebrate their emergence from slavery to freedom, we are determined that all of us may keep in our heart the love of liberty and the strength to fight for it. May we dedicate our lives to the abolition of all forms of tyranny and injustice.

The liberation of the Jews from Egypt is an everlasting and inspiring example of all liberations of oppressed and enslaved peoples. The aim of the Seder on the night of Passover is to bring the events of the outgoing from Egypt into present immediacy, so that each of the celebrants young and old, Jew and non-Jew is made to feel that she "had personally come out of Egypt," to rekindle in us renewed hope and strength in our present trials and in our steady labors toward the liberation of all oppressed people.

3. Hand Washing Ritual: Symbolizes Freedom

Someone carries a bowl of warm water (scented with lavender) and a towel, around to each 2 people at the table, and each pair washes each other's hands.

We enjoy now, unlike slaves, to wash another person's hands as we are free to care for others!

4. Wine is a royal drink and symbolizes freedom from our 4 exiles: Tonight, we will drink 4 glasses of wine, representative of the 4 stages of Exodus: freedom, deliverance, redemption and release.

First Cup of Wine: Symbol of Joy and commemorate our redemption.
Baruch ata adonai, elohaynu melech haolam, borai peri hagafen.

5. Cup of Elijah, Empty Chair.

We have a cup for Elijah, keep a door open, in the hope that Elijah, a great prophet will come and peace will be among all people on earth.

We have an empty chair at the table to remember all those that are not free in the world.

6. Seder Plate:

Karpas (parsley) symbolizes birth, growth, springtime, hope, renewal.

Tonight we dip the karpas, this leafy green vegetable, which symbolizes growth and the renewal of life that comes with liberation, into a bowl of

salty water, which represents the tears we shed under oppression and slavery. We do this to reaffirm that to liberate ourselves fully, we have first to touch the depths of our suffering and bitterness and to share our tears with each other just as we share the salt water. We do this to remember the pain and oppression of our ancestors and of people around the world today, and to celebrate the growth from these tears of struggle for freedom and liberation.

Would anyone like to share a new beginning in your life this year?

Charoset: A mixture of sweet things representing the mortar our ancestors used in doing Pharaoh's labor as well as rebuilding their temples.

What holds your life together as the mortar held the bricks?

Maror: Bitter Herbs

This represents the bitterness of slavery our ancestors experienced in Egypt and for all those who have been or are enslaved.

What bitterness would you change in your life?

Roasted Shank Bone: A reminder of the lambs that the ancient Jews used to offer as a sacrifice to G-d every Spring.

Matzah: Bread of Affliction: Unleavened bread

After Pharaoh finally agreed to let the Jews go, he insisted they leave that very night. Because they left so quickly, there was no time to add yeast to their dough and let it rise. So, the bread they took out of Egypt was flat and unleavened. That is why during Passover, we eat only unleavened bread, including dumplings: matzoh balls.

Yahatz: A bond formed by sharing

Of the 3 Matzoh on the ceremonial plate, someone breaks the middle one in half. He/she leaves the other half there and wraps the first half in a napkin and when no one is looking, it is hidden. This piece of matzoh is called the Afikomen. It has to be found and reunited with the other matzoh right after dinner. Everyone at the table shares the Afikomen. Among people everywhere, sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship.

For the sake of our struggle, we join with our own people and with all who are in need, with the poor and oppressed. For our liberation is bound up with the deliverance from bondage of people everywhere. This is the bread of poverty that our forbearers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry enter and eat; let all who are needy, come to our Passover feast.

What kind of separations happened in our lives this past year?
What still remains hidden to us as the Afikomen is hidden? What do we still search for?

7. Second Cup of Wine: We drink this cup after we share the story of our birth of a nation. Baruch ata adonai, elohaynu melech ha alom, borai peri hagafen. Amen.

8. Sing the Song, Dayanu

9. The 4 Questions, asked by the youngest person at the table.

1. Why is this night different from all other nights of the year? On all other nights, we eat all kinds of bread and crackers. Why do we eat only matzoh on Pesach?

2. On all other nights we eat many kinds of vegetables and herbs. Why do we eat bitter herbs, maror at our Seder?

3. On all other nights we don't usually dip one food into another. At our Seder, we dip the parsley into salt water and the bitter herbs in charoset. Why we dip foods twice tonight?

4. On all other nights we eat sitting up straight. Why do we lean on a pillow tonight?

Matzah Ball Soup Break!

The 10 Plagues:

Blood

Frogs

Lice

Beasts

Cattle Plague

Boils

Hail

Locusts

Darkness
Slaying of the first born

Traditionally in the Passover Seder, we take a few moments to remember and name the plagues that G-d was said to have brought upon the Egyptians. Everyone names the plagues and spills a drop of wine with the fingertips for each plague.

Mindful of the Jews long history of persecution and wandering, let us lend every effort to help in the rebuilding of a world where all people shall nevermore be homeless or oppressed, but may live in a world of dignity and freedom. As we celebrate our seder, let us work toward the day when all people shall be free: free from poverty, free from fear, free from bigotry, free from the ravages of war.

12. Drink second cup of wine and say, Baruch ata adonai eloheynu melech ha'olam boray pri hagofen. Amen.

13. 3rd cup of wine: After the meal, in honor of Rachel, who was the mother of Yosef, who sustained our nation. Baruch ata adonai, elohaynu melech haolam, borai pri hagafen. Amen.

14. 4th cup of wine: After we finish the meal, we thank Hashem for taking us out of Egypt and we remember Leah who taught us how and when to say Thank You. Baruch ata adonai, elohaynu melech haolam, borai peri hagafen. Amen.